

Dispelling the myths: An investigation into the claims that  
Prime Minister James Callaghan's Ruskin College speech  
was an epoch marking development in secondary education  
in general and for pre-vocational education in particular.

by

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## ABSTRACT

The origins and developments of pre-vocational education are traditionally traced back to Prime Minister James Callaghan's speech on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1976 at Ruskin College, near Oxford. An assertion of this study is that this is a fallacy, with evidence of the existence of pre-vocational education dating back many years before this date. Further it is contended that Callaghan's speech was not the catalyst for change in aspects of secondary education that many have suggested. The speech was neither a deliberate attempt by Callaghan to challenge the accepted *modus operandi* of the educational establishment nor an effort to raise standards. On the contrary, this study will argue that Callaghan's intervention in education was a conscious attempt to distract the attention of commentators away from the worsening social and economic conditions within the U.K, which Callaghan had inherited from Harold Wilson.

The above will be argued primarily through placing the emphasis on an aspect of secondary education which has attracted very few words of analysis or explanation namely, pre-vocational education. A definition of pre-vocational education will be constructed in order to help raise the status of pre-vocational education by means of establishing a greater understanding and awareness. The emphasis on PVE will also allow for a direct comparison to be made between the content of Callaghan's words of 18<sup>th</sup> October 1976 with the content of the Tomlinson Report published on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2004 helping to establish that Callaghan was neither a catalyst for change or making particularly original claims.

The study will use the resources of the City of Birmingham as well as the local and national press to help substantiate many of the assertions, thus mimicking a practice used by the authoritative education historian Professor Roy Lowe (1988).



## DEDICATION

To Josh and Harry, I hope you will understand one day.  
To Sue, Kim and Ma, a very special thanks.

Love.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thank you to Professor Ian Grosvenor for his patience and in memory of Mr. John Edge.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	<i>"A Basis for Choice."</i> (Mansell Report, 1979.)
A Level	Advanced Level.
ATL	Association of Teachers & Lecturers.
BSB	Birmingham School Board.
BTEC	Business & Technician Education Council.
CBI	Confederation of British Industry.
CEO	Chief Education Officer.
CGLI	City & Guilds of London Institute.
CKSA	Common Knowledge Skills and Attitude.
CPVE	Certificate in Pre-vocational Education.
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education.
Dep. Ed.	Department of Education.
DES	Department Education & Science.
DfES	Department for Education & Science.
DG	Director General.
DHSS	Department for Health and Social Security.
DoVE	Diploma of Vocational Education.
EDUCA	Digest for Vocational Education & Training.
E.I.T.B.	Engineering Industrial Training Board.
ERA	Education Reform Act, 1988.
F.E.	Further Education.
FEU	Further Education Unit.
FGPC	Finances & General Purposes Committee. (City of Birmingham)
G.C.E.	General Certificate in Education, ("O" levels)
G.C.S.E	General Certificate in Secondary Education.
G.N.V.Q.	General National Vocational Qualification.
H.E.	Higher Education.
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationary Office.
ICT	Information & Communication Technology.
IMF	International Monetary Fund.
JCP	Job Creation Programme.
K.S.	Key Stage.
LEA	Local Education Authority.
MHET	Manual and Hand & Eye Training.
M.P.	Member of Parliament.
MSC	Manpower Services Commission.
NAHT	National Association of Head Teachers.
NASUWT	National Association of School Masters & Union of Women Teachers.
NCC	National Curriculum Council.
NRA	National Record of Achievement.
NUS	National Union of Students.
NUT	National Union of Teachers.
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification.
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation & Development.
Ofsted	Office of Standards in Education.
O Level	Ordinary Level.



ONC	Ordinary National Certificate.
OND	Ordinary National Diploma.
PAT	Professional Association of teachers.
P.E.	Physical Education.
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
P.M.	Prime Minister.
PMQ	Prime Minister's Questions.
PRO	Public Records Office.
PSE	Personal and Social Education.
PSME	Personal, Social and Moral Education.
PVE	Pre-vocational Education.
QCA	Qualifications & Curriculum Authority.
RE	Religious Education.
RoA	Record of Achievement.
ROSLA	Raising of School Leaving Age.
SAT	Standardised Assessment Tests.
SCoRE	Standing Conference on Religious Education.
SEN	Special Educational Needs.
SHA	Secondary Heads Association.
STS	Secondary Technical Schools.
T.E.S	Times Educational Supplement.
TLS	Times Literary Supplement.
TUC	Trades Union Congress
TVEI	Technical & Vocational Education Initiative.
UBI	Understanding British Industry.
UVP	Unified Vocational Preparation.



## GLOSSARY

**“A Basis for Choice.”** (ABC) Sometimes called the “Mansell Report.” Published by the FEU in 1979. The Report was concerned with young people entering full time Further Education. It initiated the introduction of the CPVE. Further reading – FEU: 1982.

**“Better Schools.”** A DES consultative document which used the expression “pre-vocational education.” It considered that there should not be further central intervention in the development of the curriculum. The policy was reversed after Sir Keith Joseph was replaced by Kenneth Baker at the DES. The increasing influence of the Government on the curriculum from 1976 is covered by many authors including Chitty: 1992 & Simon: 1994.

**Business Technician Education Council.** (BTEC) Created in 1983 with the amalgamation of the Business Education Council and the Technician equivalent. It offers various internationally recognised qualifications and training for jobs in administration, commerce and industry. Further reading – Fisher: 2004 & Huddleston & Oh: 2004.

**Certificate Of Pre-Vocational Education.** (CPVE) In May 1983 the CGLI and BTEC were invited by the DES to set up the Joint Board for PVE. Using the recommendations of ABC they launched the CPVE in 1985. The primarily post 16 one year course was intended to equip young people with the basic skills and attitudes necessary for success in working life. For several reasons, including the rise of the TVEI, the course struggled to become established. Further reading – Hitchcock: 1988



& Coffey: 1989.

**CGLI -365-Course.** The one year course was accredited by the CGLI in conjunction with the FEU. It was for students in the final two years of their compulsory education and was based upon the recommendations of ABC. The provision was proposed in 1981 and rolled out in 1984. Practical work was the main focus with credit given to students through their profiles for what they had achieved. Further reading – FEU: 1987 & Morris & Griggs: 1988.

**Diploma Of Vocational Education.** (DOVE) (Appendix 5) An initiative of the CGLI which was approved in 1991, piloted in 1995 and rolled out nationwide in 1996. Students aged 14 – 16 followed the Foundation Level progressing onto the Intermediate and National Levels. Learning activities were undertaken through Case Studies with outcomes recorded against work related criteria in profiles. Further reading – CGLI: 1995 & Jervis: 1998.

**General National Vocational Qualifications.** (GNVQ) The pilot was in 1992 for students aged 14+ although taken up mainly by schools/colleges for students aged 16+. It was not job specific but meant to teach the knowledge and skills of broad occupational groups. The different levels of the qualification equated to existing recognised qualifications e.g. GCSEs. Began to be phased out in late 2000s. Further reading – Lawton: 1993 & Yeomans: 2002.

**Manpower Services Commission.** (MSC) Established in 1974 and given responsibility for training and employment in the U.K. It published the Holland Report in 1977 on the requirements of employers of their potential employees. The



MSC was briefly taken over by the Training Agency before being replaced by localised Training & Enterprise Councils in 1988. Further reading – Ainley: 1988, Ainley & Corney: 1991 & Wolf: 2005.

**National Curriculum.** Confirmed by the Education Reform Act, 1988. (ERA) The curriculum was to contain a core of English, Maths and Science with foundation subjects and R.E also taught. Assessment was to take place at the end of Key Stages. The ERA also established the National Curriculum Council, GCSEs and began to move power away from the LEAs to schools and to the DES. Further reading – Marshall: 1990 & Graham: 1993.

**National Records Of Achievement.** (NRA & RoA) The Task Group on Assessment & Testing proposed the initiative in 1987 and launched it in 1991. Every school pupil was to take their record with them throughout their school life. Initially the report only focused upon the National Curriculum subjects but was eventually extended to incorporating any facet of an individual's school life that they wished to include. The record can be presented at job interviews etc. Further reading – Ward: 1987 & Ainley: 1990.

**National Vocational Qualifications.** (NVQ) Job specific, competency based qualifications measured against national standards. Introduced in 1986 for post compulsory school age. The five levels of the qualification equate to other recognised qualifications. Further reading – Jessup: 1991 & Sieminski: 1993.

**Technical & Vocational Education (Initiative).** (TVEI) MSC initiative piloted in 1983. By 1986 65 000 students aged 14+ in 600 institutions were being funded to



stimulate and take part in work related education. The curriculum was to make schooling more relevant to post school life. It involved pupil assessment, evaluation and profiling instead of external examinations. The scheme was actively supported by Prime Minister Thatcher and the Department for Employment. Further reading – Gleeson: 1987, Cattell: 1989 & Chitty: 2004.



## CHRONOLOGY

- 1965 The reorganisation of secondary education becomes national policy (Circular 10/65 issued by Antony Crossland) and ignites the comprehensive school debate.
- 1970 Conservatives win General Election. The new Secretary of State for Education, Margaret Thatcher, announces that comprehensive and grammar schools would remain. (Circular 10/70)
- 1972 Raising Of the School Leaving Age meant that further curriculum provision had to be provided for the additional stay in compulsory education.
- 1973 The *Employment & Training Act* created the MSC.
- 1974 MSC launched and given responsibility for training and employment.
- 1976 The *Education Act* compels LEAs to introduce comprehensive education. Callaghan delivers his Ruskin College speech.
- 1977 Shirley Williams publishes a Green paper, *Education in Schools: A Consultative Document*.  
MSC publishes *Young People & Work. (Holland Report)*
- 1979 Conservatives return to power and promise to maintain grammar schools and selection.  
*Education Act* repeals 1976 Act.  
FEU publishes *A Basis for Choice. (Mansell Report)*  
HMI publishes *Aspects of Secondary Education in England* which was concerned with the curriculum.
- 1980 *Education Act* legalises 11+ selection examination, gives parents' rights over school selection and to sit on Governing Bodies.  
Increase in youth unemployment figures.  
The DES publishes *A Framework For The School Curriculum*.
- 1981 MSC publishes *A New Training Initiative*.
- 1982 Schools Council for Curriculum & Examinations disbands.
- 1983 DES creates *Secondary Examination Council* and *School Curriculum Development Committee*.  
BTEC created.  
DES pilot *CPVE*.  
MSC & Department of Employment pilot *TVEI*.



- 1984 *Education Act* to give more central control over LEA spending.  
Government announce that GCSEs are to replace GCE (O Level) & CSE.  
Circular 6/84 discusses the introduction of RoA into secondary schools.
- 1985 DES publishes *Better Schools* which mentions PVE.  
*CPVE* is rolled out nationally.  
MSC begins the process of becoming the *Training & Enterprise Council*.  
(TEC)  
YTS to become a 2 year course.
- 1986 GCSEs start.  
*National Council for Vocational Qualifications* (NCVQ) meets for the first time. 150+ qualification validating bodies. (NVQs)  
A White Paper, *Working Together – Education & Training* proposes a new framework for *Vocational Education & Training*. (VET)
- 1987 *Teachers Pay & Conditions Act*. (1265 hours)
- 1988 *Education Reform Act* establishes National Curriculum.  
The Government forms the *National Curriculum Council* (NCC) and *Schools Examination & Assessment Council*. (SEAC)  
*Compact* initiative between schools and industry starts.
- 1991 DES publishes *Education & Training for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and the intent to start *GNVQs* with the intent to have parity of esteem between academic and vocational provisions.  
First draft of the *DoVE*.
- 1992 Launch of *GNVQs*.
- 1993 *School Curriculum & Assessment Authority* (SCAA) under Sir Ron Dearing replaces NCC and SEAC.  
*Dearing Report* discusses different post 16 routes into training and employment.  
*DoVE* commences nationwide.
- 1994 Dearing announces that 14 year olds will be able to study in 5 vocational areas within the curriculum.
- 1996 DfEE publishes *Learning to Compete: Education & Training for 14-19 year olds*. Pupils aged 14 to be able to undertake *GNVQ*.
- 1997 Labour return to power after 18 years.  
*Qualifications & Curriculum Authority* (QCA) replaces NCVQ and SCAA.
- 2000 *Citizenship* and *PSHE* added to the National Curriculum.
- 2004 *Tomlinson Report*.



## CHAPTER ONE      INTRODUCTION

### 1.1      *Ruskin College to the Tomlinson Report.*

According to some authorities the origins and development of pre-vocational education (Triggs: 1989 & Hayward: 2004) and the emergence of an emphasis on the school/industry relationship (Gleeson & Keep: 2004) are traditionally traced back to Prime Minister James Callaghan's speech on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1976 at Ruskin College, near Oxford. However this study intends to show that this assertion is a fallacy. This study will provide evidence of the existence of pre-vocational education dating back many years before this date. Further, this study will go on to show that Callaghan's speech was not the catalyst for change within aspects of secondary education that some have suggested. (Donoghue: 1987 & Graham: 1993) The speech was neither a deliberate attempt by Callaghan to challenge the accepted modus operandi of the educational establishment nor an effort to raise standards. On the contrary, this study will argue that Callaghan's involvement in education was a conscious attempt to distract the attention of commentators away from the worsening social and economic conditions within the U.K., a situation Callaghan inherited from Harold Wilson. Challenging these assertions will facilitate the main thrust of the study which is to establish the present status of PVE within the contemporary classroom.

Pre-vocational education is an aspect of secondary education which has attracted very few words of analysis or explanation. There exists both anecdotal and empirical evidence of the relatively poor status of PVE. (Jervis: 1998) In order to address the poor status it will be necessary to create a greater understanding and awareness of PVE. To this end a definition of pre-vocational education will be constructed. This author has been unable to find a substantial definition of PVE. It is difficult to think of any other relatively substantial aspect of secondary education to which a definition is not applied. The emphasis on PVE will also



allow for a direct comparison to be made between the content of Callaghan's speech in 1976 and that of the Tomlinson Report published exactly 28 years later on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2004 and with events prior to 1976. These comparisons will also help to show that Callaghan was neither, as some have argued (Guardian: 17/10.2006) a catalyst for change nor, as some have argued (Blair: 1996) (<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/0000000084.htm>) was making particularly original claims.

On 26<sup>th</sup> March 2005 T.V. and radio programmes were interrupted to announce the death of Baron Callaghan of Cardiff. It was the day before his 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday and eleven days after the death of his wife of more than sixty years. Leonard James Callaghan was the only person to hold all four of the most senior positions of political office within Government: From 1964 – 67 he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Home Secretary from 1967 – 70 and in 1976 he became Foreign Secretary. Callaghan's ascension to the most senior of the four positions, that of Prime Minister, became a distinct possibility following Harold Wilson's surprise announcement, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1976, of his resignation as Leader of the Labour party and as Prime Minister. On 5<sup>th</sup> April 1976, in a competition to become party leader and Prime Minister, Callaghan beat Michael Foot in the final round of voting by 176 votes to 137. Callaghan's period in office was to be one of the shortest of the modern era. After he was defeated by the Conservative Margaret Thatcher in the general election of 1979 the next Labour Prime Minister was to be Tony Blair, nearly twenty years later in 1997. Upon the announcement of Callaghan's death Blair described him as "*one of the greats of the Labour movement.*" On the same occasion Baroness Thatcher described Callaghan as "*a formidable opponent [who] could have made a successful prime minister*" but for a congruence of circumstances. Denis Healey, a Cabinet colleague of Callaghan and Chancellor said of Callaghan.



*He was not particularly distinguished as Chancellor, as Home Secretary or even Foreign Secretary ... Yet [after the resignation of Wilson] the political skill he had perfected ... were now just what his office needed. Without them the Government ... [would not have] ... preserved its fragile hold on Parliament.* (Hennessy: 2000, 376)

Circumstances, including the death of his father, a Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Navy, when Callaghan was aged 9, necessitated his attendance at Portsmouth Northern Secondary School. At the age of 14 Callaghan left school at the end of his compulsory education and did not go onto Further or Higher Education. Over time his failure to attend University assumed greater significance for him, with repeated references to this omission being made throughout his professional career. For example Callaghan talks in his autobiography about him being “*ill-educated*” (Callaghan: 1987, 396) and his many encounters with “*educational snobbery*” (Ibid, 410) which he often thought that he had endured both in his career and as the Prime Minister. Callaghan has some recollections of his own school days.

*The teachers were conscientious and hard-working and it never occurred to us, or perhaps to them, that education means more than committing facts to memory and that at its best it involves sparking the imagination, thinking for oneself and striking ideas off one another.* (Ibid, 26)

Bernard Donoghue, a close political advisor to Callaghan and a contributor to Callaghan’s Ruskin speech, offers some insights into Callaghan.

*The only Premier born in the Twentieth Century [at the time] who had not benefitted from attending university ... He was also never afraid to take on ... Whitehall.* (Donoghue: 1987, 111)

Whilst according to Peter Hennessy, when writing as Professor of Contemporary History, University of London, “*Callaghan’s first words to his Parliamentary Labour Party Chairman, Cledwyn Hughes were: P.M. of G.B. and I never went to University.*” (Hennessy: 2000, 376)

In 1929 he gained his first full time job as a clerk in the Inland Revenue. It was here that



Callaghan became actively involved in the trade union movement culminating with him leaving his job in 1936 to become a full time union official. His enthusiasm for the causes of the Labour party and trade union movement led him to seek political office and in the Labour landslide of 1945 Callaghan was elected M.P. for Cardiff South, the beginning of a career in parliament which lasted for over forty years.

The announcement of Callaghan's death briefly rekindled retrospectives and other assessments of Callaghan's period as Prime Minister. These were in addition to the many words that had already been written about the life and career of Callaghan. Some of these words have concerned the speech on education delivered by Callaghan on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1976 at Ruskin College. The speech was arguably one of the defining actions of Callaghan's relatively brief period as P.M.

## 1.2 *The beginning of an era or the start of a myth?*

Nominally for the purpose of laying a foundation stone, on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 1976 James Callaghan attended Ruskin College. Callaghan was undertaking the task at the behest of H.D. "Billy" Hughes, a personal friend and fellow member of the Fabian Society, who once climbed Snowdon with Callaghan and was a senior Ruskin College official. Callaghan had succeeded Harold Wilson as Prime Minister the previous April, which meant that by the time of his visit to Ruskin College Callaghan had been in office for a little over six months. This brief period had afforded him very little opportunity to make an impact on the country as a whole, on Parliament or upon the members of trade unions. (Donoghue: 1987) Consequently Callaghan used the occasion of the visit as an opportunity to outline some views that he was particularly keen to have aired. It appears that Callaghan had spent his first six months as PM on the defensive, responding to a series of crises. (Maunder: 1980 & Dell: 1991) The apparent reasons for the speech are of some importance and will be revisited throughout this



study. One such example is presented by the previously cited Peter Hennessy, University of London. He obtained a memo entitled “*Themes & Initiatives*” sent from Bernard, now Lord Donoghue, perhaps the most influential of Callaghan’s advisors, to Callaghan on the 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1976. In the memo Donoghue suggests that Callaghan should accept Hughes’ invitation to Ruskin.

*The choice of such intervention [into education] is partly a question of personal inclination and partly a calculation of where the input will be most impressive – especially with the next election in mind. (Hennessy: 2000, 381)*

For others the speech is particularly significant for other reasons. To celebrate the twenty fifth anniversary of the speech the Guardian newspaper posed a question of certain individuals the responses are contained in Fig.1.

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Fig.1 (Guardian: 16/10/2001a)

In response to the question “*What does the Ruskin speech mean to you?*”

Will Woodward, the *Guardian*’s education editor, answers that the speech “*continues to define public debate about education.*”

Lord (Kenneth) Baker, a previous Tory Education Secretary, suggests that “*the great journey did start at this point.*”

Carol Adams, Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council, speaks about how some issues “*did need to be addressed.*”

Whilst Lord (Bernard) Donoghue, one of the authors of Callaghan’s speech, quite revealingly, claims that the speech managed to “*Stop the rot.*” Further use will be made later of Donoghue’s revelations about his understanding of the significance of the speech.

Interestingly Lord St John Stevas, the Shadow Education Secretary at the time of the Ruskin speech, suggests that Callaghan “*picked up the idea [for the speech] from me.*” In the *Guardian* newspaper article Stevas then goes on to talk about what he and the Conservatives had supposedly achieved in the years between 1976 and 1996 and made no other reference to the speech. Indeed, as will be noted later, his comment also appears to contradict an argument he made at the actual time of the speech.

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Callaghan delivered his speech indoors talking for approximately twenty minutes. His audience included about 250 invited guests (no list of which can be traced), a handful of press, with the national press being very scantily represented and the almost obligatory array of students protesting about various issues. (According to Callaghan's official papers, which are considered in greater depth shortly, the students "*were more interested in Government economic policy than the future of Education*" and Callaghan "*offered to meet them.*") The speech heard by the assembled group is considered, by many (Lawton: 1995) in addition to those in Fig.1 to be one of the defining moments or epoch making events in the history of education. As stated previously however, contentiously this study will argue that the ideas in Callaghan's speech did not represent a catalyst for change and that nothing original was said.

In 2009 the Bodleian Library in Oxford made a limited number of Callaghan's papers available to the public. Although still subject to censorship controls, a limited insight into Callaghan's recollections and perceptions can be gained from looking at the papers.

### 1.3 Callaghan's official papers

According to Callaghan's own papers the preparation for his speech began in May 1976 when he invited all of his Ministry/Department heads to answer two questions.

*"What was the Department trying to achieve?"*

*"How far are [you] from getting towards your objectives?"*

Fred Mulley, the Secretary of State for Education took his turn to attend Downing Street on the 21<sup>st</sup> May, 1976. This is the first instance of Callaghan's official papers differing with later accounts of events presented by both Callaghan (1987) and Donoghue (1987). The actual questions asked of Mulley, according to accounts in 1987, were different from the ones suggested by the official papers. In addition there is no reference to Donoghue's part in



preparing the questions as Donoghue's (1987) account suggests. Later extracts from the official papers suggest that Callaghan had questions relating to:

*“the 3Rs”  
“curriculum for older children in comprehensives”  
“examination system”  
“difficulties facing 16 – 19 year olds”*

Callaghan continues on.

*I told him [Mulley] I shared concerns of many parents ... like his asst [assessment] of the situation and the main areas of difficulty and I was prepared to make a major speech focusing on them.*

Callaghan's notes continue on, *“Fred M agreed to get the Dept to write a Memo on 4 areas of concern.”*

The papers suggest that the first draft was completed in July 1976, barely three months into Callaghan's term in office. This does not sit perfectly with the actual speech when Callaghan talked about his travels around the country noting concerns on particular educational issues. Callaghan noted that the first draft was *“leaked by ill wishers in the D of E [Department of Education] to the TES [who were] cynical about my intentions.”* Callaghan continues to give an insight into his state of mind approaching the speech and all matters educational when he goes on to say that the TES thought him *“a professional politician but an amateur educationalist.”* It is relatively easy to see how his asperity towards the media and educationalists was taking hold. It is noted frequently throughout this study how Callaghan had concerns about his own educational attainments. Callaghan comments that drafts of the speech were sent to *“Dep Ed, Industry, Employment, Scotland & Welsh Office & (of course) Treasury.”* It is interesting to observe the sarcasm towards the Treasury and to note the Departments that were being invited to comment upon the speech. Callaghan also observes that on the 14<sup>th</sup> October John Davis, Secretary of State for Wales *“provided me ... with some*



*illuminating figures for Wales.*” He does not, however, say how these impacted upon the final delivery of the speech four days later.

It appears that Mulley responded with a memo on July 8<sup>th</sup>. Callaghan does not disclose the content of the correspondence but he does record his own subsequent response.

*I told Fred I was in favour of increasing the influence of the Inspectorate because they had [the] capacity to bring failure to light [and] to ensure proper standards.*

There appears to be some sort of disagreement between Callaghan and Mulley although there is no explicit recognition of such. Callaghan’s (1987) later recollections only talk of Mulley being replaced by Shirley Williams. The final speech did indeed refer to the role of Inspectors.

Callaghan’s papers also outline an instruction he issued in August 1976 to “R. John” a member of his Private Office to send a copy of the speech to Fred Mulley and informing him,

*That Education has always been very dear to the Labour movement. We still [need to] emphasise the purpose of comprehensive education ... bring out various criticisms ... emphasise the value of teachers’ work.*

The final speech included those requests and questions made of Mulley with the possible exception that Callaghan did not go overboard in expounding the virtues and purpose of comprehensive education despite the existence of a rather heated debate within the Labour movement on that very topic.

Interestingly Callaghan did not include in the actual speech any mention of another concern which he penned in his papers. Callaghan queried if it was reasonable for that “*teachers passed from school to college and back to school again?*” No mention is made of why this question was not posed in the final speech. This omission appears to be a little contradictory when Callaghan himself notes that he “*did not wish it [the speech] to be bland and should*



*ask some controversial questions.*” Perhaps Callaghan’s own protestations in the final speech that there is “*the need to improve relations between industry and education*” would have negated his concerns about individuals going from school to college and back again.

To conclude this brief look at the limited papers which are available it is worth noting two comments Callaghan made in March 1977. The first sets out an agenda.

*My speech was followed up. Shirley W carried out a series of 8 Regional Conferences in March/April with Teachers, L[E]A, Parents, Employers & T[rade] U[nions] 4 types of Agenda. 1 Curriculum 2 Assessment of Students 3 Training of Teachers 4 Relation of School to working life.*

This is explicit recognition of several of the themes/issues discussed in some detail later in the study. As for the Regional Conferences they too are given some time later in the study but not in such a flattering light as that enjoyed by Callaghan.

The second is a scribbled comment which Callaghan makes upon the side of the typed speech. He writes, “*The adverse effects of large scale unemployment ...*” He does not make that comment in the actual speech. Neither does he, unfortunately, elaborate on the comment. It is difficult to know for which group there would be “*adverse effects.*” With regard to this thesis this author could take the liberty of assuming that the problems would have been for Callaghan and his desire to extend his stay as Prime Minister, therefore emphasising the need to divert attention away from this area and perhaps onto education!

Before a definition of PVE can be presented and a brief analysis of Callaghan’s speech undertaken it is essential to clarify what this author understands by the expression education. Without a recognition and acceptance of the various interpretations of the notion of education the concept of PVE cannot be understood and a feasible definition created.



#### 1.4 Clarifying the different interpretations of the concept of education.

The definition of PVE created by this researcher and used in this study is presented here at this stage in the work in order to establish a base line, to assist the reader's comprehension and to illustrate the importance of being aware of the potentially different interpretations of education. The mechanics of how the definition of PVE evolved and was created is presented at the end of this chapter. The definition created in this study and considered most appropriate to use for PVE is as follows.

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*PVE is an approach to the process of education that requires an acceptance, by its participants, of its integration into the curriculum. It provides situations where an individual's attitude and experiences are focused on achieving an understanding of how to seek solutions to problems.*

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The primary focus of this study's contribution to the ongoing education debate will involve PVE, the genre of education which Callaghan inadvertently touched upon at Ruskin College when he spoke about the well-adjusted individual requiring "*essential tools*." Callaghan then lists some of these tools. Advocates of PVE both prior to and after Callaghan's speech will recognise his list. The explanation of PVE which follows will address further the nature of these tools. In many ways Callaghan's assertion that a well-adjusted individual requires "*essential tools*" fits in with the rest of his speech in that it lacked specifics. However this researcher does accept that it may be argued that the purpose of his speech was to raise issues and not offer specifics. In addition Callaghan makes no attempt to clarify what he understands by the notion of education. As Gary McCulloch, University of London, points out about Callaghan's speech, he considers that it once again demonstrated "*a deep-seated uncertainty about the nature and purpose of secondary education*." (McCulloch: 2002, 46)

The nature of the assessment procedures employed by students and practitioners involved in



PVE provisions means that to varying degrees those involved in PVE have always automatically had an understanding or a notion of the concept of what Callaghan referred to as “*essential skills*.” The processes of assessing the work of the students involved in PVE and of the content of PVE provisions, for the want of a better word, was being undertaken prior to 1976 and has continued at a pace ever since. Therefore the various potential interpretations of the concept of education or the debate about the nature of education had been going on for many years prior to Callaghan’s speech. (Tawney: 1922, Hirst: 1965 & Simon: 1974) Callaghan’s speech has allowed for more people to pontificate subsequently as to the nature of these “*essential skills*” and of the various interpretations of education itself. (Wilson: 1977 & Hitchcock: 1988) It is not the primary purpose of this study to judge the quality of these contributions about the nature and purpose of education. There is however the temptation to consider that whilst the breadth of the discussion on education (and PVE) has widened since Callaghan’s prompt, the quality may not have deepened.

The implicit demands or requirements placed upon a secondary school teacher relate to the preparation of their charges for their post-compulsory education years. The acceptance of this role as being among the main functions of a teacher allows for a philosophical debate on the meaning of education.

In making decisions and proclamations, official bodies have unwittingly accepted an understanding of the philosophy of education and consequently accepted a concept of what education means. (MSC: 1987, DTI: 1991 & Tomlinson: 2004) As a specific example, the Hadow Report (1926) discussed particular considerations.

*... secondary education in the truer and broader sense of the word and after spending the first years of school life in primary school should spend the last 3 or 4 ... under the structure of practical work and realistic studies, and yet, at the same time, in the free and broad air of a general and humane education ... forming and strengthening of character. Another in the training of boys and girls to delight in pursuit and rejoice in accomplishment.* (Maclure: 1986, 181)



As a result decision makers and individuals of influence have tended to make assumptions about the practical component of PVE and grouped these initiatives in terms of recognition, esteem and validity. Reese Edwards, University of London, showed an understanding of the problems of interpreting or accepting the various notions of education. He was considering the many considerations of the term education nearly twenty years before Callaghan's speech.

*[A] suggestion has been made that secondary technical education [PVE] is a clumsy adaptation and represents an attempt to solve the continual problem in secondary education before the ultimate and overall question has been decided. (Edwards: 1960, 7)*

In other words Edwards was suggesting, in the days before the National Curriculum, that before schools decide what is it appropriate to teach they must first of all decide what is the meaning and purpose of education.

This predilection for policy makers to make assumptions and associations about the type of students best suited for different elements of education has helped to exacerbate the chasm that has developed between the academic and the pre-vocational provisions. In recognising the assumptions made by people/bodies of influence, it is easier to highlight the role of PVE and potentially raise its esteem among students, teachers, parents, employers and the gatekeepers of the Higher Education institutions. For a broader and in depth discussion on the philosophical aspects of education then the following should be considered. In preparing and writing his piece around the time of the Ruskin speech and the immediate aftermath, Allen Brent (1978), Principal Lecturer in the Philosophy of Education, Huddersfield University, attempts to apply the perceived understanding of the Plato's philosophy to the contemporary curriculum. Brent's reasoning or rationale for the exercise must simply be accepted and not necessarily challenged. It is possible to apply or use Brent's work as a spring board for a brief investigation about the different interpretations of the concept of



education. In the eyes of this researcher Brent's attempt to relate Plato to a contemporary curriculum is not as successful as his analysis, explanation and translation of Plato's writings into something to be understood by the intelligent layman. However his attempt to align certain of Plato's philosophical concepts to a contemporary curriculum does allow for deliberations as to the relevance of particular curriculum initiatives (such as PVE) and therefore the different interpretations of the concept of education.

Tim Horton & Peter Roggatt, authors and lecturers for the Open University, seem to have a more straight forward approach to the application of philosophical views to the contemporary curriculum. Whilst writing about "*reconstructionism*," a movement in educational thought which starts from a sense of deep dissatisfaction with existing arrangements and tendencies in society, they made a pertinent observation.

*[What] is important is not the production of scientific elite or even the training of the whole populace in scientific techniques, but the deliberate cultivation of rationality, of problem solving, adaptability & flexibility, & a ... capacity to face up to the problems of a practical life. (Horton & Roggatt: 1982, 12)*

Their observation stops shy of defining PVE, however they do suggest some specifics as to what could be applied to Callaghan's "*essential tools*."

The thoughts of the historian and writer P.J. Higginbotham may be considered of relevance to those interested in PVE and for those interested in hearing a different perspective as to the nature of education.

*Science, schooling and education are part of society's function and it is conceivable that the tasks of schools should be seen partly as preparing the young for living in that society. (Higginbotham: 1976, 44)*

Higginbotham's insistence on highlighting that education can be either a process or an achievement, or importantly both, is particularly important to consider when discussing PVE. Indeed the definition of PVE proposed by this study uses the expression *process of education*.



The significance of this observation will be considered further when a more thorough explanation of PVE is undertaken. However, a flaw in Higginbotham's work is a fairly common one among those venturing an opinion in this area in that she fails to differentiate between pre-vocational and vocational education. She is also writing in the era before the Education Reform Act (1988) which may excuse her for her naive observation that, "*Teachers make decisions about what to do in schools ...*" (Ibid, 41)

To illustrate other aspects of the nature of education, which need to be considered in light of Callaghan's speech, a fictional scenario may be offered. In order to highlight some relevant questions, then the idea can be proposed that the teaching of Latin is as equally valid as the teaching of Keyboarding Skills in the modern school. This example makes it easier to produce the following arguments and develop ideas for the definition of PVE. A comparison is made at this stage without regard or consideration to the definition of PVE. This brief comparison will be returned to after the definition of PVE is introduced in order to test the validity of the following points.

- 1) For an individual student it is difficult to define what may be considered as an "*essential tool*." Who is to decide on the relative worth of Latin or Keyboarding?
- 2) Both subjects may contribute equally well to the notion of a well-adjusted individual.
- 3) Some pupils are restricted in the choices they have, i.e. some may not be offered Latin or Keyboarding in the options system in Year 9.
- 4) There is a need for the recognition of generic skills that may be delivered through either of the subjects e.g. the appropriateness of certain methods of communication when teaching either Latin or Keyboarding. (Particularly relevant to the section of this study on the definition of PVE.)

This last point is one that would attract the attention of those involved in organizing and teaching PVE. Indeed the Tomlinson Report suggests that a new system [of educational qualifications] should include a common or central element.



*Core learning which is about getting the basics right and developing the generic knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for participation in higher education, working life and the community; and ... Main learning – chosen by the learner to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of academic and vocational subjects and disciplines which provide a basis for work-based training, higher education and employment. (Tomlinson: 2004, 5)*

This observation by Tomlinson is made several years after practitioners of PVE would have been working on such generic skills. Examples of pre-vocational programmes such as the *CGLI Diploma of Vocational Education* (Appendix 5) offered in the 1990s, prior to Tomlinson's considerations, have always included assessment criteria such as the ability of the learner to work individually or as part of a group. In addition such provisions have developed, as a foundation or building block, the use of criterion referencing which addresses aspects such as the confidence of the student to seek assistance. However Tomlinson does not elaborate upon what his generic skills are to include. He also demonstrates that which this reader considers to be one of the flaws of his work. His insistence upon differentiating between the academic and the vocational areas only emphasises the existing issues of credibility and esteem afforded to particular provisions from within the PVE stable.

Tomlinson is not alone in inadvertently casting a shadow over PVE. Neither is he alone in failing to understand the distinction between vocational and pre-vocational education. Further culprits are noted in the following section which considers the existing literature.

### 1.5 Literature Review.

This study makes extensive use of what on the surface appears to be secondary written sources. However, for the purposes of this study, some may be considered as primary sources as they give an indication of the thinking of the day. Some are genuine secondary sources but they too have validity as they are the views of recognised and established authorities. Where appropriate comments are made about the work of the authors being cited.



This study is concerned with the attitude displayed towards PVE, therefore any attitude demonstrated in the written word of a particular era can be considered as a primary source. There is considerable regard given to a range of authors such as Atkins and Marshall during the construction of the definition of PVE, whilst authors such as Brent and Higgenbotham were considered during the discussion on the nature of education. When making the distinction between pre-vocational and vocational education the writings of the likes of Hayward and Triggs were considered. Presenting these authors out of context would have weakened considerably the arguments made during the construction of the definition. However it would be appropriate to give some detailed consideration to the most prolific or potentially more influential authors within the broader areas touched upon by this study. The specialised nature of the subject matter of PVE means that the majority of the comments must consider the broader topics which are of relevance to PVE e.g. the economy and industry.

However it is important to issue reminders that the views/analysis of many of these authors can be considered as primary sources. This is also an appropriate opportunity in which to consider some of that which has been written about the events at Ruskin College and to consider how influential the speech has been perceived. Consideration must also be given to authors who have ventured impressions or opinions on the significance of Callaghan's Ruskin speech as this is one of the catalysts for this study. Some of these people have subsequently assumed (Graham: 1993) or were in positions of influence at the time of the speech (Dell: 1991) so their opinions and attitudes are of value to this study. To a certain extent it is irrelevant if their opinions or interpretations are submitted to paper many years after the event they can still be considered as primary sources.

The titled works of only three authors have been found by this researcher that suggest an explicit understanding of the specific subject matter. Of these three only Stephanie Marshall



(1990) attempts to trace the history of developments within the field. She too unfortunately makes the most frequently occurring error found within the literature, specifically that of confusing the topics of Vocational and Pre-vocational Education. Whilst the author and former secondary school teacher Bill Law does not attempt to offer any definition of PVE he rather muddies the waters by going to the extreme of suggesting that “*PVE ... defies exact definition.*” (Law: 1986, 89) Neither does Law help the cause of PVE by suggesting that it is only the students issued with “*second or third class tickets.*” (Ibid, 1) who actually become involved in the process. A Headmaster Ron Fell (1986) concentrates upon outlining his rather limited experience of one example of PVE. His failure to recognise that there cannot be a pre-vocational provision demonstrates his understanding and contribution.

Material on the specific subject matter is particularly limited. However there exists a wealth of material on the broader, related issues within which the topic of PVE education sits. There is abundant evidence of the number of authors who have been willing to contribute thoughts within these areas. In addition to the economy and industry some attention must be paid to these areas in order to contribute to the debates on:

- The nature and purpose of education.
- What constitutes knowledge.
- The importance and relevance of the education of individuals of influence.
- Whether developments within education suggest a revolutionary or evolutionary tradition.

The same justification for including consideration of the above can now be presented as was offered when the original investigation into the status of PVE was presented in 1998. The justification helps to address the issue of parity of esteem between the academic and pre-vocational traditions.

Clyde Chitty (1988), Institute of Education at the University of London, contributes a substantial narrative on the subject of the development of comprehensive education and



presents many words on the circumstances surrounding the delivery of Callaghan's speech. Chitty is convinced that there was a deliberate politicising of the education sector in order help fulfil the individual and collective ambitions of members of Callaghan's own Policy Unit. This view is supported by Callaghan who, as stated previously, admits that his closest advisors on education were "*overtly political.*" (Callaghan: 1987, 404) Although Chitty's work is primarily concerned with the expanding influence of central government upon education it does, nevertheless, serve as a valuable interpretation of the politics within the Labour party of the day and of how this would have influenced Callaghan's decision making.

Any study considering aspects of the history of PVE must refer to the work of Dr. Michael Sanderson, Reader in History, University of East Anglia. As indicated earlier in this study Sanderson is acknowledged as an authority on aspects of the history of education related or connected to PVE. Included within his considerable repertoire of knowledge, interpretation and analysis are his views on the perceived influence of education upon industrial performance. Charles More, Cheltenham & Gloucester College of H.E. suggests that "*No one is better qualified than Sanderson to write on this subject.*" (More: 2000, 189) According to John Wilson, University of Manchester "*Michael Sanderson has developed an extensive reputation.*" (Wilson: 1977, 119) Writing in the *TLS* (6<sup>th</sup> August, 1999) the economic historian Correlli Barnett suggests that Sanderson is a, "*distinguished authority on the history of British education and training since 1800.*" Although Barnett does qualify this view with some reservations. Adrian Wooldridge writing in the *TLS* (4<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1987) considers that Sanderson is an expert at relating "*historical experience to contemporary problems.*" Sanderson concludes his article with a suggestion.

*In Britain's present position it behoves us to be rather less reverential about education and a lot more about training, less about the cultivation of the mind and more about the acquisition of skills, less about academic and more about practical values. In particular we should be more sceptical about the self –*



*justifying ‘good in itself’ purpose of education and much more zealous about the need to relate it to the world of work, production and wealth creation.*  
(Sanderson: 1993, 195)

A reading of the collective works and evidence produced by Sanderson suggests that the above conclusion is appropriate to his generally maintained views. However whilst his work is very informative, enlightening and packed with analysis there are certain flaws within it which have already been alluded to previously in this study. The flaws, whilst not completely undermining his assertions and findings, must be considered when reading his work. For example a familiar line that he takes with every opportunity to espouse his views is the notion that problems within the economy and education can be traced to “*the calculated demise of the Secondary Technical School*” and indeed is “*perhaps the most serious error in educational policy since 1945.*” (Ibid, 193) Although it must be noted that Sanderson himself acknowledges that fewer than 3% of secondary age pupils actually derived any sort of benefit from Secondary Technical Schools (STS). Another issue is Sanderson’s reluctance to define technology and his lack of recognition of PVE. The description of the content of the STS curriculum illustrated by Sanderson seems to this reader to fit the definition of PVE offered by this study. Without a precise definition and clarification, Sanderson’s argument that schools other than the STS were not dealing adequately with technology becomes a little less convincing. His lack of clarification of the practical curriculum is a little disappointing. His lack of recognition that an individual student can have an interest in both the academic and more practical curriculum is a major flaw. His writings inform the reader that he considers that an individual’s attendance at a particular type of school, such as the STS, means that the student must only have interests within that field and will pursue careers in a related field. It is this type of rigid thinking from esteemed authorities that has contributed towards the stifling of PVE. This is somewhat ironic considering Sanderson’s championing of the STS.



Sanderson (1988, 93 & 94) has attempted to produce evidence of Britain's declining standards in education and the perceived knock on effects for Britain's influence on the world's economy. The main flaw with Sanderson's argument concerning the perceived demise of Britain's economic influence is that his original comparisons, i.e. between the U.K. and the USA or Germany, are not like for like comparisons. In addition he does not consider or give any credence to the thought that due to its relative lack of size, raw materials and man power it would have been virtually impossible for Britain to have maintained the position of influence it held in the world. Andrew Gamble, Professor of Politics, University of Sheffield suggests that "*British living standards and productivity have continued to rise throughout the [20<sup>th</sup>] century.*" (Gamble: 2000, 1) However he continues on to say that "*Britain's relative economic decline was inevitable.*" (Ibid, 8) With some justification Gamble argues that decline is often politically constructed. He does not join the bandwagon and attribute the decline to standards in education. With the effects of the Industrial Revolution spreading throughout the world it is unrealistic to consider that Britain could have stayed top of the league table. A simple analysis undertaken by this researcher of various trading figures presented in Appendix 2 questions the assertions of the likes of Sanderson and Graham who is highlighted shortly and provides further evidence of potential ulterior motives for the delivery of Callaghan's speech. Any criticism of the assertions of Sanderson should not detract from the fact that his body of work should be read by anyone interested in the history of the relationship between schools, industry and the economy. However it may be more prudent to be less euphoric about Sanderson's main observations than those shown by the economist and historian Phillip Ollerenshaw who claims that Sanderson is the "*historian who has done most to develop our understanding of the relationship between education and economic performance in Britain.*" (Ollerenshaw: 1990, 92) Sanderson's enthusiasm for the subject is quite infectious and his knowledge of the period from 1870 is impressive. In



addition, unlike several of his contemporaries, he is not afraid to offer an interpretation of events. This does however make his brief mention of the Ruskin speech disappointing.

Several authors of note and repute (Simon: 1994 & Aldrich: 2002) have discussed the role of Callaghan and the Ruskin speech in the development of comprehensive education and the introduction and development of the National Curriculum. The focus of this study does not warrant an extensive contribution to this discussion. However it is of some interest to note the reaction of Duncan Graham, the Chairman and Chief Executive of the NCC, to Callaghan's speech and thoughts. Graham was charged with introducing and developing a National Curriculum. As noted previously this study contends that he seems to have followed the path of several others by reading more into Callaghan's words than was actually stated. Of course it could be argued that Graham has a vested interest in attributing to Callaghan some vindication for the introduction of the National Curriculum. Graham argues.

*By the time of Callaghan's ... Speech, in which he called for a national curriculum, I ... had become even more convinced that we were serving the less able children badly by watering down what we taught them, while the education of the able children was narrow and academic. (Graham: 1993, 3)*

Graham made several sweeping statements as well as stating explicitly the need for a differentiated curriculum. Unless a reader is observant it would be easy to infer that this is what Callaghan was proposing in his speech. The issues that are raised by Graham are of importance to this study, however they are not ones that can be attributed directly to Callaghan. A substantial piece of this work will be given over to the issues raised by Graham in relation to the status of and the regard for PVE and the association of PVE with less able pupils. Graham seems uninhibited in the scope of his assertions regarding the Ruskin speech and the apparent vindication that it gives to the NCC.

*Ruskin forced ... the realisation that things were not well ... the start of the standards argument and debate about why other countries were doing better than Britain ... educational establishment took little notice of what the PM*



*said ... seemingly unaware of ... a new demand for efficiency and value for money; ... for a relevant curriculum. (Ibid, 3)*

Such assertions have helped to create a mythology about the effects and the importance of Ruskin.

Some support for Sanderson's idea about the demise of the UK economy being directly attributable to education performance can be seen in the words of Pat Ainley, University of Greenwich. He considers that *"Education and educators at all levels can be blamed for Britain's social malaise and for the country's relative economic decline. (Ainley: 1990, 3)*

Ainley makes several sweeping statements. His approach both supports Sanderson's views and reflects Sanderson's lack of a specific definition. Ainley's contention that *"the relevance of vocational education to the world of work is continually represented on all sides as the means to economic recovery."* (Ibid, 1) fails to define vocational education as a distinct entity from PVE. Indeed Ainley appears to fail to recognise the potential role of PVE within the secondary school. There is a strong anti-Thatcher slant to his work as well as scathing attacks on Conservative education policy from 1979.

Ainley finds little favour from this researcher with his assertion that *"The competition to produce validation for PVE is essentially an effort to reassert the meaning of a knowledge increasingly perceived as irrelevant."* (Ibid, 112) His mention of PVE is encouraging although his use of the phrase suggests a restricted comprehension which is a little disappointing from someone of his authority. Apart from confusing the terms vocational and pre-vocational he also misrepresents the role of the acquisition of skill in PVE.

*... vocational and pve attempts to equip the majority of school leavers may be optimistically presented as the skills to the modern economy. In practice, however, they present a dilution of previous skill levels and a preparation for the intermittent, low-waged working. (Ibid, 115)*



In many respects the words of Ainley are disappointing for someone looking for various insights into the events of 1976. His body of work must be read by anyone interested in the topic of education and training. His productivity and work has been rewarded with the title of Professor of Education and Training. His emphasis on the work related curriculum is one dear to my own heart as it was a focal point of my own professional teaching career.

However the brief or scant attention he gives to Ruskin and beyond is disappointing. Despite this he does consider that Callaghan “*redefined the purpose of education*” and that the speech “*redefined this agenda for a decade.*” (Ainley: 1990, 12) The disappointment of this researcher stems from Ainley’s reluctance to do more than just chronicle events. His experience and body of work should have allowed him to offer an analysis or interpretation of events. Nevertheless Ainley was evolving his views, developing his academic and university career and gathering his experience in the immediate post Ruskin period and therefore must be considered as a an example of what on the surface is a secondary source but is actually a valid primary source.

Denis Lawton, Director of the Institute of Education, University of London, is another who is scathing of Conservative Education Policy from 1979. He suggests that “*Kenneth Clarke was appointed by Margaret Thatcher to apply the same kind of diplomacy to education that he employed in damaging the NHS.*” (Lawton: 1993, 60) However Lawton’s views are presented in this study as they portray those closest to this researcher.

*One of the problems in writing about educational or curriculum policy is that the word “policy” normally has connotations of careful thinking and planning; the additional word “development” should reinforce that impression. “Policy development” sounds good as rhetoric, but unfortunately policy in practice tends to be contaminated by ideology, expediency and even personal ambition. (Ibid, 59)*

Lawton’s conclusion may be considered to be particularly poignant. He notes that “*cynical observers of educational policy since 1976 might suggest that new education ministers needs*



*a bandwagon of some-kind.*” (Ibid, 59)

Unfortunately this similarity in views ends when Lawton continues on to discuss the Conservative White Paper “*Education & Training for the Twenty First Century.*” (DES: 1991) His assertion that this document was based “*on the fallacy that there could be two separate routes [academic & pre-vocational] with parity of esteem.*” (Lawton: 1993, 70) To date it appears that Lawton’s views have been more accurate than the optimism of this researcher. Lawton cannot be criticised for offering a range of views and indeed doing more than just chronicling events. The criticism comes when he fails to distinguish between the 14 – 16 curriculum and the 16 – 19 curriculum, the latter being the primary focus of his consideration of the non-academic curriculum.

In an exhaustive account of a hundred years of curriculum development Peter Gordon (2002), University of London, devotes one relatively brief section to Callaghan’s speech and to the results of the subsequent Great Debate. Gordon’s account is very factual. In contrast Gordon Kirk (1989), Principal of Moray House Institute of Education and Chair of the Scottish Council for Research in Education, devotes more time than most in outlining that which he considers as being the immediate effects of the Great Debate. To be fair to Gordon it must be noted that Kirk was writing exclusively about the growing influence of central government not particularly on curriculum initiatives. On the surface it would appear that Kirk should have been able to make more of Callaghan’s remarks than Gordon. However for those who consider Callaghan’s speech to be something of an epoch then this must surely include the view that the speech should have had a direct bearing on subsequent curriculum initiatives.

Another recognised authority on this period is the historian Roy Lowe who touched upon many issues concerning the English education system since 1945. Being an overview means that many of the issues have to be paid a superficial regard. Nevertheless his piece paints a



broad picture of the period and highlights the relevant issues leading up to the speech. He does manage to create a feeling of some intrigue when he suggests that, *“There were also important ideological shifts at the time which prefigured the increasing polarization of educational politics.”* (Lowe: 1989, 8) Unfortunately this observation only serves to frustrate the reader as to what a deeper analysis by Lowe of the circumstances leading up to the speech would have yielded. Interestingly Lowe does go on to recognise that the economic climate was such that it became very easy for *“criticism of the educational system to blossom, particularly those which suggested that schools were failing to provide ... an appropriately skilled workforce.”* (Ibid, 9)

The contribution of this study to the Great Debate should be read in conjunction with a general analysis of the period from 1970 onwards offered by any of the established authorities on this period. For example this study has already made use of the works of the likes of Aldrich, Chitty, Lowe and Simon. Lowe’s chapter, entitled *“Education Policy,”* in the book edited by Anthony Seldon and Kevin Hickman gives an overview of the eponymous subject matter from 1970 through to the turn of the century. The main flaw of his piece is Lowe’s reluctance to consult the publications of the history makers. This fundamental of educational research has remained uppermost in the mind of this researcher despite following Lowe’s lead in making extensive use during the research of newspaper articles and personal accounts. Unlike this researcher Lowe has failed to acknowledge the personal accounts of the individuals who were creating the history of this period such as the likes of Callaghan, Donoghue and Thatcher. Using the recollections of Callaghan, for example, Lowe may have reconsidered one of his assertions.

[Callaghan] *identified the primary curriculum, the later years of compulsory education, the reform of examinations and the education of 16-19 year olds as the key battlefields of the summer of 1976.* (Lowe: 2004, 132)



Whilst an analysis of the actual content of Callaghan's speech may have suggested to Lowe that Callaghan's mention of £6 billion was as a justification for his intervention into the area of education and not, as Lowe suggests, Callaghan insisting that sufficient funds were already being provided by the Government for education.

This researcher may offer further questioning of some of the contentions of Professor Lowe and indeed note some potential contradictions. However Lowe's chapter remains a succinct overview of the period and therefore a useful source of background material for students.

Having consideration for Professor Lowe leads onto the need to vindicate or justify the particular research methodology employed in this study. The next section addresses this area.

#### 1.6 Justification for the methodology.

To a certain extent the methodology to be employed in such an undertaking is dictated by the rationale or primary goals of the project as presented in Fig.2. There is an assortment of goals each of which are generally considered across the study as a whole. However certain of the goals are addressed as targeted entities with dedicated sections contained within the study. It is also important for this researcher to realise that the research is being driven by a passion for the subject matter and a vested interest which unless guarded against could taint arguments. (See 5.3)

It is very important to establish at the outset of this study that it is not about the history of PVE or any aspect or incarnation of it. To do that topic justice would require a dedicated thesis and a whole different approach. However a selective chronology is included (Appendix 6) in order to locate particular initiatives within the primary time frame of this study. In addition a selective glossary of these initiatives and other pertinent reports etc completes the study (Chapter 6.6) This study is concerned with establishing the existence of



PVE which will require a definition. Once it is established that PVE has existed for many years in different guises it will then be possible to consider the status of the provision.

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Fig.2 The following are the main intentions to be addressed during this thesis.

*Raise awareness of the existence and of the generic nature of PVE.*

*Make a contribution to the ongoing debate over the relevance of the contemporary 14 – 16 curriculum in secondary schools.*

*Illustrate the potential relevance of PVE to secondary school education and therefore raise the esteem and regard afforded to such provisions.*

*Provide evidence of the longevity of PVE.*

*Discuss the significance of the events at Ruskin College in terms of developments within PVE.*

*Place the Ruskin speech in an historical timeline and context.*

*Consider the potential consequences of the Ruskin College speech on developments within secondary education.*

*Place developments within PVE in a local context.*

*Consider the effects of Ruskin College within a Birmingham LEA setting.*

*(Provide the first substantial definition of PVE.*

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The findings and challenges presented in an earlier work by this author (Jervis:1998) have not been revisited or taken up by anyone. The questionnaires designed in 1997 have been updated and redistributed to schools and industry. This allows for a direct comparison between the data to be made and appropriate conclusions presented. In addition in order to establish if variations of PVE have been offered for years prior to Ruskin then, as well as establishing that which is to be understood by the concept of education, text books, newspapers, biographies and archives must be scoured. As noted a little earlier, basing



research on the printed media is not without some credible, if not perhaps sometimes controversial precedence. (Lowe: 1988) It has become apparent that the status of PVE has been affected by the lack of both an academic study and of an appropriate definition. In addition when basing a substantial part of the research on what many would consider to be secondary evidence, i.e. interpretations by different authors of events/initiatives etc as presented in their writings and articles, I have regarded them as de facto primary sources for the purposes of this research as they represent examples of the prevailing thought of the day with regard to PVE. In other words some of the historical commentaries used in this study must be considered as primary sources as they indicate the thinking of the day. The questionnaire analysis presented towards the end of this study is an attempt to quantify these opinions and attitudes. Admittedly the data represents only a small section of those who interact with PVE over a relatively short time span but it is nevertheless valid analytical research.

It is important to bring the attention of readers to the areas of concern that PVE has touched upon and attempted to rectify. Indeed PVE can be an instrument to use to further develop aspects of education. For example in many respects the information in the *Evening Mail* on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1977 about a school pupil at Hartfield Crescent Comprehensive (now known as Ninestiles School), Birmingham, is the most revealing in terms of illustrating the attitudes and issues addressed by PVE. The article said that “*Valerie Banks will be allowed to take metalwork and other boys’ [sic] subjects in school.*” The idea of there being dedicated subjects for boys or girls does not find much credibility within the modern school system.

For a more in-depth analysis of why perceptions regarding the suitability of either boys or girls for particular school subjects arose then the work of the education historian Ruth Watts, University of Birmingham, should be considered. Her concept of “*pathological models*”



(Watts: 2002, 141) helps to illustrate the inception and development of gender stereotyping. She also touches briefly on the topic of PVE and notes that “*Girls received limited technical education,*” (Ibid, 146) although unfortunately she does not elaborate on this point. At the time of the Ruskin speech the separation of boys and girls for many lessons or schooling was very much the accepted system. Admittedly it was not just the enlightened attitude of the practitioners of PVE that eventually curtailed the archaic attitude of those who insisted upon separation, however it is important to highlight the role of PVE in attempting to break down gender stereotyping. Unfortunately the laudable intent of creating a curriculum within all schools that is accessible to all has not always been successful especially with regard to intellectual prowess and Watts’ “*pathological models.*”

As will be shown throughout this study, PVE has become primarily associated with lower ability pupils and/or more disruptive groups. Suggestions will be offered as to why this situation may have arisen although it is not the primary purpose of this research to trace the history of PVE. That would require a dedicated thesis. For example, in 1972 the Raising of the School Leaving Age (ROSLA) forced many students to stay on at school for an extra year. For some staff and pupils this caused resentment. Obviously there developed an obligation to occupy the students during this additional year of their compulsory education and provisions, often pre-vocational in nature, were introduced. This association can be seen as being to the detriment of the potential benefit that PVE could offer to all students.

Originally I thought that it should be relatively easy to rectify the situation regarding the absence of a study and of a definition. It has however proved not to be the case. The amount of time that has been given over to these factors has necessitated an amendment to the original proposal. For example it has not been possible to investigate the history of a school that has utilised PVE. In addition it has been very difficult to access school records due to



confidentiality rules governing records. However a case study is undertaken with the results reported in the penultimate chapter of the study. The case study is an attempt to establish the contemporary situation with regard attitude towards and understanding of PVE.

The events at Ruskin College coincided with the month and year I started teacher training whilst the publication of the Tomlinson Report in 2004 was commissioned at around the time of the end of my teaching career. This provides a neat boundary within which nominally to base the study. One of the major problems of attempting to identify and define PVE is the vast range of relevant history and related topics. Considering the contributions of Callaghan and Tomlinson to the Great Debate provides specific examples of particular assertions.

This author has spent the vast majority of his personal and professional life within the City of Birmingham. This combined with the fact that Birmingham has a reputation as a progressive education authority (Grosvenor: 2009) vindicates the decision to base the study around developments within Birmingham.

The themes identified and the observations about the Ruskin speech unfortunately could not be commented upon by Callaghan. At the beginning of the research Callaghan's secretary was approached with a view to making an appointment to interview him. Citing ill-health the request was denied. The secretary's words were unfortunately quite prophetic. However some of Callaghan's official papers were belatedly made available to the public and some regard is paid to these as primary sources of information/evidence.

The chapters in the study are concerned with the tensions which permeate throughout the piece, building towards an analysis of the results from the questionnaire sent to schools and to companies. This analysis will act as a case study that touches upon the tensions of the previous chapters.



There remain two considerations for this introductory chapter. The first is a brief yet important look at why this the topic of PVE warrants this attention. The second, and perhaps the most significant contribution of this study to education and the Great Debate, is when a definition of PVE is created.

The reasoning and rationale for the undertaking of this study stem from a personal interest in the subject matter. This interest must be outlined briefly in order to illustrate the motivation and subsequent emphasis of the study.

### 1.7 *Why is this subject matter of such personal interest?*

Having been a secondary school teacher during the period of time which many (Young: 1993) consider to have been unprecedented in terms of the number of initiatives and directives, I wish to stand back and see if hindsight is such a wonderful thing. When engrossed in preparing lessons, marking books or taking after school activities it is very difficult to see the broader picture and understand why events have occurred. My training as a secondary school teacher began around the time of Callaghan's speech in October 1976. It was on the Alsager site of Crewe and Alsager College, situated between Stoke and Crewe. Alsager College had just been merged with Crewe College, the significance of which was not fully understood by a fresh faced eighteen year old. Thirty years later the significance is clearer with the amalgamation of the two colleges being a symbol of the politics and policies of the day. Thirty years ago the amalgamation of the colleges was used as a source of sporting and other rivalries between the students of either college, whilst the economic significance was generally ignored. To illustrate further the evolutionary nature of education the Alsager site is now the Education Department of a municipal university.

Writing thirty years after starting college it has become interesting to consider whether, if I



had been as informed of the political situation of the day in 1976 as I am looking back today, I would have made any different decisions? This question means that looking back to 1976 and looking at developments since 1976 highlights the fact that no finger of blame can be pointed at Callaghan, Thatcher, Major or Blair or any of the many Secretaries of State for Education for the career paths which I selected. The decisions to teach in secondary schools, to teach disruptive pupils and indeed to work in a Grant Maintained school (a political hot potato of the late 1980s early 1990s) was my own doing. Nowadays I realise that each decision was made in comparative isolation and in relative ignorance from within the insular walls of a school classroom. As one becomes more experienced then there develops more of an awareness of the external factors which may play a part in decision making. In 1976 there was a distinct lack of this comprehension.

This study will cite reports from the CEO of Birmingham and other Education Officers of the City of Birmingham of the 1980s. (Chapter 3) During this time I was one of hundreds of teachers in Birmingham getting to grips with the changes and initiatives being handed down by both the local and national authorities. Although the amount of work involved in implementing the changes meant that at the time it was very difficult to applaud them, looking back it is now relatively easy both to support the ambition of some of the councillors and to recognise their ignorance of the potential and content of PVE. This recognition helps to explain why such provisions have struggled to gather any esteem, as they were always used, by the councillors and those in charge of school timetables, as provisions for the less able. The list of rationale for this study does not include a substantial analysis of the factors and personal objectives of which I became increasingly aware as my teaching career developed. From a very early time in my career I was convinced of the relevance and potential of PVE. What I was unable to work out is why it appeared that the majority of my colleagues did not share my enthusiasm for PVE and why PVE provisions did not enjoy



parity of esteem with the “academic” subjects.

In 1994 I decided to undertake an academic study into why other teachers did not share my enthusiasm for PVE and why PVE lacked regard within the education community. This period of study finished in 1998 with the award of an M.A. (Ed). In the year 2000 I felt that I was better equipped to take the research even further. As a schoolteacher advocating the virtues of PVE I had not been as well equipped as I should have been to argue for PVE and to argue against the reticence of my colleagues that I encountered in the 1980s and 1990s. Some may suggest that being able to argue the cause of PVE some thirty years after starting college is a waste of time. However there is an inner feeling that wants to justify further to myself the reasons for following particular professional paths. In addition to the rationale for the study this aim has influenced the methodology used within it.

#### 1.8 Creating a definition of Pre-Vocational Education.

In many respects the most important aspect of this study will be the creation of a definition of PVE and the potential for further engagement by academics and others on the appropriateness of said definition. There are many words, reports and so on which make implicit references to PVE or use expressions such as technical education (Watts: 2002) when the term PVE may have been more appropriate. For example Will Spens, Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, suggested in his Government sponsored report in 1938 that it would be better “*to have a technical value in relation not to one particular occupation but to a group of occupations.*” (Maclure: 1986, 196). This study will make reference to many of these examples in order to establish that which a definition should omit and obviously to include those aspects which make it easier to define PVE. To reiterate, this author has been unable to find a substantive definition of PVE. As this entity is the basis of the study it is important that a definition be created. In addition it is easier to address issues of validity and credibility



if the concept is defined.

It is very difficult for curriculum planners and managers in schools to consider the benefits of offering PVE to potential customers, i.e. their pupils, without knowing exactly what the commodity entails. For many of these curriculum planners in the secondary schools the poor status afforded to PVE (Chapter 5) means that they may not see a future for such provisions except as a option for the less able pupils. For a number of reasons PVE has become associated with the less able and/or more disruptive pupils within a school. (Fell: 1986)

However those that have argued that PVE is never going to gain parity of esteem with the more academic initiatives or rid itself of the image of low regard may be forced to change their opinions or alter their attitudes if a precise definition of PVE is offered. The previously cited former school teacher and now established author Bill Law, for example, unfortunately talks about students following a pre-vocational provision who were being issued with “*second or third class tickets, which, we suppose, offer entry to working life.*” (Law: 1986, 1)

Without actually offering a definition of PVE the likes of Law, Parker, Pring and many others, including the authoritative Geoff Hayward and Rosa Fernandez from the University of Oxford, have discussed PVE and the role it plays in secondary schools. Hayward and Fernandez argue that the “*pre-vocational tradition*” (Hayward & Fernandez: 2004, 128) was developed to cater for learners who would have entered the labour market at 16 “*but were unable to do so because of the collapse of the youth labour market in the mid to late 1970s.*” (Ibid, 128) It may be considered that this assertion is not entirely accurate. However the main point is that the confusion over the meaning and status of PVE means that in this respect employees, parents, teachers and pupils are unable to compare like with like as they are now able to do, for example by comparing the results obtained by schools X and Y in Mathematics GCSE.



It appears to this researcher that a strikingly obvious development of this point is that the people who are most concerned with the value of a pre-vocational qualification i.e. the students, are lacking a standard by which to compare their results with those of students elsewhere. In other words they are not certain as to the value of the currency that they hold. This has consequences for: gaining access to Further and then eventually Higher Education, access to different types of employment and indeed the value of their currency in terms of its intrinsic value, as a reward for their endeavours. In recent times the Government has recognised that there needs to be a standard by which to compare or establish the value of particular qualifications. Even such an attempt, as exemplified by the Labour Government's publication "*English National Framework for Recognising Achievement, 2004*" has certain flaws. A brief explanation and discussion of this document is presented in Fig.3. However it must be noted that it appears to this researcher that the designers of this framework have fallen into the same trap as others and through comparisons perpetuate the same mythology that it is attempting to avoid or prevent. This example is used as it coincides with the end of the time frame of this study and it also illustrates the difficulty of attempting to quantify the worth of qualifications. The use of NVQ in the example is not an acknowledgement that they are examples of PVE they are simply the qualifications cited by the report compilers.

The confusion and lack of clarity about the value and worth of particular qualifications may force the likes of admissions officials in the Further and Higher Education institutions or personnel officials in industry to revert to type. In other words they will embrace or acknowledge that which they have personally experienced, using the "A" Level as the gold standard with the supporting GCSE examination. (This idea will resurface when the case study of schools and industry is undertaken in the penultimate chapter of this study.)



Fig.3 (DfES: 2004)

THE ENGLISH NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT.

8	HIGHER LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS		LEVEL 5
7			NVQ
-----			-----
6			LEVEL 4
5			NVQ
4			
-----			-----
3	A LEVEL	VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	LEVEL 3 NVQ
-----			-----
2	GCSE A* - C	VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	LEVEL 2 NVQ
-----			-----
1	GCSE D – G	VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	LEVEL 1 NVQ
-----			-----
ENTRY LEVEL	CERTIFICATES OF EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT		
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The example offered above gives rise to some concerns: The insistence on equating the vocational qualification to an academic counterpart immediately recognises the pre-eminence of the academic qualification. In addition the range of grades available to the academic student undermines the broad nature of each of the NVQs, parents, industrialists etc are going to give more credibility to an A\* for example than they would a NVQ Level 2.



Providing a definition of PVE would also help to address the following objectives of this study.

- Raising the awareness of the existence of the generic nature of PVE.
- Highlighting the relevance of PVE to secondary school education.
- Providing evidence of the longevity of PVE.

Much of the misunderstanding over the role of PVE stems from the association with vocational education and training. On occasion the academics and professionals who have written on the topic since 1976 have not helped to clarify the situation regarding creating an understanding or definition of PVE. The following are examples of those who have shown some confusion in their understanding of the differences between pre-vocational and vocational education. In some respects one of the most recognisable culprits is Michael Tomlinson. As will be seen a little later, Tomlinson appears to become confused about the distinction between pre-vocational and vocational education. For example he talks about wanting a provision of “*academic and vocational domains*” (Tomlinson: 2004, 6) when what he is actually referring to is academic education and PVE. Similarly the likes of Higginbotham (1976) and Triggs (1989) have also shown some misunderstanding. For example Eric Triggs, a former secondary school teacher who moved on to be a Researcher in Business and Service Training at Thames Polytechnic, has not helped the situation at all by insisting that “*Pre-vocationalism is a comparatively recent arrival on the curriculum scene.*” (Triggs: 1989, 46) What such writers have tended to do is to contribute some explanation as to what PVE provisions include and/or as to what PVE is not about. Presenting, accepting, disregarding or amending some of these points makes it easier to produce an all encompassing definition of PVE. Although it appears to be a relatively straight forward task the fact that an agreed definition of PVE has not entered the academic lexicon means that many journals, texts, etc have been consulted to seek out and create a definition.



It is important at this stage to note that the phrases *pre-vocational education*, *vocationalism* and *vocational education* have become more widely used since 1976, although, as previously highlighted, not necessarily always in the correct context. Tomlinson (2004) meant pre-vocational when talking on several occasions about “*vocational education*.” John Major talked about “*technical education*” (Major: 2000, 396) when he actually refers to PVE. After reading his work it could be argued that Ian Jamieson, Professor of Education, University of Bath, actually means pre-vocationalism when he considered that “*Vocationalism is not a new phenomenon in the education system of Britain*.” (Jamieson: 1990, 14) There are other examples scattered throughout this study.

Geoff Hayward (2004), a recognised authority on vocational education and training from the University of Oxford, acknowledged in an article reproduced on the internet that, “*Vocationalism is a poorly defined and rather vague term*” and then rather misleadingly continues on to say that “*developments are typically traced to the Ruskin College speech*” ([http://www.bwpat.de/7eu/hayward\\_uk\\_bwpat7.shtml](http://www.bwpat.de/7eu/hayward_uk_bwpat7.shtml).)

In July 1977 Shirley Williams, the Secretary of State for Education, proposed a Green Paper entitled, “*Education In Schools- A Consultative Document*.” (Cmnd 6869) This was published after apparently considering the information gathered from the eight regional conferences which followed Callaghan’s Ruskin speech. According to Callaghan’s official papers however this was done at his behest. On the 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1976, two days after the speech Callaghan’s papers note that “*I wrote to Shirley suggesting she should publish (before Xmas) a White or Green Paper for discussion ...*” Significantly an undated note questions the effectiveness of the final Green Paper “*because everyone wanted his own special interests accommodated*.” The Green Paper was introduced by outlining that which is perceived to be the purpose of education. This introduction can be used as both a contribution to the earlier



discussion concerning the nature of education and as an example of the lack of clarity from official sources as to the nature of PVE. Included in the eight aims of the Green Paper were certain intentions.

[To] *help children learn how the nation earns and maintains its standard of living ... role of industry and commerce.*

[To] *provide ... the essential skills needed in the fast changing world of work.*

The idea of Callaghan instigating a Green Paper may at first appear to contradict an idea of this study that Callaghan's apparent interest in education was motivated by political expediency. However his claim that it was always his intention to "*begin a debate about existing educational trends*" (Callaghan: 1987, 410) sits comfortably with this idea as Callaghan had no choice but to appear to follow up his speech. Both Donoghue (1987) and Hennessy (2000) suggest that it was political motives rather than personal beliefs that fuelled Callaghan's Ruskin speech and subsequent actions.

Particularly relevant to the search for a definition is the emphasis given by both Callaghan and Tomlinson to the role of skill or more accurately those skills to be acquired by a school pupil. Unfortunately the vagueness of Callaghan's comments has not helped to define PVE or, indeed, to clarify the distinction between pre-vocational and vocational education.

Callaghan talked about the "*essential tools*," a phrase echoed in Williams' Green Paper (DES: 1977) published one year later. Many years later Tomlinson refers to CKSA, the "*common knowledge, skills and attitude*." (Tomlinson: 2004, 7) In his report Tomlinson seems to acknowledge that there is a difference between pre-vocational and vocational education without appearing to understand fully the actual difference. He talks about "*better vocational programmes ... to combine with core learning (including basic and employability skills) with a specialised vocational curriculum*." (Ibid, 5)



Neither Callaghan, Williams or Tomlinson, attempted to define what they understood by the expressions they were using. To be fair Tomlinson does list some of the areas that may be covered in his CKSA. Callaghan's *essential tools* is really an example of a call for generic skills, or abilities that can be taken by an employee from one job or task to another.

Tomlinson further observes that his CKSA "*would not be formally assessed but their development should be attested and recorded in the transcript.*" (Ibid, 7.) The commitment of recording the attainment of an individual is one that is always undertaken by PVE practitioners. However it is not to be included in the definition of PVE as it is not unreasonable to assume that every aspect of education should involve a form of assessment. Historically PVE practitioners have been at the forefront of developments in the logistics or practicalities of undertaking the assessment process. (Hitchcock: 1988) This has included developing the language to be used and the mechanics of recording the ongoing or continuous assessment of individual students.

Perhaps the most important point for this study to emphasise is that PVE is not about the acquisition of particular skills. Therefore,

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PVE is not: -

1) *The acquisition of skill.*

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Professor Pring, University of Oxford, attempts to point out some of the difficulties in attaching too much emphasis on the development of skill during the training process. This aspect of his argument is both relevant and of some validity. Pring's thoughts are worthy of consideration by those interested in furthering their understanding of the concept of skill. Unfortunately this area is so vast a topic that it is not one that should be considered for any lengthy analysis within this study. Rather surprisingly it appears to this reader that Pring is



not fully aware of how vast a topic it is. His argument appears to be a little contradictory, thus highlighting the reason why the acquisition of skill cannot be used within a definition for PVE. His attempt to illustrate the nature of “*communication*” as a skill of “*vocational relevance*” (Pring: 2004, 114) just adds to the confusion. In his attempt to illustrate further the problem of defining skill or suggesting the essential skills to be acquired by a prospective employee Pring raises two points in relation to enterprise as an example of an essential skill. He correctly points out that “*it is difficult to see how enterprise is a skill rather than an attitude or a personality trait.*” (Ibid, 115) Unfortunately he misses the point completely.

[It] would be questionable to assume that such a trait would be picked up simply through work experience or under the guidance of enterprise advisers who presumably are engaged in such activities because they have failed to be enterprising in the world of work. (Ibid, 115)

Pring fails to recognise that pre-employment courses are not solely about the acquisition of a particular skill but are more about knowing how to seek advice and guidance and indeed when to seek such advice. Throughout the several years of his career Pring would no doubt have learnt when and where to go to seek information or to acquire a skill/experience that have enabled him to reach his present position. In the academic world in which Pring functions this sort of activity is positively encouraged and does not reflect his inability to do a job. This observation allows for a consideration about what PVE may include. Therefore,

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PVE includes: -

1) *Knowing how to seek solutions.*

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Furthermore Pring’s suggestion that enterprise advisers must be failed entrepreneurs should be considered a little churlish and does not reflect the standards of intellectual argument normally associated with such an august institute of education and learning. In addition, Pring’s assertion that young people should be given a “*moral sense of purpose,*” (Ibid, 115)



is not one supported by Government policy or by the grass roots of the teaching profession. However there are some redeeming aspects to Pring's work such as his acknowledgment of the need to bridge the academic/vocational divide and that to focus on skill merely "*traps ... into a limited language.*" (Ibid, 115) those that would like to advance the cause of pre-vocational or vocational education. Pring has been consistent in his argument as he had noted earlier that there had been a need to "*build a bridge between the academic and vocational and bring some order to the mess.*" (Pring: 1993, 97)

Some further support for the idea that PVE is concerned with knowing how to seek solutions can be taken from the work of the previously cited Ian Jamieson. When talking about the work related curriculum he suggests that one of the purposes of PVE is for an individual to establish "*the ability independently to acquire new knowledge and skills so that learning how to learn becomes increasingly important.*" (Jamieson: 1993, 51) This view is the closest to be found to the definition of PVE presented in this study. The new dimensions of "*independent learning*" and "*learning how to learn*" are very closely connected to the actual definition of PVE presented earlier. What makes these elements particularly relevant is their relationship to that which in presenting her Green Paper in 1977 the Education Secretary, Shirley Williams, had referred to as the "*fast changing world of work.*" As an example, in an era where new computer programmes or technologies appear to be an almost daily occurrence, the ability to know where to go to find a solution to using this new technology is very important.

Interestingly Jamieson's view in 1993 appears to differ subtly from the one he offered three years earlier when he suggested that PVE dating from the latter part of the 1970s "*is education which prepares the basis for a more specific occupational education and training.*" (Jamieson: 1990, 16) The reference in 1990 to "*specific occupational education*"



was replaced in 1993 by a more general overtone suggesting a change in understanding.

Jamieson appears to be recognising that PVE is about preparation for any profession.

However this observation cannot be considered for inclusion in the definition of PVE as in reality all schooling is concerned with preparation for later life.

The previously cited Headmaster Ron Fell is quite adamant that PVE “*is not a package of curriculum.*” (Fell: 1986, 40)

Hayward & Fernandez whilst lecturing in education at the University of Oxford do attempt to define some elements of PVE. However they fall into a familiar trap. Initially they recognise the importance of a prospective employee having the “*skills, disposition and abilities*” (Hayward & Fernandez: 2004, 119) to do a particular job. Unfortunately their work is then hijacked by a discussion on generic skills and a “*modern competitive economy.*” (Ibid, 118) To their credit they do recognise that these discussions pre-date Callaghan’s intervention in 1976. They make an observation about the relationship between the two.

[Between] *education and the economy is usually traced in English policy discourse to ... Ruskin College speech. The debate about the relationship between school and the work-place is, however, much older than this ...* (Ibid, 118)

Whilst they argue that there is a “*demand for generic skills in the work place*” (Ibid, 123) and that the “*saliency and importance of these skills is valued by both the employees and employers*” (Ibid, 123) they actually only produce evidence of such an assertion from the employer’s prospective, which obviously slants the nature of the responses. Fig.4 is a compilation of the responses they received.

Actual or prospective employees were not asked the questions which is significant, especially as they note those employers were “*unwilling to pay for the development of generic skills resulting in the state looking increasingly to the public education system.*” (Ibid, 123) The



reproduction of their findings does serve to illustrate both what some consider to be the generic skills and also the nature of some of the areas of concern addressed by PVE.

The points raised in Fig.4 are of particular relevance in that earlier in this study it was decided that PVE is about knowing where to go to seek solutions to problems. Therefore,

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PVE is not: -

- 2) *A curriculum package.*
  - 3) *The labelling or quantifying of generic skills.*
- 

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Fig.4 (Hayward & Fernandez: 2004, 119)

*Generic skills sought in connection with skill shortage vacancies in four occupational categories. (The figures are a percentage of companies with skill shortages who reported their need for a particular generic skill.)*

	Managers/ Senior Officials	Administration/ Secretarial	Personal Services	Sales & Customer Services
Basic Computing	23	23	2	4
Communication	16	17	33	35
Customer Handling	36	44	41	38
Team Working	41	7	32	23
Problem Solving	38	23	7	5
Management Skills	27	8	5	18
Numeracy	31	13	28	18
Literacy	9	27	4	16

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Hayward & Fernandez propose an “*impressive looking list of core content that should be taught or experienced.*” (Ibid, 123) which is a particularly valid consideration. The notion of experience being an important element of education is a valid additional contribution to the earlier discussion on the nature of *education*. Therefore,

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PVE includes: -

2) *Experience.*

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It is possible to acquire general experience without necessarily identifying a specific experience. For example Hayward & Fernandez identify “Team Working” (Fig.4) as a consideration but do not stipulate the many facets that may be involved. Working in pairs, larger groups, the different roles played by individual members of a working party or a committee (Peters & Waterman: 1982) are considerations that have not been exemplified by Hayward & Fernandez. There are too many specific experiences or scenarios for a list to be identified. What is important is that during the assessment of the student those specific experiences or scenarios that have been encountered are identified and a note made.

Their observations that the list of core content has been “*informed by broadly liberal thinking*” (Ibid, 123) and that the courses are applicable generally for the “*vocationally and academically uncommitted*” (Ibid, 123) are the sort of comments that have perpetuated the low esteem or value placed on PVE.

The problem of identifying and quantifying generic skills is further illustrated by the inclusion of the data published by the Manpower Service Commission (MSC) in their “*Young People and Work Report*” (1977) The report, more commonly known as the Holland Report is reproduced in Fig.5. It show the percentage of responding firms/companies who considered a particular attribute/skill/qualification as being vital for prospective employees to



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Fig.5 (“Holland Report” as found in Moore: 1989, 210)

Percentage of employers requiring a particular attribute from a prospective employee.

- willingness/attitude to work	81%
- good level of general fitness	47
- appearance/tidiness	39
- specific physical attributes	36
- basic 3R's	21
- maturity/stability	20
- ability to communicate	18
- willingness to join a union	16
- good level of numeracy	13
- past experience	7
- good written English/literacy	6
- existing union membership	4
- specific educational qualifications	2

(The distinction between Basic 3Rs and Numeracy and Literacy is not made clear.)

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possess. Once again it must be noted the data was only collected from employers and considers the attributes thought essential for a prospective employee to have. And, once again, there is no reference to how each attribute (or generic skill) was identified or indeed what exactly some of the titles mean. The information is significant in that it was compiled so close to the events at Ruskin. It is possible to compare the nature of some of the points that are included in the report with the data collated by Hayward & Fernandez and to the suggestions made by Tomlinson and indeed the findings of this study.

Would a direct comparison between the data published by Hayward & Fernandez and that of the MSC and the comments made by Tomlinson help to provide further information as to that which constitutes PVE and that which is not? The first observation is that a direct comparison between the MSC and Hayward & Fernandez is made a little difficult by the fact that the MSC's Holland Report does not differentiate or identify the nature of the employers



that responded to the survey. Hayward & Fernandez identify four different types or sectors of employers. The differentiation or identification of the different types of employer is significant as there is, in many instances, a large variation in the demands from particular types of employers for the different types of generic skills. After all this was one of the purposes of the survey. For example there is some considerable variation in the need for *Basic Computing* between the Managerial/Senior Officials sector and the Administration/Secretarial type employers with those of the Personal and Sales/Customer Services. It may also be argued that the generic skills of Hayward & Fernandez are far more specific than the generalisations of the Holland Report. Nevertheless Fig.6 is presented as this researcher's suggestion as to the components of the two reports under consideration which fulfil the demands of the definition presented in this study. An examination of the two charts (Fig.6) illustrates further how the categories that they have created are not necessarily concerned with a quantifiable skill. Indeed it may be argued that the majority of the areas or categories may be grouped under a title of Attitude. There are obvious problems with making such an assertion, such as, how is attitude measured or reported upon? Nevertheless this researcher accepts that considering the particular components as examples of attitude is appropriate. There are arguments to be made to suggest that each of the following (Fig.6) from the charts may come under the title of Attitude.

For a possible number of reasons (Chitty: 1988, Kirk: 1989, Batteson: 1997 & Farley & Phillips: 2001) ever since the publication of the MSC report in 1977 there has been a raft of initiatives or programmes of study, such as the *Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education*, *Diploma of Vocational Education* (Appendix 5) and various BTEC courses which required the use of criterion referencing. Examples of this criterion referencing (Appendix 1) or a student's attainment being measured against specific learning objectives can be found in the modern NVQ provisions. (Jessup: 1991) (See also 3.6 and 3.7)



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Fig.6 (A comparison of the findings of the Holland Report and the research of Hayward & Fernandez with regards “attitude.”)

<u>MSC, Holland Report</u>	willingness/attitude to work, good level of general fitness, appearance/tidiness, specific physical attributes, maturity/stability, ability to communicate, past experience, willingness to join or existing union membership.
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*These represent a substantial nine of the thirteen identified areas.*

<u>Hayward &amp; Fernandez</u>	communication, customer handling, team working, problem solving
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*These represent a substantial five of the eight identified areas.*

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However this study has already suggested that PVE is not about the acquisition of specific skills. For example it is very difficult to quantify *maturity* or *attitude to work*. Also as recently illustrated Hayward & Fernandez do not qualify the depth or extent of *Team Working* or neither do they quantify *Problem Solving*. These points allow for a suggestion about specific skills to be made. Therefore,

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PVE is not: -

*4) The acquisition of specific experiences.*

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As stated previously neither the MSC report nor the list published by Hayward & Fernandez place much significance on the acquisition of specific educational qualifications. This observation offers one explanation as to why professionals have failed to produce a definition of PVE. There is something more tangible about having a fixed grade for a particular subject e.g. a 2:1 degree or a grade A in GCSE. The acquisition of a specific grade is not available to a PVE student as it is not a subject or curriculum package. In fact there is a sense of



intangibility attributed to PVE that has tarnished the image of the provision. However both the MSC and Hayward & Fernandez address *Communication* and *Literacy*, albeit the highest value is only 35%. This suggests a limited regard for the need for a specific qualification in these areas. Therefore,

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PVE is not: -

5) *The obtaining of specific educational qualifications.*

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The types of expressions used and the sentiments expressed by the MSC and Hayward & Fernandez resonates throughout the Tomlinson Report (2004). This observation lends more support to an assertion of this study about the evolutionary nature of education and the unoriginality of the content of Callaghan's speech. Further examples can be found in Fig.7. The content serves to show that there are other documents/reports that contain the subject matter considered by the MSC and Hayward & Fernandez and indeed address issues raised by Callaghan. Fig.7b is an attempt by this researcher to extend the exercise across a larger range of important reports etc. Later sections of this study will pay more regard and develop the list of issues which are identified as recurring throughout the history of secondary education and therefore can be used to help substantiate some of the assertions of this study.

As mentioned previously *communications* is highlighted in all of the recently mentioned documents/reports. In fact all education provisions since 1976 claiming to be PVE in essence (e.g. *CPVE*, *DoVE*) have included a reference to communication. As stated earlier an example of such a provision (*CGLI 365 Vocational Preparation*) which used communication as one of the assessment criteria can be found in Appendix 1. It is also an example of the range of different types of assessment criteria from an actual provision used in secondary schools during the early part of the 1980s. The criteria are also quite prescriptive. The Tomlinson Report (2004), to a certain extent, has completed the circle and has become very



prescriptive with regard to what should be included in the topic of communication. Despite Tomlinson's attempt to be more prescriptive there still remains the problem of what is actually meant by the expression *communication* as any discussion involving or using the different forms of written, verbal and visual communication would illustrate.

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Fig.7 (Education Acts/Reports and their regard to the recurring issues as proposed by Marshall: 1990.)

*Education (Foster) Act, 1870.*

This act required "*the elementary schools ... to ... instil ... certain traits necessary for entrepreneurial success*" (Marshall: 1990, 220)

*Education (Fisher) Act, 1918.*

She suggests that at the time of the act "*the utilitarian view of education in the nineteenth century appears to have waned*" (Ibid, 221)

*Hadow Report, 1926.*

Which Marshall argues was meant to enhance the economic performance of the country. (Ibid, 221)

*Education (Butler) Act, 1944.*

Marshall simply notes, she does not offer any opinion on her observation that the act "*signalled the acceptance of the belief that young people should be stratified into streams or schools appropriate to prepare them for their future roles*" (Ibid, 222)

*(Tomlinson Report, 2004. Added by this researcher.*

Which will be considered in greater detail later in the study.)

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Fig.7b (A development of Fig.7 as proposed by this study.)

Some of the recurring issues which have been identified and listed. Following the listing the recurring issues, as listed 1) to 4) are then attributed to each noticeable report or Act.

- 1) Relations between schools and industry.
- 2) Education for all.
- 3) Public concerns.
- 4) Inspections and/or assessments.



*TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889*

(Related aspects of the curriculum to the demands of industry.)

*SAMUELSON REPORTS, 1890s*

(Linked education to the economy.)

*EDUCATION ACT, 1902*

(Gave powers for the new LEA's and the development of technical schools.)

*EDUCATION ACT, 1918*

(Addressed teachers, the curriculum and industry.)

*HADOW REPORT, 1926*

(Considered the relevance of the curriculum.)

*SPENS REPORT, 1936*

(Concerned Technical schools and the raising of the school leaving age.)

*NORWOOD REPORT, 1943*

(Considered different types of learners/education.)

*EDUCATION ACT, 1944*

(Provided for the development of technical schools and tripartite education.)

*EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING ACT, 1948*

(Established National Youth Employment Council.)

*CROWTHER REPORT, 1959*

(Considered a more "practical" curriculum and the economics of raising the school leaving age)

*INDUSTRIAL TRAINING WHITE PAPER, 1962 and ACT, 1964*

(Concerned industrial training and schooling.)

*NEWSOM REPORT, 1963*

(Considered the occupational relevance of the school curriculum)

*RUSKIN SPEECH, 1976*

(Considered several of the recurring educational issues.)

*MANSELL REPORT, 1979*

(Considered vocational education and used the phrase "*pre-vocational studies*.)



The date of the report or Act and the recurring themes which can be identified in each are:

1889	1 & 3
1890s	1 & 3
1902	1, 2 & 3
1918	1, 2, 3 & 4
1926	1, 2, 3 & 4
1936	1, 2 & 3
1943	1 & 2
1944	1, 2, 3 & 4
1948	1, 2, & 3
1959	1, 2 & 3
1962/4	1, 2 & 3
1963	1 & 3
1979	1, 2, 3 & 4
Ruskin Speech	1, 2, 3 & 4
(Tomlinson Report)	1, 2, 3 & 4)

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After considering the content of Figs.6, 7 & 7b it is possible to make a further claim.

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PVE includes: -

3) *An acknowledgement of the importance of attitude.*

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Every provision claiming to be pre-vocational or vocational, including the most recent examples of GNVQs and NVQs, have all included an element of communication and it cannot therefore be considered to be something particularly unique to PVE. It could be argued that the essence of all forms of education and teaching is communication. However this forum does not provide the time to pursue this controversial debate. Therefore,

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PVE is not: -

6) *An assessment of communication.*

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The previously cited secondary school Headteacher, Ron Fell (1986), may not agree with the



opinions of Madeleine J. Atkins from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. She talks about a pre-vocational curriculum, course and/or scheme. It has already been noted by Ron Fell, and accepted in this process of defining PVE, that PVE is not a curriculum package. This acceptance may undermine the assertions of Atkins. In addition her lack of understanding of PVE is demonstrated in her observation that *“there are differences of emphasis between the various schemes and courses.”* (Atkins: 1986, 45) She also has several misplaced assumptions about the potential market for PVE. This reader also contends that she fails to realise that there is to a certain extent a paradox as there is no such entity as a pre-vocational curriculum whilst at the same time she fails to acknowledge that the whole of schooling is pre-vocational! She is keen to subject PVE to an academic analysis or scrutiny in order to find a conventional label to place on the provision or a box in which to place the topic of PVE. The purpose for this may be to allow fellow academics the opportunity to make decisions about the context and value of PVE. In doing this she does attempt to present a balanced discussion, albeit without offering a definition of PVE. At the same time she makes certain assertions, assumptions and contradictions such as considering post 16 F.E. provisions to be fundamentally pre-vocational in nature and therefore only worthy of undertaking by the working class. She also mistakenly offers a list of the subjects to be found in PVE. Some allowance could be made for the fact that she was composing her thoughts in the early years of the modern era of PVE. In addition she does appear to be arguing in favour of PVE. Unfortunately she attempts to offer an intellectual rationale or justification in discussions about functionalism and demographics. In juxtaposing PVE with functionalism she is inviting an immediate association between PVE and the less able pupils. This is compounded by her insistence on associating PVE with primarily the children of the working class. Neither association will help raise the value or esteem placed on PVE. However it does mean that further additions can be made concerning a definition of PVE. Therefore,



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PVE is not: -

- 7) *A functionalist approach to education.*
  - 8) *A provision solely for working class pupils.*
- 

Atkins does introduce the notion of the need for an integrated curriculum within secondary schools. Whilst there are difficulties in using the term curriculum some thought must be given to the notion of integration. If it is accepted that PVE is not a discrete entity then it can be more readily accepted that PVE can exist without it being necessarily identifiable. Whilst some ingredients in a casserole cannot be seen they can however be identified as soon as they are tasted. To some extent PVE cannot be pointed at or identified but it can be tasted as soon as it is experienced. This understanding allows for a further suggestion to be made as to the list of aspects to be included in the definition of PVE. Therefore,

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PVE includes: -

- 4) *A total integration into the school curriculum.*
- 

Like Atkins others have discussed the notion that the English social division/class system is the basis or reasoning behind some students being forced into vocational education. Once again there are many writers on the subject of the English class system and its influence on the history of education. For an interpretation or analysis of this issue then the works of Andy Green (1990) at the Institute of Education in the University of London, the polymath Brian Simon (1991), the previously cited Gary McCulloch (1998), Institute of Education, University of London and the previously cited Ruth Watts (2005), University of Birmingham must be considered. It is not the purpose of this piece to engage in a discussion on the class system but it is important to point out that those involved in the delivery of PVE would accept and encourage meritocracy and the recognition of an individual's personal endeavours



above any perceptions regarding social divisions. For this to happen all students should have a wide field of choice or curriculum options offered by their own school. Pathways should not be barred to students because of the perception of others as to the value of particular entities for particular students, the most common example being the reluctance to allow the “academic” pupil to follow “vocational” provisions. Some support for this view can be taken from Gary McCulloch.

*[Secondary] education in England and Wales has systematically failed the ordinary child ... most children have emerged into adult life branded as failure from its processes of classification and grading. (McCulloch: 1998, pi)*

Although perhaps a little emotive, McCulloch’s view illustrates the value of a genuine meritocracy. Unfortunately, issues concerning the practicalities of assessment and ensuring that students’ efforts and not social division are rewarded are, it appears, intentionally avoided by McCulloch.

The title of Stephanie Marshall’s (1990) article may raise the hopes of those interested in seeking a definition of PVE. Her piece, “*The Genesis and Evolution of PVE in England,*” is quite thorough in listing many of the relevant reports and acts that have influenced the developments within PVE. Fig.7 contains examples of what she correctly highlights as reports etc. of some significance for developments within PVE. The list in Fig.7 and the fact that she mentions PVE specifically in her title make the reality of her work disappointing. Her listing of the relevant reports etc. appears to be something of a coincidence as the title of PVE is one that she gives to her notion of the utilitarian curriculum, a not dissimilar idea from that of Atkins’ functionalism. Both approaches consider the usefulness of PVE as a means to particular ends. Atkins considers adapting the curriculum to the perceived needs of the working class whilst Marshall considers the perceived needs of a particular vocational area. Marshall fails to define PVE and fails to distinguish between her understanding of a



utilitarian curriculum and the specific demands of a curriculum containing elements of PVE. Furthermore she fails to acknowledge that PVE is not necessarily a means of delivering a more utilitarian curriculum. Marshall's approach does allow her to plot how PVE has become the apparent solution to the economic problems of the U.K. This point is to be pursued in more detail at a later stage. Unfortunately her work, like Atkins', assumes an association between PVE, the working class and manual work.

This study does not consider either ideology as being an integral aspect of the definition of PVE. Interestingly Marshall does not present any case for attempting to challenge the perception of that with which PVE has become associated. This study refutes the claims of Marshall and Atkins that PVE is merely a device for those wanting to deliver a more utilitarian or functionalist approach to a secondary curriculum for working class students. The refutation means that another step can be made towards defining PVE. Therefore,

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PVE is not: -

- 1) *The acquisition of skill.*
  - 2) *A curriculum package.*
  - 3) *The labelling or quantifying of generic skills.*
  - 4) *The acquisition of specific experience.*
  - 5) *The obtaining of specific educational qualifications.*
  - 6) *An assessment of communication.*
  - 7) *A functionalist approach to education.*
  - 8) *A provision solely for the working class pupils.*
  - 9) *A means of delivering a utilitarian curriculum.*
- 

The cases of Atkins and Marshall highlight the idea that PVE is concerned with the process of education and not necessarily about what is taught or the acquisition of specific subject based qualifications. This is a very important point that they have apparently inadvertently discovered and which this study will be forced to return later in this chapter. Understandably both Atkins and Marshall become a little preoccupied with their own arguments. However



their work does suggest there is a good case to be made that PVE is more of a process than a final outcome. Unfortunately this notion is alien to the demands of politicians who want a quick fix to economic and social problems such as unemployment. Politicians talk about the number of students achieving qualifications in plumbing or mathematics for example and not about the process that each student has been through. This is one of the reasons for the Governments of the past encouraging the development of PVE. However, this study asserts that they have failed to realise that the process that the student goes through is as important as the tangibles they collect at the end of their schooling. Therefore,

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PVE includes: -

- 1) *Knowing how to seek solutions.*
  - 2) *Experience.*
  - 3) *An acknowledgement of the importance of attitude.*
  - 4) *A total integration into the school curriculum.*
  - 5) *An awareness of the process of education.*
- 

The final point to clarify is the distinction between PVE and vocational education. As mentioned previously, one of the problems with more people apparently contributing to the Great Debate called for at Ruskin or ignoring the signs to “*keep off the grass*,” (Callaghan: 1976) is the increase in the confusion with regard to an understanding of the distinction between PVE and vocational education. No doubt some may consider the distinction to be one of semantics. However this is an excellent example of how the broadening of the debate on education may well have been at the expense of the quality of the debate. As already mentioned the preparation of individuals for post school life went on before Ruskin and has continued on ever since and will continue in the future. Even the academic tradition contains an element of post schooling preparation. (Pring: 1995) It is even more important today, when people may be required to change jobs and careers quite frequently, to have the abilities /skills/knowledge/experience that can be taken from one job to another.



This is the notion that the previously cited Tim Horton and Peter Roggatt, lecturers and authors with the Open University, inadvertently hinted at when they talked about the “*deliberate cultivation*” (Horton & Roggatt: 1982, 12) of individuals in order to “*face up to the problems of practical life*” (Ibid, 12) and individuals not just being prepared for one type of job or profession. This in turn is similar to the utilitarianism and functionalism espoused by Atkins and Marshall. These points must be considered in light of those aspects already identified here as not viable for inclusion in a definition of PVE.

This author considers that the notion of a job being for life is quickly disappearing if indeed it is not already extinct. Anecdotal evidence suggests that even those individuals who are considered to be in the professional divisions may well change the types of job they do. Many teachers for example are leaving the profession becoming librarians, bank managers, plumbers, electricians and so on. Although PVE is not about the acquisition of skill there is still some worth to be attached to the process of acquiring a particular skill that can be used in a range of professions. This notion is very different from the ethos governing the delivery of vocational initiatives which are very much target focused and require the acquisition of a particular skill. Vocational initiatives do not necessarily consider the process involved in the acquisition of a particular skill.

Skilbeck et al attempt to define some important terms. Unfortunately their definition does not address PVE specifically. An understanding of the major flaws of their work means that the lack of a specific definition of PVE comes as no surprise. For example they do not provide evidence for a number of their major claims. Familiar to this study is the fact that the following assertion is not supported by facts and figures.

*For reasons that are primarily economic, the years since the early 1970s have witnessed a major resurgence of interest in the vocational role of education and training ... (Skilbeck et al: 1994, 1)*



Their expression “*resurgence of interest*” makes no reference to when the original interest was shown or any other periods of such interest. Their observation that “*a distinctive movement of ideas, policies and practice ... emerged during the last quarter of the [20th] century*” (Ibid, 2) contradicts their earlier observations. The following observation about the period 1970 – 2000 reflects more about the positions of responsibility that they hold than the reality of the “chalk face” or the classroom.

*Much has been achieved, as a result of immense effort during a period of change unparalleled for the scale and intensity of commitment to reform of vocational education and training.* (Ibid, 3)

Skilbeck was writing as the Deputy Director responsible for education and training at the OECD in Paris. Whilst Nicholas Lowe was a Policy Analyst with the Westminster City Council. Some credit must be given for their efforts to distinguish between education, vocational education and training. However the vagueness of the following explanation of vocational does not help to clarify the situation as regards PVE.

*... educational function and process which purports to prepare and equip individuals and groups for working life whether or not in the form of paid employment ...* (Ibid, 3)

Even more unforgivable is the missed opportunity that they created to offer a definition of PVE when they made certain observations.

*[Training] for a specific occupation or even cluster of occupations is being supplanted by strategies for “generalisable” skills or general transferable education* (Ibid, 15)

Nevertheless there is an important recognition of the general nature of PVE. The effect of the recognition of PVE by individuals of influence or Government departments is pursued in the conclusion of this study.

The first official document to use the phrase *Pre-Vocational Education* was the Government



document “*Better Schools*” in 1985, although the Mansell Report in 1979 had talked about “*pre-vocational studies*.” This was followed by the first initiative to carry the specific title of PVE which was launched nationally in 1985. According to Gloria Hitchcock (1988), former Head of Careers in a large comprehensive and now attached to the University of Bristol delivering in-service training to teachers, the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education was directly attributable to the Great Debate. This assertion lacks a little credibility as one of the reasons offered for the relatively short life of the CPVE, which was a one year post sixteen provision, was the fact that it lost its battle with the MSC who were trumpeting their Technical & Vocational Educational Initiative. The TVEI initiative was aimed basically at the same institutions as the CPVE. The FEU, the organisers of the CPVE, rather interestingly made suggestions about the potential capabilities of CPVE including the idea that it would meet the “*needs of young people from a wide ability range, with varied interests and with varying degrees of vocational commitment*.” (FEU: 1985, 47)

The TVEI undertaking came with the support of a huge financial investment from the Government and, perhaps more importantly, with the support of Prime Minister Thatcher. The result was that the CPVE was effectively drowned. Perhaps a little understandable was the reluctance at the time shown by external validating bodies to commit to the CPVE. In the opinion of this author it was becoming very much the norm for there to be “politics” at play, in this instance Thatcher being very keen on the TVEI. This consideration will be revisited.

Hitchcock quotes the framework for the CPVE. Included in the framework are aims that are already familiar to this study. Hitchcock quotes the framework and notes the anticipated role of CPVE.

[Was to] *assist the transition from school to adulthood by further equipping young people with the basic skills, experiences, attitudes, knowledge ... required for ... adult working life.* (Hitchcock: 1988, 45)



Once again this contains an array of vague expressions that are open to a wide number of interpretations. The framework is very similar in wording to Tomlinson's *CSKA*. Once again whilst trying not to steal the thunder of later sections of the work it is important to note that this researcher considers that within the secondary school sector vocational education has been foisted onto particular groups of students at an early age. It will be interesting to view the Government's response to the Tomlinson Report. It will also be interesting to see if the teaching profession accepts that any substantial change to the secondary school system would have to include changes in their attitude.

The idea of a skill or ability that can be taken from one job to another is in contrast to vocational education which is concerned with the skills and knowledge which are applicable to a specific employment or profession or indeed, Hodder & Roggatts' "*scientific elite*." The skills of laying a brick or cutting hair are examples of vocationally specific skills.

With an understanding of that which should or should not be included in a definition of PVE then the following is restated as a definition. If the inclusion of the following definition creates some sort of reaction amongst academics or those involved in the delivery of such entities then that can only be a good thing. Developing a definition of PVE has helped this researcher to identify that which may be considered to be aspects of PVE and therefore develop arguments. Although particularly useful and indeed essential the creation of the ultimate definition has not been the main purpose of the exercise. To reiterate it is more desirable to provoke a reasoned debate on the appropriateness of the definition which would mean further engagement on the topic of PVE by a wider audience.

To return to the fictional scenario suggested earlier in the chapter. The definition dictates that either, both or neither of the subjects, Latin and Keyboarding should be a part of the options system available to all of the pupils in Year Nine. The definition (reproduced below) also



dictates that the specific content of each subject is, to a certain extent, irrelevant as PVE is about the experiences undertaken and the attitude which is expressed by the students. Both the attitude and experience are elements that should be geared towards enabling the participant, the student, to seek solutions to a problem. In theory therefore both Latin and Keyboarding would be able to promote Callaghan's "essential skills" if it is accepted that those skills are in fact the elements spoken about in the definition. Readers of the definition might argue that the definition makes no reference to the workplace or any aspect of employment. There is no need for this as this study argues that one of the purposes of the 14 – 16 school curriculum is preparation for post 16 education. Therefore a distinct subject such as Physics or Geography can address the issues of seeking solutions, adapting the correct attitude, gaining experience and so on. Therefore attention does not need to be drawn to the workplace.

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*PVE is an approach to the process of education that requires an acceptance, by its participants, of its integration into the curriculum. It provides situations where an individual's attitude and experiences are focused on achieving an understanding of how to seek solutions to problems.*

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Throughout this first chapter certain recurring themes and ideas have been mentioned. Sanderson, for example, has produced many words on the perceived relationship between standards in secondary school education and the nation's economic performance. In order to substantiate certain assertions of this study some time must be given to establishing and discussing these themes in greater detail. The next chapter is so dedicated.



## CHAPTER TWO     LOCATING THE RUSKIN SPEECH.

### 2.1     PVE, educational issues and the Ruskin speech

In order to substantiate further the main assertions of this study, it is necessary to travel backwards and forwards through historical events to seek out particular themes or issues. The issues to be sought out and ideas identified are the ones raised, identified and discussed in Callaghan's speech of the 18<sup>th</sup> Oct 1976 and also in his official papers. Identifying how these themes or issues were already well established and/or implemented prior to Callaghan's speech will show how the speech may not be considered as a catalyst for change or influence for development as some have suggested. (Graham: 1993) It will be possible to complete the time travel by comparing the contents of the Ruskin speech with the most recent of significant secondary education reports, that of Tomlinson (2004)

Maintained throughout this study is the assertion that Callaghan did not make any original comments or proposals on any aspect of secondary education. Historical precedents can be found for all of the themes or issues he raises in his speech. A further argument of this study is that PVE was not discovered, reignited or indeed first thought of as a result of Callaghan's intervention or prompt in 1976. However it must be noted that Callaghan made no claims about the originality of either the content or purpose of the speech. It has been commentators and authors who have made such claims. (Guardian: 2001a, 2001d & 2006) Indeed Callaghan asserts that his "*general guidance for the speech was that it should begin a debate about existing education trends.*" (Callaghan: 1987, 410) Although the Head of Callaghan's Policy Unit, Bernard Donoghue, proposes other motivations for the speech including the observation that "*I steered him [Callaghan] a bit towards education because I had four children going into the state system.*" (Guardian: 2001c) Donoghue also acknowledges that "*Economic problems dominated the time at Downing Street.*" (Donoghue: 1987, 3)



Interestingly Donoghue continues on to offer the insight that the Ruskin speech was a response to “*motives and objectives*” (Ibid, 113) other than those stated openly by Callaghan. It is possibly a task for another researcher to investigate the discrepancies between the recollections of Callaghan and Donoghue. Callaghan dismissed the inconsistencies with the simple observation that “*there are differences between what I saw as the truth and the recollections [Donoghue] and diaries [Crossman] of others.* (Callaghan: 1987, 19)

The purpose of the next two chapters is to provide further evidence for the assertions of this study regarding Callaghan’s potential motives for delivering the speech and the consequences of the speech. Where possible the City of Birmingham will be used to provide the evidence or help to establish the precedent. As stated previously Birmingham is the place where this researcher has spent most of his professional and private life. In addition it is acknowledged that the City of Birmingham has been to the fore in both industrial and education developments for well over a hundred years. (Grosvenor & Myers: 2006) There are also a number of reasonably accessible historical records pertaining to the City of Birmingham. Various components of these records are housed in the Central Library of Birmingham, University of Birmingham and the Council House archives. Travelling backwards and forwards through time will enable this researcher to illustrate certain points that I am keen to have aired and to further highlight the ten main recurring educational issues identified and discussed. Therefore the main considerations for this time travel is to illustrate:

- The spiral nature of developments within secondary education.
- The longevity of PVE.
- That the events of 18<sup>th</sup> October 1976 were not a catalyst for change.
- Callaghan had nothing original to say in his speech.

The above will be achieved when the ten recurring issues are highlighted. In order to do this then Callaghan’s speech must be reproduced and the main issues identified from within it. It will then be possible to troll through the records to find examples of the many instances



that these issues were raised prior to or after Callaghan's speech. The whole of the speech is reproduced to assist the reader to identify the context and nature of the issues raised.

To highlight these recurring themes the structure of this chapter will use specific historical examples. This will require movement backwards and forwards in time. The focal point around this time travel will be Callaghan's speech in 1976 with the journey being completed by Tomlinson (2004). (Appendix 6 contains a brief chronology.) To this end the themes or issues raised by Callaghan will be listed briefly. A reproduction of the speech follows with lines numbered in order to facilitate analysis.

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Fig.8 (Ruskin speech as reproduced in Callaghan: 1996)

*(1) I was very glad to accept your invitation to lay the foundation stone for a further extension of Ruskin College. Ruskin fills a gap as a "second chance" adult residential college. It has a special place in the affections of the Labour movement as an institution of learning because its students are mature men and women who, for a variety of reasons, missed the opportunity to develop their full potential at an earlier age. That aspect of the matter is a particular interest of my own.*

*(6) Ruskin has justified its existence over and over again. Your students form a proud gallery and I am glad to see here this afternoon some of your former students who now occupy important positions. They include leading academics, Heads of State of Commonwealth countries, leaders of the trade union movement and industrial life and Members of Parliament. Indeed, 11 of the present Labour Members of Parliament graduated from Ruskin and five of them are either in the Government or have served there, including one present member of the Cabinet, Eric Varley, the Secretary for Industry.*

*(12) Among the adult colleges, Ruskin has a long and honourable history of close association with the trade union movement. I am very glad to see that trade unions are so strongly represented here today because you are involved in providing special courses for trade union officials and I hope that this partnership will continue to flourish and prosper.*

*(16) The work of the trade union official becomes ever more onerous, because he has to master continuing new legislation on health and safety at work, employment protection and industrial change. This lays obligations on trade unionists which can only be met by a greatly expanded programme of education and understanding.*

*Higher standards than ever before are required in the trade union field and, as I shall indicate a little later, higher standards are also required in the general education field. It is not enough to say that standards in this field have or have not declined. With the increasing complexity of modern life we cannot be satisfied with maintaining existing standards, let alone observe any decline. We must aim for something better.*

*(23) I should like to pay tribute to Billy Hughes for his work at Ruskin and also for his wider contribution to education as Chairman of the Adult Literacy Resource Agency. This has been a strikingly successful campaign for which credit must go to a number of organisations, including the BBC. It is a commentary on the need that 55 000 students were receiving tuition this year with a steady flow of new students coming forward. Perhaps most remarkable has been that 40 000 voluntary teachers have come forward to work, often on an individual personal basis, with a single student. When I hear, as I do in some many different fields, of these generous responses to human need, I remain a confirmed optimist about our country. This is a most striking example of how the goodwill, energy and dedication of large numbers of private persons can be harnessed to the service of their fellows when the need and the opportunity are made plain.*



(32) *There have been one or two ripples of interest in the educational world in anticipation of this visit. I hope the publicity will do Ruskin some good and I don't think that it will do the world of education any harm. I must thank all those that have inundated me with advice: some helpful and others telling me less politely to keep off the grass, to watch my language, and that they will be examining my speech with the care usually given by Hong Kong watchers to the China scene. It is almost as though some people would wish that the subject matter and purpose of education should not have any public attention focused upon it; nor that profane hands should be allowed to touch it.*

(39) *I cannot believe that this is a considered reaction. The Labour movement has always cherished education: free education, comprehensive education, adult education. Education for life. There is nothing wrong with non-educationalists, even a Prime Minister, talking about it again. Everyone is allowed to put an oar in on to overcome our economic problems, how to put the balance of payments right, how to secure more exports and so on and so on. Very important too. But, I venture to say, not as important in the long run as preparing future generations for life. R. H. Tawney, from whom I derived a great deal of my thinking years ago, wrote that the endowment of our children is the most precious of the natural resources of the community. So I do not hesitate to discuss how those endowments should be nurtured.*

(47) *"Labour's Programme '76" has recently made its own important contribution and contains a number of important statements that I certainly agree with. Let me answer the question "what do we want from the education of our children and young people?" with Tawney's words once more. He said: "What a wise parent would wish for their children, so the State must wish for all its children."*

(51) *I take it that no one claims exclusive rights in this field. Public interest is strong and legitimate and will be satisfied. We spend £6 billion a year on education, so there will be discussion. But let it be rational. If everything is reduced to such phrases as "educational freedom versus State control" we shall get nowhere. I repeat that parents, teachers, learned and professional bodies, representatives of higher education and both sides of industry, together with the Government, all have important parts to play in formulating an expressing the purpose of education and the standards that we need.*

(57) *During my travels around the country in recent months, I have had many discussions that show concern about these matters.*

(59) *First let me say, so that there should be no misunderstanding, that I have been very impressed in the schools that I have visited by the enthusiasm and dedication of the teaching profession. In the variety of courses that are offered in our comprehensive schools, especially arts and crafts as well as other subjects and by the alertness and keenness of many of its pupils. Clearly, life at school is far more full and creative than it was many years ago. I would also like to thank the children who have been kind enough to write to me after I visited their schools: and well written letters they were. I recognise that teachers occupy a special place in these discussions because of their real sense of professionalism and vocation about their work. But I am concerned on my journeys to find complaints from industry that new recruits from the schools sometimes do not have the basic tools to do the job that is required.*

(68) *I have been concerned to find that many of our best trained students who have completed the higher levels of education at university or polytechnic have no desire to join industry. Their preferences are to stay in academic life or to find their way into the Civil Service. There seems to be a need for a more technological bias in science teaching that will lead towards practical applications in industry rather than towards academic studies. Or, to take other examples, why is it that such a high proportion of girls abandon science before leaving school? Then there is concern about the standards of numeracy of school-leavers. Is there not a case for a professional review of the mathematics needed by industry at different levels? To what extent are these deficiencies the result of insufficient co-ordination between schools and industry? Indeed how much of the criticism about basic skills and attitudes is due to industry's own shortcomings rather than to the educational system? Why is it that 30 000 vacancies for students in science and engineering were not taken up last year while the humanities courses were full?*

(79) *On another aspect there is the unease felt by parents and others about the new informal methods of teaching which seem to produce excellent results when they are in well-qualified hands but are much more dubious when they are not. They seem to be best accepted where strong parent-teacher links exist. There is little wrong with the range and diversity of our courses. But is there sufficient thoroughness and depth in those required in after life to make a living?*



(84) *These are proper subjects for discussion and debate. And it should be a rational discussion based upon the facts. My remarks are not a clarion call to Black Paper prejudices. We all know those who claim to defend standards but in reality are simply seeking to defend old privileges and inequalities.*

(87) *It is not my intention to become enmeshed in such problems as to whether there should be a basic curriculum with universal standards – although I am inclined to think that there should be – nor about other issues on which there is a divided professional opinion such as the position and role of the Inspectorate. Shirley Williams, the new Secretary of State, is well qualified to take care of these issues and speak for the Government. What I am saying is that where there is legitimate public concern it will be to the advantage of all involved in the education field if these concerns are aired and shortcomings righted or fears put to rest.*

(93) *To the critics I would say that we must carry the teaching profession with us. They have the expertise and the professional approach. To the teachers I would say that you must satisfy the parents and industry that what you are doing meets their requirements and the needs of our children. For if the public is not convinced then the profession will be laying up trouble for itself in the future.*

(97) *The goals of our education, from nursery school through to adult education, are clear enough. They are to equip children to the best of their ability for a lively, constructive place in society and also to fit them to do a job of work. Not one or the other, but both. For many years the accent was simply on fitting a so-called inferior group of children with just enough learning to earn their living in a factory. Labour has attacked that attitude consistently, during 60 or 70 years and throughout my childhood. There is now widespread recognition of the need to cater for a child's personality, to let it flower in the fullest possible way.*

(103) *The balance was wrong in the past. We have a responsibility now to see that we do not get it wrong in the other direction. There is no virtue in producing socially well-adjusted members of society who are unemployed because they do not have the skills. Nor at the other extreme must they be technically efficient robots. Both of the basic purposes of education require the same essential tools. These are basic literacy, basic numeracy, the understanding of how to live and work together, respect for others, respect for the individual. This means acquiring certain basic knowledge and skills and reasoning ability. It taken means developing lively inquiring minds and an appetite for further knowledge that will last a lifetime. It means mitigating as far as possible the disadvantages that may be suffered through poor home conditions or physical or mental handicap. Are we aiming in the right direction in these matters?*

(112) *I do not join those who paint a lurid picture of educational decline because I do not believe it is so though there are examples which give cause for concern. I am raising a further question. It is this. In today's world higher standards are demanded than were required yesterday and there are simply fewer jobs for those without skill. Therefore we demand more from our schools than did our grandparents.*

(116) *There has been a massive injection of resources into education, mainly to meet increased numbers and partly to raise standards. But in present circumstances there can be little expectation of further increased resources being made available, at any rate for the time being. I fear that those whose only answer to these problems is to call for more money will be disappointed. But that surely cannot be the end of the matter. There is a challenge to us all these days and a challenge in education is to examine its priorities and to secure as high efficiency as possible by the skilful use of existing resources.*

(122) *Let me repeat some of the fields that cause concern. There are the methods and aims of informal instruction; the strong case for the so-called "core curriculum" of basic knowledge; next, what is the way of monitoring the use of resources in order to maintain a proper national standard of performance; then there is the role of the inspectorate in relation to national standards; and there is the need to improve relations between industry and education.*

(127) *Another problem is the examination system – a contentious issue. The Schools Council have reached a conclusion about its future after a great deal of thought, but it would not be right to introduce such an important change until there has been further public discussion. Maybe they haven't got it right yet. The new Secretary of State, Shirley Williams, intends to look at the examination system again, especially in regards to less academic students staying at school beyond the age of 16. A number of those issues were up by Fred Mulley and will now be followed up by Shirley Williams.*



The following is offered as a summary of the topics or issues raised by Callaghan in his speech. (Where the issue was raised is also shown.) The list is supplemented by a topic raised by Callaghan in the House of Commons shortly after his speech.

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Fig.8b (Concerns or issues raised by Callaghan in the Ruskin speech)

<i>Issue 1</i>	Public concern.	Line 35
<i>Issue 2</i>	Education for all.	50
<i>Issue 3</i>	Purpose of education.	56
<i>Issue 4</i>	Schools and industry.	65
<i>Issue 5</i>	Curriculum content.	73
<i>Issue 6</i>	Teacher training & methods.	79
<i>Issue 7</i>	Inspectorate.	125
<i>Issue 8</i>	Examinations.	127
<i>Issue 9</i>	Less able pupils.	130
<i>Issue 10</i>	(Economy and education.	House of Commons.)

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Whilst it must be remembered that there is a limited number of recurring issues these topics have been mentioned or addressed within a range of City of Birmingham committee minutes and records. Due to the nature of education it means that the various issues identified in Fig.8b are often considered together within the same minutes of the City of Birmingham.

In addition the following may be identified as issues of some familiarity to this study and appear to be common areas of consideration by the authorities in the City of Birmingham. Evidence for the following points can be found in the various records. They are not ones identified by Callaghan but are nevertheless important ones in addressing the goals of this study. The records can also be used to discuss the following.

- The differences between pre-vocational and vocational education.
- The association of particular types of pupil with particular types of curriculum provisions.
- Teaching qualifications.



An investigation of these various records (Fig.8b) has established that which this researcher refers to as recurring themes or issues. These are topics or specific initiatives within education which continually reappear throughout recent history. They are also themes which Callaghan spoke of in 1976, the same themes which some, already highlighted in this study, mistakenly thought were original observations made by Callaghan. These issues must now be located within the Callaghan's speech. In order to identify the specific concerns they have been annotated with *Issue 1* etc in direct reference to Fig.8b.

## 2.2 Consideration of the Ruskin speech.

A reasonable proportion of time must be allocated to going through Callaghan's speech in detail in order to offer some analysis and to place the issues within a context and begin the process of illustrating how these issues were not unique to Callaghan's consideration. Where appropriate the theme(s) will be identified by the number assigned on the previous page.

It is difficult to speculate as to whether Callaghan consciously included in his first paragraph of the speech those factors which may be considered to be two of the main influences on his own persona and his thinking. The speech was intended to be provocative (Callaghan's official papers) and therefore the idea of their inclusion being a coincidence must be considered doubtful. The two influences already cited in this study which held great sway over Callaghan were the trade union movement and his lack of academic achievement.

From the outset of the speech Callaghan pays regard to the Labour movement and therefore by implication the trade union movement. Callaghan's original involvement with trade unions has already been outlined. Possibly the second most important influence on his political motivation is alluded to in line 5 of the speech. As highlighted earlier it appears that Callaghan carried a scar with regard to his own academic background. He appears to want to



celebrate the fact that he was the first person in the twentieth century to reach the highest political office without having been to University. But for the promotion of John Major in 1990, Callaghan would have been the only person of the modern era to have achieved this. The lack of an authoritative academic background seems to have bothered Callaghan. As will be illustrated later, there are further parallels to be drawn with John Major (2000) who was often irritated by comments about his academic background. Prime Minister John Major, like Callaghan, offered his personal experiences of the education system as justification for his emphasis upon educational reform. To a certain extent it is irrelevant as to whether Callaghan was the first to be so heavily influenced by his academic background. It is perhaps more important to note the fact that he was so influenced and was therefore particularly keen to make a speech on the topic. It is also a factor that other politicians seem to find expedient to use when commenting on education. For example Ruth Kelly, the Secretary of State for Education, argued during the launch of a Mathematics GCSE that *“Maths was my favourite, and strongest, subject at school ... So I believe passionately that mathematics should be for everyone.”* (Birmingham Mail: 9/3/2006)

As all politicians would have attended secondary school they would all have been subject to negative or positive experiences which they may offer as some sort of justification for getting involved in debates or proposing policy concerning secondary education. This makes the subject of secondary education unique in that it is something that all politicians and others of influence would have experienced, so they would want to pass on what they consider to be informed opinions to the general public. (*Issue 1*) Conversely not all politicians have, for example, experience of being parents, or running their own company or perhaps of having to claim social security benefits and therefore will not be so keen to offer any authoritative opinions on these subjects.



A reading of the newspapers of the day, reference to Callaghan's official papers and the consultation of Hansard suggests that the main concern for Callaghan during his first six months in office was the state of the economy. This evidence suggests that the main problem with Callaghan's discussions with the trade union movement was the state of the economy with a specific concern expressed by the unions about the plight of the manual worker. (Dell: 1991) It is readily apparent that Callaghan's political history was influenced by his allegiance to the trade unions. However it is equally obvious to this researcher that Callaghan was also aware of the practicalities of being a Prime Minister. As only restricted access to Callaghan's personal papers is available to the public evidence of his thoughts about the impending disputes with the trade unions of the day about the need for economic reform (*Issue 10*) must be taken from the accounts of others and from Callaghan's autobiography.

*... there were heavy hints that I was a stop gap P.M. and the favourite forecast was for the date of the next general election was Sept 1976. I was having none of that ... I was determined to keep it.* (Callaghan: 1987, 395)

Significantly he also recognised the “*strength of the trade unions ... sources of power that could and sometimes did exercise their veto against the national interest.*” (Ibid, 396) Most significantly Callaghan considered “*the need to win the battle against inflation and of the need for a second year of pay restraints*” (Ibid, 387) to be of greater importance. More than likely the proposed pay restraints would have brought him into direct confrontation with the trade unions. The role of the economy and matters economic will be given further coverage throughout the study. (*Issue 3*) It is argued in this study that Callaghan was developing a strategy of placating the trade unions whilst attempting to address economic concerns. (*Issue 10*) Further this study argues that it is also evident that Callaghan was keen to deflect attention away from the problems he had dealing with the state of the economy. (Donoghue: 1987 & Hennessy: 2000)



The idea of Callaghan attempting to divert attention away from the economic problems can be exemplified further with examples of the rhetoric offered in his speech. His suggestion about the “*increasing complexity of modern life*” (line 21) is considered by this researcher to be at best merely a sound bite. At worst it may be considered an unoriginal argument or vindication for raising the issue of education. The paragraph concludes with what this researcher considers to be a rather bland observation about the need to “*aim for something better.*” Like some before (Hadow Report: 1926) and since (Coffey: 1989) Callaghan was not averse to making references to a perceived decline in education standards without actually offering any substantive evidence.

Line 16 onwards hints further at the use of this speech as more of a weapon of political expediency than expressing a genuine concern over issues. Articles containing accurate details of the content of the speech appeared in advance of the actual delivery. (Sunday Telegraph: 17/10/1976) However the fact that the content of the speech had been leaked deliberately must be taken as an example of political expediency. (Donoghue: 1987) Some thirty years on the actual nature of the motives for this expediency can only be guessed at. Whilst Callaghan suggests that the purpose of the speech was to offer publicity for Ruskin College and to act as some sort of therapy for the “*world of education,*” the leaking of certain aspects of the speech suggests other motives. Callaghan felt sufficiently confident in 1976 that he could face the future despite the many problems.

*I took Michael [Foot] into my confidence and in our first discussion told him of my objective ... remain in office ... and that we should make whatever ad hoc arrangements were necessary to ensure this. (Callaghan: 1987, 402)*

Callaghan (1987) attempts to give the impression that he was perhaps the first P.M. to get so involved in education. This however was not the case. It is interesting to compare Callaghan’s assertion that, “*We spend £6 billion a year on education, so there will be*



*discussion*” (line 52) with the words of Prime Minister Balfour speaking in parliament 75 years earlier. Balfour thought that an expenditure of several millions of pounds on education entitled him to comment and make suggestions on the subject. Whilst addressing the House of Commons on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1902 Balfour observed.

*We spend £18,000,000 a year ... Can anybody believe that under the [education] system I have described we get the best results ... for so vast an expenditure?* (Maclure: 1986, 151)

The paragraph commencing on line 39 of the speech continues with many of the themes already addressed in the previous paragraphs. Callaghan continues to be quite sarcastic as regards to his own lack of formal education and his ascension to the highest political office. By linking his own philosophy (line 44) with the ideas of Dr. R.H. Tawney Callaghan is quite cleverly creating the impression of there being some level of gravitas attached to his own intellectual prowess. In addition the acknowledgement of the influence of Tawney is a way of showing his allegiance to the Labour movement. Richard Henry Tawney was an economic historian who spent his professional life lecturing at the London School of Economics. Tawney was an ardent socialist who helped to formulate the Labour economic policy during the nineteen twenties and thirties. Throughout this study the idea of individuals of influence being affected by their own experience of schooling is continually raised. (*Issue 1*) Interestingly no evidence of what Callaghan thought of Tawney’s schooling has been found. Tawney became a socialist with a background of elite education offered by Rugby School and Oxford University

Writing thirty years after the event, and with only the written word of a relatively few contemporaries, makes it very difficult to comment on the tone of the speech or on the attitude displayed by Callaghan as he delivered it. There appears to be a sense of sarcasm or irony that permeates the speech, although the demonstrations by members of the NUS did not



warrant any public recognition by Callaghan. (A note about an offer to meet with the students is included in Callaghan's official papers.) It would be interesting to read or hear any firsthand accounts of the tone or manner with which Callaghan delivered line 46 onwards where he appears to get off his chest the issues which had been of greatest concern or irritation to him. This part of the speech also lists the areas from which he was concerned to distract the attention of people away. This may be considered something of a contradiction. From a distance of thirty years it is not so easy to imagine a sense of resentment in Callaghan's voice or the use he makes of sarcasm, another of his favoured tools.

Unfortunately no reference has been found which mentions the tone, emphasis or attitude in Callaghan's voice when he suggested that the economy is a topic that "*Everyone*" is allowed "*to put an oar in.*" (line 41) It is easier to imagine the sense of spite or annoyance that may have accompanied Callaghan's words when he mentioned the many that had talked about "*economic problems, [and] how to put the balance of payments right.*" (line 42) These were the concerns (*Issues* 1, 2, 3 & 10) that had appeared to dominate his first six months as the Prime Minister and would apparently continue to do so for the rest of his stay at number 10.

It appears to this researcher that this same paragraph is then used by Callaghan to speak to those in the Labour movement who were enjoying a protracted debate on the role of comprehensive education. (*Issue* 5) There are many accomplished writers who have chronicled this debate. (Simon: 1994 & Aldrich: 2002) It is not the purpose of this study to comment upon the opposing arguments of this debate. However this study is entitled to argue that Callaghan was speaking to a much wider audience than that which had assembled at Ruskin College. This further suggests that an element of political expediency was to the fore. The issue of State intervention in education is the focus of the next paragraph of the speech. (*Issue* 2) It could be argued that Callaghan was making a contribution to the topical discussion about teaching methods and State involvement. (*Issue* 6) However it is more



likely that Callaghan was attempting to publicise further the ongoing debate on comprehensive education whilst at the same time hopefully steering commentators away from discussions on the economy. Once again Callaghan appears to use language which attempts to taint or sway the discussion with expressions such as “*education freedom versus State control.*” (line 53) Again there are several other authorities that should be read (Lawton: 1993) in order to get a more developed narrative on the history of State intervention in the education system. This study just needs to argue that Callaghan used this discussion as a means of distraction.

Callaghan never contended that when talking about “*expressing the purpose of education and the standards that we need,*” (line 56) that he was either making a unique observation or a substantive comment. (*Issue 3*) However this study considers that Callaghan was actually once again attempting to “*identify a ... policy of genuine interest*” (Donoghue: 1987, 111) by using a subject that most everyone has an opinion i.e. education. More by chance than a conscious decision Callaghan did mention the question of the purpose of education. (*Issue 3*) Unfortunately he misses the opportunity to highlight the fact that the process of education is just as important as the end result. It is not unreasonable to assume that the issue of standards within secondary education is one on which the vast majority of the adult population would have held some sort of opinion. Whilst for many this would be an opinion on discipline in the classroom for others it may mean discussing the potential content of a core curriculum. (*Issue 5*) To a certain extent Callaghan was using a form of tautology when mentioning standards even in an era when the subject of education was not always in the press. In contrast in any era there would be far fewer adults capable of discussing, for example, the balance of payments situation.

Callaghan goes to the extent of listing the groups of people that should be looking away from



the state of the economy and onto the education field. He talked about “*teachers, learned and professional bodies, representatives of higher education and both sides of industry.*”

(line 54) (*Issue 4*) Whilst Callaghan seems to accept that everyone will understand the idea of “*both sides of industry*” it is not certain as to whether he realised that not everyone would have understood the implications for education of having two potentially confrontational sides of industry. Obviously this would not have been a consideration for Callaghan if he was merely keen to promote further provocation. At this stage it is sufficient to just offer one consideration about the potentially conflicting demands of the two sides of industry. For example the workforce will have the need for long term job security whilst the employer will have a need for the cheapest possible workforce perhaps on short term contracts. These conflicting ideas have consequences for people intent on addressing the question of the purpose of education. (*Issue 3*) They were not necessarily issues to which Callaghan would have given much consideration.

The next paragraph returns to the familiar themes already flagged up by Callaghan. However the paragraph also begins to get to the heart or essence of this researcher’s focus. Callaghan both reintroduces and emphasises the notion of an education system existing to serve the whims of industry. (*Issue 4*) Callaghan uses a form of poetic licence in suggesting that the issues in this paragraph are ones that had been raised constantly on his journeys during his brief period in office. It has not been possible to establish how many secondary schools or factories Callaghan actually managed to visit in the six months of his leadership. It is possible to infer from the first part of the paragraph his support for the existing comprehensive system. In highlighting the role of art and craft subjects he is making a specific reference to subjects not associated with the more elite form of education which existed in the grammar schools of the day. (*Issue 9*) To focus upon these subjects may also have been a means of drawing attention to an assertion he makes in subsequent paragraphs



about the apparent need for more engineering type subjects. (*Issue 5*) Callaghan follows this with another swipe at his own schooldays and at the same time offers another sound-bite or potential banner headline for the press. This is possibly a way for him to offer a modicum of support for the teaching profession. Callaghan considers that, “*Clearly, life at school is far more full and creative than it was many years ago.*” (line 62) Such comments must be considered to be a personal opinion and indeed Callaghan offered nothing in terms of any substantiation for his assertions. Indeed Callaghan goes on, to a certain extent, to contradict himself. He goes on to build up the role and status of the teaching profession before offering several criticisms, a device he perhaps uses in order to pander to his supporters from elements within the trade union movement.

He talks about “*complaints from industry*” (line 67) and school leavers being ill-equipped with “*the basic tools to do the job that is required.*” (Ibid, 67) (*Issue 3*) However, once again, this is not a new assertion (Samuelson Report: 1884) Indeed a recent set of GCSE results were greeted with the usual number of perennial comments from leaders of industry about potential employees being ill-equipped for industry. For example the *Birmingham Mail* reported on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2006, the day of the publication of the GCSE results that more than “*40% of Birmingham’s school leavers are unemployable in anything but the most menial roles, business leaders warned today.*”

The views of Harold Wilson can be offered as more evidence of the fact that Callaghan was saying nothing original. There is an argument to suggest that Callaghan’s call for “*a more technological bias*” (line 70) in science teaching echoes Wilson’s sentiments about the “*White Heat of Technology*” which he delivered as Leader of the Opposition at the Labour party conference in Scarborough in 1963. Callaghan attempted to clarify his position by suggesting that what is taught in Science “*will lead towards practical applications in*



*industry rather than towards academic study.*” (line 71) Of course, in some respects, it is not unreasonable to argue that all teaching of Science has potential implications for industry in that all practical applications are founded in scientific theory. (*Issue 5*)

During this paragraph Callaghan poses several questions. However, as is often the case, it is the questions that are not asked that perhaps lend more of an insight into what was actually going on and the motives for setting the original questions. Whilst reading this paragraph the following alternative questions came to mind.

- 1) At this time what were the pay and conditions for graduates entering the academic world or going into the Civil Service?
- 2) What did the professional classes think about the militancy of the trade union movement?
- 3) How would a “*technological bias*” lead to an increase in “*practical applications*” when all such applications need a theoretical background anyway? (*Issues 3 & 4*)
- 4) Did the furore, prior to the Ruskin speech, over the state of the economy have an impact on the psyche of the school leavers and their parents, on the captains of industry, on school teachers, on lecturers and so on? (*Issue 10*)

The ability to pose these particular questions many years after the event is due to the benefit of hindsight and an awareness of the historical developments since 1976. However, it is quite obvious, that had Callaghan aired these questions in public he would have undermined his ability to do the following through his speech.

- 1) Make a contribution to the debate about comprehensive schooling.
- 2) Appease and appeal to his trade union friends.
- 3) Distract attention away from the many problems that were besetting his government and which eventually led to his defeat at the ballot box.

The paragraph beginning on line 79 appears to be another blatant attempt to “stir the pot” and distract people from other issues. Commentators of the day were quick to pick up on Callaghan’s comments about the “*new informal methods of teaching.*” (*Issue 6*) At this time arguments about teaching methods had become subsumed into a more general debate about the status and future of comprehensive schooling. It appears to this researcher a little strange



that no one at the time, or apparently in the intervening thirty years, has argued that any method of teaching depends upon the ability and skills of the practitioner delivering said method. Good practitioners are able to use a particular method well at the appropriate time. Even the teaching methodologies which may be held in the highest regard can be devalued by poor practitioners, a point apparently ignored by Callaghan and others. Therefore Callaghan's emphasis on the "*informal methods*" was perhaps a little mischievous. The subsequent development of an all graduate teaching profession dating from this time and the closure of several teacher training colleges also suggests that Callaghan's expression concerning "*well-qualified hands*" (line 80) perhaps hid more than he was letting on. (*Issues 6 & 10*) Indeed this researcher has personal experience of the effects of the amalgamation and reorganization of H.E. institutions at around the time that Callaghan was making his speech. Callaghan and the Department for Education were facing many questions, both in Parliament and from the teaching profession, on the future of the Colleges of Education and about the number of opportunities for teacher training. It is therefore credible to link Callaghan's observation about there being "*30,000 vacancies*" in some university subjects with the cost cutting changes and with the amalgamation and closure of colleges that were announced throughout the second half of this decade. These are issues that go directly to the state of the economy, to spending cuts and to Callaghan's ulterior motives. (*Issue 10*) Callaghan concludes this paragraph with a question about "*thoroughness and depth*" in the "*after life.*" (line 83), after the period of compulsory education. (*Issue 3*) Whilst once again appearing to offer some form of justification for the speech and an apparent insight into education Callaghan is actually only touching upon a subject that has both before and since filled many pages of text, specifically the nature and purpose of secondary education. On 17<sup>th</sup> August 2006 the day the "A" level results were published, the *Birmingham Mail's* Business Correspondent, Jon Griffin, made some observations.



*Midland business leaders have attacked plans to change school leaver qualifications and say job candidates will still be ill-prepared for work ... won't go far enough to make youngsters more employable.*

In his speech Callaghan appears to give some form of explicit approval for the subject matter of the *nature of the curriculum* considering that they “*are proper subjects for discussion and debate.*” (line 84) (*Issues 2 & 3*) In reality this debate had been one which has engaged commentators since Socrates and Plato. It could be argued that Callaghan was more concerned with airing his own prejudices as betrayed by his observation about defending, “*old privileges and inequalities.*” (line 86)

Individuals such as the previously cited Duncan Graham, the head of the NCC, have lauded the next paragraph as a clarion call for the introduction of the National Curriculum. (*Issue 5*) A close scrutiny of the text suggests some potential ambiguity at best and is certainly not the demand for a National Curriculum that some would suggest. However this ambiguity does allow for Callaghan to once again steer attention albeit, as it turned out, temporarily away from the headlines that had been following him throughout his period in office. His continued attempt to offer some sort of justification possibly suggests that he certainly had issues as regards his own schooling and lack of further or higher education. Indeed it is questionable as to whether a parent in 1976, as with a parent of today, would have been at all interested in the workings of the inspectorate. (*Issue 7*) However a parent in 1976 would have been just as concerned with the reputation of the local school as a parent of today is. Parents of any era will talk to people in their local area about their experiences of the local secondary school. Callaghan's notion of there being a “*legitimate public concern*” (line 91) (*Issue 1*) is considered by this study to be a little misleading.

The next paragraphs, although relatively short in length, are in many respects the most significant in terms of addressing or provoking the main points of this study. Callaghan



states that the needs of “*parents and industry*” (line 94) must be satisfied by the education system. (*Issue 4*) It appears to this individual that Callaghan was obviously attempting to provoke a response whilst at the same time pandering to the wishes of his supporters and potential voters. As suggested earlier it is very difficult to deduce from these words if Callaghan was aware of the intricacies or potential implications of attempting to address the needs of both the parents and of industry. The two factions may have competing demands. E.g. parents may want schools to point out the benefits of maternity leave whereas industry may want an immediate and sustained return on any investment they make, including the training of a young employee. Equipping children for “*a lively, constructive place in society*” (line 98) may today bring that prospective employee in direct conflict with industry, e.g. on issues such as the environment or the minimum wage, whilst in Callaghan’s day the conflict may have been over trade union rights. Callaghan does not appear to have followed through his prompts and explored the potential consequences. Whilst his thought about equipping a young person for “*a job of work*” (line 99) reflects the deteriorating contemporary situation. (*Issue 10*) However it should have been possible at this time to see how changing technology and the increasing pace of change may have had consequences for the nature of a workforce, making workers, for example, more transient. After all Wilson had hinted at such a change in 1963. Anecdotal evidence compiled since this period in addition to the considerations of some authorities (Pedler et al: 1991 & Handy: 1994) illustrates how an increasing percentage of the work force will change careers or professions, in many instances on more than one occasion. As will be seen later this certainly provokes questions about the form of education for fourteen to sixteen year olds best suited for them to cope with their fluctuating needs when they become employees and when they may want to change their types of jobs or professions. (*Issues 3, 4 & 5*) Whilst, on the other hand, employers may want to train and retain a stable workforce in return for their investment in training.



The last third of the speech summarises many of the points which had gone before whilst at the same time allowing Callaghan to raise other themes. Other ingredients, such as the examination system, (*Issue 8*) are thrown into the pot by Callaghan. This is just one example of a link between the Tomlinson Report, which talks about the examination system and post sixteen options for the less academic pupils (*Issue 9*) and Callaghan's speech. The contents and potential implications of the Tomlinson Report are examined more thoroughly later.

Another ingredient stirred in by Callaghan was the apparent breakdown in communication between schools and industry, (*Issue 4*) although Callaghan was very careful to point a finger of blame at both sides. Since a restricted number of Callaghan's official papers have been made available it can be noted that this was not Callaghan's original intention. In the section of this study devoted to his papers his original question about teachers going straight from school to college and back again is noted. Throughout the speech Callaghan continues to remain the politician, appearing to say things without actually offering any substance, e.g. the unsubstantiated observation that, "*there are examples*" (line 113) and regarding the economic climate that, "*in the present circumstances there can be little expectation of further increased resources being made available.*" (line 117) Interestingly this is a point not realised or raised by any opposition M.P. or by the press of the day.

To conclude this section of the chapter Callaghan's words in the middle of the speech should be highlighted. It would be remiss of any researcher concerned with tracing developments within pre-vocational education to ignore this element of the speech. This section, although Callaghan may not have realised it, is concerned with the substance or content of pre-vocational provisions. (*Issue 5*) He suggests the need for "*basic literacy, basic numeracy, ... how to live and work together ... acquiring certain basic knowledge and skills and reasoning ability.*" (Ibid, 106)



A strong emphasis of this study is the idea that Callaghan was not making a particularly original contribution to the debate on education. It is also a contention that this speech was not the catalyst for change or indeed the beginning of PVE. In order to substantiate these assertions some brief examples of the prior existence of relevance of the issues and topics raised by Callaghan must be presented. The next section of this chapter is concerned with illustrating how Callaghan was not being original in the issues which he identified in his Ruskin speech. Callaghan informs us that he wanted to “*ask some controversial questions*” (Callaghan: 1987, 410) on familiar issues.

### 2.3 *What is the evidence of the existence of PVE and of concern for the recurring issues prior to Callaghan’s Ruskin speech?*

As stated previously in order to travel through time, finding examples of how the educational issues raised by Callaghan were not particularly original, then the records held in the archives of the Birmingham Central Library, Birmingham Council House and of the University of Birmingham can be consulted. To help identify particular sources, this researcher has designed my own list of abbreviations (Fig.9) as each location has its own referencing system in some instances for identical material or official records which makes referencing a little more difficult. The abbreviations designed to locate the source are as follows. More precise referencing is contained within the Bibliography of this study.

Exploring these records and being prepared to undertake some literary time travel has unearthed the following examples of how the issues raised in the Ruskin speech already had historical precedents within the City of Birmingham. As stated previously, in order to help identify the recurring educational themes, issues or concerns, these have been identified as *Issue 1* etc. as originally identified in Fig.8b.



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Fig.9 (Archive referencing.)

<i>Birmingham Central Library Archive</i>	(1/)
<i>University of Birmingham, Education Lib Archive</i>	(2/)
<i>Birmingham Council House Official Records</i>	(3/)
<i>Mr. Broscomb's Records</i>	(BR)
<i>Birmingham Education Committee</i>	(BEC)
<i>Birmingham School Board</i>	(BSB)
<i>City of Birmingham Council Minutes</i>	(CoBCM)
<i>Careers Sub-Committee</i>	(CS-C)
<i>Continuation School Sub-Committee</i>	(CSS)
<i>Economy Topic Group</i>	(ETG)
<i>Examination Sub-Committee of the Education &amp; Schools Committee</i>	(ES-C)
<i>Evening School Committee</i>	(EvSC)
<i>Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee</i>	(F&GPC)
<i>Training School for Teaching of Cookery &amp; Laundry Work Sub-Committee</i>	(TCLW)
<i>Reports to Transfer Standards, Children to Upper Departments</i>	(TSC)
<i>Manual and Hand &amp; Eye Training in Birmingham Sub-Committee</i>	(MHET)

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Expressions such as “*essential tools*” as mentioned earlier and used by the likes of Callaghan, Shirley Williams and, as will be seen shortly, Michael Tomlinson, are suitably vague as to encourage different interpretations whilst cleverly giving the impression that matters are in hand. This vagueness has been one of the problems that advocates of PVE would have been forced to address if they wished to raise the profile and esteem of PVE. Over the years this vagueness has lead teachers, pupils, parents, LEAs and employers to offer different interpretations or make different use of such expressions. This lack of clarity surrounding the definition and the many possible interpretations of the expressions has not been unique to the period from 1976 and indeed helps to emphasise one of the main achievements of this study in producing a working definition of PVE. Further the recognition of this lack of clarity throughout the ages gives more substance to the claim of this study that PVE provisions had existed for many years prior to Callaghan. Applying the definition of PVE offered by this study it is possible to find examples of PVE provisions at both local and



national levels prior to Callaghan's failure to "*keep off the grass.*" (Callaghan: 1987) (*Issue*

1) A brief look at these examples gives more credence to the view that Callaghan had nothing new to say and that major events subsequent to Callaghan would probably have occurred anyway without his apparent intervention.

The Birmingham Education Committee held one of its regularly scheduled meetings on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1976 at around the time that this researcher would have been attending his first lecture at teacher training college. Included in the minutes of this meeting are the findings of a questionnaire commissioned by the Birmingham LEA. A brief look at the findings of the *Community Education in Secondary Schools Questionnaire* (1/ & 2/ BEC) initiated by the Chief Education Officer is quite revealing. (*Issues* 1, 2, 3 & 5) The work of one unnamed secondary school was highlighted as being an example of a particularly good programme. The minutes did not go into specifics other than saying that every student in their final year of compulsory schooling at this particular school were required to undertake a period of Community Education and that a number of teachers were involved in the programme. It did not say what was so particularly admirable about the project. This was perhaps a missed opportunity to provide guidance to other Birmingham schools or other interested parties. Unfortunately there is not a substantial explanation of what people understood to be Community Education. Interestingly, secondary school pupils of today have recently been required to study citizenship as part of a PSE programme. (*Issues* 3 & 5) However if it is accepted that the primary function of the Community Education programme was to help individuals e.g. by helping OAPs or aiding young children and teachers as a classroom assistant, then it should be considered that this initiative in 1976 was about addressing the individual participant's attitude and experiences gained through helping OAPs and so on. This consideration goes to the heart of the definition of PVE.



The same minutes were a little more detailed with regard to a “*Social Education*” programme that one other unnamed Birmingham secondary school was running for its final year pupils. The report suggested that the programme being offered by this school was typical of many other schools within the authority. The programme was delivered during Home Economics, Woodwork, Metalwork and Religious Education lessons. This list in itself is quite revealing in terms of the potential status that this school gave to the programme. (*Issue 9*) The core subjects of Mathematics, English and Science were apparently not included in the programme. The report does not give any specific detail, leaving open the opportunity for speculation over the content of the course, its specific aims, which students qualified for the programme (*Issue 9*) and as to whether the provision may be considered to be another from the PVE stable. Neither do the minutes include any reference to the students being given any formal accreditation for their work. (*Issue 8*) Individuals may have their own ideas as to what should be contained in such a programme. Each suggestion will no doubt be concerned with gearing the attitude and experiences of individual participants towards seeking a solution. E.g. a social education programme may include topics such as how to avoid teenage pregnancy or knowing how to use credit cards. When considering the likes of attitude and experience then important components of the definition of PVE are being addressed.

The previously discussed Atkins and Marshall could use the example of social education as an illustration of their notions of utilitarianism and functionalism. (*Issue 3*) Whichever approach is considered or example ventured it is possible to argue for this social education programme to be considered as an example of a provision containing elements of PVE.

With the exception of Religious Education, the subjects of Home Economics etc. which hosted the *Social Education* programme are ones which are traditionally associated with PVE. This association has become something of a double-edged sword with some schools



offering these provisions to some pupils whilst other schools were not so keen to offer the practical subjects. (*Issues 2, 3 & 5*) The potential consequences of some schools offering some practical subjects to a discrete group of pupils (*Issue 9*) are ones that get a more substantial airing later in the study. In the mean time it must simply be accepted that this has contributed to the development of a tradition that prescribes PVE a status below that of the traditional academic subjects. This idea is another of the main assertions of this study.

Examples of the vagueness or lack of definition given to PVE can also be found on a national basis. The Hadow Report (1926) was published some fifty years before the events of Ruskin College. Talking about the establishment of a more formalised school structure the report considered the aims of the types of schools to come under the title of secondary school.

(*Issues 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5*) Dr. R.H.Tawney, an acknowledged influence on Callaghan's formative years, (Callaghan: 1987) served as one of the members of the *Consultative Committee of the Board of Education* who produced the report on "*The Education of the Adolescent*." Under the Chairmanship of Sir William H. Hadow the members worked within the following terms of reference.

(i) ... report upon the organization, objective and curriculum of courses of study suitable for children ... regard being had on the one hand to the requirements of a good general education and the desirability of providing a reasonable variety of curriculum ... for children of varying tastes and abilities, and on the other hand the probable occupations of the pupils in commerce, industry and agriculture.

(ii) ... to advise as to the arrangements which should be made

(a) for testing the attainments of the pupils at the end of their course;

(Maclure: 1986,179)

Of particular significance to this study is the observation that the terms of reference make specific requests to consider the "*varying tastes and abilities*" of the children "*under the stimulus of practical work and realistic studies*." (Ibid, 181) (*Issue 9*) Interestingly committee members were also required to consider the likely perceived career options of the



students in “*commerce, industry and agriculture.*” (Ibid, 179)

These observations address several of the specific points and assertions of this study including presumptions about the suitability of certain pupils to follow particular courses or a particular curriculum. (*Issue 9*) The report was commissioned in February 1924 at a time of a worsening world-wide economic situation (*Issue 10*) which was having particularly serious consequences for the U.K. The setting up of the committee was one of the initial actions of the first Labour Government led by Ramsey MacDonald. As testified to by Callaghan (1987) it appears that Tawney and those arguing “*for secondary education for all*” were having a great influence on the thinking of the leaders of the Labour movement. (*Issue 2*)

Of relevance to this study is the observation that one of the recommendations of the Hadow Report, the raising of the school leaving age, was not actually enacted until 1947.

Occurrences such as the short life of this first Labour Government (defeated in the General Election of October 1924) meant that it was over twenty years before the leaving age was raised to 15. Subsequently it meant that it was many years to the creation of the ROSLA students of the 1970s and the need for a tailored final year curriculum often pre-vocational in character. (*Issues 5 & 9*) The Hadow Report is quite laudable in its intentions. However a close analysis of the report’s stated aims allows for several different interpretations and, as suggested at the beginning of this section, for the potential for more ambiguities surrounding PVE. The report also provides further evidence of the assertion that Callaghan had nothing new to say. Unfortunately the report did not help to improve the status of those subjects perceived as being practical in nature, suggesting that the new schools should be “*less academic*” than the existing schools and more appropriate for the majority of the students in the 11 – 15 age range. (*Issue 9*) A description of the curriculum of the secondary schools does not help to define PVE and allows for a wide range of interpretations. Without offering



any substantial definitions the Hadow Report called for a curriculum that should:

- Be “*practical*” and “*cultural*.” (Maclure: 1986, 181)
- Have “*general*” and “*humane*” education.” (Ibid, 181)
- Be “*strengthening*” of individual and national character. (Ibid, 182)
- Have regard for “*practical intelligence*.” (Ibid, 185)
- Be “*liberal*.” (Ibid, 185)

It may be argued that aspects such as “*cultural*” and “*humane*” and references to “*character*” and “*practical intelligence*” are primarily addressing attitude and experience, which has been stated on several occasions are important elements of the definition of PVE proposed by this study. In addition, and just as important, these elements would have been integrated totally into the curriculum therefore addressing the process of education. (*Issue 3*) These are fundamental elements of PVE as suggested by the definition offered in this study.

The report is littered with terms such as “*realistic studies*,” and a course that “*brings children into contact with the larger interests of mankind*.” [Maclure (1986) quotes various sections of Chapter 3, paragraph 93 of the report.] Another example of the potential for differing interpretations is Hadow’s call for Modern Schools to offer a curriculum in which certain subjects (*Issue 5*) “*of the curriculum should be practical in the broadest sense and brought directly into relation with the facts of everyday life*.” (Maclure: 1986, 186)

Such terminology does help to highlight some of the recurring themes identified by this study, specifically the perceived appropriateness of the curriculum to the contemporary social, economic and industrial conditions. (*Issue 10*) In addition it recognises that certain school courses are considered appropriate for the less able students even though the course could be of benefit to all of students. (*Issue 9*)

Some years later the City of Birmingham discussed secondary education which included the following notion. (*Issues 3 & 9*)



*... that is best suited to develop the full potential of a child at the post primary stage, whatever the nature and the measure of his [sic] talents ... be related to the aptitude and interests of children ... (2/CoBCM: 15/10/1946)*

The issues raised by the National Federation of Head Teachers Association (NFHTA) in their conference in Birmingham were reported in the *Daily Mail* on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1897. The paper reported that the head teachers required certain commitments.

- The establishment of a “*Departmental Regulation of Teachers.*”
- The establishment of a unified LEA.
- “*State Supervision*” for all education.
- The development of education “*to meet the educational needs of the population.*”

The NFHTA demand to meet the perceived educational needs of the population is very similar to the sentiments of both Callaghan and Tomlinson and similar to the rhetoric of contemporary politicians and others involved in education. For example this study has already noted how Duncan Graham claimed that the lack of preparedness of students for the demands of industry (*Issue 4*) was sufficient justification for the formation of the NCC.

There are other sources to be explored briefly which illustrate that PVE, and indeed vocational education, were not provisions which suddenly emerged as a result of Callaghan’s intervention into education or were suddenly discovered by Tomlinson.

In response to a question during a debate in the House of Commons on Maintenance

Allowances on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1976 the Minister of State for Education, Gerry Fowler, acknowledged that “*Vocational Preparation ... provision was so deficient in the past.*”

(Hansard: 1976b, 2360) Fowler did not acknowledge the potential for the existence of PVE when he continued on to say that vocational education was “*an area of the curriculum where we have too little expertise*” (Ibid, 2360) or when he suggested the need for “*suitable courses*



*for the very large number of people who hitherto dropped out of education once they attained the statutory school-leaving age.” (Ibid, 2360)*

Hansard records the words of H.A.L. Fisher, the President of the Board of Education, to the House of Commons on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1917. This was on the occasion of the proposal of his Bill which suggested the extension of compulsory education. It eventually passed into law as the Education Act 1918. Fisher observed. (*Issues 3 & 5*)

*They do not want education in order that they may become better technicians, workmen [sic] and earn higher wages. They do not want it in order that they may rise out of their own class, always a vulgar ambition, they want it because they know that in the treasure of the mind they can find an aid to good citizenship, a source of pure enjoyment ... (Hansard: 1917, 814)*

Certainly this proposal includes the additional elements of the recurring issues of this study namely those of “education for all” and “public concern.” Fisher went on to suggest the extension of schooling up to the age of 14 “*which shall not be unimpeded by the competing demands of industry*” (Hansard: 1917, 805) and that the “*education should be the education of the whole man [sic], spiritually and physically ... which will promote general culture and technical knowledge.*” (Ibid, 814)

Fisher both recognised that a relationship between schools and industry does exist and also the fact that this relationship was potentially an adversarial one.

Moving on to approximately half way between the publication of the Fisher Act and of Callaghan’s Ruskin speech was the publication of the “*Report of the Committee of the Secondary School Examination Council on Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools.*” (Norwood Report, 1943) There is a familiar ring to the background of the Chairman of the committee, Sir Cyril Norwood - he was a pupil at Merchant Taylors’ School and then read Classics and Greats at St. John’s College, Oxford. The terms of reference



which were given to the committee in 1941 were *“To consider suggested changes to the secondary school curriculum and the question of school examinations in relation thereto.”*

(Maclure: 1986, 200) (*Issues 5 & 8*) The report established the principle of a tripartite system of education which was eventually imposed by the Butler Act in 1944. Norwood held a conviction that the development of education *“has ... thrown up certain groups each of which can and must be treated in a way appropriate to itself.”* (Ibid, 201)

Norwood’s committee exacerbated the mistakes of Hadow in considering a stereotypical curriculum for each of the types or classification of students. (*Issues 2 & 9*) So although there may be education for all it is very much of the prescriptive nature based upon an assumption about the needs of different types of pupils. Indeed Maclure goes on to reproduce that which Norwood considered to be the three types of student. It is possible to project on a few years to recognise the three types of school which Butler established. Norwood observed the distinctions between the types of children.

*“[pupils] interested in learning for its own sake.”* (Maclure: 1986, 201)

*“pupils whose interests and abilities lie naturally in the fields of applied science and applied art.”* (Ibid, 201)

*“The pupils [who] deal more easily with the concrete things than with ideas.”* (Ibid, 202)

Norwood took one further step and suggested the types of jobs which the schools and pupils should have in mind for consideration as the likely destinations for the pupils attending each of the particular schools. Interestingly some contemporary secondary schools are encouraged by the Government to place an emphasis upon particular aspects of the curriculum in order to achieve a specialist College status. There are now, for example, an abundance of Business, Language, Sports and Technology secondary schools. Norwood suggested the following career goals for the pupils at each of the different types of school.



Grammar – higher administrative or business positions.

Technical – engineering and agriculture.

Modern – positions that allows an “*immediate return on his [sic] efforts.*”  
(Ibid, 203)

It is particularly irritating to a proponent of PVE that students are encouraged to follow preconceived pathways and not individual goals or ambitions.

Fig.10 is a reproduction of parts of a substantial report made by the Secondary Schools Sub-Committee to the main Education Committee of the City of Birmingham Council on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1977. The report is highlighted as it contains many of the issues highlighted in the introduction to this section. It also highlights the fact that even though some of the individual elements have been identified in the above they sometimes cannot be taken in complete isolation. The report is dated within a year of Callaghan’s speech and only a few months into the deliberations of the Great Debate. Therefore it is quite reasonable to assume that these two events would have had minimal influence on the content of the report. Due to the traditional nature of the working of bureaucrats and the likely time taken to compile the report it is highly unlikely that Callaghan’s speech would have influenced the content.

There are several questions and thoughts prompted by the report. To some extent the opening paragraph questions Callaghan’s assertion about people being allowed to ignore the signs to “*keep off the grass*” as it appears that the topic of education had been the focus of attention for a range of “*disparate bodies*” for many years before his intervention. Line 4 of the report echoes the sentiments of Callaghan’s speech about some individual teachers not getting to grips with the new techniques and materials. (*Issue 6*) Thirty years on it is difficult for this reader to come to the defence of unnamed individual teachers however it is a fair assumption that there were bound to be those who would have some difficulty with coping with change



REPORT OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SUB-COMMITTEE.

*Curriculum Change*

[1] *Especially during the past twenty years the curriculum has been under review nationally by disparate bodies (Issue 1) and teachers have been faced with suggestions and counter-suggestions ...*

*The enthusiasm of some teachers to introduce new material has not always been matched by [5] an understanding of the implications of the change ... (Issue 6)*

*The breadth of options available to pupils in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years [Years 10 & 11] may enable them to choose an attractive, but not academically taxing group ... (Issue 9)*

*Not all employers, however, appreciate the objective of curricular change beyond providing basic literacy and numeracy, and striking a balance between education for living and [10] education for earning, is a problem urgently deserving further attention. (Issues 3 & 4) Again whilst in the last ten years the new examinations have fostered the development of techniques of assessment over a wide range of skills and activities, some courses and certificates have not gained credibility with the outside world by comparison with the traditional "O" level pass ...*

*[15] (Report doesn't criticise "new" teaching methods but does say that success depends upon "good organisation and secure discipline." ... )*

*... and the current national debate raises again the difficulties facing teachers in marrying the aims of schools with the expectations of the community, especially those of parents and industry. (Issues 1, 3, 4, 5 & 7)*

*[20] How to give pupils a realistic insight into the world of work remains a practical difficulty for many schools. How to respond to criticism through various media is another. How to persuade parents and pupils of the value of academic discipline and work in a world where these do not necessarily lead to national reward is a third.*

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as this has always been the case in any era of the profession. Some find coping with change more easily than others. Interestingly the authors of the report do not state what they consider to be "*the implications of the change.*" It only takes until line 7 of this report to get onto an element of education that has dogged this study throughout. The report says that the more extensive choices now apparently offered to pupils do not guarantee academic rigour.



Simply put this is true. However the report implies that those subjects considered less academic routes or that which Tomlinson was to call a “*pathway*,” (Tomlinson: 2004, 6) means that there cannot be any academic rigour. Simply put this is wrong. (*Issue 9*) In fact the paragraph starting on line 8 typifies or encompasses many of the issues or contentions raised in this study. This is with regard to secondary education in general and PVE in particular. For example the idea of employers requiring basic literacy and numeracy from their employees is a theme familiar to this study. It must be remembered that Tomlinson amended his report to add the expression “*functional*” to his call for literacy and numeracy. In reality what both Tomlinson and the Birmingham Sub-Committee were suggesting was that prospective employees were able to cope with the training instructions and the demands of the employers. This is a facet of the relationship between the schools and industry (*Issue 4*) which is never going to change, as employers have too many vested interests in employing a malleable workforce, one that they can, figuratively, mould to their own requirements. This study has already highlighted several reports produced since 1976 that have suggested that employers do not necessarily require specific academic qualifications, save those in literacy and numeracy, from their prospective employees. (*Issue 8*) It appears that employers are apparently more interested in the attitude and potential aptitude of their prospective employees than the number of qualifications they have. (Chapter 5) These are skills where employers do not have to make a financial commitment in order to secure them from their prospective employees.

The distinction made by the authors on line 9 of the report between “*education for living*” and “*education for earning*” is particularly revealing. This study has already devoted several words to the idea of education being both a process and/or an end product. (Atkins: 1986 & Marshall: 1990) The authors of the report seem to recognise that the notion of education can be interpreted in different ways. (*Issue 3*) This reader suggests that



unfortunately they fail to illustrate correctly the actual distinction between the different elements. The fact that earning a living is an integral part of living seems to have passed the authors by. This confusion means that the authors fail to understand fully the relationship between academic rigour and the purposes of education. In the opinion of this study the authors of the report, like many others (Norwood: 1943) fail to recognise that there does not have to be an inverse relationship between vocational pathways and academic rigour. In a hierarchical vocational and academic structure it is very easy to see why people do not acknowledge, for example, that the vocational path to becoming a surgeon involves a very demanding academic undertaking. Many may not consider the tough academic demands of a surgeon to be anything other than that. They may not accept that it is in fact vocational training. The authors of the report appear to fall into the same trap occupied by many others in associating vocational pathways with primarily manual or low wage earning jobs. Over the years this association has blighted the development of PVE as an opportunity with wide appeal and for extensive use. The report continues to talk about the low credibility of certain types of curriculum provisions. Whilst the report does not identify these provisions it is relatively easy to infer the nature of these provisions or the stable from which they originate. Interestingly the report does not offer any solutions to this difficulty. In fact it takes up until the publication of Tomlinson's work before any individual of potential influence offers any solutions. Also of some interest is the fact that the report does not state explicitly that the "*traditional O Level*" requires the "*good organization and secure discipline*" (Issue 6) which the report demands of the new teaching methods which it talks about. In other words the report accepts that the teaching methods and academic standards of the "O" Level (predecessor of the GCSE) will be automatically be better than those of any other initiative. It has been stated previously in this study that any method of teaching requires good organization and discipline. It would be interesting to question the authors to see if they are



suggesting that the “O” level by its very nature engenders good organization and discipline or if they are suggesting that the very nature of the new methods and provisions engender bad organization and discipline. This is a further example of how the educational experience of individuals of influence can taint their objectivity. To their credit the authors of the report are astute enough to recognise that teachers have difficulties in managing all the expectations of the different elements who demand an input into the affairs of a school. Unfortunately it does not appear that the authors are astute enough to realise that the expectations of particular groups will often be diametrically opposed. For example historically the expectations of management and those of the trade union officials have often provoked confrontation. Indeed a reminder must also be given as to the nature of the major criticism contained in this study of the content of the Tomlinson Report, specifically his obsession with attempting to appease all of the different factions who want to have a say about the affairs of secondary schools. The authors of this report in 1977 (Fig.10) seem to suggest that the two most important groups or factions whose requirements should be listened to are the “*parents and industry.*” (Line19) There is no mention of the needs of individual pupils or of the practical concerns of teachers. Thirty years after its publication it is very difficult to comprehend the content of the concluding paragraph starting on line 20. A reading of the paragraph simply prompts a series of questions and queries in the mind of this researcher.

- 1) Why would schools want to give pupils a “*realistic insight*” into the world of work? [This was at the time of the general introduction of work experience programmes, such as “Trident,” into schools.]
- 2) Is it ever going to be possible to give pupils a realistic sample of something that has such great bearing on the lives of the majority of individuals aged 16+ or 18+ or 21+ and so on?
- 3) Is the sole purpose of compulsory education the acquisition of a job at the end of the ten years or so?
- 4) Who needs to “*respond to criticism*”? And why should they respond?



5) What does the final sentence on line 23 actually mean?

The next chapter provides evidence of the existence of specific recurring issues prior to Callaghan's intervention. Some consideration must be given over to these issues in order to help substantiate some of the familiar assertions of this study namely that Callaghan's speech was not a catalyst, the longevity of PVE and that PVE has a history of being held in low regard and esteem.



### 3.1 *The recurring concerns and the City of Birmingham.*

Fig.8b is once again offered as a summary of the topics or issues raised by Callaghan in his speech. The list is supplemented by a topic raised by Callaghan in the House of Commons shortly after his speech at Ruskin College was delivered. These concerns are to be considered one at a time to show how the affairs of the City of Birmingham had already touched upon them and how they were to remain areas of concern after and despite the Ruskin speech.

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Fig.8b (Issues raised by Callaghan in his Ruskin speech and House of Commons.)

<i>Issue 1</i>	Public concern.
<i>Issue 2</i>	Education for all.
<i>Issue 3</i>	Purpose of education.
<i>Issue 4</i>	Schools and industry.
<i>Issue 5</i>	Curriculum content.
<i>Issue 6</i>	Teacher training & methods.
<i>Issue 7</i>	Inspectorate.
<i>Issue 8</i>	Examinations.
<i>Issue 9</i>	Less able pupils.
<i>Issue 10</i>	Economy and education.

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### 3.2 *The public concern and disquiet about education (Issue 1).*

The City of Birmingham archive, official documentation, (Hadow Report:1926, Crowther Report: 1959 & Hansard: 1976b) autobiographies (Callaghan: 1987, Donoghue: 1987, Thatcher: 1993 & Major: 2000) contain material pertinent to how perceptions about public concern influenced policy and the actions of those in position of power.

In Birmingham there are many examples of local politicians and the public failing to “Keep



*off the grass*” (Callaghan’s Ruskin speech) and attempting to get involved in various aspects of education. An example can be seen just over a year before Callaghan’s visit to Ruskin. The Birmingham Education Committee talked about the arrival of a “*Petition protesting against the introduction of the Syllabus of Religious Instruction which includes Communism and other things.*” (3/EC: 25/9/1975) Whilst the individual subject of RE has no direct consequences for the assertions of this study, raising this example does, nevertheless, show that just one year before Callaghan questioned why he should not get involved in education as there were already instances of people getting involved. In fact within Birmingham at this time there existed a *Standing Conference on RE* (SCoRE) which advised, amongst other things, on the content of the RE syllabus to be followed by schools in Birmingham. (*Issue 5*) The members of the conference represented a range of special interest groups with only a limited representation being from the secondary school teaching profession. A later report noted the CEO’s response to the petition. He reiterated the breadth of the organisations, including those from the church community, who were represented on the SCoRE. It appears that at this time members of the public regularly took up the open invitation to make complaints about any aspect of education. In the same minutes as the CEO’s response to the petition it was reported that the CEO had received a complaint.

*Anonymous ... that schools spend unnecessarily large amounts on expensive equipment, regardless of whether it is needed. He ... mentioned large or double gas and electric cookers and deep freezers. (3/EC: 30/12/1975)*

Unfortunately the report does not elaborate upon the reasoning behind the complaint. It has to be assumed, at a distance of thirty years, that the cookers and freezers were for lessons. It would be interesting to note the educational background of the complainant to see if he had an opinion on the worth or validity of qualifications offered within the practical subjects such as Home Economics which were obviously being offered at this time. The potential effects of the experience of those who had followed the curriculum of any of the post war tripartite



schools have already been mentioned in this study and indeed there are others whose opinions should be sought. (Ranson: 1994 & Simon: 1991 & 94.) However it is acknowledged that this is one of a number of assumptions made by this researcher about the complainant that have to be made when looking back after so many years. At this point it is also worth issuing a reminder that some schools at this time were not keen to teach some of the practical subjects. In addition, instruction in the practical subjects had been the focus of the Technical Instruction Act 1889 which restricted the opportunities for subjects like cookery to be taught in schools. Unfortunately it is now impossible to establish if the complainant saw the repeal of the Act as progress or as a step in the wrong direction. In either instance this must be considered as an example of individuals failing to “*keep off the grass.*”

The same minutes of the Birmingham Education Committee continue on to note how a teacher had complained “*That it is wasteful to employ ancillary helpers.*” (3/EC: 30/12/1975) Unfortunately, once again, the minutes do not go into specifics other than to mention that it was a teacher who was complaining.

Whilst in 1946 the Birmingham Council were discussing the introduction of the subject of “*Citizenship*” into the curriculum of the Secondary Modern Schools of Birmingham, they were told by a representative of the Education Committee that teachers would be able “*to inculcate socially desirable attitude and behaviour*” (3/EC: 5/2/1946) in their pupils. The topic of Citizenship is a relatively recent addition to the contemporary National Curriculum.

Sometime after the events of Ruskin the notion of skill was discussed in a report published by the Economy Topic Group of the Birmingham District Council entitled “*Skill Training for School Leavers,*” (2/ETG: 25/5/1982) It was suggested that, “*the future need for skilled personnel will be much smaller ... of a different order.*” (Ibid, pi) The suggestion that there was going to be “*a different order*” implies a likely change in the types of industry being



offered in Birmingham and therefore prospective employees should be prepared for and capable of adapting. The actual change nationally from a manufacturing to a more service based economy has been well documented. (Gamble: 2000) This report was presented some three years into Thatcher's tenure as Prime Minister. It must be remembered that Thatcher was politically motivated to challenge the influence of the trade unions and any observation about trade unions stifling advancements in skill levels would have been viewed favourably by Thatcher. (Thatcher: 1993) Due to his personal background and the financial support offered by the trade unions Callaghan had not been so overtly keen to challenge the influence of the trade unions which would have been required in order to address the issues involved in the changing nature or focus of British industry and the ailing economy. It appears that the ETG was acknowledging this change. Interestingly the report offers as justification for the required changes in education and training the requirement "*to remain competitive in world markets.*" (Ibid, pi) (Issue 10) Also the report goes out of its way to stress the importance of accommodating the less able pupils through "*broad based training.*" (Ibid, pii) (Issue 9) It is not stated if the more able pupils were or should be offered "*job specific training.*" (Ibid, pii) This researcher takes the liberty of suggesting that this may also be taken as a call for the less able pupil to be offered primarily pre-vocational provisions - a familiar theme to this study.

### 3.3 Education for all (Issue 2).

Within the Labour party and the Labour movement of the 1970s there was an intense debate as to the nature and purpose of comprehensive education. Once again there exists a number of authoritative accounts of this period. (Kirk: 1989 & Simon: 1991) The content of the Education Department and Council archives in the Birmingham Central Library confirm that a similar debate had been going on within the City of Birmingham for many years prior to



this time. The archive contains an extract of the *Daily Mail* which reported the comments of “the genial Professor of Ancient History” from Dublin University. The paper reported Professor Mahafy’s lecture at Mason College, Birmingham.

*[He] put his finger decisively upon two current educational fallacies of the present day ... the abuse of the examination system, and the absurd and impossible attempt to teach everyone everything. (Daily Mail: 1/10/1897)*

Whilst the City of Birmingham Council minutes list a proposal that the Council should recognise all that is good.

*[In] Secondary education ... of all that is good in Grammar School education, now declares its intention of abolishing all methods of selection and of introducing a comprehensive system of education. (2/CofBCM: 1/1/1968)*

Immediately prior to Callaghan’s Ruskin visit Members of Parliament and Ministers often took the opportunity to promote one side or other of the comprehensive education debate. In a written response to Dr. Glynn, M.P. who asked in the House of Commons on 3rd August 1976, “How many pupils will have taken the 11+ in 1976? (Hansard: 1976b, 657) the Minister for Education, Miss Margaret Jackson M.P., replied.

*This information is not collected ... but the honourable Member may be interested to know that over 70% of children in maintained secondary schools are now in comprehensive schools. (Ibid, 658)*

Robert Phillips, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Wales, brings the debate back to Callaghan when he lists as one of his five reasons for the Ruskin speech being considered of such importance.

*[The speech] represented a lack of confidence by elements within Labour in the comprehensive school movement and on public severing of any link between Labour and “progressive” curricular reforms. (Phillips: 2001, 12)*

Again such issues had been considered in Birmingham many years before. On 6<sup>th</sup> July 1880 the BSB resolved to recommend that “authorities adopt a system of classification [of pupils]



*by classes according to attainment rather than by standards.*” The *standards* refer to the tests that the pupils undertook.

At this point the words of the “*genial*” Professor Mahafy are once again applicable. It was reported that the Professor observed that, “*political men who dabble in educational theories*” (Daily Mail: 1/10/1897) base their thoughts on a misplaced perception about the process of education being linear, ranging from the “*lowest infants*” to the “*highest university education*.” These words display a very good insight and indeed, unfortunately, foresight into what has come to blight the education sector throughout the twentieth and into the twenty first centuries. For example, this researcher contends that the hugely influential 1944 Education Act was predicated on assumptions about the linear nature of the process of education and therefore assigns young pupils to particular preordained educational paths. Had the potential implications of Mahafy’s words been pursued then the path of developments within education in general and the fate of PVE in particular may have been very different. Education is not a linear process, there are sidings and diversions which may interfere with the educational path of an individual. An understanding of the role of PVE in allowing individuals to negotiate these obstacles on the path would raise the esteem and perceived value of PVE.

The City of Birmingham can be used to provide evidence of how political intervention into education can manifest itself at a local level. The minutes of the Examination Sub-Committee of the Education & School Management Committee for 1877 gives examples of local politicians involving themselves in the minutia of the day-to-day life of schools. For example the records show (Fig.11) the application from Mr. Bradley, a member of the public, who asked to use a schoolroom during the evening is “*declined on the grounds that it would interfere with the general use of the building,*” (1/E&SMC: 10/7/1877) whilst the other



applications be approved “*on the usual terms.*” (Ibid: 10/7/1877) There are no further details and indeed it is very difficult nearly one hundred and thirty years on to guess why Mr. Bradley’s application, who wanted to use Farm St. School for a weekly Orchestral Class, was not as successful as the following.

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Fig.11 (Booking request for classroom hire in Farm St. School. 1/E&SMC: 10/7/1877)

<i>Mr. Newbold, Bristol St. (School)</i>	<i>25<sup>th</sup> Sept. Committee Meeting.</i>
<i>Moseley Debating Society, Moseley Rd.</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1878.</i>
<i>Miss ?, Several Schools, Temp Lectures [Temperance Society]</i>	<i>Dec, Jan &amp; Feb.</i>
<i>Mr. Parkinson, Bristol St.</i>	<i>26<sup>th</sup> Sept. Concert Rehearsal.</i>
<i>Mr. Wakeley, Rea St. Weekly Religious Service.</i>	
<i>Mr. Holloway, Moseley Rd.</i>	<i>18<sup>th</sup> Oct. Concert.</i>
<i>Rev. M. Parker, Farm St.</i>	<i>9<sup>th</sup> Oct. Concert.</i>
(Ibid: 10/7/1877)	

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In addition there is evidence in the City of Birmingham Records that the authorities were actively concerned prior to 1976 with certification and records of achievement which are others of the recurring issues. (*Issue 8*) For example a report by the Education Committee suggested strategies for the reducing of truancy rates. One suggestion was the setting up of a certificated course “*for the less able who were truanting*” (E-SC: 25/9/1975) Through a reading of this report it becomes evident to this researcher that there was a prevailing assumption at this time that there was a mainly unsubstantiated assertion that it was the less able students (*Issue 9*) who were truanting. The involvement of the Education Committee continued at a pace after 1976 which will be illustrated a little later.

### 3.4 Purpose of Education.

The third of the issues, “Purpose of Education” was given a fairly substantial airing early in Chapter 1 in order to help create the definition of PVE. However to illustrate further some



continuity between events prior to Callaghan's speech and then subsequent to it a few words can be offered on a report presented in 1981 by John Crawford, the Chief Education Officer of Birmingham LEA, to Birmingham District Council. The report was "*Preparation Of Young People For Employment.*" Callaghan had raised a similar question in 1976. In his report Crawford appears to understand that work experience is only a sample of work. Crawford recognises that there is some benefit to be gained from removing the pupil for a short while from the "*sheltered atmosphere of school*" (2/CoBDC: 27/1/1981) and letting the pupil sample work experience. Unfortunately Crawford then appears to follow the optimistic notion of the previous 1977 report in suggesting that experiencing "*some of the problems of work while still pupils they are more likely to settle ... into the new routine of paid employment.*" (Ibid, 9)

The fourth of the issues follows.

### 3.5 *The relationship between schools and industry.*

There are a range of examples to be considered of the idea of the relationship between schools and industry being a recurring issue of some relevance. There are many authors (Tomlinson: 1993 & Sanderson: 1994) who may be consulted to find further examples. This issue is obviously closely connected with the recurring issue of the state of the economy which is afforded considerable space within this study.

For no other reason than offering a form of symmetry to the period of twenty-eight years between Callaghan and Tomlinson the year 1948, twenty-eight years before Callaghan's speech, is the first year to be considered. Twenty-eight years before Callaghan had asked about "*the way of monitoring*" and "*a proper national standard of performance*" (Issues 7 & 8) the Employment and Training Act (1948) required schools to provide statistics about such



concerns. Part ii, Section 13(2) of the Act stated that these statistics “*shall be such particulars relating to the health, ability educational attainment and aptitude ...*” of school leavers. Furthermore the Act also created the National Youth Employment Council whose constituent members were to include both educationalists and industrialists. In addition the Act formally linked industrial training courses with LEAs. The need to formalise the relationship between industrialists and the education system is one that Callaghan considered.

Prior to Callaghan’s tenure as Prime Minister Harold Wilson had placed a great emphasis upon formalising links between the Government and the trade unions as well as the relationship between schools and industry. The extent of Wilson’s *beer and sandwich* negotiations with the trade unions has become entrenched in industrial folklore. (Gleeson & Keep:2004 & Seldon & Hickson: 2004) Callaghan appeared keen to follow this line. Callaghan acknowledged the symbolism of sending one of his first invitations to Downing Street to Jack Jones, the leader of the Transport & General Workers’ Union. (Callaghan: 1987) The formalising of links between training courses and the LEAs meant that Callaghan had further justification to make comments, albeit of an apparently relatively bland or innocuous nature, about aspects of secondary education.

Callaghan’s policies for addressing the economic woes of the country during the 1970s, including his dealing with the “Winter of Discontent,” drew attention to the weakening link between schools and industry and away from the specific difficulties. (Dell: 1991) Indeed Callaghan later observed that the strength of the trade unions was growing and they had a “*great source of power that [they] could and sometimes did exercise ... against the national interest.*” (Callaghan: 1987, 396)

Through judicious use of backbench M.Ps Callaghan continued to try to distract the attention of potential malcontents by trying to focus on education and training. One example of such



use before the events at Ruskin was made of the Birmingham M.P., Jeff (later Lord) Rooker, who required Mr. Golding, the Secretary of State for Employment, on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1976, to make a statement. (*Issues 1 & 3*)

*[On] the efforts of the local authorities, public industry, private industry and voluntary bodies in securing work and training young people in Birmingham.*  
(Hansard: 1976b, 79)

The written response of Mr. Golding is particularly interesting if only for what he does not say. There is no mention of the role of schools in securing employment or delivering training for potential employees. The question also alluded to the notion of possibly developing the relationship between industry and education providing that industry did not have to finance such a link. In turn this created the idea of schools having more responsibility for training as this would have been cheaper for both the Government and for industry.

*The Birmingham Metropolitan District Council ... is closely concerned with securing work for young people in Birmingham. 715 applications from employers in the area for the recruitment subsidy for school-leavers have been approved. A community industry unit of 100 places has been established in Birmingham. The MSC informs me that 17 job creation projects, to provide 264 jobs in Birmingham, mainly for young people have been approved; nine of the projects are sponsored by local authorities and other public bodies. A number of industrial training boards are taking special measures in Birmingham to stimulate training opportunities for young people in their industries.* (Hansard: 1976b, 79)

The need to formalise the relationship between the education system and industry is taken by this researcher as an explicit acknowledgement of the existence of divisions between the two bodies. As illustrated in this study these divisions were acknowledged in 1948, 1976 and 2004. If these divisions were stated in these years as well as on many other occasions then the question should be asked as to whether these long lasting divisions between schools and potential employees are insurmountable? As a further example this study has highlighted how in his statement to the House of Commons H.A.L. Fisher had talked about the competing demands of industry when proposing his Education Act in 1918. Nearly sixty years after the



1948 Act there was still no indication that the problems had been addressed successfully as Tomlinson apparently felt the need “*to respond to the concerns of employers.*” (Tomlinson: 2004, 92) The need for Tomlinson to raise this point suggests that the Ruskin speech and the subsequent Great Debate have not yielded much in terms of concrete resolutions. The issue of responding to the needs of employers is considered further when the work of Gleeson and Keep (2004) is considered at the end of this section.

In any era the questions posed by the Opposition in the House of Commons are aimed to cause political embarrassment for the Government. This was the same for Callaghan. An example of this was the written question presented by the M.P. for Eastleigh, David Price, who, on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1976, asked for the recent unemployment statistics for school leavers in Eastleigh to be provided. The answer given serves to illustrate the worsening unemployment situation for school leavers. This would have been a reason why Callaghan would have pointed a finger of blame at schools and why he may have wanted to ensure further support from the trade unions. Fig.12 contains the unemployment data for school leavers in the Eastleigh constituency for the period in the run up to Callaghan’s speech. The reply provides evidence of the fact that in this part of the country (Hampshire) youth unemployment was on the increase. During this period the increasing levels of youth unemployment nationwide was becoming an issue of growing concern. (*Issue 1*) It was a topic that Callaghan was keen to avoid having to deal with in the public domain.

A further example can be seen in the efforts of Shirley Williams, the new Secretary of State for Education, who managed to be typically evasive (Simon: 1991) in replying to John MacGregor M.P. that she was considering the situation when he asked, “*What measures she proposes to take to ensure that school leavers are better fitted with the skills needed for working life?*” (Hansard: 1976d, 535)



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Fig.12 (Youth unemployment figures for Eastleigh, Hansard:1976, 545)

<i>July 1976</i>	349 (unemployed school leavers)
<i>1975</i>	59
<i>1974</i>	<i>Nil</i>
<i>1973</i>	17
<i>1972</i>	8

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The trade unions were also a major element to be considered by Callaghan in his attempts to establish a foundation for his own Premiership. The ability to manipulate a political situation is not a charge to be levied at Callaghan alone and it is unrealistic to suggest that Callaghan was the inventor of such a strategy. However, accepting this understanding gives more credibility to the thought that Callaghan would have been using distractions, such as education (*Issue 1*) and its relationship with industry, in order to manipulate the situation, appease the trade unions and to sidetrack his detractors. (Callaghan: 1987 & Donoghue: 1987) Unlike the opinions of some (English & Kenny: 2000 & McCulloch: 2002) evidence of the assertion that Callaghan was not being particularly original or genuine in suggesting that the topic of education was one of burgeoning interest can be seen in Birmingham. Some eighty years before the events of Ruskin the *Daily Argos* reported.

*The Trades Council are showing a strong disposition to increase their representation on the School Board from one member to three-which may be taken as evidence of increasing interest in education. (4/10/1897)*

It should be restated that Callaghan never made claims about the originality of the content of his speech. However Callaghan (1987) did make claims about his genuine interest in education and its relationship with industry.

The Trade Council advocated trade union reform and asked for increased trade union



representation on the BSB during the election of 1897. The reason for this can only be guessed at but it is not unreasonable to assume that they wanted trade unionists in positions of potential influence and involve themselves in school curriculum issues. (*Issues 3 & 5*) They asked for the support and votes of the 30,000 trade unionists of Birmingham. It is perhaps for others to discuss the significance of the subsequent demise of the directly elected BSB. The outcome of the 1897 election to the BSB will be raised later in this chapter.

A further indication of the proactive nature of the education authorities of Birmingham is suggested by the following advertisement for Evening Classes (Fig.13) which appeared in the local press of Birmingham in 1902. The advertisement suggests that the payment of one shilling for a particular class was to be met by the individual. There are no suggestions as to why a person would want to undertake the class. However once enrolled there was a financial incentive for the individual to attend at least three quarters of the sessions and an even bigger reason to attend them all. This means that it is most likely that if every student attended every session then the BSB would have been out of pocket. In fact it is more than likely that these sessions would have run at a loss even if each session did not have 100% attendance.

There are references to fees for Evening and various other classes to be found in the archives of the Birmingham City Council housed within the Birmingham Central Library. However the minutes of the BSB, Technical Education & Evening Schools Sub-Committee (8/5/1916) states that “*the amount of unpaid fees ... [from] Evening Schools in the South District in the session 1915-16, amounting to £1 12s be written off as irrecoverable.*” The same report talks about “£5 15s 3d” being “*irrecoverable*” in the North District. This means that a total of £7 7s 3d, or approximately 1.5% of the total fees that should have been collected, were not. This was not an insubstantial amount showing once again Birmingham’s commitment to the



vocational and pre-vocational cause.

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Fig.13 (Taken from the minutes of Technical Education & Evening Schools Sub-Committee, 8/1/1902)

# **Birmingham School Board**

## **EVENING CLASSES**

Commencing on **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>, 1902**, at 7.45 p.m. will during the ensuing session, be held on **MONDAYS, TUESDAYS and WEDNESDAYS**, from 7-45 to 9-30 p.m. at the undermentioned schools.

### **For MEN AND YOUTHS-**

**Barford Road, Bristol Street, Camden Street, Cromwell Street, Dixon Road, Elkington Street, Icknield Street, Lower Windsor Street, Nelson Street Tindal Street, Upper Highgate Street.**

### **For WOMEN and GIRLS-**

**Brookfields, Burbury Street, Dudley Road, Hope Street, Loxton Street, Nechells, Oakley Road, St. Saviour's Road, Somerville Road, Stratford Road, Summer Lane, Gem Street (Deaf)**

The subjects to be selected in the Schools will be selected from the following –Arithmetic, Commercial Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Commercial Correspondence, Cookery, Drawing, Dressmaking, French, Geography, History, Laundry Work, Mensuration, Metalwork, Needlework, Reading, Science, Shorthand, Vocal Music, Woodwork, Writing.

An Entrance Fee of One Shilling will be charged, the payment of which, at the discretion of the Head Teacher, be made in not more than four instalments within a month from the date of admission, the whole of the fee to be returned at the end of the session to every student who attends at least 75% of the times the school is open during the session, and whose conduct and progress in his or her Evening School work is satisfactory to the Head Teacher. Pupils with a leaving card (to be obtained at the School Board Office) will be admitted to the Evening Classes free for the session, or remainder of the session, after leaving the Day School. Persons of all ages not attending a Day School will be admitted.

Commercial Classes will be formed at every centre provided there is sufficient demand for them.

AUGUST 27<sup>TH</sup>, 1902

**JNO. ARTHUR PALMER,**  
CLERK OF THE BOARD

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Although these figures concern events some thirteen years after the original advert was placed, it does suggest that around the turn of and in the early part of the last century the BSB were keen to supplement the local work force and industry within those which they perceived as being employment shortage areas. (*Issue 3*) A further example of this notion can be found



in the City of Birmingham Council Minutes. There was a call by the new Education Committee for the development of a “*School of Printing [in Frederick Street] which is urgently necessary if it is to serve properly printing trades in Birmingham.*” (1/CoBCM: 10/1/1933) Once again there is a specific link to the demands of local industry being made by the local education authority. Whilst there is no reference to the precise content of the curriculum to be offered in the school it must be assumed that there would be significant vocational and pre-vocational elements within the curriculum. Later in the same year the Council was notified by the Education Committee.

*Birmingham ... has failed to realise the importance of keeping its facilities for engineering education abreast of the development of the industry and has been content with trade schools which, in accommodation and equipment, were suited to the needs of industry in the late decades of the last century.*  
(1/CoBCM: 25/7/1933)

The most interesting points about the advertisement (Fig.13) are that it appeared in 1902 and it is reasonable to assume that many of the provisions advertised were offered in response to the perceived needs of the local community and industry within Birmingham. Classes were probably being taught technical, generic or transferable skills some many years before the Ruskin speech. However as the advertisement does not specify the content of each course and the archive material available to this researcher is limited then it must be accepted that there are potential dangers in making some of these assumptions. In addition the definition of PVE offered in this study precludes an emphasis being placed upon skill. However if the officials were to comply with the Technical Instruction Act 1889 then these types of classes would most likely be pre-vocational in essence as the Act stated that technical instruction “*shall not include teaching the practice of any trade or industry or employment.*” (Chapter 76, Section 8, as recounted in “*The Law Reports Statutes 1889,*” 387) In other words cooking could be taught to students but not used to train people that wanted to become cooks. The responsibility for that lay elsewhere.



Years later in both his Ruskin speech and when addressing Parliament Callaghan talked about the need for “*basic literacy*” and “*basic numeracy*.” In turn this was nearly 100 years after a report was presented to the BSB which made several pertinent observations.

*... opinion of this Committee ... many schools the children are not practised in working Arithmetical questions from practical papers so easily as would be desired ... draw the attention of all Teachers to this point. (2/ES-C: 9/10/1877)*

Among the many resolutions proposed by the TCLW of particular significance to this study are the following. Whilst it is very difficult to speculate as to the requirements of “*a good general education*” it is, nevertheless, encouraging for an advocate arguing about the longevity of PVE to witness such expressions being used in 1905.

*Firstly, That the Board of Education [in London] be asked if they would raise any objections to Birmingham Education Committee issuing Laundry Diplomas which they propose to grant to students when they successfully complete their courses at the Birmingham Training School of Cookery and Laundry Work. And secondly,*

*That as a candidate of admission as a student to the Training School of Cookery & Laundry Work, some evidence of a good general education be required, the Superintendent to take a test at the end of one month ... (2/TCLW: 20/2/1905)*

A continued interrogation of the archive material of the Birmingham LEA raises many other pertinent examples including a copy (Fig.14) of the correspondence of the BSB with the Board of Education in London.

In addition there is information of how the authorities in Birmingham took the opportunity presented by the 1889 Technical Instruction Act to attempt to develop educational provision within the City of Birmingham. Unfortunately the authorities do not appear to have grasped fully the fine detail of the Act and the requirement not to teach towards a particular profession. In a further report to the BSB several other points and requests were made.



*There is nothing now to prevent the Board from providing suitable workshops in different parts of the City as rooms for teaching Cookery have been provided and one or more skilled artisans may be employed in the same way as the Cookery Teachers, the workshops being used by classes from different schools situated sufficiently near to them. Probably four or five workshops would be sufficient ... (2/MHET: 7/8/1890)*

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Fig.14 (Letter from the Board of Education to Birmingham School Board)

*Board of Education  
Whitehall, London, SW  
27<sup>th</sup> March, 1905*

*Laundry Work 05/585 GTR*

*Sir,*

*In reply ... I am delighted to state that the Board will be prepared for the present to continue their recognition of the Birmingham Training School for Cookery & Laundry Work ... and to continue their recognition of its Diploma as qualifying the holders to give instruction. This recognition will be dependent upon the requirements of the Board as set out in the Regulations as to Cooking Diploma (Rule 4) continuing to be satisfactory. Notification should be sent to the Board of any alterations in the staff or curriculum.*

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The extent of the development and the BSB commitment to the lessons can be seen in the minutes from a year later. The minutes note a request for a “*cheque ... of £7 7s 0d [be paid] to Mr. Ricks of London, being the amount of his fee and expenses for a lecture in Hand and Eye Training.*” (2/MHET: 28/7/1891) There followed several months of debate amongst the authorities concerning the funding of Continuation Schools, Unemployment Classes and Day Schools. In the same report to the BSB the Technical Initiative Act (1889) was discussed with specific recommendations made. These recommendations included a requirement for some students to be absent or away from their employers for a short period in order to attend training. More recently this practice has been referred to as “day release”. The MHET recommendations also included references to standards and assessment, which are more of



Callaghan's themes. (Issues 1, 5, 7 & 8) The minutes talked on a range of pertinent issues.

*That they have had under consideration the extended powers conferred upon School Board in preference to the introduction of Manual Instruction into the Day School. Manual Instruction is now recognised, and a grant may be earned from the Science & Art department by scholars in Day Schools after they passed the fourth standard. The conditions are: -*

*(a) that the instruction shall be in the use of ordinary tools used in handicrafts in wood and iron*

*(b) that the instruction should be given in a properly filled workshop*

*(c) that it will be connected with the instruction of drawing ... The amount of grant will be 6/- if the teaching is pronounced good, and 7/- if excellent for each boy [sic] who has received such manual instruction for at least two hours a week for two weeks. (2/MHET: 7/8/1890)*

The policy of offering financial inducements to attend training is not alien policy to the unemployed youth of today.

Further minutes of the BSB note other attempts to involve industry with secondary education.

*The CEO further reported upon the measures proposed to be taken for consulting the convenience and enlisting the sympathy of employers. He had arranged to wait personally upon the heads of several big firms, and other officers were to interview heads of other large firms. (2/CSS: 7/10/1920)*

Whilst the year before the minutes of the same committee noted that the "Chairman ... expressed disappointment with the responses" (2/CSS: 29/5/1919) that the CEO had received from a questionnaire sent to employers in the Aston area of Birmingham. Selected employers were invited to recommend employees who could attend an experimental Day Continuation School. The youngsters were to attend on a part time basis over a short period of time. The Chairman received some replies (Fig.15) although there is no record of the actual number of invitations that were sent. The purpose of the list is to illustrate an attempt by the education authorities in Birmingham to engage with industry. It also demonstrates the willingness of some of these companies to be so engaged. A brief commentary is contained within Fig.15.



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Fig.15 (Number of employees sent to Day-Continuation schools from various companies.)

<u>FIRM</u>	<u>No. of boys to attend</u>
<i>Wright, Brindley &amp; Gell Ltd.</i>	<i>Nil</i>
<i>Billtens Ltd.</i>	<i>Nil</i>
<i>Accles &amp; Shelvoke Ltd.</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Hollings &amp; Guest Ltd.</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Thompson-Bennett Magnetos Ltd.</i>	<i>25 to 30</i>
<i>British Lighting &amp; Ignition Co.</i>	<i>Nil</i>
<i>Dunlop Rubber Co.</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>General Electric Co.</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Moss Gear Co Ltd.</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Wolvesley Motors</i>	<i>50</i>

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In general it is of little relevance to the contentions of this study as to the nature of the above companies or indeed to trace what became of them. However a brief look at the fate of some of these companies does show that they must have had some standing within the business community of the day, and perhaps even the wider communities which makes the decision to pursue their active involvement in education a little more revealing. *Dunlop, General Electric* and to a lesser extent *Wolvesley* remain household names. The *Moss Gear Co Ltd*, by the end of the nineteen thirties, employed over two thousand workers in their new site in Tyburn, Birmingham. During the Second World War the Ministry of Defence employed the *Moss Gear* workers in the production of tanks. The company eventually became *F.P.W. Axles* and still operates worldwide from a base in Lancashire. In some ways the history of *Thompson-Bennett Magnetos Ltd* is even more fascinating and can be traced through to its amalgamation with *Joseph Lucas Ltd*, another famous Birmingham name. The company was formed by a partnership of James Thompson and Peter Bennett. *Accles & Shelvoke Ltd* still exists and can be found in Minworth, some ten minute drive from their original Aston location. Unfortunately the company does not keep any records of this period save the advertising brochures from the different eras.

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It is recognised that the City of Birmingham took a lead in formalising the links between industry and education. (Gordon: 2002) This study has already illustrated that this was not at the behest of Callaghan. The CEO of the Birmingham LEA presented a further report to the City of Birmingham District Council in 1981. The report outlined all of the existing links within Birmingham between schools and industry, several of which existed prior to 1976.



Some of these links are listed below in Fig.16. They are included in this study to show how relatively well developed the City of Birmingham was with such links and to illustrate further some of the recurring issues of this study. There is also the case study questionnaire considered in the penultimate chapter of this study where the decline in industrial/school links of the present day is suggested to be quite acute.

A later report (Fig.16b) included information concerning the fate of the West Midlands Industry/Schools Link scheme to which the City of Birmingham was the largest contributor. The Understanding British Industry scheme was presented by John Crawford to the Council in the previous December. The scheme was based upon two assumptions; specifically that the purpose of secondary education was to prepare a pupil for work and secondly to emphasise the importance of industry. A direct comparison can be made between these two assumptions and the sentiments of Callaghan. Crawford attests that,

*... industry and commerce need to do far more to assist the teaching profession to provide an informal and balanced picture of what present day industry is and does. (2/CoBDC: 16/12/1980, 1)*

Callaghan had also recognised the need for industry and schools to work closer together. This however was not an original claim. (Hirst: 1974 & MSC: 1975) The CEO then demonstrates a familiar misunderstanding when he continues on to make further suggestions about the importance of the scheme.

*[Ensure that] children approaching the statutory leaving age receive a realistic picture of industry and its importance to society as a wealth creator. (Ibid, 1)*

It is not unreasonable to assume that Crawford was suggesting that an important part of the secondary education process was the gratification of industry. This notion ignores the considerations about the process of education being just as important as any final outcome e.g. a particular qualification. The report continues with an observation by Crawford which



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Fig.16 Industrial links programmes. (2/CoBDC: 25/6/1981)

- The West Midlands Committee. (Of which more will follow later.) (Ibid 4)
  - *The large number of work experience schemes, work visits and talks by employers for pupils and students in full time attendance at schools and colleges.* (Ibid, 4)
  - *some 300 teachers, since the 1970's have undertaken attachments to a variety of industrial concerns ... [which] has not enabled them to delve ... into the problems of industry etc, ... a contribution to teachers' understanding of industry and commerce* (Ibid, 4)
  - *the creation, in September 1980, of an Advisory Teacher post for the development of schools/work understanding, part of whose functions is to continue the development of active links between schools, colleges and firms.* (Ibid, 4)
  - The City of Birmingham was the first authority to take part in the UBI secondment scheme for teachers. (Ibid, 4)
  - Development of a "*Schools/Industry base at the Bordesley Centre.*" (Ibid, 4)
  - "*Birmingham is now committed to participating in Phase II of the Schools Council Industry Project.*" (Ibid, 5)
- 
- 

is of particular relevance to this study. With regard to material which should be taught in Birmingham secondary schools about industry Crawford suggested that it was "*realised that the skills, attitudes, concepts and issues which needed to be understood had not been clearly defined.*" (Ibid, 2) Of further significance and relevance was the notion "*that teaching about industry should be attempted across the curricula to all levels of ability.*" (Ibid, 3)

Unfortunately the great promise demonstrated by these two assertions is undone when

Crawford passes the responsibility for development back to schools.

*It was not envisaged that a new subject should be introduced. The desire to produce a comprehensive package of materials was resisted because each individual school had different needs.* (Ibid, 3)



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Fig.16b (Fate of the following scheme, 2/CoBDC, 1)

WEST MIDLANDS INDUSTRY/SCHOOLS LINKS SCHEME

Chairman:  
Mr H Heginbotham

48 Moorcroft Road  
Moseley  
Birmingham B13

Mr J M Crawford  
Chief Education Officer  
City of Birmingham Education Department  
Education Offices  
Margaret Street  
Birmingham  
B3 3BU

20 May 1981

Dear Mr Crawford

*I write to inform you that at a meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1981, it was formally decided to wind up the West Midlands Industry/Schools Links Scheme and transfer the remaining funds to the Industry Base at the Bordesley Centre. It had, of course, been hoped to that as the one went out of existence, a new body would emerge; however, I gather that there have been difficulties with Committee and that the matter stands deferred pending discussions on school/industry strategy within the Authority.*

*I think that it would be appropriate that the Sub-Committees concerned should be advised that the West Midlands Industry/Schools Links Scheme is no longer and that there is, therefore, a need for an early decision as to a replacement.*

*Yours sincerely*

MR H HEGINBOTHAM  
Chairman

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The first teachers to benefit from the UBI scheme and go on secondment were from Dame Elizabeth Cadbury School, Riland Bedford (which was to become Plantsbrook School, the school attended by my youngest son), Swanshurst School and Mirfield School (which was to become my last full time employer). The firms that agreed to take the placements were *West*



*Midlands Gas, Imperial Metal Industries (IMI), McKechnie Retail and National Carriers.*

The *IMI* company was to appear once more in the minutes when it was reported by the Economy Topic Group that *IMI* was an example of a Birmingham based company that was struggling to employ new engineers because of the economic climate.

*[IMI] will not be recruiting any engineers in 1982 and probably in 1983 and their Witton Secretarial Training School is to close in the summer. (3/ETG: 25/5/1982, 1)*

This is a timely reminder of the changing nature of British industry at this time. (Senker: 1986 & Moore: 1989)

The TVEI may be considered the single most concerted and expensive effort to introduce pre-vocational and vocational themes to the school curriculum. Many authors have charted the history of TVE and TVEI (Jamieson: 1993 & Chitty: 2004) The basis of the initiative was the development and enhancement of the relationship between industry and schools. Such was the record of the City of Birmingham in attempting to formalise links between the two bodies it comes as no surprise to read that the authorities in Birmingham were keen to embrace the initiative. Hindsight informs us that the initiative was destined to struggle to be fully embraced within the secondary schools of Birmingham as it was swamped by the plethora of initiatives launched by the Conservative Government during this period. The minutes of the 2/CofBCM for 30<sup>th</sup> November 1982 tell of the willingness of Birmingham to get involved in the TVEI pilot scheme. A subsequent report of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1983 informs that Mr Christopher Lee would represent the City of Birmingham as the project leader. He would have responsibility for the first year budget of £600 000, for the eight schools, one sixth form college and the Further Education colleges involved in the pilot scheme. The report of 16<sup>th</sup> September 1983 included more details as to what the pilot scheme was to involve. The report named the eight schools that were to be involved: Primrose Hill, Queensbridge, Holte,



Holyhead, Sir Wilfred Martineau, Byng Kendrick Central, John Willmott School and Fairfax.

This researcher notes a symmetry in involving a school named after a family (Martineau) who pioneered the industry/schools links in Birmingham one hundred years or so before the introduction of TVEI. The schools were to offer any two of the following subjects or “*occupational families*” to a discrete group of students identified by each of the schools.

- Business and Administrative Studies.
- Technology/Technological Studies.
- Personal and Caring Services.

The nature of the occupational families are a good indication of the changing nature of British industry and that which had caused Callaghan some problems with the trade union movement. It is apparent that at this time the foundation of the British economy was continuing to move away from the traditional manufacturing base to the tertiary industries.

A year later the CEO reported to the Education Committee.

*... attached to the development of strong links between schools and industry ... initiative is sensitive not just to changes in education but the changing nature of Birmingham as a workplace. (2/EC: 13/3/1984)*

The extracts in Fig.17 are from the *Education Committee Draft Report to the City Council* presented on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1982. (Interestingly the report notes the closure of the Mirfield Craft Centre in September 1981. This school was to re-open as Mirfield Special School where this researcher was to end his teaching career several years later.)

The extracts touch upon other issues raised in this study. The timing of the report is particularly significant as it is one of the first indications of the effects that a change of Government was to have on education policy. The most noticeable change being the increased part to be played by the central Government upon curriculum affairs. The following points occurred to this researcher after reading the extracts: The request for



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Fig.17 (Birmingham Education Committee Draft Report to City Council.)

4) *THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM – DES CIRCULAR 61/9*

*This circular requires Authorities to review their policy for the school curriculum ... and plan future development accordingly within the resources available. Clearly this is a very major issue involving not only your Committee but the community at large, in particular the parents, the Governors and the teaching profession.*

7c) *BUSINESS STUDIES*

*There is a national and local shortage of qualified teachers of Business Studies. Particular efforts have been made to increase training courses for non-specialists, encouraging instruction to obtain qualified status and encouraging qualified teachers to consider re-training in Business Studies.*

7d) *CRAFT EDUCATION*

*A wide range of courses for both pupils and teachers have been run at the various Craft Centres and, in particular, craft courses for girls [sic] ... Various schools have featured well in craft competitions including Queensbridge School... "Young Industrial Team of the Year" ... Highgate School which won the £1 000 prize in the "Nat. West Bank Competition."*

7e) *LINKS WITH INDUSTRY ...*

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councils to plan for education budgets "*within the resources available*" and to do so with regard to "*the parents, the Governors*" and so on was a clear indication of the way that policy was to go throughout the time of Thatcher's leadership. The demand for more teachers of Business Studies gives an early clue as to the demands of the TVEI which was to follow. It also supports the notion that the importance of the tertiary sector was growing at the expense of the influence of the manufacturing sector. In some respects it is very disappointing to read that there was still a need to focus attention on attracting girls to the



craft courses several years after schoolgirl Valerie Banks had made headlines in the local press of Birmingham. However the reality of the situation is that such initiatives have continued to be introduced up to the present day. The situation today is not as bad as it was in 1982 or when Valerie Banks, a schoolgirl who was in the news in Birmingham in 1976 for taking on the Birmingham LEA for wanting to do “*boys [sic] subjects*” at her secondary school, was making the headlines. (Evening Mail, 11/5/1977) PVE has played a part in the contemporary school where pupils are accepted for what they have to offer or for what they want to achieve from a particular course and not because they are from one particular gender or the other. The extracts generally support the idea that the City of Birmingham was more proactive in terms of aspects of PVE than the majority of its nationwide counterparts.

As mentioned previously the work of Gleeson & Keep, University of Warwick, warrants some analysis. They have recognised the existence of divisions between the needs of industry and those in the secondary education system and have attempted to identify them. They offer some provocative thoughts on the division in needs between the employer and the prospective employee. Although their support for PVE is not overtly stated their thoughts can be developed to support the arguments of advocates of PVE. An interpretation (Fig.18) by this researcher of the thoughts of Gleeson & Keep with regard to the differing interests between the employer and those of a young school leaver is offered as it is a way of exemplifying several of the abstracts which have arisen to date.

The article by Gleeson & Keep is worth reading in its entirety in order to consider the potential impact of each of their divisions of interest. Of particular interest to this study is their observation.

*In a long line of policy documents, speeches and initiatives dating all the way to Jim Callaghan’s Great Education Debate speech in 1976, ministers have stressed the need for education to deliver what they assume labour markets want ... (Gleeson & Keep: 2004, 44)*



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Fig.18 (An interpretation of the findings of Gleeson & Keep, 2004)

<u><b>EMPLOYEES</b></u>	<u><b>INTERESTS</b></u>	<u><b>EMPLOYERS</b></u>
-Want cheap learning/training.		-Want others to pay for learning.
-To have transferable skills.		-Want job specific skills.
-To be the only person with the qualification.		-To have a choice of qualified candidates.

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This observation may be considered as an example of the spiral development and evolutionary nature of education in addition to noting their assumption about the presumed demand for schools to respond to the needs of industry.

Gleeson & Keep discuss the time period up to 2004. Their work raises several important issues and attempts to place vocational education within a contemporary context. Their failure to acknowledge the pre-1976 period is a little frustrating. However they like many others, including Callaghan, fail to differentiate between pre-vocational and vocational education. At this point no particular purpose would be served in speculating as to the reasons for Gleeson & Keep's stance or omissions. Neither, interestingly, do they suggest that the differences between the conflicting interests of the employers and the employees can be surmounted. Of some significance, however, is the fact that they do acknowledge the acquisition of transferable skills is a pre-requisite for the school leaver. Although it has already been established within the definition of PVE that the transfer of generic skills is not a pre-requisite of PVE it must, nevertheless, be taken an indication of their recognition of a full integration of PVE into the curriculum. In other words an acceptance of an all embracing



presence of PVE. This is one of the main elements of the definition of PVE. Unfortunately Gleeson & Keep do not attribute as being pre-vocational that which they prescribe as “*generic skills; key (interpersonal) skills, and personal characteristics, dispositions and attributes*” (Ibid, 39) Advocates of PVE would classify these skills as aspects of PVE i.e. skills which are not specific to any particular job. At the same time the Chief Inspector of Schools, Michael Tomlinson, goes to the extent of talking about “*the transferability of the relevant components*” (Tomlinson: 2004, 11) including Mathematics and Literacy. However Gleeson & Keep are correct to point out that there has been a developing recognition by both sides of the need for skills that an employee can take to another job. This is especially so in an economy where people now switch jobs more often. Modern trends in employment include a regular movement between jobs within the same industry and indeed between types of industry. It is also recognised that there has been a shift in emphasis between the number of employment opportunities in manufacturing and those of the service industries although for advocates of PVE this is an irrelevance. They are also correct in pointing out that an employee’s desire for transferable skills may go against the employer’s wish to keep hold of a good employee. However Gleeson & Keep are somewhat remiss in not considering the period prior up to 1976 and for not realising that there was also a demand for transferable skills. The impression they create is that the division of interests were apparently created after the Ruskin speech. There is a degree of naivety to think that the division of interests between the employer and the school leaver is a relatively new phenomenon. Gleeson and Keep do not really offer any clarification as to the possible content of “generic skills.” In addition their notion of “*the ability to work as a team,*” being a job specific requirement is not entirely accurate; this study argues that this is an attribute that goes to relationships and is therefore a transferable skill which fulfils the definition of PVE in terms of attitude and experience. A failure by Gleeson & Keep to realise this may be one reason for their omission



or lack of recognition of events prior to 1976. It would be very difficult to argue that the division or differences of interests highlighted by Gleeson & Keep are accepted as the reality of the work place if they did not exist prior to 1976.

The next section concerns itself with *Issues 5 & 6*.

### 3.6 *The curriculum & teacher training.*

In his speech at Ruskin Callaghan raised the topic of teacher training. Once again this was a topic that had been raised many times prior to Callaghan's interest. For example the same level of apparent concern suggested by Callaghan was not supported by Fred Mulley, Callaghan's first Secretary of State for Education, who when asked (3<sup>rd</sup> August 1976) whether "*he will commission an independent, full scale investigation of teaching methods in British schools?*" (Hansard: 1976b, 665) gave a written response declining the invitation.

Further the archive of the Birmingham LEA housed in the Birmingham Central Library contains many references to teacher training in relation to technical or vocational education. This study argues that many of these references actually pertain to PVE. This material addresses issues such as who should become a teacher, the nature and content of the curriculum and, very importantly, the teaching methods to be utilised. In 1917 the education authorities in Birmingham were displaying further evidence of their increasing realisation of the need to train teachers. In 1917 the Council heard a recommendation from the Continuation School Sub-committee.

*[Would] be advisable to secure some part of the supply of teachers from University Graduates or other persons of sufficiently high standards of education. Training facilities should be offered to them. (1/CSS: 11/11/1917)*

The references to "*Graduate*" and "*high standards*" are an early indication of the status afforded to teachers some sixty years or so before teaching became an all graduate



profession. The CSS went on to discuss the possibility of training potential teachers for three to six months “*on the job*” and under the “*observation of a practised teacher.*”

Consideration could perhaps be given to how this differs from the present day system of *Associate Teacher Schemes*, *Access* courses and the *Graduate Teacher Teaching Programme* offered by universities and schools which also encourage training “*on the job.*” There are other historical examples of such concerns being expressed and discussed.

In 1905 the authorities had wanted evidence “*of a good general education*” (1/TCLW: 20/2/1905) in order to enter the Training School of Cookery & Laundry. Whilst two years later the Council heard about the concerns of a Birmingham teacher, Miss Stockdale, who was concerned about the standard of trainee teachers. She gave an example.

*Miss Ethel Broadbent, a student who trained for cookery and Laundry Work is at present not entitled to any diploma because she had failed in the School Method papers, ... Miss Broadbent was appointed last week as Teacher of Cookery and Laundry Work at Rowley Regis. (1/TCLW: 5/1/1907)*

Miss Stockdale was most indignant about Miss Broadbent’s appointment.

*[It is] an injustice to fully trained and qualified Teachers and also to students in training because it undermines the value of the Diploma. It also tended to the lowering of ambitions among students. (Ibid: 5/1/1907)*

Of particular relevance to a notion of this study, specifically that the rudiments of PVE had existed for many years prior to Callaghan’s intervention is evidenced by a further contention of the CSS. In their first presentation to the Council of 1917 they argued that for the benefit of trainee teachers.

*Arrangements should be made for them to visit factories, workshops and offices, so that they might become in some measure familiar with the working conditions and requirements. (1/CoBCM: 30/1/1917)*

Coincidentally the same report also gives another indication of the long standing relationship between industry and education. (*Issue 4*) Even more revealing and relevant to the concept of



PVE is the contention that the potential teacher should have a series of lectures.

*[In] the theory and practice of teaching on the social and industrial conditions under which the boys and girls live, on mental and physical development and special characteristics of the adolescent person. (Ibid: 30/1/1917)*

The contemporary secondary school curriculum requires tuition in Personal, Social and Health Education in addition to lessons on Citizenship. The inclusion of these initiatives was apparently being proposed around 100 years ago. It must be argued that these aspects of the curriculum are not isolated subjects. They involve the development of attitudes, skills and experiences that can be taken into any job, hence fulfilling the definition of PVE. It is important to point out that just as the Government of today is imposing curricular considerations the local government of the day was doing the same in 1917. In addition the national authorities were doing the same in 1976. This makes the assertions of Callaghan and others that the Government should become involved in curriculum issues a little disingenuous as they were already heavily involved.

For several months during 1917 the education authorities in Birmingham entered into negotiations with Dr. Valentine from the University of Birmingham who had recently been appointed Professor of Education. The Council confirmed an agreement to work together on teacher training subject to finalising costs. (1/CSS: 29/5/1917). Unfortunately three years later the CSS made an observation after which there is no further reference to the matter.

*... the question whether visits to factories in the study of industrial conditions are not part of the training scheme as she indicated that the teachers in training had so far not paid such a visit. The CEO replied that provision had been made in the scheme and undertook to communicate with Professor Valentine on the matter. (1/CSS: 7/10/1920)*

In comparison the press in Birmingham in the 1970s were reporting the following (Fig.19) about the relations between industry, schools and teacher training initiatives. It shows that several of the themes or issues were already well established in the public domain some while



before Callaghan raised the same subjects. (*Issues 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6*) In one instance the article was presented the day before Callaghan gave his speech. The following are examples of local newspaper headlines which were appearing before Callaghan invention. The second was a particularly scathing attack on the standards of teachers within some Midlands schools.

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Fig.19 (Local Birmingham based newspaper headlines.)

SUNDAY MERCURY (6/12/1970) Mercury Staff Reporter.

*A West Country Grammar School is sending a party of children to the Midlands in an experiment to get them acclimatised to industry and city life.*

SUNDAY MERCURY (17/10/1976b) Richard Williamson.

*When the dunces may be teachers.*

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Whilst the negotiations with the University of Birmingham progressed in 1917 the education authorities of Birmingham continued with other plans for the development of Day Continuation Schools. The Council heard a report the following.

*... measures should be taken immediately to ... develop ... the following buildings for the purpose of the Day Continuation Schools ...*

*(a) Sparkhill Institute*

*(b) Moseley Road School of Art*

*(c) Erdington Technical School*

*(d) Selly Oak Institute*

*(1/CSS: 27/3/1917)*

The acquisition of buildings and the successful negotiations with the local university meant that the education authorities were able to propose placing advertisements in the *TES* and local press for the recruitment of teachers. The minutes (1/CSS: 27/3/1917) suggested the following (Fig.20) wording for the advertisement.



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Fig.20 (Proposed wording of an advertisement to be placed in the *TES*.)

*CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
DAY CONTINUATION SCHOOL TEACHER*

*Applications from persons of good general education engaged in Trades (principally engineering) and Commerce will be considered, also from persons of University or other advanced education not already engaged in teaching*

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A search of the University of Birmingham and *TES* archives does not find any record of the advertisement actually being placed in 1917. Interestingly however the City of Birmingham did place advertisements in the *TES*. One sought to appoint an *Assistant Mistress* [preferably a graduate] *or equivalent*, [to teach] *History* [at the] *Stirchley Institute*, a *Day School for Young [female] Employees*. (TES: 26/7/1917) Another advertised for a boys' school which required an *Assistant Mistress* [to teach] *Experimental Science and Maths* [and for an] *Organizer of Domestic Subjects* [who should be proficient in] *Cookery, Laundrywork & Housewifery, including Needlework and Dressmaking*. (TES: 26/7/1917) It is for others to investigate why a "*Mistress*" was specifically asked for. It may simply reflect the fact that the advertisement appeared during the war or it may be an indication of how roles within education 90 years ago reflected gender stereotyping. (Watts: 2005)

On the same day the King Edward's School, Birmingham, advertised for, *A French Master of British birth and nationality*. (TES: 26/7/1917) Whilst in an edition of the following month the only stipulation required of the *Chief Assistant Mistress* for *Aston Commercial School* [Birmingham] *for boys and girls* was that *she* [sic] must have *special qualifications in French*. (TES: 23/8/1917)



Some observations about Fig.20 should be offered: It implies that graduates should not be involved in trade or commerce. Indeed the above advertisement for the History position, an academic position, does ask for a graduate. This inference is an indication of a clear distinction developing between the academic and vocational areas which eventually creates some disheartening consequences for the status of PVE. There is obviously a clear distinction being made between the tradesmen and those from the academic world. Another inference can be drawn from the advertisement which assumes members of the teaching profession have a professional persona or that the profession as a whole being one that contains qualified practitioners. There are implications for the teaching profession of today. One of the buildings identified as being suitable for the setting up of a Day Continuation School was the Sparkhill Institute in Birmingham. It was thought that the newly qualifying teachers would supplement the existing staff at the Institute. The teachers already in place would oversee the trainee teachers. The courses offered at Sparkhill and at the Unemployment Schools suggest what the authorities in the City of Birmingham were considering as appropriate for the potential general workforce to learn. From the minutes of various committees it is possible to infer that the curriculum at Sparkhill establishes that courses of a pre-vocational nature had long been established. It is possible to suggest that the content of several of the courses or lessons were likely to provide material applicable to a range of professions or jobs and therefore be pre-vocational in nature. For example, the previously mentioned Miss Stockdale was required “*to report on the more classified instruction in Practical Work suggested by the Inspector.*” (1/TCLW: 2//7/1906) Practical work is not defined but it is not really a huge leap to consider that such work would cover a range of generic or transferable learning experiences.

Fig.21 is an extract taken from the minutes of the Technical Education & Evening School Sub-Committee. (5/6/1916) It is the proposed list of courses to be taught at the Moseley



School of Art for the 1916-17 Monday sessions. The same minutes note that on each Tuesday of the same session Dr. Greenwood was offering *Ambulance and Home Nursing* whilst on other days there was *Practical Mathematics*, *Grocery* classes and *Women's* classes. Dr. Lena Walker was being paid ten shillings each evening for running courses for women entitled *Sick Nursing* whilst Mr. Millard was receiving seven shillings each evening for a *First Aid course for men*.

Fig.21 (Proposed list of courses to be taught at Moseley School of Art, 1916/17.)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TEACHERSHIP</u>	<u>Fee per evening</u>	<u>Total fee for session of 25 weeks</u>		
			£	s	d
<i>Mr A Baker</i>	<i>Headmaster</i>		60		
<i>Mr W Rae</i>	<i>Bookkeeping (Inter)</i>	10/-	12	10	
<i>Mr J Thorna</i>	<i>French (Elem)</i>	10/-	12	10	
<i>Miss M Roe</i>	<i>Cooking (Older)</i>	7/6	9	7	6
<i>Mr H G Smith</i>	<i>English (Commercial)</i>	10/-	12	10	
<i>Mr J Lewis</i>	<i>Arithmetic (Commercial)</i>	10/-	12	10	
<i>Mr J Hucknell</i>	<i>Shorthand (Reporting)</i>	10/-	12	10	

Linking Fig.21 with the minutes of the 1/ CSS helps to paint a clearer picture of the variety and range of provisions being offered in Birmingham. For example in 1917 the CSS reported to the Council that staff were “*concerned to know ... what course in Domestic Subjects [was going to be offered especially regarding] Cooking, Laundry ... Housewifery.*” (30/1/1917) This uncertainty may have been one of the reasons which prompted the need for the previously mentioned advertisement to be placed in the *TES* in 1917 asking for an “*Organizer of Domestic Subjects.*” (TES: 26/7/1917) Later in the same minutes the committee members were informed that the boys who were forced to attend the



Unemployment Schools “*are instructed in Workshop, Mathematics, English Grammar, History, Technical Drawing, Physical Education and Games.*” (1/CSS: 30/1/1917) The same minutes went on to note that at the same time the girls were forced to undertake,

*English, Geography, History, Needlework, Physical Education, and when the facilities existed in practical Housewifery-these subjects including Cooking, Dressmaking and Millinery.* (1/CSS: 30/1/1917)

As far back as 1880 the BSB were insisting, via the Evening School Committee, that the following books be purchased for the teaching of elementary science.

(Boys) Hewitt’s “*Elementary Mechanics*” and Toddhunter’s “*Natural Philosophy.*”  
(Girls) Huxley’s “*Animal Physiology*” and Mann’s “*Domestic Economics.*”  
(2/ES-C: 12/10/1880)

In many ways the issue deliberated over by the same committee a few months earlier illustrates the idea that the State and local authorities have been involved for many years in curricular issues. It turned out to be another seventy one years before the U.K was prepared to accept partial decimalisation but in 1880 the committee were making resolutions on the subject.

*... the introduction of instruction in the Decimal System of Coinage, Height and Measure [be deferred] until the country seems more prepared to adopt that system.* (2/ES-C: 6/7/1880)

In 1896 the MHET reported to the BSB.

*... the letter received from the School Board of Leeds with reference to Manual Instruction in Elementary Schools ... and they now recommend the Board to join with the Leeds Board in the request for greater freedom in the matter of Manual Instruction, and for the removal of any restriction now imposed ... interferes with the development of special methods ... adapted to the needs of particular localities.* (1/MHET: 25/4/1896)

The requests for “*greater freedom*” and “*for the removal of any restrictions*” are examples of the evolutionary nature of education reform. The MHET plea on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1896 for



teaching methods and lesson content “*adapted to the needs of particular localities*” is a direct call for the establishment of a symbiotic relationship between local schools and local industry. A further example of this can be seen as far back as 1877 when the CoB insisted that all Boys Schools taught Drawing as there were a number of potential benefits to the local economy. (2/ES-C: 10/7/1877) Over one hundred years later Tomlinson talked about the need “*to develop locally relevant curricula ... within the national framework.*” (Tomlinson: 2004, 12) Whilst the Hadow Report (1926) noted the need for “*consideration of local conditions*” (Maclure: 1986, 186)

It is evident that well over a hundred years ago the education authorities in Birmingham were having formal relations with their counterparts in Leeds and London regarding curriculum initiatives and relationships with industry. These may be considered earlier examples of what Tomlinson referred to as a “*national framework*” (Tomlinson: 2004, 12) and Callaghan’s “*national standard of performance.*” Whilst in 1900 the education authorities in Birmingham were talking about helping to establish Evening School provisions in Scotland. (ES-C: 20/5/1900) A year later the same authorities were collating statistics (Fig.22) with a view to developing their programmes with other authorities from around the country. (2/ES-C: 18 & 26/6/1901) The statistics show both the extent of the number of Evening Schools and of the actual number of students taking the classes. It is also possible to see how successful Birmingham was in attracting students. For the purposes of this study the statistics are meant to show the extent of classes nationwide and how the efforts of Birmingham to expand provisions were being rewarded. There is no benefit to be gained by undertaking some form of extended statistical analysis. However after reading the data there are certain questions which occur to this researcher.

- 1) If the classes were meant to reflect the local needs of the participants why are the attendance figures generally not so good?
- 2) Why were only one third of the lessons attended?



- 3) Is one of Birmingham's answers to be seen in the charges or incentive schemes offered to prospective students?
- 4) Were there other social considerations at the turn of the century which would have necessitated the participants being elsewhere?
- 5) Why do the class attendance figures apparently improve further north in the country?

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Fig.22 (National Evening School attendance figures, 1901)

<b><u>PUPILS ADMITTED TO EVENING SCHOOL 1899 –1900</u></b>		<b><u>% OF THE POPULATION</u></b>	<b><u>% LESSONS ATTENDED</u></b>
Aberdeen	2 734	1.9	72
Aston	2 254	2.2	42
Birmingham	9 213	1.8	35
Bradford	8 577	2.9	51
Glasgow	10 506	1.7	81
Govan	3 400	1.6	84
Ipswich	1 100	1.7	29
Liverpool	8 452	1.3	59
Leeds	4 793	1.1	52
London	125 640	2.7	(Not legible)
Manchester	17 233	3.1	72
Norwich	1 314	1.1	58
Oldham	4 848	3.2	60

*(The district of Aston in Birmingham had its own education authorities during this time.)*

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According to Fig.22 Scotland, as represented by Aberdeen, Glasgow and Govan perform particularly well in terms of the people turning up to the lessons. Govan was a particularly rugged industrial area at this time. This recognition prompts further thoughts for this researcher such as why were the English northern industrial towns of Manchester and Oldham more successful than the authorities in Birmingham in attracting numbers to their classes? In addition it may be asked if attendance figures for Birmingham gave support to those suggesting that the Ordinary and Commercial Schools should not be segregated. It



suggests that teachers were teaching courses of significance to their local community and were being controlled by the local authorities years before Callaghan's intervention and perhaps even in breach of the Technical Instruction Act of 1889.

Returning to an example raised earlier. The backgrounds of the candidates and the nature of the debate itself for the election to the BSB on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1897 brings together many of the issues which links this period to Callaghan and to Tomlinson. Fig.23 lists the candidates that offered themselves for election. The first observation is that education is considered to be of such importance at this time that 167 polling stations were to be made available throughout Birmingham for electors to vote between 08:00 and 20:00. As mentioned previously the Trade Council candidates, Eades and Millington were arguing for increased representation on the Board and that their 30 000 trade unionists should go out to vote. Today every election appears to involve "spin doctors." In 1897 it was no different with "celebrities" attending public meetings to support candidates. The Marquess of Ripon and the Bishop of Hereford were two such celebrities. The Marquess and the Bishop discussed the themes highlighted in the newspaper articles which preceded the election. These issues included those which Callaghan was to raise many years later e.g. the curriculum, examinations, skills and teacher training. The list of candidates is included in to illustrate the fact that industrialists, politicians, clergymen, school teachers all had their say and wanted to get more involved in the administration of education in Birmingham. It is particularly interesting to note the number of candidates offering some form of religious allegiance. (*Issue 1*) A definitive list of the winners of the contest has not been located although the records for sometime later contain the names of members attending particular council meetings. It is interesting to list the attendees of two such meetings in order to give some clue as to the winners of the contest and also to show the evolving nature of the constituent members of the various Birmingham Education Committees. A meeting of the School Management Committee in 1902 gives an



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Fig.23 (The *Daily Post*, November 8th 1897, the candidates standing for election to the BSB.)

### **Liberal Education Eight**

*DALE*, Harriett Elizabeth Gertrude, Spinster.

*MacCARTHY*, Egerton Francis Mead, Clerk in Holy Orders, Schoolmaster.

*WOOD*, Joseph, Nonconformist Minister.

(Included a member of the Martineau Family as one of his proposers)

*SHARP*, John Alfred, Wesleyan Minister.

*KENRICK*, George Hamilton, Ironfounder.

*ANSELL*, William, Manufacturer.

*TITTERTON*, George, Merchant.

*HULME*, John, Nonconformist Minister.

(Included a member of the Martineau Family as one of his proposers)

### **Religious Instruction**

*KNOX*, Edmund Arbuthnot, Bishop Suffragan of Coventry.

*CARTER*, Elizabeth, Married.

*IUENS*, William Edmund, Clerk in Holy Orders.

*SOWTER*, George Arthur, Clerk in Holy Orders.

*KERBY*, William, Certified Teacher.

*OGDEN*, Jacob, Solicitor's Clerk.

*MILLWARD*, Victor Graham, Solicitor.

### **Trades Council**

*MILLINGTON*, Joseph, Railway Signalman.

*EADES*, Arthur, Cabinet Maker.

### **Roman Catholic**

*WINDLE*, Bertram Coghill, Doctor of Medicine & Professor of Anatomy.

### **Independent**

*STURGE*, Joseph, Managing Director of Montserrat Co.

*PINCHARD*, Arnold Theophilus Biddulph, Clerk in Holy Orders, Vicar of St. Jude's.

*PENTLAND*, Joseph George, Printer.

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example of these developments. (Fig.24) A brief observation is included in Fig.24.



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Fig.24 (School Management Committee Minutes, Birmingham City Council)

Members of the committee meeting of 1902.

*Rev W Friend, Rt. Rev Bishop of Coventry, Mr W Ansell, Mr G Bethune-Baker, Miss Dale, Mr Kendrick, Mr W Kerby, Mr H Lloyd, Rev E MacCarthy, Mr J Pentland, Miss Suffield, Rev J Wood, Rev J Bell and Mr A Coley.*

In comparison a meeting of the same body held in 1884 had been attended by:

*Rev Dr Crosskey, Miss Kenrick, Rev R.B. Burgess, Mr George Dixon, Rev W. Greaney, Rev T. Howarth, Dr. Langford, Rev E MacCarthy, Rev W. Poulton, Rev G. Leach.*

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The most striking observations about the above are, firstly, the longevity of the Rev E. MacCarthy. Secondly the number of members of the clergy who dominated the meeting of 1884 and subsequently went on to lead a period of clergy pre-eminence within the education authorities of the City of Birmingham. These observations also help to demonstrate the improving levels of literacy between 1884 and 1902 and of the willingness of more industrialists and other professionals to involve themselves in matters of education. (*Issue 1*)

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Moving on several years but still before Callaghan's Ruskin speech further examples can be found. The Finances and General Purposes Committee of the City of Birmingham reported in 1968 that the CofBDC must maintain responsibility for the Youth Employment Services.

*[It] is an essential part of a progressive local education authority because guidance, both educational and vocational is a continuing process which is an integral part of post primary education. (2/FGPC: 30/9/1968)*

The report is implying that the process of vocational preparation (through PVE) begins as soon as the pupil enters the secondary education system. Unfortunately there was a wait of a further thirty six years before someone of national influence was again going to suggest something similar. (Tomlinson Report: 2004) Of further interest is the fact that the report appears to distinguish between education and vocational education whilst failing to realise that it can be the same thing. In addition the report fails to appreciate that due to cost schools



may offer “*vocational guidance*” but the actual reality of these curriculum initiatives is that the content would have been, most likely, part of a PVE programme. (Such a provision would have included “*educational guidance.*”)

Fig.25 is a reproduction of a syllabus published by the CEO, Mr K. Brooksbank, to the Birmingham Education Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1976, the day after Callaghan’s speech. In the report the CEO reproduced an example of a syllabus that he wanted to commend to the committee and onto other schools. It was an example he had received in response to a questionnaire he had distributed to the secondary schools to find out the extent of their community or social education programmes. The CEO was particularly impressed with this example. The name of the school running this social education programme is not given. The following observations are prompted by the content of Fig.25. Each of these observations concern matters that have already been raised or aired in this study.

- 1) The issue about the teaching of “*moral responsibility.*”
- 2) “*Problem solving*” and “*decision making*” are familiar issues raised in the discussions of this study about a definition of PVE.
- 3) Why is there a need to point out that, “*Boys and girls study equally in all four sections*”?

Further questions and observations are prompted by the additional extracts from the same report of the CEO and Figs.25 & 26 are presented as they relate to the specific issues raised throughout this study. Fig.26 contains the CEO (Mr. K. Brooksbank) summation of the results of his questionnaire.

1) 72 responding secondary schools apparently represented a very high proportion of the number of Birmingham’s secondary schools. (In a recent guide issued to parents preparing to send their child to a Birmingham secondary school, “*Secondary Education 2007,*” there are 76 secondary schools listed.)

2)(a) It is a fair assumption that of the schools that had fewer than 20 pupils taking part in the programme the vast majority, if not all, would have been running the provision for their less able pupils



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Fig.25 (Birmingham Education Committee Syllabus, 19/10/1976.)

## SOCIAL EDUCATION

### Aims

1. To give the child the knowledge and skills to equip him [sic] for his home and family life.
2. To foster an awareness of needs throughout human life and to discover the interdependence of man [sic] in satisfying these needs.
3. To expand the individual's concept of his life and his [sic] position in society.
4. To develop qualities of social and moral responsibility, self confidence and maturity.

### Approach and Content

Work involves the development of the following: -

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| (i) problem solving  | (ii) decision making |
| (iii) discrimination | (iv) discovery       |
| (v) self-analysis    | (vi) discussion      |

The course is divided into four areas of work which closely relate to each other. Boys and girls study equally in all four sections.

SECTION A. - Work undertaken by the Home Economics Department.

- (i) "The New You" – personal conduct and hygiene.....
- (ii) "On Your Own" – life after school.....
- (iii) "Parenthood and Child Care" .....

SECTION B. - Work undertaken by the Craft Department.

- (i) Woodwork - .....
- (ii) Metalwork - .....
- (iii) Home Maintenance - .....

SECTION C. - Topic work on Human Need, by course tutors from all four sections.

SECTION D. - 5<sup>th</sup> Year Community Service (School and Local Community .....

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(b) It can be assumed that none of the responding schools offered the provision to all members of their 4<sup>th</sup> and/or 5<sup>th</sup> year pupils. (Y10 & Y11) In other words there would have been a form of selection based most likely on academic ability and/or the behaviour of the pupils.

3)(a) The only mention to examinations are references to the CSE examination which was primarily for the less able pupil.

(b) The CSE Mode III did not involve any external examination.

4)(a) The craft subjects of Home Economics, Woodwork etc have become associated with the delivery of pre-vocational initiatives.

(b) Initially the ROSLA students were often occupied for the additional year of their compulsory schooling with the more practical provisions and programmes such as community or social education.

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Fig.26 (Birmingham Education Committee questionnaire, 19/10/1976.)

- 72 secondary schools were involved in some form of community education.
- The extent of the involvement of an individual school varied between 30 schools which had fewer than 20 pupils involved to 23 schools which had more than 50 pupils involved.
- In the majority of the schools ... was aimed at ... in the 5<sup>th</sup> Year. [Year 11]
- 10 schools offered the programme as part of a CSE course.
- *"in 9 schools a course was geared towards the choice of future careers."*
- For a few schools the involvement took the form of a concerted two week programme after the completion of the examinations.
- For the majority of the schools the provision lasted throughout the year.

*In some schools, such courses are designed for the less academic pupils ... They are taken at the appropriate level of the individual ability, but the aim would be CSE Mode III. [A continual assessment course for the less able.]*

*In yet another, the Social Education course was programmed for 9 periods per week and involved 10 teachers covering Home Economics, Woodwork, Metalwork, R.E ... The aims for this particular programme are typical of those encountered in the schools.*

*Some schools saw Community Service programmes as of prime importance to ROSLA type pupils*

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Some sixty years after the authorities in Birmingham were addressing the idea of training



teachers, Callaghan's Government was proposing the reorganization of teacher training colleges many of which did not survive the Callaghan era. The motive for this reorganisation was not based purely upon education but straight forward economics with many Teacher Training Colleges being subsumed by larger institutions or amalgamated with other colleges. I joined such a college in 1976 one year after its amalgamation with another local college.

With regards teacher training and the curriculum initiatives appear to continue at the same pace as they did prior to Callaghan's speech. (Chitty: 1988) Once again events within the City of Birmingham can be used to help illustrate this assertion. The minutes of the City of Birmingham Council meetings do not make it clear as to whether the councillors were enthusiastic about embracing the demands of the national authorities proposals which were considering imposing the Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP) programme. The report of the Careers Sub-Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1978 contains the response of Birmingham to the demands of the UVP. Although the tone or level of enthusiasm of the authors can only be guessed at, there are nevertheless some observations about the Birmingham response that should be made. The notes of the report on the background to the UVP and the significance of the Government statement are quite revealing. The report talked about the background and the catalyst for the launch of the initiative which was published by the MSC in May 1975. This publication appeared one year before Callaghan's speech so therefore could not have been influenced by what Callaghan had to say. In the introduction to the MSC report, entitled "*Vocational Preparation for Young People*," it talked about vocational preparation for young people.

*[The MSC] recognised the problem arising out of the transition from school to working life. It drew attention to the 300 000 (approx) young people who each year entered employment with little or no training was given, and suggested that the development of gateway courses of vocational preparation which could be available as pre-entry courses or as part of the initial training by an employer. (MSC: 1975, 1)*



Unfortunately the publication does not go into the specifics as to the content of a “*gateway course*” although, as shown shortly, it does suggest the likely content of the courses to be run by the Further Education Technical Colleges as part of Birmingham’s UVP programme. To some extent the notion that a gateway provision may be provided “*as part of the initial training by an employer*” (MSC: 1975, 1) shows the naivety of the MSC at the time. Some thoughts have already been offered in this study about the potential for employers to provide part of a basic training provision for prospective employees. The discussion on this issue by the councillors concluded with the thought that it was unlikely that employers would want to get heavily involved in the training of prospective employees in skills that could be then taken to and used by a rival company. The pre-employment courses (PVE by another name?) would therefore best be offered or undertaken by schools or FE institutions. The minutes of the Careers Sub-Committee in January 1978 continues on to discuss a Government statement that had been sent to councils in July 1976. This was the statement which initiated the UVP programme. It suggested that any action by councils in response to the “*Vocational Preparation for Young People*” should build upon the initial contributions made by schools. Once again the lack of specific detail is a little frustrating as neither the report nor actual document lists the potential extent of the school involvement. However this statement could be taken as some form of explicit recognition of the need for schools to offer PVE. It must be assumed that as the school contribution comes before the training proposed by the “*Vocational Preparation for Young People*” and the UVP programmes then the school contribution should be considered to be pre-vocational in nature. The minutes of the Careers Sub-Committee continued on to inform the council.

*Vocational preparation ... a means of closing the gaps between education and training, helping ... people to develop the basic skills which they will need, and providing a firm basis onto which further training could be built, ... developing greater self-confidence, ... sense of personal identity, responsibility and adaptability ... (1/CS-C: 19/1/1978)*



The notions of developing “*basic skills*” and “*adaptability*” are familiar to this study. In discussing Birmingham’s response to the initiative the minutes record how the councillors thought that it should “*enable young people to improve their problem solving ability,*” (1/CS-C: 19/1/1978) a sentiment which echoes the words of the definition of PVE offered in this study. It was requested by the Rubber and Plastics Industry Training Board (ITB) that Birmingham’s pilot course should be run at Bourneville College of FE. The ITB insisted that the course syllabus was to be designed to be practical rather than academic. It may be suggested that this must be considered as an instance of external bodies influencing the content of a curriculum and therefore walking on the grass. The syllabus was to include:

- *technology*
  - *industry & business organisation*
  - *social problems*
  - *home & world affairs*
  - *map reading*
  - *craft options*
  - *physical activities*
- (1/CS-C: 19/1/1978)

The various council and education department minutes of this period do not reveal what happened to the pilot scheme or to the UVP initiative. However a clue to the fate of the programme was suggested in December 1980, nearly two years after the launch. The ES-C was presenting a report by the CEO on UBI to the council. Under the title of, “*What should be taught about industry?*” the CEO talked about the “*skills, attitudes, concepts and issues which needed to be understood [but] had not been clearly defined.*” (1/ES-C: 16/12/1980) He went on to say that there should be “*greater economic literacy for school leavers to prepare them for the type of industrial society they would now face.*” (Ibid, 16/12/1980)

These observations must be taken as some form of official recognition of the changing nature of British industry from its established base in manufacturing to a more service based industry. Hindsight informs us that it was the failure of Callaghan to accept or recognise this



change (Dell: 1991) and heed Harold Wilson's warning that contributed to the eventual demise of the Labour Government.

As part of his presentation of this report, the CEO noted the apparent success of two training courses run in the Spring and Summer of 1980 for teachers, "*all of whom were in senior posts in Birmingham schools.*" (1/ES-C: 16/12/1980) The revealing and provocative aims and objectives of these courses were listed by the CEO. (Fig.27) In addition, and of some interest to the assertions of this study, the CEO made some initial curriculum proposals.

This may be taken not only as the establishment of some sort of vocational preparation but quite obviously as instances of direct local government involvement in the content of the school curriculum. In addition the CEO report uses references to "*skills and attitudes,*" which are elements of PVE, and then comments upon the "*changing nature of society.*" This is actually a reference to the nature of the employment opportunities facing school leavers.

Of course by the time of the publication of this report by the CEO Callaghan had left office to be replaced by Thatcher. It would be interesting to speculate as to what Callaghan's officials and advisors would have made of the report had he remained in office. If the apparent sincerity of the content of his Ruskin speech is to be believed then it may be presumed that he would have been pleased with this attempt to formalise the relationship between industry and the schools. As an ardent trade unionist Callaghan may also have been pleased to note the intent for schools to teach about industry and the various types of industrial conflict.

In another report presented to the City of Birmingham District Council some four years later there are familiar themes and issues presented. In "*A Strategy For Birmingham*", presented by an Education Officer of the Further Education Division in January 1984, a range of pertinent issues were raised.

*Most young people ... study a curriculum which largely reflects the prescription of further academic study post 16 and the needs of higher*



*education: typically many less able young people are offered CSE examinations, if not “O” level, which are almost exclusively academic in their design and content. ... many young people, and their parents, see the “O” level/CSE examination process as being a largely instrumental record of attainment which secures employment in the job market. “O” levels and CSEs are attainments which employers are well acquainted with, and with which they associate some basic abilities (for example, in communication skills, numeracy, general education etc) and qualities (for example in personal application, problem-solving, self reliance etc.) necessary for immediate employment or a combination of employment and training. (1/CoBDC: 7/1/1984, 10)*

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Fig.27 (Proposed courses for senior school staff. 1/ES-C: 16/12/1980)

*Educational and Industry Courses Spring/Summer Terms 1980.*

*Two courses were run and each one was attended by approximately 20 teachers all of whom were in senior posts in Birmingham schools.*

*The aims and objectives of the courses were: -*

- 1) To discuss the importance and structure of industry and identify some of the knowledge, skills and attitudes for curriculum inclusion.*
- 2) To examine the methods of industry/education liaison.*
- 3) To evaluate suitable teaching materials and by making the courses as participatory as possible to identify some of the teaching methods for possible use in schools.*

*To achieve these aims seven sessions were arranged covering the following.*

- 1) Curriculum planning in the 1980s, to take account of technological developments and the changing nature of society;*
  - 2) The conflicts in industry;*
  - 3) The availability and suitability of existing industry related materials for the classroom.*
- 
-



These recent examples recognise many of the points which this study has presented.

- 1) The pre-eminence of academic courses.
- 2) Education is most often considered as a means to an end i.e. employment.
- 3) Pre-vocational courses are often considered as most appropriate for the less able student.
- 4) The more able students are often denied access to pre-vocational provisions.

Points 3) and 4) are particularly relevant when the report continues on.

*[There is an] increasing concern on the part of both educationalists and employers that by lacking relevance the “O” level and CSE ... does not adequately prepare young people ... [for] working and adult life. (1/CoBDC: 7/1/1984, 10)*

To conclude this section a simple illustration is provided (Fig.28) to show how Callaghan’s speech had very little influence over the development of the school curriculum. Professor of Education, Institute of Education, London University Richard Aldrich published a chart comparing the prescribed curriculum of 1904 with the demands of the National Curriculum in 1988. The content of the chart is really self-explanatory although it could be argued that the comparison is a little simplistic in that the content of each subject is not described. However this researcher considers this a risk worth taking to illustrate the lack of developments.

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Fig.28 (Timetable comparison, 1904 & 88. Aldrich: 1996, 33)

<u>1904</u>	<u>1988</u>
ENGLISH	ENGLISH
MATHS	MATHS
SCIENCE	SCIENCE
FOREIGN LANG.	FOREIGN LANGUAGE
GOEGRAPHY	GEOGRAPHY
HISTORY	HISTORY
P.E.	P.E.
MUSIC (Subsequently added)	MUSIC
DRAWING	ART
MANUAL WORK/ HOUSEWIFERY	TECHNOLOGY

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The next issue raised in Callaghan's speech which has been long established as an issue of concern is that of the role of the inspectorate within secondary schools. As noted earlier, this may have been a topic which caused some disquiet between Callaghan and Fred Mulley, Callaghan's first Education Secretary.

### 3.7 *The role of the School Inspector (Issue 7).*

The contents of the archives of the Central Library of Birmingham include records of the School Inspectors who were operating in Birmingham many decades before Callaghan's interjection and his questioning of the role of Inspectors. The records show how the Inspectors in the Birmingham area were already addressing the issues raised later by Callaghan. The records serve to illustrate the following which are familiar to this study:

- the evolutionary nature of aspects of secondary education
- the development of pre-vocational concepts
- how many aspects of Callaghan's speech had already been considered many years earlier.

The introduction to the minutes of the MHET lists the members that constituted the Inspectorate for the session 1893/4.

*Director of Manual Instruction, the Superintendent Teacher of Singing, the Superintendent Instructor of Physical Education and ... three Inspecting Teachers of Drawing. (1/MHET: 1893/4)*

Apparently a question had arisen over how much time the Inspectors should spend teaching and how much inspecting. Unfortunately the question is not answered in the minutes.

The report in the CoBCM from the Industrial School Committee illustrated the rather extreme range of subject matter upon which inspectors were expected to comment. It reported to the Council the words of HM Inspector James G. Legge who spoke of the "inmates and staff" of the Shustoke Industrial School.



*[At] the present time in the School 160 boys. The health and conduct of the boys since the presentation of the last Report ... have been, with the exception of one case of fatal illness, on the whole satisfactory. (1/CoBCM: 1/2/1898)*

Other reports are not as brutal in terms of recording the number of deaths that have been recorded in a school. However there are other references which are particularly rigorous in their own way. The need to report a death in such a matter of fact way points to how the social, environmental and economic conditions were so very different from today. This must be considered as a warning to researchers and readers when trying to compare eras 100 years apart.

Callaghan may have been impressed had he been made aware of some of the instances of inspection which had taken place in Birmingham schools, the details of which are contained in the Birmingham Central Library archives. The reports are particularly stark when addressing the performance or competence of teachers. (*Issue 6*) Callaghan suggested in his speech in 1976 that the “*role of the inspectors*” (line 128) should be considered.

Interestingly the archive material contain many examples of the detailed involvement and nature of the inspectors’ visits and work. For example the precise details of the inspector Mr. Broscomb’s visit to Upper Highgate Street Mixed School in Birmingham included an observation about an assistant.

*Mr Wyatt ... The majority of this teacher’s class came up from the Infants Department ... I allowed the teacher to withdraw boys [sic] recently admitted. (1/BR: 13/11/1900)*

Mr. Broscomb’s apparent consideration for the teacher is short lived.

*I gave an easy piece of Dictation on slates and the result was unsatisfactory. The teacher marked some of the slates which I subsequently examined: in no one case were all the mistakes marked, on one slate one error was marked whereas there were seven and in another three were marked instead of seven ... teacher set three sums which were decidedly easy. (Ibid, 13/11/1900)*



The questions that the episode involving Wyatt prompt are of no real significance to the outcome of this study. However, posing the questions offers some sort of belated support for Wyatt. The questions also help to highlight the problem of interpreting events many years after the incident. This researcher has a background in representing teachers in industrial relations and consequently finds it difficult to disregard Wyatt's plight. Therefore: Could Wyatt have sought representation? If Wyatt's ability was being questioned why was the Head Teacher not involved at an earlier stage? And, indeed, why was the Head sending more pupils to Wyatt's class?

On a subsequent visit to this school (1/BR: 13/12/1900) Broscomb reported that Wyatt was leaving the school. Unfortunately there are no other references to Wyatt. It appears that the Head Teacher and the Inspector were in agreement as to Wyatt's fate.

However Broscomb had previously not been in agreement with the Head Teacher of Garrison Lane Boys' School. They disagreed over the abilities of a teacher, Miss Saville. The Head was "*not satisfied with her work,*" (1/BR: 13/11/1900) whilst Broscomb thought that "*she appears to have more ability*" and therefore it will "*be necessary to enquire further into the matter before reporting.*" (Ibid, 13/11/1900)

The cases of Wyatt and Saville suggest that the opinion of the Inspector carried more weight than those of a Head Teacher. Many years later Callaghan does not make it clear as to what changes he envisaged for the role of the Inspectorate.

During the same visit to Garrison Lane Boys' School Broscomb noted "*two teachers having canes in their possession.*" (1/BR: 13/11/1900) At this stage he makes no further reference to this discovery. Interestingly neither Callaghan nor Tomlinson make any reference to the discipline or disciplining of school pupils although they do refer to standards. Broscomb



apparently had opportunities to comment on discipline whilst the fate of Miss Saville was left undecided.

After a visit to Clifton Rd. Girls' School Broscomb wrote that he saw "*Probationary candidate Mr. Rees teach and awarded marks.*" (1/BR: 14/11/1900) Subsequently it is noted that Broscomb awarded Rees "*60 marks.*" There is no indication as to what may be inferred from an award of 60 other than noting that he awarded 100 marks to several other candidates. There is no indication as to whether the trainees were successful or how the marks were awarded or indeed what opinion Broscomb had of Rees. Despite these questions the main point to note is that a formal assessment of trainee teachers was obligatory many years before Callaghan's words. It appears that the circle may have been completed as contemporary trainee teachers are faced with reams of formalised lists of criterion referencing. It must be assumed that Broscomb would have had some sort of list of criteria in order to award Rees 60 marks and not 50 or 70 or the 100 he awarded others.

With perhaps an air of menace it is noted that during his next visit to Conway Rd. Upper School Broscomb reported that he had, "*Arranged to hear Mr. Woods, whose period of appointment expires on December 31<sup>st</sup>, [I] give a lesson at 9:15 a.m., Thursday morning next.*" (1/BR: 14/11/1900) Broscomb's opinion again conflicts with that of a Head, in this instance Mr. Jackson, after watching Woods Broscomb made his report.

*The engagement of this teacher expires on Dec 31<sup>st</sup>. and he is in receipt of a salary of £30 per annum as a probationary assistant. The Head says Mr. Wood's has good teaching power: he is intelligent and willing and anxious to please but he is not yet capable of taking charge of a class because his discipline is not strong. The lesson this morning was given to a well disciplined class and Mr. Woods maintained good order. He certainly possesses many of the qualities found in good teachers and I wish to recommend his re-appointment at a salary of £50 p.a. Having passed the Matriculation Examination of London University he is legally qualified as an assistant. (1/BR: 14/11/1900)*



Broscomb's disagreement with Jackson extended to him recommending an approximate 67% pay increase for Wood! It also appears that the feeling of foreboding or menace that was read into Broscomb's initial intention to observe Woods was unfounded. Broscomb's report on Woods also talked about another hurdle that the trainee teacher was required to jump, namely the Matriculation Examination. Callaghan referred to teacher training which the media used to initiate discussion about the "*Dunces*" (Sunday Mercury: 17/10/1976b & Fig. 19) in the classroom not necessarily being the students. Interestingly in the modern teaching profession there are many routes to achieving Qualified Teacher Status some of which resemble the paths trodden by Woods and co. Once again the main point to note is that the idea of formalised and assessed teacher training is not a brand new area for discussion and debate and although the immediate after effects of Callaghan's speech was more "teacher bashing" the topic of teacher training had always been on the agenda for those involved in the delivery of education. Broscomb's apparent contradiction of Jackson may be considered to be a little baffling when the comments regarding Broscomb's first visit to Conway Rd. Upper School are read. The contradiction apparently goes unchallenged by the Head. Broscomb had previously noted that "*Mr. Jackson has been fortunate in securing a very efficient staff.*" (1/BR: 7/11/1900)

A further insight into Broscomb's regard for the teaching profession is demonstrated when he continues on to say that the "*assistants on the girls' [sic] side are [an] unusually intelligent set.*" (1/BR: 7/11/1900) The comments or opinions of the "*unusually intelligent set*" are not noted.

Today a distinct similarity between the requirements of modern teacher training and of pre-vocational and vocational initiatives can be shown with the need for participants to keep a logbook, diary or journal of their training experience. Once again this is not a modern



development. In 1900, one hundred years before today's emphasis on keeping such documents, Broscomb recorded his unease with the state of the journals of those involved in training. After attending an award ceremony for Pupil Teachers he recorded his thoughts.

*I have today examined the journals of 28 Pupil Teachers ... noticeable that the attention paid to the proper keeping of journals has been getting less year by year ... I would suggest that a circular letter calling attention to the matter be sent to the 15 Head Teachers whose entries are not satisfactorily made.*  
(1/BR: 26/11/1900)

There appears to be a thought that standards were declining in 1900!

Broscomb was obviously keen to resolve the situation with regards to Miss Saville whose fate was left undecided after his visit to Garrison Lane Boys' School. It is possible that he may have been frustrated on the occasion of his next visit to the school when he had to report the absence of the Head Teacher whom "*I wished to confer with respecting Miss Saville whose appointment expires on December 31<sup>st</sup>.*" (1/BR: 26/11/1900) It appears that Broscomb was particularly busy at this time including deciding the fates of Woods and Saville. His attitude to the school was apparently beginning to change when he continued on to note that "*I was sorry to notice a ... slackness in the workings of the school.*" (1/BR: 26/11/1900)

Broscomb also had cause to return to the issue of discipline. He noticed during the same visit to Garrison Lane Boys' School a teacher "*caning a boy*" and was forced to "*draw his attention to the Board's Regulations on the subject.*" (1/BR: 26/11/1900) He also remembered his previous visit to the school when he noticed "*two teachers having canes in their possession.*" (1/BR: 14/11/1900)

More examples of the language and tone of Broscomb can be produced to show that a certain rigour existed within the inspection system, at least at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It appears that Broscomb was reluctant to heap lots of praise on teachers although



he did admit on a visit to Little Green Lane Boys' School that "*Miss Proctor is doing admirable work with a small class of very dull boys.*" (1/BR: 14/11/1900) Within the classroom of today this sort of phraseology would be considered particularly provocative and inappropriate. Considering Callaghan's background it would have been of some interest to have sought his views on the Inspector's practice of describing boys as "dull". Such descriptions litter Broscomb's work. His flattering comments are not as frequent, indeed his thoughts on the fate of Miss Slain, a teacher at Sherbourne Road Girls' School, seems more representative of Broscomb's influence and thoughts. After his visit to the school on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1901 Miss Slain resigned. Unfortunately there is no further clue as to the fate of either Miss Saville or Miss Slain.

On his next visit to Garrison Lane Boys' School Broscomb appears to switch his attention to other aspects of the profession and considers the professional development of teachers. Once again it must be noted that this is some seventy years before Callaghan's words appear to have provoked yet another attack by the press on the professional standards of teachers. The starkness of Broscomb's comments are consistent with the attitude he displayed earlier and are worthy of note. Broscomb considered that "*Mr. Nicholls should, I think, be required to improve his qualifications, he has done nothing for a considerable period.*" (1/BR: 5/5/1901) (*Issue 6*) Broscomb also appears prepared to offer guidance on teaching techniques, he suggests to a teacher "*a means of stopping spitting on slates for cleaning purposes.*" (1/BR: 5/5/1901) (*Issue 6*) Broscomb also busied himself with teacher training. He also commented about his visits to schools accompanied by "*the Rev. A. J. Baker, Principal of Derby Training College. The second year students of this college have paid visits of observation to these and other schools today.*" (1/BR: 14/1/1901)

Once again there appears to be a continuing presence within teacher training maintained by



the clergy of the day. Also it is interesting to see that trainee teaching students were undertaking observation visits 75 years before this researcher had to endure the same process in schools in Cheshire and Manchester.

Interestingly Broscomb appears to be involving himself continually with the parents of the pupils from the schools that he visited. On more than one occasion it appears that he had to intervene to resolve situations between parents and the schools. These interventions are quite revealing in terms of the involvement of the inspectors in the schools. One such intervention required Broscomb to suggest a way forward for the parent who was complaining at having to provide a knitting bag for her daughter. Whilst on a visit to Bridge Street Boys' School Broscomb observed the actions of a Mr. Challon.

*[Who] called to complain of Mr. Winterbottom, Assistant Master, striking his son in the face ... Mr. Winterbottom, having expressed regret and promised that it should not occur again Mr. Challon expressed himself as satisfied and left. (1/BR: 3/3/1901)*

Broscomb is obviously concerned to involve himself in all aspects of school life. Among a wide array of subjects Broscomb reports upon are the following:

- the role of the caretaker.
- equipment requisitions.
- pupil and staff discipline.
- teacher training.
- curriculum.
- syllabus.

Perhaps the most telling of the many observations made by Broscomb and scattered throughout his records are the occasions when he states "*Examined Book*" and "*Signed Salary Forms.*" Ill-fortune obviously struck the school staff on the occasions when Broscomb was unable to sign the salary form due to, for example, the Head Teacher's absence. It is not clear whether Callaghan would have approved of this system or indeed if he would have approved of the apparent independence of the school Governing Bodies of



today that are allowed to award salaries, hire and fire their staff, award cleaning and catering contracts etc. Callaghan was apparently keen to become involved or to initiate discussion on the curriculum. (*Issue 5*) This study has already highlighted the many instances of LEAs, Government, schools, industry and so on prior to Callaghan's speech addressing curricular concerns. There are many examples throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of discussion and actions about the relationship between industry and schooling and of the curriculum becoming more concerned with industrial or commercial issues. (*Issue 4*)

Broscomb was also keen to be involved in such affairs. It has already been noted that he was, quite unusually, keen to sing the praises of the staff of Conway Road Upper School. His report on the staff was based upon his assessment of the lessons in Reading, Composition, Spelling, Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, Recitation and in *Object Lessons* that have "been given experimentally and with much success." (1/BR: 7-9/11/1900) Several examples of these types of lessons from different eras have already been referred to in this study. It may be argued that some of these subjects come from areas of study applicable or relevant to various types of job. They may also be compared with the list of subjects referred to in the "Aspects of Secondary Education in England" produced by the HMI in 1979 which has already been discussed in this study and compared with the demands of the modern National Curriculum. It must also be remembered that many years later Callaghan referred to the need for *Basic Numeracy and Literacy* as pre-requisites of all employment. Broscomb's *Object Lesson* required a student to study or observe phenomena, objects or situations. There is no detail of what the objects etc were. However the observations had to be recorded but unfortunately the inspector's reports lack any detail of how precisely this was to be done.

On one occasion Broscomb pointed out to the staff of Jenkins Street Girls' and Garrison Lane Girls' Schools that they did not have approved timetables. (1/BR: 13/11/1900) Whilst the



Head Teacher at Harborne Road Boys' School was taken to task after Broscomb "*went over the syllabus of work with him.*" (1/BR: 5/2/1900) It appears that once again Mr. Wyatt was having particular difficulties with his Arithmetic and was subsequently interrogated by the inspector. Broscomb proposes to the Head several options of remedial action for Wyatt. The Head's thoughts or comments or indeed subsequent actions are not recorded. The subsequent action of Wyatt is recorded when Broscomb's talks of him "*moving on.*" (1/BR: 13/12/1900)

After his visit to Allcock Street Boys' School Broscomb reported that "*Arithmetic is fairly good but having regards to the fact that all of the sums are set in problematic form.*" (1/BR: 22/1/1901) This appears to be some form of criticism but he does not elaborate upon it. Interestingly Broscomb had noted several years earlier that at Arden Road Girls' School "*mechanical [devices] are used ... in their sums*" and that, "*the mistress admits that they are not educational ... [and] will probably be discontinued.*" (1/TSC: 3-4/3/1896)

This last observation reflects discussion and questions posed earlier in this study about the nature and purpose of education. (*Issue 3*) Over 100 years later readers can ponder as to whether Broscomb was concerned with the end result and getting the answer "*in their sums*" or concerned with the process that each of the pupils should have been through whilst using a device to aid learning. A further clue as to Broscomb's priorities can be inferred from his report on Miss Bean's Arithmetic lesson at Floodgate Street Mixed School. He writes, "*not satisfactory ... there was much whispering and finger counting.*" (1/TSC: 13/5/1896) The same journal also mentions his thoughts on: Montgomery St. Girls' School where the "*3Rs*" are to be examined by the HMI (1/TSC: 3/3/1896) and the Geography where, "*The syllabus is far too full.*" (1/TSC: 29/4/1896) He also offers considerations on "*Wordbuilding and Spelling*" in response to the Board of Education Circular 375. (1/TSC: 11/1/1896)

(To illustrate further the idea of the circular nature of developments within education it must



be noted that one of the most recent Government publications concerned with Primary Schools, the “Rose Review of the Teaching of Early Reading,” published in December 2005, suggests a return to “*Wordbuilding and Spelling*” in order to raise standards.)

Contrary to Broscomb’s apparently thorough and perhaps harsh attitude towards the staff in the majority of the schools he visited are his reports on the various Manual Instruction Centres. For these his reports in the TSC are comparatively very brief and certainly not of the same rigour suggested by his many reports on the performances of various members of staff attempting to teach Arithmetic. It could be argued that the reports are even quite bland. For example his only comment on the Stratford Road Centre was “*Examined Log Book.*” (1/TSC: 19/6/1896) Whilst on the same day at Moseley Rd. Centre “*All was going well here.*” (1/TSC: 19/6/1896) The only exception to this series of comments was his report about the state of the steam engine at the Moseley Rd. Centre. (1/TSC: 12/5/1896)

Callaghan mimics Broscomb in making no comment or reference to the pupils requiring special educational provisions. These pupils have often been the focus of those involved in the development and delivery of PVE. (*Issue 9*) An observation regarding the education of pupils with special educational needs was made at the beginning of this section of this study. This issue can now be returned to at the end of the section. It could be argued that both Callaghan and Broscomb were less forthright about addressing the issue of special educational needs than they were with other aspects of education. They may have considered that other issues would be safer targets than special educational needs. Undoubtedly Callaghan would have considered that the majority of the electorate would have little or no knowledge of the specific demands of teaching special needs pupils. Broscomb would not have opened himself up to criticism if he felt his knowledge and expertise regarding special educational needs was not as good as other aspects of secondary education. It is



interesting that neither Callaghan or Broscomb made any comments about the performance of teachers involved in the delivery of special education.

The next two issues, those of examinations and less able pupils, are going to be given relatively brief regard at this point and covered more extensively in the section of the study that deals with the case study and the questionnaire responses received from secondary schools and companies based in Birmingham. In addition, extensive regard to each has also been made throughout the study.

### 3.8 Examinations and regard paid to the lower ability students.

Many words have already been given over in this study and elsewhere (Blackman: 1987) to the regard paid to the lower ability student and the association with certain types of courses, especially in the years prior to Callaghan's speech. As stated at the end of the last section further comments will be made later but in the meantime some time must be given to noting how the issues were being addressed in the City of Birmingham after 1976. In all of the records scrutinised in producing this study no reference can be found post Callaghan's speech to the effects or influence of the speech over developments with regards to either of the issues to be mentioned in this section of the study.

Another of the laudable intentions of the City of Birmingham concerns the motives for the introduction and development of a school pupil leaving certificate and the Record of Achievement some eight years before legislation (ERA) introduced the National Record of Achievement. Both the leaving certificate and RoA were intended to be completed regardless of the academic ability of the student. As a teacher facing increasing demands upon his professional time the requirement to complete yet more forms during this period was not well received. This is despite this researcher recognising the validity of the scheme to introduce a



more extensive or relevant leaving certificate and the RoA. In his comments in July 1980 to the council, John Crawford introduces the idea of the Birmingham School Certificate.

*It has been felt that such a document should be available for issue to all types of pupil and should cover a wide range of aspects of a pupil's school life.*  
(2/CoBDC: 1/7/1980)

Unfortunately the CEO does not clarify what he means by “all types of pupil.” Based upon the content of the many reports issued by Crawford and other officials it may be assumed that the main beneficiaries of the certificate were intended to be the students who had not followed a strict academic timetable and would be undertaking a limited range of examinations. An example of the certificate as contained in the report is reproduced in this study (Fig.29) in order to highlight the areas or characteristics which the authorities considered to be of such importance to include in a leaving certificate. Advocates of PVE will recognise these areas. Interestingly Crawford acknowledges that a wide range of representatives, including those from industry, were instrumental in deciding upon the content and design of the certificate. The blank certificate was accompanied by notes for teachers on how to complete the certificate. The following extracts from these guidance notes are of particular relevance to this study.

*-Those pupils who are likely to leave schools with few examination successes or other obvious achievement should know that their effort and a positive attitude will be generally reflected, so that they can be awarded a certificate which will make a good impression on employers and others.*

*-ensuring a fair representation of a pupil's characteristics.*

*-Comments could include reliable information about any definite positions of responsibility.*

*- to give full credit for effort and attitude.*

(2/CoBDC: 1/7/1980)

The above show a continuing regard to attitude, characteristics and the effort of students in completing their work. These facets of assessment are ones which equate to the specifics of



Fig.29 (An example of a Record of Achievement as proposed by the CEO, 1980)

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_  
 has been a student at this school for \_\_\_\_\_ years and completed his/her period of  
 compulsory education on \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of admission \_\_\_\_\_

<u>I</u>	<u>Attendance and Punctuality</u>	<u>Comment</u>
	Attendance during _____ (specify period)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Average _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Below Av. _____
	Punctuality during _____ (specify period)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Average _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Below Av. _____

<u>II</u>	<u>Personality</u>	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Av.	Poor
	Ability to get on with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Capacity to lead others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Self-reliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Willingness to co-operate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

III      Sense of Responsibility

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IV      Extra-Curricular and Recreational Activities and Achievements.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



V      Subjects Studied and Attainments

<u>Subject/Course</u>	<u>Level of Course</u>	<u>Effort</u>	<u>Achievement</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

VI      General Comment

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Status \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Head Teacher

This certificate is not a confidential reference. If a reference is required, the Head Teacher should be contacted at the school.

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the definition proposed in this study. To reiterate it is important to note that the above are considerations for assessment which prospective employers view particularly favourably.

Later the same year in a report Crawford presents in December 1980 to the District Council



he talks about the skills, attitudes etc which schools should consider appropriate for their pupils. In respect of an explanation or elaboration of what is to be understood by the notion of skills, these minutes give some clue as to what Crawford means. He talks about “*attitude*” as an adjunct to skill but again he fails to offer any expansion as to his understanding of the term. Crawford continued on to note that the City of Birmingham had financed various unemployment schemes since 1972. The eight week course at Brooklyn College was an example of such a course. The emphasis of this particular course was the “*less skilled.*” Therefore it is possible to infer or work out from looking at the syllabus of such a course what Crawford means by “*skills.*” The course ran for pupils immediately after the completion of their compulsory schooling. Crawford does not offer any clarification as to what is understood by the expression “*less skilled.*” He does however offer a list of the aims of such courses which may be used to provoke some comment. Crawford suggests.

*The aims of the course include to*

- (a) stimulate and maintain personal interest and enthusiasm and to sustain and develop physical stamina.*
  - (b) promote job satisfaction through increased self respect and a more responsible attitude.*
  - (c) enhance the prospect of employment.*
  - (d) give ... a lead into a wide range of employment themes extending the employable range of each student.*
- (2/CoBDC: 16/12/1980, 1)

Some thirty years on it is relatively easy to make observations about the above.

- 1) This is the only reference found to “*physical stamina.*” Is this to be regarded as a substitute for skill?
- 2) How are the skill levels to be measured?
- 3) Is it primarily pre-vocational skills that are being considered?
- 4) With regards the phrase “*a more responsible attitude.*” To what? To whom? How is responsibility and attitude quantified? Does Crawford consider that there is a direct correlation between lack of skill and attitude?
- 5) Which aspects of the 8 week course specifically increase the prospect of employment during an era of increasing unemployment? (Hence the name of the course!)
- 6) Or are the skills jobs specific and therefore vocationally orientated?



In undertaking this work the Education Department of the City of Birmingham demonstrated once again their proactive nature. This would not have been recognised or appreciated by a teacher working in Birmingham at this time and burdened with additional work. Further evidence of the initiative taken by the authorities in Birmingham can be inferred from the further minutes of the District Council for 1984, four years after the launch of the City of Birmingham RoA. The minutes note that the Government Instruction 6/84, "*Pilot Scheme to provide Records of Achievement for young people in Secondary Schools and Colleges*," which required councils "*to establish educationally satisfactory and cost effective ways of recording achievement by pupils and students.*" (2/CoBDC: 12/10/1984)

This researcher considers that after showing some initial promise (previously considered in "*Purpose of Education*" ) the rest of John Crawford's, the CEO of Birmingham, report pursues familiar themes. For example in the report "*Preparation Of Young People for Employment*" he talks about employers and teachers deciding, with "*great care*," (2/CoBDC: 27/1/ 1981, 9) placements for pupils upon leaving school "*to ensure the pupils are not permanently prejudiced against types of work which are in fact likely to be the only ones open to them.*" (Ibid, 9)

What is Crawford implying? It is relatively easy to infer from his comments that he is talking about the less able pupils and the type of work or employment that he envisages that these types of pupil will be looking to acquire. (Burchell: 1987) His bias, stereotyping and lack of understanding is illustrated further in his next observation that "*It is debateable whether a work experience programme can be established to cater for all pupils below a certain level of ability.*" (Ibid, 9)

Crawford's later insistence that these placements "*must involve useful production tasks*" (Ibid, 10) clouds the true intention of such programmes. In addition his comment



demonstrates a little uncertainty, as previous reports and comments by Crawford had apparently recognised the changing nature of the employment opportunities for young people. Crawford then goes on to call for the following familiar notions to be enacted in order to help prepare young people for the future.

*(a) Preparing young people for what the future involves.*

- (i) the need for pupils to gather information about careers education, training and non-work opportunities.*
- (ii) the need for pupils to know themselves their strengths, weaknesses and what they want from life.*
- (iii) the need for them to learn decision making skills.*
- (iv) The need for them to cope with the decisions reached. (Ibid, 10)*

Crawford's idea of preparing for unemployment in point (i) demonstrates genuine insight whilst his observation in point (iii) could almost be taken from the definition of PVE presented by this study. This researcher considers that unrealistically Crawford considers that the above should be achieved through a "*Social education programme*" which the students should follow in the final year of their compulsory education. Of particular interest is the fact that Crawford modifies his thinking a little to propose the possibility that some of his aspirations listed previously could be achieved across a range of timetabled (and discrete) school subjects. His examples involve craft subjects and English lessons. In other words Crawford is suggesting that aspects of what this study calls PVE could be subsumed into the school curriculum, a condition argued for by this study. PVE has suffered from the fact that it is often perceived as being a "bolt on" aspect of the curriculum or an additional subject aimed specifically at the less able pupils. The status of PVE can only be improved when it is accepted by curriculum planners as an aspect of the curriculum which is subsumed within all and across all of the discrete subjects offered to the pupils in the final two years of their compulsory education.

In discussing the role of careers education as part of his report Crawford adds to his list of



targets for preparing young people for the future with the inclusion of “*the need for them to learn transitional skills.*” (2/CoBDC: 27/1/1981) Crawford does not elaborate upon what this would entail. It is reasonable to argue that he is talking about the times when the pupils leave school and go on to employment. It is very difficult to visualise what these skills would be if they were only needed for this relatively short period. Therefore it is more likely that Crawford was talking about the skills that would be needed in all or any type of employment and would potentially be required for the duration of an individual’s career. These are the familiar skills of teamwork etc. This study contends that Crawford is in error to think that these could be taught solely within the last year of compulsory education as part of a programme of “*Social education*”. They are not, and should not be, “bolt on” or discrete subjects or provisions. Nevertheless this study should not become hijacked by anticipating Crawford’s intentions. It is perhaps more important for advocates of PVE to be encouraged by the fact that someone of Crawford’s stature was considering aspects of PVE.

Perhaps the most invasive of the recurring themes to have infiltrated the mindset of politicians, parents, industrialists the media and so on is that of the relationship between education standards and the state of the economy. Callaghan was not averse to alluding to the question as a way of steering the political agenda. Indeed this particular issue has permeated throughout the whole of this study with continual references being made to the concern. This topic is therefore of such importance then more than a brief mention must be made of the issue.

### 3.9 *The Perceived Link between Declining Education Standards and the Economy*

A question asked of Callaghan by Christopher Price M.P. covers some of the familiar issues that Callaghan would have been keen to have aired whilst he was Prime Minister. The question also serves to illustrate the subtle way in which the perceived state of the education



system is considered and developed as an influencing factor on the state of the economy.

Price asked Callaghan in Parliament about his Ruskin speech of the previous day.

*[Callaghan] suggested that our education system provided part of the cure for our country's economic ills, is he aware that some Government supporters have considerable concern and apprehension that we load onto our schools too much of an exclusively economic role? Does he not agree that it would be a pity if, in the debate that he initiated, we started a movement which made the teachers in our schools, who are doing a very good job, the scapegoat for the nation's economic ills? (Hansard: 1976c, 1115)*

Callaghan's response could have been taken directly from his speech. This observer considers that very cleverly it appears that at the same time Callaghan was distancing himself from blaming the state of the economy on the effectiveness of the education system.

Nevertheless the association has been made and it is one that commentators and politicians pick up on. (Caves & Krause: 1980) It is also a theme that had been addressed continually for many years prior to 1976. For example the local press of Birmingham reported in 1888 that, "*The Chairman of the BSB ... revealed a rather alarming vista of expenditure to the ratepayers.*" (Birmingham Daily Times: 3/2/1888) It appears that the Chairman of the BSB was attempting to justify his demand for an increase in the annual education budget to £70,000 in order to cope with the 66,000 pupils. It has already been noted that Callaghan too makes an association between education and the economy. Callaghan manages to use this association in his response to Price's question.

*Nothing that I have said so far should lead to that conclusion ... pointed out some worrying factors, ... large number of vacancies – I am told 30,000 or so for scientific and technical students in our universities and polytechnics ... a serious matter, which the nation should consider ... out the lack of coordination that exists between industry and education. I have asked that there should be better linkage between the two, and I should like to work to this. But I do not put anyone in the dock on this. We, as a nation, are too fond of trying to find scapegoats and of putting people in the dock. We have to discover what is wrong and to work towards putting it right. (Hansard: 1976c, 1115)*

On Thursday of the same week as Callaghan's visit to Ruskin P.M. Questions did not include



any reference to the Ruskin speech. There were however questions on unemployment and the state of the economy. This suggests that Callaghan's attempt to make "*his mark*" (Donoghue: 1987, 113) was struggling to find favour in the House of Commons. Indeed the number of questions which focused specifically on education that Callaghan faced in the House of Commons after the Ruskin speech continued at pre-Ruskin levels. From the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1976 onwards Callaghan only fielded one question on education. In his response to this question Callaghan once again took the opportunity to promote the familiar theme of the relationship between education and industry. (*Issue 4*) On 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 1976 Mr. Roberts M.P. asked Callaghan a question in the House.

*Has the P.M. considered the general reluctance of young people to enter industry as opposed to the public services may be due to the comparative uncertainty of employment in industry and the comparatively poor rewards that there appear to be for middle managers?* (Hansard: 1976d, 1196)

It is apparent that Callaghan was well prepared for the question. Whilst his response promotes one of his favourite themes it also allows him to promote his allegiance to the trade union movement in a public forum.

*... there is something in the first part [of the question.] When there are high levels of unemployment, certainty and security in employment are a very good attraction. But I think that it goes deeper than this. I doubt whether most of the 550,000 youngsters who left school in June and July all of whom, I am glad to say, are now off register, except for 78,000-were really concerned at this stage about rewards to mid-management ... we need ... a close relationship between school and industry ... and I hope that this will be encouraged.* (Ibid, 1196)

Callaghan was obviously keen to get some good news into the public domain and to "*input* [that] *will be most impressive.*" (Hennessy: 2000, 381) His apparent dismissal of 78,000 youngsters still on the unemployment register was not pursued by any of his opponents. Nobody apparently observed that 78,000 school-leavers represented approximately 14% of the number originally on the register. As noted previously when discussing Callaghan's



official papers he scribbled in the margin of his typed Ruskin speech a comment about “*the adverse effects of large scale unemployment.*” Callaghan’s manipulation of the situation illustrates further his intention to steer discussion away from the areas with which he was having most political difficulty. (Donoghue: 1987) In addition this researcher suggests that his need to use “*ad hoc arrangements*” (Callaghan: 1987, 402) in order to “*remain in office*” (Ibid, 402) also casts a shadow over his assertion in his autobiography that one of the reasons for his commitment to education was the recollection of his own school days.

[The] *teachers were conscientious and hard working ... never occurred to us, or perhaps to them, that education means more than committing facts to memory and ... its best it involves sparking the imagination, thinking for oneself and striking ideas from one another.* (Callaghan: 1987, 26)

Another of the reasons presented by the previously cited Robert Phillips as to why the Ruskin speech was so important concentrates on the perceived relationship between the health of the economy and standards within the education system. Unfortunately Phillips does not offer any substantial justification as to whether the association between the economy and education was based upon measurable or definable evidence. It seems to this researcher that those blaming economic shortfalls on the secondary education system often do so without presenting empirical evidence and/or fair comparisons. (Sanderson: 1999) Phillips claims that the Ruskin speech was important because it initiated “*the perception both within political circles and in the public minds that there was a close relationship between the economy and the education system.*” (Phillips: 2001, 12)

It is important to reiterate that it is one of the intentions of this study is to address the status of PVE. One way to do this is to disassociate PVE from the notions of it being a provision solely for the less able pupil (*Issue 9*) and that its main purpose is to serve as a solution to the economic problems of the nation. At the same time it is intended to argue against the belief that from 1976 onwards the U.K. has declined as an economic force with declining standards



in education being a contributory factor. (Senker: 1986) In order to dispel the myth about the originality and effectiveness of Callaghan's speech then this assertion must be questioned.

Finally it will be possible in this section to illustrate further the idea that PVE could be a valid contribution to post 14 education provisions for any student. In other words it is not just a provision for the less able pupil.

The most prolific of authors who has argued for an association between the success or otherwise of the economy with the role of education has been the previously cited Michael Sanderson. Considerable attention was given to his views in earlier in this study. As stated previously anyone interested in the topic of education and its relationship with industry and the economy should read Sanderson's body of work. In reading Sanderson's work this researcher has developed and outlined some reservations. However a reading of his work does give some insight into the historical relationship between industry, schools and the economy. In addition a reading helps to formulate questions and raise issues with regard to Callaghan's speech.

- Is the apparent need for politicians and others to "dabble" in education reform justifiable on the grounds of the prevailing national economic situation?
- Is there a direct causal relationship in the U.K. between post aged 14 education performance and the national economic performance?
- Has the use of PVE been a response to a perceived need to "catch – up" with some of the United Kingdom's international competition?

Sanderson, just like Prime Ministers Callaghan, Balfour and Blair seems to accept that there is some justification in undertaking education reform on the pretext of addressing the economic situation. Apart from the observation that a Prime Minister is always going to look for someone or something else to blame for any perceived difficulties within the economy or with industrial relations it appears that accepting this notion means that a Prime Minister is



always going to give the impression that we, as a nation, are always attempting to catch up with the standards achieved in other countries. A Prime Minister, Chancellor or Secretary of State for Education will have to be very brave in a political sense if education reform is ever going to be proactive as opposed to reactive. Politicians do not tend to be politically brave unless forced into a corner and then again they will often look for a scapegoat. According to the definition of PVE offered in this study PVE is in a position to be adaptable, flexible and therefore proactive. However politicians have tended to use PVE (e.g. the introduction of TVEI) as a response to perceived shortcomings instead of as a proactive device. Sanderson obviously does not have the ulterior motives of the likes of Callaghan and Donoghue. However the continuing fundamental flaw in Sanderson's work presents others with the opportunity to hide their own ulterior motives behind his thesis. Those using his ideas exploit the fact that he does not make like for like comparisons between the economic performance of the U.K. and that of other countries. For example, as suggested earlier, Sanderson will often compare elements of the U.K. economy with those of the USA, a far larger economy and a super power. In contrast although Bacon & Eltis (1974) make comparisons with the USA they do so at a micro economic level which goes some way to negating the effects or consequences of the USA being a super power. In addition Bacon & Eltis were making comparisons between the manufacturing sectors of the major economies around the time of the events of Ruskin. In their work they make no reference, other than to pay awards and the cost of running the service, to education. They seem to point the finger of blame elsewhere for the apparent demise of the economy.

*West Germany, Japan and recently France ... their government control of effective demand, the money supply & the exchange rate ... to provide an economic environment where businessmen & workers could co-operate to increase wealth ... (Bacon & Eltis: 1974, 1)*

Further Sanderson's assertion about the comparative performance of aspects of different



economies often appears to be based upon assumptions rather than any empirical or quantifiable evidence. This is particularly evident in his assertion which he makes frequently about the potential benefits of certain types of education. There is a vast amount of data available to commentators, such as Sanderson, which could be used to substantiate assertions or promote ideas. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, in order to substantiate further some of the assertions of this study a thorough analysis of some of this relevant data has been undertaken by this researcher and presented Appendix 2. The analysis is made by a researcher with no special training in either economics or statistical analysis yet is still able to illustrate the liberties taken by authors, politicians and commentators such as Sanderson and Callaghan.

David Coffey, Senior Lecturer in Guidance & Counselling at the University of Ulster, suggests that there has been a concentration on “*job specific skills in an attempt to respond to economic and industrial needs and demands.*” (Coffey: 1989, 359) He considers this concentration to be a little restrictive – the reason for this being that such a practice creates a narrow vocationalism which does not allow for an acceptance of the other aspects of the student’s education. The academic and aesthetic purposes of education, Coffey argues, are diluted by education planners in pursuit of a broad curriculum. Connecting these assertions of Coffey to his apparent confusion over the differences between pre-vocational and vocational education suggests that he has accepted the idea that education standards affect greatly the level of economic performance. He suggests that every effort is “*needed to be applied to deal with the rising levels of youth unemployment.*” (Ibid, 358) However this researcher argues that this is an observation that could be applied to any of the industrialised nations within any era of the last hundred years or so. Coffey is another that does not make use of the pertinent data that is readily available in order to substantiate his assertions.



Another who fails to make use of readily available data is Peter Senker, University of Sussex, who has no qualms about associating the economic fortunes of a nation with whatever is taught in secondary schools. It is not clear as to whether Senker is aware of the difference between pre-vocational and vocational education although he does acknowledge the importance of knowing how to “*learn how to learn.*” (Senker: 1986, 293) This idea is considered to be one of the cornerstones of the definition of PVE.

The lecturers and authorities in the history of education Richard Aldrich, David Crook and David Watson are a little conciliatory when they observe that the economic and social ills of the early 1970s “*re-focused attention on the disillusionment with the educational system which had developed in the 1960s.*” (Aldrich, Crook & Watson: 2000, 143) Without substantiating the claim they also suggest that some sort of systematic analysis followed in the 1970s and that the “*relationship between education and economic performance became a matter of urgent investigation.*” (Ibid, 143)

As stated at the outset of this study, the most significant recent contribution to the discussion on the education of 14 – 16 year olds has been the Tomlinson Report (2004). Some time must be spent looking at the report in order to illustrate the similarities with the Ruskin speech and therefore, by implication, illustrating a continuation of the themes which existed prior to Callaghan’s speech. Also it will show how developments within education in general, including PVE, are evolutionary and not revolutionary as some have accredited to the effects of Callaghan’s speech. (Jamieson, Miller & Watts: 1988) The following analysis of the report also helps to highlight several of the other issues/assertions raised by this study.



#### 4.1 The Tomlinson Report.

Reflecting on the recommendations and considerations of the Tomlinson Report will help to address the following aims of this study:

- To raise the awareness of the existence of PVE and of its generic nature.
- To make a further contribution to the ongoing debate as regards the relevance of the contemporary 14 – 16 secondary school curriculum.
- Highlight the relevance of PVE to secondary school education.
- Provide evidence of the longevity of PVE.

In contrasting circumstances to those which faced Callaghan exactly twenty eight years earlier, the former Chief Inspector of Schools for England and Wales, Michael Tomlinson, on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2004, presented his long awaited report on the reform of the curriculum and assessment arrangements for 14 – 19 year olds. Both the national media and T.V. were well represented at the presentation although neither reported any significance of this particular date. Unlike Callaghan Tomlinson did not have to deal with a demonstration by the NUS.

Tomlinson was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1942. In contrast to Callaghan's education Tomlinson read chemistry at Durham University and after graduating he went on to become a secondary school teacher, indeed teaching whilst Callaghan was the Prime Minister. He became an HMI in 1978. He was eventually appointed HM Chief Inspector in 2000 serving in this capacity for two years. Tomlinson is regarded as having a "safe pair of hands" in terms of handling the pressure and demands of dealing with the media, politicians and others involved in secondary education. (Guardian: 18 & 19/10/2004) He had produced one previous report for the DfES in December 2002 entitled, "*Inquiry into A level standards.*" Tomlinson had been involved in education for many years in a range of capacities suggesting therefore that his report of 2004 would not have any credibility issues.



#### 4.2 What did the report have to say?

In order to compile his final report Tomlinson charged sub-groups with making recommendations and providing information to the main working group. Presenting the names and details of the main group members (Fig.30) is a similar task to that which was undertaken earlier in this study concerning the members of the Hadow Committee (1926).

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Fig.30 (Main Working Group, Tomlinson Committee, Tomlinson Report:2004)

<i>Michael Tomlinson CBE.</i>	<i>Chairman.</i>
<i>John Berkeley OBE.</i>	<i>Director, National Apprentice Monitoring Unit.</i>
<i>Simon Culmer.</i>	<i>Operations Director, Cisco Systems, U.K.</i>
<i>David Eastwood.</i>	<i>Vice Chancellor, University of East Anglia.</i>
<i>Carmel Flatley</i> (up to 06/2003)	<i>Director of H.R. &amp; Training, McDonalds Restaurants Ltd.</i>
<i>Ian Ferguson.</i> (from 07/2003)	<i>Chairman, Data Connections Ltd.</i>
<i>Helen Gilchrist.</i>	<i>Principal, Bury College.</i>
<i>Edward Gould.</i>	<i>Master, Marlborough College.</i>
<i>John Guy OBE.</i>	<i>Principal, Farnborough VI Form College.</i>
<i>Carolyn Hayman OBE.</i>	<i>Chief Executive, the Foyer Foundation.</i>
<i>Colin Hilton.</i>	<i>Executive Director, Liverpool City Council.</i>
<i>David Melville CBE.</i>	<i>Vice Chancellor, University of Kent.</i>
<i>David Raffé</i>	<i>Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Edinburgh.</i>
<i>Jennifer Slater.</i>	<i>Principal of North Allerton College.</i>
<i>Ken Spours.</i>	<i>University of London Institute of Education.</i>
<i>Kathleen Tattershall.</i>	<i>Former D.G. AQA.</i>

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As in 1926 the membership of 2004 shows a poor representation of the grass roots of the teaching profession with not one member of a state secondary school serving on a working group. (*Issues 1 & 3*) It shows that there were many groups which had vested interests in the outcome of the report and which, in the opinion of this researcher, Tomlinson mistakenly tried to appease. (*Issue 1*) The difficulty with Tomlinson attempting to appease all of the



parties involved in the working group is highlighted by the previously discussed Ian Ferguson's involvement with the group after he replaced Carmel Flatley in July 2003. Not only was Ferguson Chairman of *Cisco Systems U.K.*, a large multi-national company, he was also Chairman of the Government's QCA Qualifications and Skills Advisory Group as well as having involvement with the CBI.

The main proposals of the Tomlinson Report are covered in Figs.31 & 31b.

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Fig.31 (Main proposals of the Tomlinson Report: 2004)

	<u>Diplomas</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Current Qualification</u>
<b>Advanced</b>	CORE + MAIN LEARNING	3	ADVANCED EXTENSION, GCE, VCE, AS & A LEVEL, LEVEL 3 NVQ.
<b>Intermediate</b>	CORE + MAIN LEARNING	2	GCSE A* - C, INTER GNVQ, LEVEL 2 NVQ
<b>Foundation</b>	CORE + MAIN LEARNING	1	GCSE D – G, FOUNDATION GNVQ, 1 NVQ.
<b>Entry</b>	CORE + MAIN LEARNING	Entry	ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATES & OTHER WORK BELOW LEVEL ONE.

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Tomlinson suggests that his new qualification process would lead to the award of one of four levels of a diploma. (*Issue 8*) The suggestion of the Tomlinson Report that pupils will be awarded diplomas when they are ready or when they have completed their work as opposed to just at the time of the end of school year examinations is something that has been proposed within PVE. This concept has unfortunately always been restricted by the demands of the external awarding bodies of GCSEs to exam candidates at set times of the year. This leads onto another fundamental of PVE and one that the Tomlinson Report has picked up on. PVE advocates would argue that qualifications taken by an individual can be done at any time of the year and then developed upon at later stages to even higher levels. (*Issue 8*) This idea



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Fig.31b (Letter of recommendation outlining main proposals of the Tomlinson Report.)

*14 – 19 Curriculum and Qualifications Reform.*  
*Final Report of the Working Group on 14 – 19 Reform.*

*All 14 – 19 programmes should comprise core and main learning.*

*Core learning should ensure:*

- *specified levels of achievement in functional mathematics, functional literacy & communication. ICT.*
- *completion of an extended project appropriate to the level of the diploma.*
- *development of a range of common knowledge, skills & attributes (CKSA).*
- *an entitlement to wider activities; and*
- *support for learners in planning and reviewing their learning, and guidance in making choices about further learning and careers.*

*All 14 – 16 year olds should continue to follow the statutory National Curriculum at Key Stage 4 and other statutory curriculum requirements.*

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requires the unlikely eventuality of schools accepting the notion of other institutions helping by offering components of an individual candidate's proposed career path, e.g. School A offering performing art type courses whilst School B would provide business courses for a student to dip into. In the many years of the existence of PVE it has struggled to overcome the feeling of insularity or independence that the individual schools feel that they must operate within. In other words schools find it difficult to cooperate with other schools if they feel that there is some status to be lost or if the successful student would not count as a positive for the school in the school league or performance tables. Possibly the only regular exception to this has been when the more disruptive pupils have been offered chances to undertake courses outside of school, e.g. at colleges of Further Education. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that this practice of offering the disruptive pupil courses outside of the school environment would fall to the member of staff in charge of PVE to organise as the



prevailing perception is that the composition of such a course is more likely to be vocational or pre -vocational in nature. (*Issue 3*) This has obvious implications in terms of the association made between the nature of PVE programmes and the type of pupil that it engages. Other recommendations of the report a PVE practitioner may recognise include:

- the chance for students to be offered detailed advice on future options. (Tomlinson: 2004, 11) (*Issues 3, 4, 5 & 8*)
- the recognition of the value of “*wider aspects*” such as sport, arts and community service. (Ibid, 13) (*Issue 3*)
- the electronic recording of an individual’s progress. (Ibid, 14) (*Issue 8*)
- “*compulsory, core elements*” including literacy, numeracy & computer skills. (Ibid, 29) (*Issues 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 & 10*)

More importantly the examples that Tomlinson gives of his CKSA (key skills) which he suggests would be entities “*such as personal awareness, problem solving, creativity, team-working and moral and ethical awareness,*” (Ibid, 33) would fit comfortably within the definition of PVE suggested by this study. The only question mark over this claim would be Tomlinson’s inclusion of moral and ethical aspects. PVE provisions do not contain elements which may be considered to include the titles of morals and ethics. After the introduction of PSME courses into schools at the end of the nineteen eighties the folly of attempting to preach morals and ethics in such a context was realised and subsequently dropped. The other major concern that this researcher has with the report is Tomlinson’s insistence upon giving pre-vocational courses a value in terms of equating the qualification to a number of GCSEs or “A” levels. This practice once again has adverse implications with regard perceptions and the status of PVE.

A more direct comparison between aspects of Callaghan’s speech and the content of the Tomlinson Report will be made shortly. In the mean time, and of direct benefit to the considerations of this study, would be a more in depth look at some of the content of the



Tomlinson Report. The following concerns of this study find some resonance within the Tomlinson Report.

- 1a) The nature and content of PVE.
- b) A lack of understanding of the distinction between pre vocational and vocational education.
- 2) The issue of the lack of parity of esteem between academic and vocational programmes.
- 3) The recurring themes which have appeared pre and post 1976.

The report emphasises the need for “*a unified framework of 14 – 19 curriculum and qualifications*” with a “*high quality vocational provision to be available.*” (Ibid, 3) (Issues 3, 5 & 8) In Tomlinson’s introductory letter of recommendation to Charles Clarke, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, there is no explicit mention of the need for PVE provisions. Unfortunately at no point in the report is there a direct call for a programme specifically called PVE. Such a call may have enhanced greatly the status of PVE. On the other hand there is the idea or familiar theme that a young person (Issue 3) “*should be able to develop her/his full potential and become equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for adult life.*” (Ibid, 5)

This is a sentiment that appears a number of times throughout the report and may be considered as another indication or example of one of the recurring themes. Unfortunately however there are obvious problems in making assumptions about Tomlinson’s understanding of PVE or an awareness of the potential for PVE to sit astride all facets of the curriculum.

The report continues on to call for the “*development of positive attitudes to continuing learning.*” (Ibid, 5) Whilst the word attitude is contained within this study’s definition of PVE the notion of continuing learning is a new idea. However the definition of PVE does



refer to the process of education and could quite easily be taken to include the concept of continuing education. Tomlinson makes the following request.

[A call for] *a common format for all ... programmes which combines the knowledge & skills everybody needs for participation in a full adult life ... to meet own interests, aptitude & ambition ... develop knowledge, skills & understanding of academic and vocational subjects and discipline which provides a basis for work-based training, higher education and employment.* (Ibid, 5)

The most striking question about this particular sentiment is what exactly does Tomlinson mean? Is he, as this study would contend, arguing a case for PVE or is there some other consideration? Why does Tomlinson persist in distinguishing between the academic and other provisions when talking about work-based learning? With the potential consequence of helping to perpetuate the long held perception about the value and worth of each of the provisions i.e. academic v pre-vocational considerations. (*Issues 3, 4 & 5*)

Some time should be spent considering the first question about what exactly Tomlinson was trying to say. Is he saying that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of academic and vocational provisions? Consequently is there a different approach to be taken by educators depending on the perceived focus of the subject e.g. strict academic lessons or a more laissez-faire approach to vocational provisions? (*Issues 6 & 8*) And are the perceptions of the individuals involved in delivering either the academic or vocational subject affected by the setting of the subject e.g. in the work-place, in the school classroom or in a university?

This study contends that Tomlinson should have realised, and, more importantly, acknowledged the generic nature of PVE which could be used in a work-based setting and/or a Higher Education setting and/or in employment and/or classroom and so on. This idea echoes the previous discussion in this study regarding the nature and purpose of education. (*Issue 3*) This may be considered as being one of the major flaws of the Tomlinson Report i.e. not recognising the several purposes of education and assigning these purposes



appropriately. From the outset of the report there is no explicit recognition of the existence of PVE yet Tomlinson states that he intends to consider the interests of pupils, employers, Higher Education institutions and the requirements for an “*adult life.*” (Ibid, 5) This is a task for which PVE is qualified. In addition there is no recognition that some of Tomlinson’s special interest groups will have unique considerations that may not necessarily complement each other. PVE advocates do not claim that PVE can address each of the specific interests of all groups, however they would claim that PVE does engage the attributes that would allow individuals to recognise these differences and to be able to explore a resolution to the conflicts that the inconsistencies may create. The nearest Tomlinson comes to acknowledging and defining the constituents of PVE is when he suggests that his proposals will “*enable learners to develop and demonstrate a range of generic skills ... problem solving, researching and managing own learning ...*” (Ibid, 5)

According to this study the definition of PVE demands “*an understanding of how to seek solutions to problems.*” This would certainly include the need for students to be able to research and organise their own learning. Remembering that at around the time of Callaghan’s speech the Holland Report (1977) suggested that employers wanted potential employees to display a particular willingness and attitude to work. Those involved in academic work certainly require the ability to know where to seek solutions to problems. The generic attributes of PVE should be allowed to cross the boundaries of those who do not want to enhance the esteem of vocational qualifications. A public recognition by, for example, a senior representative of one of the many special interest groups e.g. TUC or CBI, of the need of an understanding of the value of generic entities, (as covered by PVE) would go some way to improving the status of PVE and consequently that of vocational qualifications. Each of the skills listed by Tomlinson e.g. *research*, can be taught and the rules and techniques (Issue 6) established which could be applied across any of the various settings e.g. academic, work-



based or during unemployment. When Tomlinson begins to discuss his generic skills it appears that he may be getting ready to acknowledge the existence of PVE. Unfortunately this is not the case as he once again returns to less specific phraseology such as “*employability skills*” (Ibid, 13)

Tomlinson once again misses the opportunity he creates to argue explicitly for PVE when in calling for “*a core*” that would offer certain guarantees. (*Issues* 3, 5 & 10)

[To] *ensure that young people acquire the functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication, functional ICT and common knowledge, skills and attributes to take beyond the age of 16.* (Ibid, 29)

He omits to call his core by any other title or to illustrate how the skills would go across the arbitrarily designed boundaries which separate the different environments or disciplines e.g. the factory floor, the class room or the lecture theatre.

Interestingly as the report progresses the word “*functional*” is added to some of the subjects from when they were first mentioned in the report e.g. “*literacy*” becomes “*functional literacy*.” The meaning of the word in the context in which it is being used is a little ambiguous. For the purposes of this study “*functional*” will be taken to mean “appropriate to the task at hand” – which is a facet of PVE. Tomlinson does not help the situation by omitting to define or clarify what he takes the word to mean.

Again Tomlinson hints at the existence of PVE during the process of acknowledging the demands of what he calls *vocational qualifications*. (Ibid, 32) Unfortunately however what Tomlinson actually does is to illustrate the most common failing exhibited by those who become involved in education without fully understanding the nuances of vocational education. Tomlinson cites the content of BTEC provisions as an example of the existing material that he has used to develop the content of his *Extended Project*. BTEC provisions



are used by Tomlinson as exemplars of the vocational content he would like to see adapted in his proposals. Unfortunately he has failed to realise that many of the BTEC provisions are in fact examples of pre-vocational provisions. Tomlinson argues that his proposed *Extended Project* would allow for certain learning opportunities. Indeed a case could be made to suggest that Tomlinson was arguing for the incorporation of PVE into the curriculum without realising it.

[To] ensure that all learners develop and demonstrate a range of generic skills including research and analysis, problem solving, team-working, independent study, presentation and functional literacy and communication and critical thinking. (Ibid, 32)

Many of these points are already old favourites within Tomlinson's Report and repeat the observations he made concerning the *Core* component of his proposal. Nevertheless the notion of generic skills is perhaps the nearest he comes to an explicit recognition of the existence of PVE. The expansion of Tomlinson's proposals with regard to his *CKSA* includes many of the goals, aims, tasks etc associated with PVE. Interestingly Tomlinson does appear to offer considerations which may, on the surface, not find a direct comparison with the established content of PVE. However this researcher thinks that a closer analysis suggests that in fact what Tomlinson has done is to become very much more prescriptive in his proposals for the assessment process, almost replicating the pre-vocational provisions of the early 1980s. (*Issue 8*) One of the reasons why such provisions in the 1980s struggled to be accepted in schools was because of their insistence on being over prescriptive.

"*Young People & Work*," (MSC: 1977) more commonly known as the Holland Report is the first official and significant piece of relevant research completed after Callaghan's speech. And just as there were some benefits to comparing the requests of the Holland Report to those of Hayward & Fernandez (Fig.5) there are some benefits for this study in making a comparison between the content of the Tomlinson Report, published towards the end of the



time frame of this study, and the Holland Report, published just after the Ruskin speech. It can be demonstrated (Fig.33) how Tomlinson has broken down into smaller sections the majority of the elements which the Holland Report highlighted twenty seven years earlier. Some recognition in the comparison has been given to the ethical and moral components of the Tomlinson Report but it has only been considered in this analysis on the proviso that the earlier discussion in this study on its inclusion is acknowledged. In the end there were some points from each report which could not be compared directly with an aspect of the other report. (Fig.32) However these points are few in number and give some support to one of the ideas of this study concerning the lack of influence of Callaghan's speech and the long established presence of pre-vocational components.

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Fig.32 (Aspects of the two reports which cannot be compared directly.)

Holland Report - good level of general fitness.  
- specific physical attributes.  
- appearance/tidiness.

Tomlinson Report - think and use skills creatively.  
(- be morally and ethically aware.)

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However there is a considerable number of points/recommendations/considerations where an appropriate direct comparison between the two reports can be made. This must be taken as a clear indication that Callaghan's speech had very little influence and that really within secondary education there are only a limited number of issues. It is also possible to see them as evolutionary and not, as advocates of the influence of Callaghan's speech (Donoghue: 1987 & Graham: 1993) would consider the changes in secondary education, as revolutionary.

The aspects of the Holland Report which have no direct comparison with the Tomlinson Report give clues about the changes that may have occurred in society during the period from



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Fig.33 (Comparison between the two most significant reports at each end of the primary study period.)

<u>HOLLAND REPORT 1977</u>	<u>TOMLINSON REPORT 2004</u>
1- willingness/attitude to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- organise and regulate own learning.</li> <li>- set objectives.</li> <li>- manage time effectively.</li> <li>- undertake research.</li> <li>- active citizenship and the work place.</li> <li>- know about other countries and other cultures and understand and value ethnic, cultural and religious diversity.</li> </ul>
2- basic 3Rs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functional numeracy, literacy and English and communication.</li> </ul>
3- maturity/stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- manage own time effectively.</li> <li>- working in groups.</li> <li>- seeking understanding and evaluating the viewpoints of others.</li> <li>- be aware of rights and responsibilities.</li> </ul> (- be morally and ethically aware.)
4- ability to communicate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functional communication.</li> <li>- giving and receiving feedback.</li> </ul>
5- willingness to join a union.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be aware of rights and responsibilities.</li> </ul>
6- good level of numeracy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functional numeracy.</li> <li>- identify, analyse and evaluate relevant information derived from different sources and contents.</li> </ul>
7- past experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identify and solve problems.</li> <li>- identify, analyse and evaluate relevant information derived from different sources and contents.</li> <li>- working in groups.</li> <li>- compromising.</li> <li>- giving and receiving support and feedback.</li> <li>- empathising and understanding the needs of others.</li> </ul>
8- good written English/literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- functional English and literacy.</li> </ul>
9- specific qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continue with Key Stage 3 curriculum.</li> </ul>

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twenty seven years on. Looking at the social developments of this period would also provide a context for the many changes within education which have occurred. Once again a reminder must be given that this is not the primary purpose of this study and indeed there exist many more authoritative authors in this field. (Simon: 1991, McCulloch: 1998, Gamble: 2000 & Watts: 2007)

The segment of the Tomlinson proposals which does not find a direct comparison with Holland is that concerning the creative process. However it would not be too difficult to convince readers that the notion of thinking creatively could be applied across all facets of both reports and indeed any other report concerning education. However due to the potential ambiguity of the sentiment it is perhaps best to leave this as the only aspect of Tomlinson's generic skills without a direct comparison with the Holland Report. The considerable differences in the detail of the two reports, Tomlinson's being very much more prescriptive, means that several of the recommendations of the Tomlinson Report may be compared with more than one element of the Holland Report. It must be accepted that some considerable argument could be given over to justifying some of the comparisons. However the mere fact that such a discussion could take place means that some credibility should be given to the comparisons that have been made. Also the comparison does serve to show the many similarities which exist.

Of some significance is the fact that in 1977, according to the Holland Report, 81% of the employers questioned considered the "*willingness and attitude*" of potential employees to be the most important attribute. Many years later several of the recommendations from Tomlinson can be compared directly with Holland's "*willingness and attitude.*" Of course it may be argued that this title casts such a wide net that it is bound to scoop up more comparisons than others. It may also be argued that the willingness and the attitude of an



individual may be applied to any walk of life or to any situation. Nevertheless this study contends that the comparison illustrates that Tomlinson's "*generic skills*" and Holland's "*attributes*" are recognised as being of some importance. The task of demonstrating how the skills and attributes referred to by both Holland and Tomlinson comply with the definition of PVE is undertaken in Fig.35. Before then the definition of PVE created in this study can be split into the distinct elements (Fig.34) in order to make further comparisons between the beginning of the time frame of this study, 1976, and with the end, 2004, possible.

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Fig.34

The definition of PVE offered by this study can be split into three distinct components.

- A     *"PVE is an approach to the process of education that requires an acceptance by its participants of its integration into the curriculum.*
  - B     *It provides situations where an individual's attitudes and experiences are focused on achieving an ...*
  - C     *... understanding of how to seek solutions to problems."*
- 
- 

The following (Fig.35) illustrates how each of the blocks or elements of the two reports above square up against the elements of the definition of PVE. The most striking observation with regard to the chart is that element B of this study's definition can be applied to each of the groupings or recommendations of Holland and Tomlinson. Element B concerns itself with the learner's attributes and experiences. This point raises in the mind of this researcher the question as to whether all the acclaim afforded to the GCSE system is warranted. However this question and others about this observation will be returned to at the end of this study when the way forward for the development of pre-vocational provisions is considered.



Fig.35 identifies four groupings (2, 6, 8 & 9) within which all elements of the definition of PVE can be applied. These same four groupings can be applied equally to those sections of Callaghan's speech which are concerned with the basic subjects. However it may be contended that the same argument can be applied to any of the reports, speeches and so on concerned with secondary education which have appeared over the last thirty years or so. In other words Callaghan, Holland and Tomlinson all concerned themselves with long established themes. This in turn suggests that Callaghan was not being particularly innovative with the contents of his speech.

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Fig.35 (Applying the definition of PVE to elements of significant reports.)

<u>HOLLAND/TOMLINSON</u> (Fig.33)	<u>DEFINITION COMPONENTS</u> (Fig.34)
1	B
2	ABC
3	B
4	B
5	BC
6	ABC
7	B
8	ABC
9	ABC

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The following extract from the Tomlinson Report serves not only to illustrate the existence of PVE, although once again without any tacit acknowledgement from Tomlinson, but it also reintroduces the familiar theme of the lack of understanding by many authorities of the distinctions between pre-vocational and vocational education.

*In discussing vocational programmes we should recognise that they have an important role as a vehicle for general education as well as for occupational preparation. Vocational programmes should therefore be designed to achieve broad objectives and to support progression to a range of destinations.*  
(Tomlinson:2004, 78)



This study suggests that Tomlinson does not realise that vocational programmes cannot address *broad objectives*. Vocational programmes can help to provide opportunities or situations in which the pre-vocational components, or broader objectives, may be practised. This is by far the most consistent misunderstanding shown by people when discussing facets of pre-vocationalism. Vocational education and qualifications address a specific occupation. For example the unique demands of brain surgery are performed by only those trained or educated in the unique demands of brain surgery. However the ability or skill of the brain surgeon to interact with their patient is a skill not unique and may also be applied to other situations. In these examples the brain surgeon is using aspects of both vocational and PVE. Tomlinson's *broad objectives* refer to skills or attributes which can be taken from one situation to another and so therefore must be considered to be pre-vocational in content. The more successful the acquisition of these attributes etc. the more prepared an individual becomes to acquire subject or job specific skills or vocational qualifications. Another example is the brain surgeon's ability to work in a team and to be receptive to the ideas of others will serve the brain surgeon well as well as other individuals in their chosen occupation.

There is potential for some ambiguity to occur in the interpretation of Tomlinson's request for a "*coherent delivery of the knowledge and skills needed by different employment sectors*" (Ibid, 78) appears to suggest a lack of understanding by Tomlinson of the distinction between pre-vocational and vocational education. This study has already identified examples of those skills, attributes etc which are required in every position and more importantly are transferable between each of the positions. Unfortunately it appears that Tomlinson is unaware of the flexibility of that which he calls "*generic skills*" and therefore of the possible irrelevance of the learning environment. After all this is one of the reasons that companies or organisations take employees away from their normal working environment in order to



undertake team building or initiative building exercises. (Everard & Morris: 1985) On the other hand a task which is specific to a particular job is vocational and the environment or situation in which the skill, attribute etc is developed is often crucial to the successful acquisition of the skill e.g. Astronauts will attempt to replicate weightlessness during their training.

Although his intentions are laudable Tomlinson's failure to recognise that the following observation he makes is in fact about PVE means that another opportunity he creates to advance the cause of PVE has been lost. Nevertheless practitioners of pre-vocational education should attempt to take some encouragement from the following thought.

*There is no absolute distinction between vocational and general (or academic) learning. Good vocational provision develops skills, knowledge and attributes that are desirable in adult life generally, and not only in the workplace; conversely, much of what is learnt in general or academic learning is relevant to employment. (Ibid, 77)*

The next group of examples taken from the Tomlinson Report are considered in order to discuss the esteem afforded to PVE by parents, pupils, teachers, employers and so on. This is another of the important recurring themes of this study. The first example is one that was used earlier when aspects of the observations of Tomlinson were used to support this study's definition of PVE. Tomlinson talks about wanting particular aspects to a provision.

*[To] develop knowledge, skills and understanding of academic and vocational subjects and disciplines which provide a basis for work-based training, higher education and employment (Ibid, 5)*

He is once again making a claim for PVE without actually naming the provision. Not using the title of PVE undermines the work of those individuals who advocate PVE and would like to see proper accreditation from someone such as Tomlinson. In addition, and to reiterate a recurring contention of this study, in emphasising a possible distinction between that which Tomlinson calls *academic* and that which he calls *vocational*, he only serves to perpetuate the



associations or stereotypes (*Issues 3 & 9*) that have become attached to each of the subjects, e.g. that the vocational subjects are pursued by those unable to cope with the demands of an academic subject. In addition to distinguishing between the pre-vocational and vocational elements Tomlinson could have done more to raise the status of the vocational subjects by pointing out how vocational subjects are often taught in an environment which is considered to be a more academic setting. Indeed it is possible to point out the many significant historical examples of such work, e.g. by priests, doctors, teachers etc.. Further examples can be seen in those who attempt to improve their knowledge or understanding of their job or profession through academic study, e.g. a Nursery Nurse may pursue a degree in Child Development. This is the basis of the work of the Open University championed by Harold Wilson. Tomlinson fails to point out that the skills which overlap the academic and vocational should be classified as being pre-vocational. A simple statement to this effect by someone of Tomlinson's stature would do the cause of PVE no harm. When Tomlinson fails to clarify the notion of the significance of the environment in which learning can take place he once again fails to enhance the status of PVE. For example he should have explained that both academic and vocational learning can take place in the classroom or in the factory.

On page 6 of his report Tomlinson not only illustrates his lack of understanding of the distinction between pre-vocational and vocational education but he also compounds the problem concerning the esteem given to pre-vocational and vocational education. When Tomlinson proposes to provide more specialised named pathways covering broad academic and vocational domains, not only does he fail to see the potential contradiction in his proposal but also to qualify what he means by the term broad. He could have encouraged supporters of PVE a little had he at least acknowledged that the broad vocational domain could have an academic content. Unfortunately this was not to be. The need for a clarification or more detailed explanation of his terminology is needed in order to address the concern of esteem or



status given to those subjects not considered to be academic. The same observations or comments can be made with regard his intention to “*place all learning in a single framework which emphasises the equally valid but different academic and vocational training.*” (Ibid, 13) There should be no distinction made between the different learning environments if the issue of esteem is to be addressed conscientiously. He redeems himself a little when he suggests that “*Bringing vocational pathways into a single framework would give formal equality between academic, vocational and mixed pathways.*” (Ibid, 71) However he is naïve to think that this is the only action that is needed to address the question of esteem and equality. For advocates of PVE perhaps a little more encouragement can be taken from the fact that Tomlinson appears to recognise and agree that (Issues 9 & 10) “*vocational learning is not just a matter of contributing skills to the economy, nor of providing opportunities to young people who find difficulties with academic subjects ...*” (Ibid, 178)

The following three sentiments taken from the report are familiar not just because they can be found in various forms in both Callaghan’s speech and the Tomlinson Report but because they are also sentiments with historical foundations laid long before Callaghan’s interjection into the field of education. The first is when Tomlinson talks about the basics of education. He talks about “*functional mathematics, literacy & communication and ICT.*” (Ibid, 4) Although even in this instance, as noted previously, there is a subtle change between that which Tomlinson talks about here and his previous description of the basics offered earlier in his report. His addition of the word “*functional*” to each of the individual subjects prompts questions and issues including the notion of the perception of concerned groups and the effects on the esteem given to the provisions. (Issues 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 & 10) In a hierarchical structure of examinations, any qualification considered to be functional would not be placed particularly highly. The following are the other two familiar sentiments to be taken from this part of the report.



*Every young person should be able to develop her/his full potential, and become equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for adult life. (Ibid, 5) and*

*This includes preparation for work to which they are suited, development of positive attitudes to continuing learning and active participation within the community. (Ibid, 5)*

The above sentiments prompts questions on themes familiar to this study.

- 1) Who decides upon the suitability of individuals for certain programmes?
- 2) When should the selection for particular pathways be made?
- 3) What distinguishes each of the particular pathways?
- 4) Do these distinctions help to perpetuate concerns about the parity of esteem issues between different pathways?

The final question to raise concerns Tomlinson's ideas on page 78 of his report where he considers the vocational provisions of other countries. This study attests that Tomlinson is not the only person to have made unsubstantiated and unfair comparisons between the programmes offered in the U.K. and those offered in other countries. Prime Minister Balfour, for example, was undertaking the same task 102 years before Tomlinson whilst the previously cited Michael Sanderson (1988, 94 & 99) does so throughout his work.

This researcher considers that many, if not the majority, of the recommendations of the Tomlinson Report will never be enacted because of political considerations. For example it is unlikely that any political party in power would put teachers back into a position where they have the potential to exert political pressure. Teachers will not be given the opportunity to work to rule as they will have more control over the final assessment of the performance of a pupil's course work. Neither will the Government put teachers into a position where they will be able to justify above inflation salary demands. Tomlinson's proposals for the final assessment of each pupil leaving school would allow teachers to reacquire some of these bargaining tools.



With a naive disregard for politics an advocate of PVE would support proposals like Tomlinson's which allows for the development of the formative assessment process. Tomlinson either displayed a considerable naivety in suggesting that the role of teachers should be increased to include a greater say in the final assessment of their students for the award of qualifications or he may have been demonstrating some political acumen by attempting to use his position of influence to encourage the development of a principle. For those that favour the former as suggested earlier, this is another of the practical flaws in the recommendations of Tomlinson.

This researcher attests that ever since 1979 the Government of the day has attempted to erode the influence of teachers in the awarding of the final assessment mark for their pupils. This has coincided with the growing influence of central Government in designing the curriculum of schools. (Gordon: 2002) Whilst also remembering that the Government has concentrated on taking away the bargaining tools of teachers with regard their pay and conditions.

Some time can be given to seeing if the significance of the publication of the Tomlinson Report was realised and view how the report was greeted. These views once again can be taken as primary sources as they reflect the authoritative views of commentators of the day.

#### 4.3 *The end of an era or the continuation of a myth?*

As this study did with Callaghan's Ruskin speech some words should be given over to seeing how the report was greeted at the time.

The reporting of the print media of the Tomlinson Report provide clues as to the changes that have occurred within education since 1976. More newspapers were represented and reported Tomlinson's presentation than attended Callaghan's speech. This illustrates further how the subject of education has become much more of a public and political (*Issue 1*) concern.



The *Guardian* is one of the few papers to have reported Callaghan's speech. Its subsequent revisiting of the speech on the occasions of notable anniversaries singles the paper out in terms of recognition of the original speech. This interest in Callaghan's words makes their reporting of the Tomlinson Report a little disappointing. They employ the tactic of almost exclusively seeking out the views of individuals to fill up the column inches. Admittedly they do seek out those that may be expected to have an insight into the affairs of secondary education. The *Guardian*'s team of writers, Rebecca Smithers, Michael White and Lucy Ward, are experienced enough to have been able to have produced more of an insight into the potential consequences or pitfalls of the recommendations of Tomlinson than they actually did. However they may argue that the question posed by the *Guardian* following the publication of the report demonstrated some of their experience and insight. It would have been interesting to have read the reporters' own answers to their question. In the editorial the paper asked, "*Are we ready to abandon over a century and a half of deeply ingrained prejudice against technical education and recognise its importance?*" (18/10/2004a.)

Some credit must be given to the reporters for recognising and acknowledging an "*ingrained prejudice*" and for talking about the importance of technical education. Unfortunately what the reporters fail to do is to recognise what the report actually talks about in terms of pre-vocational and vocational education. Had the reporters recognised that which was actually being said about the two different strands of what Tomlinson referred to as "*vocational pathways*" then they would not have used the terminology that they did. Their use of the phrase "*technical education*" is something of a revival of seventy years or so ago when the expression was used to describe a range of programmes which did not fit neatly into the academic curriculum. These particular programmes were actually predominately pre-vocational in nature. It is not made clear as to why the *Guardian* has opted to use such a phrase. It may be that the reporters were attempting to demonstrate their apparent expertise



of reporting about a range of areas from within the field of education. Or the paper was attempting to distinguish itself from the other national newspapers who on the whole stuck to the phraseology used by Tomlinson. The use of the expression “*technical education*” also has connotations with regard to the Education Act (1944) which is one of the most influential pieces of legislation in education. Arguably the *Guardian* may be attempting, albeit very subtly, to show the potential or implications of Tomlinson’s proposals. This, however, is possibly a very generous interpretation of their reporting. Whilst not really commenting or offering any in-depth analysis of the potential implications of the report, Rebecca Smithers, the Education Editor does, albeit accidentally, point out the main flaw of the report. At no point does she acknowledge the significance of what she says about aspects of the report, which possibly suggests that she is not entirely convinced about her observations. Whether by coincidence or through insight she manages to cite many of the representatives of the various factions which appear to have had some input into the report. This demonstrates, quite starkly, that Tomlinson had attempted to placate or accommodate the many groups who had some sort of vested interest in the final outcome of the report. Tomlinson attempted to address the concerns of many groups which means that the influence or potential impact of the recommendations of the report have been diluted. Smithers manages to cite several representatives of these groups. Not unsurprisingly the majority reply to her questions in a manner which they could be expected as representatives of particular groups. Such examples include David Hart, General Secretary of the NAHT.

*The government would be making a fundamental mistake if it did not give a strong signal that it supported the report and that it would work with everyone concerned to implement these reforms. (18/10/2004b)*

Whilst John Crickland, Deputy Director General of the CBI, thought that business “*is absolutely behind the government ... It’s no secret that the school system still fails too many young people.*” (18/10/2004b)



The CBI were giving a similar message throughout the period from the late 1970s onwards. (Seldon & Hickson: 2004) They will no doubt continue to give the same message until they secure funding from the Government in order to train potential employees themselves.

The day after the publication the *Guardian* suggested that there was going to be no smooth ride for any implementation of any of Tomlinson's proposals.

*Tony Blair and ... Charles Clarke, yesterday appeared to undermine the spirit of the radical new English diploma system ... P.M. insisted that they [GCSE and A levels] will not be scrapped, whilst Charles Clarke himself appeared to be talking down the role of teachers in the assessment process of the students. (19/10/2004)*

Writing for the *TES* Warwick Mansell and Michael Shaw picked up on the theme of the *Guardian* published three days earlier.

*The Government is posed to reject the most radical aspect of this week's Tomlinson Report ... ministers appeared to have doubts about putting themselves in conflict with the rest of the world. (22/10/2004b)*

This was the most animated part of the reporting by the *TES*. In attempting to view all sides of an imagined discussion the editorial is rather bland in content.

Melanie Phillips, a columnist in the *Daily Mail*, cannot be accused of being bland. Her limited analysis of the Tomlinson Report concludes with the appeal that "*for our children's sake ... bin the report.*" (18/10/2004)

The education correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, Liz Lightfoot, appears to be more optimistic than some of her colleagues.

*Plans for the biggest shake-up of secondary education in 50 years will be published today ... the Education Secretary, is expected to welcome the proposals to replace GCSE's and "A" Levels with an over-arching diploma that includes vocational courses. (18/10/2004a)*

Of relevance to an assertion of this study is that Lightfoot goes on to report about the



Education Secretary in the House of Commons when she noted that Clarke said he will promote “*evolution not revolution.*” Lightfoot was sufficiently informed to note the following which those involved in PVE will recognise as the CBI “party line.”

*Tomlinson is unlikely to receive support from the CBI, which says it is not convinced the shake-up would not add to improved levels of literacy and numeracy. (18/10/2004a)*

Whilst John Clarke, the Education Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, suggested an original take on the report.

*[It] wound the education clock back to 1944, said that from the time children entered secondary school at 11, teachers should begin identifying which of the 3 pathways they were most likely to follow, specialised academic, specialised vocational or a mixture of the two. (19/10/2004a)*

John Clarke is wrong to compare the intentions of Tomlinson with those in 1944 of Rab Butler. Clarke appears to have spotted the number 3 in the report and seen that students may have a choice of three paths to follow and has therefore equated the report to the Butler Act of 1944. As an aside there is an argument worthy of consideration which suggests that the creation of Butler’s Grammar, Technical and Secondary Modern pathways was something of an educational disaster for large sections of the population from 1945 through to the middle of the 1960s. There are many authorities (Simon: 1986) who should be consulted on this argument. Tomlinson himself had realised the importance of getting away from the idea of suggesting a hierarchical system among the different pathways insisting that there be a “*formal equality of study.*” (Tomlinson: 2004, 79) To be fair to Clarke he does recognise that the need for equality is important. Unfortunately Clarke is falling into the trap of equating particular pathways to an intellectual capacity. The association between technical education or vocational pathways with students of a particular level of intelligence is one of the reasons why the recognition and respect which should be afforded to vocational and pre-vocational provisions has not been given. Clarke then goes on to quote from the report. His



choice of quotations has a familiar resonance for those reading this study. Clarke feels that it is important to point out that in the opinion of Tomlinson, *“Too many people leave education lacking basic and personal skills.”* Clarke does not give his own opinion on this assertion made by Tomlinson. However he does feel the sentiment is of sufficient importance to reprint it. Clarke fails to point out that Tomlinson neither offers any substantive proof of this assertion nor that he was probably attempting to appease his colleagues from the CBI. Clarke then notes that Tomlinson says, *“Bringing vocational pathways into a single framework would give formal equality of standing between academic, vocational and mixed pathways.”* The recognition by both Tomlinson and Clarke of the importance of developing equality between the different paths is quite encouraging for advocates of PVE. There is, however, as evidenced by the reaction of the Government and individuals of influence, some way to go to turn these intentions into realities.

The article by Clarke then goes on to quote the words of Michael Howard, Leader of the Opposition Conservative party who was addressing the Society of Education in Newcastle on the day of the publication of the Tomlinson Report. It is apparent that Howard’s former boss, Margaret Thatcher, still holds a great deal of influence over some politicians of a particular generation. It was evident throughout the Thatcher years that the team with which she surrounded herself, of which Howard was one, displayed a distrust of teachers to fulfil their professional obligations without being forced to do so. (Thatcher:1993 & Pring: 1995)

Howard was mistaken in what he thought the report said about the qualifications system.

*... should move away from external assessment at 16. We do not. If the GCSE exams were abolished and teachers allowed to grant their students the system would be wide open to abuse. (19/10/2004a)*

Howard’s thoughts perhaps reflect more the opportunities presented to him by his advisors than his actual reading of the report. Howard had been a member of a Government that had



been particularly proactive (or who intentionally walked on the grass) in the process of formalising the role of the central Government in curriculum and assessment issues. (Lowe: 2004) Contrary to Howard's opinion a significant part of a teacher's work is the continuing assessment, either formally or informally, of the work of their students. Indeed it is the opinion of the teacher which is the most influential when deciding at which level a student should be entered for each of the external examinations. The progress of a student through their school career depends, to a very great extent, on the ability of individual teachers to assess accurately the work and potential of each student. Despite the attempts of the Conservative party to impose more and more control over the assessment process they have never been able to control or prevent teachers from forming opinions or making decisions about the individual students sat in front of them in any given lesson. With checks and balances (Pole: 1993) teachers have always had a say, to varying degrees in different subjects, about the final grade to be awarded a student. Teachers involved in PVE encourage students to take part in the assessment process and will recognise the part to be played by individual students in the comments and extent of their final report or RoA (*Issue 8*) which will accompany them to interviews or into another branch of education.

Richard Garner writing in the *Independent* does not offer any particular insight or analysis of the content of the report. His main focus is the idea that he considers or has been told that "*Blair falls short of total backing for reform.*" (18/10/2004) His most enlightening and original observation is saved for the following day when he notes the reaction of Tomlinson to questions put to him during the presentation of the document to the media.

*Tomlinson swayed back from the lectern and said, "There's absolutely nothing new in this ... isn't anything in it that isn't being done somewhere in England."* (19/10/2004a)

Garner's other observation concerns Ian Ferguson the CBI representative on the Tomlinson



working group. (Considered further later) Garner quotes Ferguson as saying that there was “*an almost 100% match between what the CBI wanted and what Tomlinson would achieve.*” (19/10/2004a) Unfortunately Garner does not offer any thought or assessment as to the validity of Ferguson’s claims. However one must remain sceptical as to the likelihood of Tomlinson fulfilling all of the demands of the CBI, although this study contends that one of the main flaws of the report is the attempt to accommodate a large number of interested groups and therefore it is unlikely that the CBI would have been so accommodated to the extent that Ferguson claimed. The main reason for this insistence is the idea, as proposed earlier, that the vested interests of the “competing” groups means that it would have been impossible to appease everyone all of the time. For example, taking the broad issue of addressing the concern of British industry in terms of the preparedness of students leaving school (*Issues* 1, 3, 4 & 10) and facing the rigours of employment. On the surface the CBI and the TUC may appear to be to have the same goals. However, when their particular demands are examined more thoroughly it is possible to see some areas of potential division, e.g. the CBI emphasis on basic numeracy and literacy versus the TUC requirement to provide training as opposed to education for potential employees. In reality, therefore, it is unlikely that Ferguson was being totally genuine in his assertion that there was a 100% match.

Sarah Cassidy, the Education Correspondent of the *Independent* gathers opinions from interested individuals. The opinions of David Bell are presented by Cassidy. Bell succeeded Tomlinson as the Chief Inspector of Schools and is quoted as saying that the Tomlinson Report “*demonstrates that there is a better way forward.*” (19/10/2004b) Interestingly Bell goes on to give a valid warning saying that change will not come about if “*people retreat to bunkers in an attempt to defend GCSE and A levels.*” (19/10/2004b) These words may easily be used in reply to the previously quoted Johnson writing for the *Daily Telegraph*, who was keen to berate aspects of Tomlinson’s proposed assessment system and to defend, apparently



at all costs, the GCSE and A level examinations. The Chief Executive of the QCA, Ken Boston, is quoted by Cassidy as saying that “*the proposal* [Tomlinson Report] *builds on a strong foundation,*” (19/10/2004b) which he then goes on to imply is partially due to the work of the QCA. In the same article Mary Boustal, the General Secretary of the ATL, is quite forthright suggesting, “*It’s a better deal for learners. The CBI and employees would be better to work with these proposals and ... act together on vocational training.*” (19/10/2004b)

The daily *Birmingham Mail* has recognised the popularity of education as a subject for general debate or comment by its readership. It did so in 1976 and 1977 when, as the *Evening Mail*, it invited the readers, in the wake of Callaghan’s speech, to submit comments about teachers and teaching methods. In 2004 the paper invited readers to comment on the Tomlinson Report, about which the readers would have had very little knowledge of the actual contents. Interestingly, yet perhaps not surprisingly, the paper itself makes no comment. On 19<sup>th</sup> October 2004 the paper published the thoughts of its readers on the content of the Tomlinson Report. It would be interesting to revisit these individuals in order to ask them how much of the report they actually read or to what extent they were informed by the paper’s journalists. In addition, the paper reported the words of Prime Minister Tony Blair who was visiting a school near to Birmingham as the report was being published. Blair was visiting the Heart of England School, Balsall Common, en route to the CBI conference in Birmingham. According to the paper, although Blair was apparently given the opportunity to do so, he did not comment specifically on the report but contented himself with simply mentioning that the Heart of England School was a good example of the specialist schools offering vocational programmes which he was trying to develop.

There were many articles and editorials presented at the time. The Bibliography lists several



of them.

Some regard should be paid to establishing some sort of timeline in order to place PVE within the contemporary secondary school education system and to ascertain the present status of PVE. The next chapter considers this intention.



### 5.1 *How is PVE viewed today?*

Put simplistically as this study nears its completion it needs to establish what has happened to PVE as a product for use in the contemporary secondary schools. By establishing a definition of PVE this study has shown that PVE had existed for many years prior to Callaghan's Ruskin speech in 1976. Unfortunately it has also demonstrated that the concept has not been afforded the status that this researcher considers appropriate. By drawing attention to the part that aspects of PVE has played in addressing continually recurring issues it has been possible to establish further the longevity and importance of PVE. The next sections of this chapter are concerned with bringing the PVE story up to date. It is important to note once again that this study is not about the history of PVE, that is a story to be told on another day in a dedicated thesis. This study is about recognising the existence and perceived value of PVE.

### 5.2 *Callaghan to Tomlinson: An overview of developments within PVE from 1976 – 2004.*

One of the purposes of this study is to see if the regard afforded PVE has improved over the last ten or so years. It is not the purpose of this study to present specifically an historical review or chronology of PVE. Once again there are other authors that should be consulted in order to find a straight forward and more thorough list of certain developments within both pre-vocational and vocational education. (Phillips: 2001 & Gleeson & Keep: 2004) For the purpose of this study only a brief mention of the potentially more influential developments are made throughout the study in order to assist the reader in placing the subject matter in a more tangible or recognisable situation. For example the topic of TVEI, possibly the most expensive and well known pre-vocational consideration has been frequently referred to



throughout the study. The following may be added to the list of authorities already cited in this study as sources of commentary upon TVEI: Furlong & Phillips: 2001, Hayward: 2004 and Gleeson & Keep: 2004.

In order to illustrate one of the dominant thoughts of the time of the introduction of the TVEI, and therefore the problems advocates of PVE were facing, then the words of John Dunford, General Secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, are noted. With regard to his position Dunford's consideration is perhaps not that surprising.

*TVEI was a classic example of teachers taking a central initiative, which had been planned without sufficient care or consultation, and turning it to the advantage of all their pupils. (Chitty & Dunford: 1999, 53)*

David Yeomans, Post 14 Research Group, School of Education, University of Leeds, published an article (*"Constructing vocational education from TVEI to GNVQ"* 16/10/2002) which can be used to illustrate attitudes which prevailed with regards to PVE towards the end of the time frame of this study. He is one of those that is mistaken in his view that: *"The renewed interest in vocationalism can be traced back to James Callaghan's 1976 Ruskin College speech."* ( <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/document>) He too unfortunately fails to differentiate between pre-vocational and vocational education although he does make a good comparison between TVEI and GCSE provisions and their potential relationship with vocational education (although in many instances he actually means pre-vocational.) This is an example of how the lack of understanding of the existence of PVE existed right up to the end of the time frame of this study. It is also another example of how what on the surface appears to be a secondary source of research material is in fact a primary source for the purposes of assessing attitudes at a particular time.

At about the same time the OECD published a document entitled *"Education at a Glance"* (30/1/2003) where they considered the main purpose of PVE to be preparation *"for entry*



*into vocational or technical programmes ....”* (<http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp>) This is simply wrong. This attitude displayed by such an important body as the OECD is immensely disappointing especially as it is only one year from the end of the time frame of this study and three years into this century. PVE is an approach that can be used to assist the transition from school into vocational and/or technical programmes but so too into any other field of education or employment.

Attention must now be paid to another of the main points of this study, namely to see if the regard and status afforded PVE has altered significantly since the last study of the topic was made. The next section is concerned specifically with the status of PVE within both the educational and industrial sectors.

### 5.3 Comparison Methodology

In order to establish if the conclusions of a previous investigation into the status of PVE (Jervis: 1998) are equally valid today or whether there had been any discernable change or specific improvement in the regard afforded to PVE, then the methods of gathering data in 1997/8 had to be replicated as near as possible. Whilst this appears to be a relatively simple task the warning considered in 1998 had to be adhered to this time. The HMI and course writer for the Open University Judith Bell considers that *“There can be dangers in placing too much reliance on preconceived ideas.”* (Bell: 1995, 127)

The process was quite straightforward. Questionnaires were sent to 75 Secondary Schools and 20 of the larger private companies all housed within the boundaries of the Birmingham LEA. Unlike 1998 it was decided on the grounds of efficiency and time constraints not to send questionnaires to F.E. and H.E. institutions or to interview parents and school pupils. The difficulties encountered in 1997/8 in undertaking this type of research are equally



problematic in the contemporary setting: specifically the lack of similar research and the complexities of measuring abstract concepts such as esteem, respect, status and so forth.

There also remained the relevance of Bell's warning about maintaining preconceptions. For example I was convinced that the major findings of 1998 would not have changed significantly, therefore I had to guard against finding evidence merely to substantiate these preconceptions. It is useful to have these major findings of 1998 listed (Fig.36) in order to act as a reminder and to guard against falling into Bell's trap.

These preconceptions were based upon personal research, personal experience and anecdotal evidence gleaned from within the media. The last remaining problem or factor to be guarded against was basing findings on, and therefore presenting evidence which would be derived from, a relatively narrow band of individuals of influence who had experience of the pre-vocational issue. However it was reassuring to find some validation for this particular methodology in the words of Professors Ian Lewis, Cambridge University and Pamela Munn, Moray House School of Education. They suggested that methodology should be considered in the light of "*the issue of feasibility which should, finally, determine which of the ... possibilities for research.*" (Lewis & Munn: 1987, 18)

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Fig.36 (Main findings of Jervis:1998)

- Parity of esteem does not exist between academic and PVE and will never be achieved unless there is a change in attitude from those espousing different educational ideologies.
  - There are too many vested interests from those involved in education/industry links for PVE to prosper as it should.
  - There are some misconceptions held by teachers and pupils as to the specific demands of prospective employers.
  - Many of the aims of pre-vocational and vocational education are not being achieved e.g. PVE will remain in the domain of the less able pupil.
  - The pre-eminence of gaining qualifications in G.C.S.E. Mathematics, English and Science will remain unchallenged. (Including as stand-alone entities without regard to PVE.)
- 
-



In respect of the secondary schools, the questionnaire (Appendix 3) was addressed to the person/teacher within the school with a specific responsibility for Careers Education. This was a subtle change from 1998 when the teacher in charge of the Diploma of Vocational Education (DoVE) was targeted. This particular provision no longer exists. Knowing about the demise of the DoVE before the most recent questionnaire was sent out suggested an outcome of the eventual findings of the survey. This is an example of the preconceptions to be guarded against. It was considered that the person/teacher with the specific responsibility for Careers Education may be more likely to respond to a questionnaire on employment prospects of their pupils and indeed may be more aware of the range of education provisions afforded by the school. These considerations were justified with a slight increase in the number of responses to the questionnaire recorded. In 1998 38.5% of the questionnaires were returned whilst in 2008 it was 44%. Both of these figures are higher than the average for such questionnaire responses (Bell: 1995) which validates to a certain extent the specific targeting of the individual responsible for the careers programme within the secondary schools. The findings suggest that all of the respondents were experienced with each having more than 10 years teaching or relevant experience. The responding schools were also guaranteed anonymity.

The large companies sent a questionnaire (Appendix 4) were originally identified by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce. The changes in ownership, size and indeed the actual existence of some of the companies targeted in 1998 reflect the changes that have occurred within the manufacturing sector over the last ten or so years. (City of Birmingham: 2007) It is not the purpose of this study to comment upon the changes other than to point out that it gives more support to the claims of this study that an employee within the contemporary workforce needs to be more flexible and proactive in terms of reacting and being equipped for a potential change to their careers. When setting out upon the data collection the effects



of the “credit crunch” were not even a consideration, such was the speed of this recent phenomenon. Due to the specific demands of their career structure the professional service industries such as teaching, nursing and care staff were not questioned although these are areas where PVE could have a substantial input into preparing people to start their training for their chosen profession. There were also the lessons of 1998 to be considered when too many groups were targeted.

The reasons for the choice of the companies to target in 2008 were exactly the same as in 1998, with the additional consideration of there being the need to be able to make accurate comparisons between the two eras. The reasons for their identification were:

- The established companies would have considerable experience of employing youngsters.
- The larger companies are more likely to have dedicated personnel officers who would be required to keep abreast of secondary education issues.
- These companies would be more likely to accommodate links with local secondary schools.
- The selection of the smaller companies would have been more random with the potential to taint the data.

#### 5.4 School Questionnaire Responses

As stated previously, the schools returning the completed questionnaires were guaranteed anonymity. As results were returned an ongoing list (Fig.37) was compiled. This explains the apparently haphazard presentation of the results. If one was so inclined, an analysis of the data contained within the responses would allow an individual to have an educated guess as to the nature, if not the actual name, of the school responding. This is due to the fact that within the borders of the Birmingham LEA there can be found at least one example of almost every type of secondary school. However this exercise would be fraught with dangers and would not validate or substantiate any of the outcomes of the survey. In addition of course it would also break the trust or unofficial contract that a questionnaire setter and respondent



Fig.37 (School responses.)

	<u>GENDER</u>	<u>JOB/YRS IN POST</u>	<u>EXPER.</u>	<u>NOR</u>	<u>VI FORM</u>	<u>YRS 10/11</u>
1	M	C/4	17	1250	170	420
2	F	C/2	13	600	X	240
3	M	C/3	15	880	190	250
4	M	C/4	16	920	245	260
5	F	C/7	16	900	X	360
6	F	C/5	14	750	X	300
7	M	C/1	10	1170	X	420
8	M	C/7	15	1140	85	420
9	M	C/4	14	1000	250	300
10	F	DH/3	16	610	X	300
11	F	C/2	10	950	X	380
12	M	C/4	14	500	X	240
13	F	C/4	16	1450	100	540
14	F	C/2	12	1050	X	420
15	M	C/1	16	980	170	340
16	M	C/3	11	1300	260	420
17	M	DH/4	17	1110	200	360
18	F	C/7	16	775	X	360
19	F	C/4	13	2450	300	840
20	M	C/4	14	600	X	240
21	M	C/2	16	1120	X	480
22	M	HY/5	18	700	X	280
23	M	C/5	16	1500	200	540
24	F	C/3	12	1250	160	420
25	F	C/9	19	630	X	240
26	M	C/7	17	880	X	360
27	F	C/10	17	640	40	240
28	M	C/5	12	870	X	340
29	F	C/2	13	900	X	360
30	F	C/6	16	640	X	280
31	M	HY/4	14	930	X	360
32	F	C/10	20	1170	200	400
33	M	C/4	10	630	X	250

KEY:-

C:	Person completing the questionnaire is responsible for Careers.
DH:	Person completing the questionnaire is the Deputy Head or equivalent.
HY:	Person completing the questionnaire is the Head of Year or equivalent.
NOR:	Approximate number of pupils on roll.
VI FORM:	Approximate number of pupils aged 17 – 18.
YRS10/11:	Approximate number of pupils aged 14 – 16.



enter into. The results are presented in the main body of the study and not in the Appendices in order to make referencing and analysis easier.

The purpose of Section A (Fig.38) of the questionnaire was to establish the credibility and experience of each individual respondent. It also helped to hide the main intention of the questionnaire thus preventing the respondents from attempting to tailor their responses to their perceptions about the real purpose of the questionnaire.

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Fig.38

### **SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **SECTION A** DETAILS ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL COMPLETING THE FORM.

- 1) GENDER :- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) AGE:- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) JOB TITLE/DESCRIPTION:- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) No. OF YEARS IN POST:- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) No. OF YEARS TEACHING:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

An analysis of the data extrapolated from the responses to Fig.38 suggest that all of the respondents:

- held positions of responsibility with an average tenure of 4.5 years
- had been teaching for at least ten years, the average being just over 14 years
- would have an awareness of their school's industrial and F.E. links

The respondents who had been teaching for the fewest number of years (Schools 7, 11 & 33) would have started teaching most likely no earlier than 1998. The respondent from School 32 may have started teaching around 1989. Due to the scarcity and status of pre-vocational options it is therefore unlikely that any of the respondents would have personal experience as school pupils or F.E. students of PVE. Whilst this does not suggest that their views would



have been tainted or indeed question their professionalism it does show that very few individuals of potential influence have the conviction of personal experience to substantiate or alter their views. Few may have had some experience of the TVEI of the early 1990s. Likewise very few, if any, would have had hands on experience of being a pupil undertaking a GNVQ. Whilst there are a number of routes into teaching being developed it is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the respondents would have followed the traditional academic “A” level route into the graduate teaching profession. A quick on-line scan of the prospectuses of a selection of H.E. institutions (Fig.39) suggests that many universities are yet to be convinced of the values of pre-vocational and vocational qualifications as an alternative or indeed supplementary means of gaining undergraduate entry. The apparent random nature of the selection of the Universities was not entirely without some influencing factors namely the fact that my two boys and myself were studying at one of each of the following examples.

Further analysis of the results from the questionnaires sent to the secondary schools show that all of the responding schools offered compulsory work experience placements for students in the final year of their compulsory education. At least one of the responses (School 16) insisted upon their students having a two week placement. In this respect this finding mirrored the responses of 1998. Interestingly according to Tom Bentley, a former adviser to the Education Secretary, David Blunket, considered that “92% of *secondary schools* [in 1995] *had links with business.*” (Bentley: 1998, 99) I anticipated that this would be the case although I was hoping that schools would indicate that this was part of a concerted approach to develop a more pre-vocational or vocational provision within their schools – unfortunately none of the schools suggested that this was the case. However even though the questionnaire did not ask for specific details of the placement some of the respondents did volunteer the information that their pupils were required to keep a work experience diary and/or complete a



criterion based evaluation of the placement. This researcher considers it not unreasonable to assume that the criteria for the assessment of the usefulness of the placement would have made reference to the personal experiences of the individual pupil undertaking the placement, a component of this study's definition of PVE.

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Fig.39 (Entry requirements of a select group of HE providers.)

University of Birmingham (<http://www.undergraduate.bham.ac.uk/entry>)

*"Qualifications in addition to your main [A Level] exam .... Although we do not normally make an offer based on such qualifications we encourage applicants to take them and to note them on their application form."*

University of Leeds (<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/coursefinder/11451/>)

Particular and subject specific "A" Level grades are required for undergraduate entry are required although *"General Studies is not accepted."* With the exception of the International Baccalaureate no regard is made to any other potential entry qualifications.

University of Manchester (<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses>)

*"Additional entry requirements [in addition to A Levels] exist ... Considered on an individual basis."* None of the courses listed in the prospectus had any overt recognition of pre-vocational or vocational content.

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Although only a very scant and brief regard to the H.E. Institutions it would appear that the situation has not changed markedly, if at all, from that when the original research was undertaken. This is despite much rhetoric from successive Governments and Secretaries of State for Education on the need for a wider range or more relevant qualifications system.

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Just under 61% of the responding schools had formal curriculum links with F.E. institutions.

Each of the 61% were involved with one or more of the practical or vocational courses

offered by the local F.E. institution. The courses noted by the respondents were in: -

- Bricklaying/Construction
- Catering
- Hairdressing
- Metalwork
- Motor mechanics



Of particular significance to the premise of this study is the observation of the 61% with formal links with F.E. only one respondent (School 2) suggested that all of their pupils were entitled to pursue this link. Presumably this would have included their most able pupils. (*Issues 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 & 9*) The questionnaire did not ask about the nature of the pupils that took part in the link but several noted that the provisions were available to their average and below average pupils or to bands other than the top sets. (*Issue 9*) In 2008 the average timetable commitment to these links appears to be around 10% or approximately one morning or afternoon session per week. (In the case of the previously mentioned School 2 their commitment was a whole day, or 20% of their timetable commitment.) In 1998 2% of dedicated timetabled pre-vocational provision rose to 24% when the school's practical lessons were added to the equation. This would suggest that the provisions have not changed significantly. It is difficult to make assertions about these findings as the influence of the National Curriculum demands has not been incorporated into the questionnaire. However it can be assumed that the access to the academic and practical provisions has remained the same for the average and below average pupil. In 1998 there was the DoVE course whilst today there are NVQ options to schools that would like to expand their curriculum provisions. Fig.40 lists the approximate percentage of students aged 14+ who are taking part in vocational provisions offered by some of the U.K's European industrial/manufacturing rivals. The purpose of this exercise is merely to provoke further thought and ideas for potential research. It is not possible to offer a substantial analysis or comparison within this study as others are more qualified (Marshall: 1991 & Rauner & Maclean: 2009) and the data does not apply strictly to pre-vocational provisions or initiatives.

If the figure of 61% which have formal links with F.E. was expanded across all of the schools within the Birmingham LEA borders this would represent 45/46 schools and a considerable number of pupils. Unlike the questionnaire of 1998 this questionnaire one does not ask for



details of the school's timetable commitment to practical subjects so therefore a certain degree of assumptions must be made about the nature of these links. However it is a fair assumption that these links would involve the more practical subjects which many schools cannot cater for on their own premises.

School 2, which offered a whole day of F.E. links, is a four form entry school for pupils aged 11 – 16. The respondent talked about “*our boys*” which suggests a single sex school. It is not the purpose of this study to identify individual schools but the single sex status coupled with information about the actual F.E. institution with which they have links allows for an assumption to be made about the likely name of the school. In fact the information allows for a short list of two schools to be presented. Both of these schools have an average to below average performance in the GCSE league table. So even though in School 2 all pupils were allowed access to the F.E. link they may not have a dedicated better than average group of pupils with which to deny such access.

Of the responding schools 14 of the 33 (42.4%) offered post 16 or Sixth Form provision. There was no significant statistical difference between these schools and the others when it came to F.E. links. From phrases used by schools it was once again possible to make assumptions about the status of some of these schools. School 4 commented that by “*undertaking the selection process our parents are buying into our traditional academic commitment.*” It would be fair to assume that this is one of the selective Foundation Schools. This school did not profess to have any F.E. links although it did claim to have “*an extensive*” work experience programme. The school obviously has an above average return in GCSE and “A” level performance with their selective pupils.

Section C was potentially the most revealing in terms of portraying the true focus of the questionnaire and therefore allowing the respondents to slant their responses accordingly.



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Fig.40 (Number of European students taking part in vocational education, 2007.)

Percentage of upper secondary school students enrolled in vocational education 2007

AUSTRIA	77
CZEC REP	75
SLOVAKIA	73
BELARUS	70
NETHERLANDS	68
FINLAND	67
ROMANIA	65
SERBIA	65
LUXEMBOURG	62
ITALY	60
GERMANY	57
SERBIA	57
BELGUIM	53
MALTA	49
DENMARK	48
POLAND	44
FRANCE	44
SPAIN	43
<i>UK</i>	<i>41</i>
LATVIA	34
IRELAND	34
GREECE	32
PORTUGAL	32
ESTONIA	31
LITHUANIA	26
HUNGARY	24
CYPRUS	13

(<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Images>)

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However no better way of obtaining the information could be found. The question is reproduced here to make it easier to consider the responses. (Fig.41) This was the most revealing aspect of the questionnaire. All 33 respondents, including the Foundation Grammar School, coupled the spaces provided on the questionnaire for explicit recognition of both pre-



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Fig.41 (Final question on School Questionnaire.)

*Please outline the details of your school's involvement with pre-vocational and/or vocational provisions for pupils from year 10 onwards.*

*Pre-vocational:-* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Vocational:-* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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vocational and vocational education together in order to answer the question. In other words each consideration was not treated as an individual entity. Schools 3, 5, 21 & 23 took the opportunity to talk about courses that they used to run. School 5 actually mentioned the extent of its involvement within the extinct DoVE programme. This presented the opportunity to identify the school. This school used to be to the fore in terms of developing PVE due to the vision of one member of staff who helped to establish the network of teachers involved in PVE in Birmingham in the late 1980s. Once again the school performs at an average to below average standard within the GCSE league tables. It is a six form entry school for pupils aged 11 - 16.

It was in considering their answers to Section C that the majority of the respondents discussed the need for dedicated provisions for the their lower ability pupils.

Schools 6, 11, 15 & 26 implied that they would like to offer more vocational provisions if the National Curriculum would allow them to do so. However none of these schools distinguished between pre-vocational and vocational education. There was limited



conversation about the new Diploma qualification being offered to pupils with School 30 being the only one to imply that it had some involvement with the provision. A few schools suggested that they would “*monitor*” the situation with regards introducing the new Diploma.

It was very disappointing to note the lack of any acknowledgement of the distinction between pre-vocational and vocational education. In this respect the situation had not changed since the first investigation.

### 5.5 Industry Questionnaire Responses.

Fifty questionnaires were distributed with 46% responding. Unlike the schools the companies were not guaranteed anonymity. This meant that a more accurate understanding of the nature of the work of the company replying could be made although no company would actually be named in the analysis. Where possible the companies which responded in 1998 were revisited.

The percentage of respondents this time around was significantly lower than the almost 69% of 1998. Initially this was somewhat disappointing but when the actual number of respondents was considered the comparison became for more favourable and encouraging. The 23 recent responses was almost double that of 1998. This considerable increase would allow for a more accurate assessment to be made. In reality of course it is only the compulsion of the national government across the whole of the country and with all companies that would ensure relatively thorough accuracy. As mentioned previously the companies of 1998 were revisited.

The fate of these companies over the intervening years can be viewed as a microcosm of the social and economic climate of the period. Once again the development of a commentary on the potential consequences for PVE of these changes is not the purpose of this study and



should be included in a history of PVE which would be a substantial piece of standalone work. The 12 companies who responded in 1998 can be found among the list of the top 15 companies in terms of the size of the workforce for the Birmingham area provided by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1996. This list is reproduced in Fig.42 and a reader will recognise many historical names. Only five of these companies have maintained the same circumstances in terms of location, ownership and unfortunately existence. The transference of some of the companies to overseas ownership have been the subject of national news coverage. Of the remaining companies only three have increased the size of their workforce. These are circumstance where it is reasonable to assume that pre-vocational and vocational initiatives may prevail – as will be seen shortly this has not been the case.

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Fig.42 (Greatest number of employees in Birmingham companies.)

Largest Birmingham based companies, 1996.

Rover Group Ltd.  
IMI PLC.  
Glynwed International PLC.  
Severn Trent PLC.  
West Midlands Travel.  
Severn Trent Water PLC.  
Cadbury Ltd.  
Newman Tonks Group PLC.  
Delta Engineering Holdings Ltd.  
S.P.Tyres Ltd.  
Newey & Eyre Group Ltd.  
Scancam Group Ltd.  
Linpac Mouldings Ltd.  
Churchfields Diaries (1995) Ltd.  
Central Independent Television Ltd.  
Specialist Computer Holdings Ltd.

(adapted from Jervis: 1998, 31)

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Fig.43 is the Section A component of the questionnaire sent to the employers. It follows a similar pattern to that sent to the schools and is an attempt to establish the credibility of the individual responding on behalf of the individual company. Fig.44 contain the results to the Fig.43 questions.

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Fig.43 (SECTION A questions.)

**SECTION A DETAILS ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL COMPLETING THE FORM.**

1. GENDER :- \_\_\_\_\_
  2. AGE:- \_\_\_\_\_
  3. JOB TITLE/DESCRIPTION:- \_\_\_\_\_
  4. No. OF YEARS IN POST:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

What do the results suggest? The gender breakdown is almost exactly the same as in 1998.

The age and number of years in the position of responsibility show that 74% of the respondents had been in their positions for 6 or more years with 26% having 10+ years experience. Therefore just as in 1998 there were no credibility issues in terms of the respondents lacking sufficient knowledge, experience and understanding of their respective companies. Particularly revealing is the fact that only the 6 respondents found in the 36 – 40 age division would have had any opportunity of experiencing at first hand the TVEI initiative discussed earlier in the study. Barely half of the respondents would have had the opportunity to interact with any pre-vocational based programme. Several words have been given over in this study to the potential of an individual's own school days influencing later decisions they may have to make about secondary education issues such as the worth of qualifications held by prospective employees.



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Fig.44 (Results to Section A questions of Industry Questionnaire.)

1. GENDER    *15 FEMALE & 8 MALE.*

2. AGE.            21 /25    26 /30    31 /35    36 /40    41 /45    46/50    50+ YEARS

                         1            4            5            6            4            1            2

3. POSITION

Co Sec/ Sec    Director    HR            Manager            Training

                         4            1            16            1            1

4. EXPERIENCE.

1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10+ YRS

1        2        1        2        0        2        4        2        3        6

6/23                    0                    17/23

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Section B of the questionnaire is considered in Fig.45. The responses to question 1 highlighted a flaw in the questionnaire which had not been made evident in 1998. Many of the responses considered their group of individual companies to which their “Birmingham Branch” belonged as an entire entity therefore to a certain extent invalidating the question. Although of course any information gleaned from the shop floor of any company must be considered as a valid primary source. The question was intended to ascertain the relative size of the Birmingham based component of the company and therefore consider the likelihood or potential extent of its involvement with education links and its involvement within the community which housed the particular company. It is reasonable to assume that



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Fig.45

**SECTION B**    **THE COMPANY**

- 1) APPROX. No. OF EMPLOYEES:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) WITHIN WHICH SECTOR OF INDUSTRY DOES THE COMPANY PRIMARILY OPERATE, MANUFACTURING OR SERVICE? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3a) WOULD YOU PLEASE LIST THE FORMAL ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS EXPECTED OF A 16 OR 17 YEAR OLD JOINING THE COMPANY. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3b) ARE THERE ANY INFORMAL ATTRIBUTES REQUIRED OF THE SAME YOUNG APPLICANTS? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) WOULD YOU PLEASE DETAIL ANY FORMAL LINKS THAT YOU HAVE WITH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS. \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

the larger companies may have dedicated Personnel/Training/Community liaison etc type officers. It is also assumed that these companies may be better equipped to stay up to date with initiatives and ideas emanating from secondary education. However the largest number of employees within the Birmingham area from the responding companies was 9265 from a manufacturing company. This figure is barely a quarter of the largest of the respondents in 1998 and would have just got into the top 5 of the figures for 1998. Interesting this particular company has quadrupled in size from 1996 although this development is very much the exception. Therefore the likelihood is that the majority of the responding companies would have limited opportunity to be involved with PVE. This assertion is supported somewhat by the responses to question 4 which is dealt with shortly. I accept that these are broad assumptions. In addition, as hinted at a little earlier, I also acknowledge that any primary source has to be accepted as reflecting the existing situation within Birmingham. The main



purpose of identifying the potential weakness was to show an awareness of the potential for flaws.

In 1998 Manufacturing companies comprised approximately 50% of the responding companies. The most recent findings demonstrate a national trend (English & Kenny: 2000) in that only 7/23 (30%) responding companies were manufacturing based. For those involved in PVE this finding should have little significance as the nature of PVE is generic and should not be influenced by any particular industry. However the same cannot be said for those involved in creating or introducing education provisions such as secondary school curriculum managers as their outlook may become more vocationally orientated (as opposed to pre-vocational) when considering material other than the academic. Therefore they may not look to utilise the advantages of incorporating PVE into the curriculum. The responses to questions 3a & b are tabulated in Fig.46.

Some observations can be made with regards to Fig.46. Most noticeable is the fact that some 26% of the responding companies did not ask for specific qualifications. In 1998 this figure was 20%. This study has cited frequently the findings of the Holland Report which in 1977 suggested that only 2% of the surveyed companies required specific academic qualifications. Since 1977 there has been a substantial increase in the number of examinations which secondary school pupils are required to sit. This would help to explain why 74% of the respondents in Fig.46 require specific academic qualifications. Interestingly it does not explain why still over a quarter of the companies did not stipulate specific qualifications. Neither did it explain why the figure has gone up since 1998. Whatever the reason(s) may be it is still disappointing to note that PVE was not considered by any of the companies. The other striking feature of the results, just as in 1998, was the pre-eminence of Maths, English and Science. This observation is a little at odds with Tomlinson's suggestion of "*functional*"



numeracy and literacy.

Such is the nature of question 3b that it is difficult to tabulate the responses. Those that ventured a response talked about “*attitude*” or a “*willingness to learn*” whilst others considered other immeasurable attributes. Indeed they are expressions which mimic the Holland Report (1977) and the data from 1998. These findings came as no surprise to this researcher but it does not help to push the case of PVE when it deals with the abstract.

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Fig.46 (Formal entry requirements of industry recruits.)

<u>TYPE OF INDUSTRY</u>		<u>FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED OF 16 OR 17 YR OLDS.</u>
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS		
Manufacturing.    Service		
-----		
1	4	MATHS, ENGLISH, SCIENCE at GCSE Level C or above.
1		MATHS, ENG, SCI + 1 other GCSE all at Level C or above.
	2	4 GCSE including MATHEMATICS & ENGLISH.
2	2	4 GCSE including MATHHEMATICS & SCIENCE.
	2	4 GCSE at Level C or above including MATHS & ENGLISH.
2	1	5 GCSE at Level C or above.
	1	“GOOD GENERAL EDUCATION.”
	5	No formal qualifications required.

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Despite Callaghan’s rhetoric and the demands of many industrialists, politicians and so on only one of the respondents, a manufacturing company, offered any formal links with secondary education where they allowed teachers to shadow members of their staff. All said



that they had given work experience placements when asked. They gave no indication as to how often this occurred. It appears that the principles of PVE are having to be addressed without the direct involvement of industry. Two of the respondents talked about the lack of time and resources to get involved more directly with secondary schools. Fig.47 is an illustration of the final section of the questionnaire.

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Fig.47 (Section C questions of the Industry Questionnaire.)

**SECTION C**     **PRE-VOCATIONAL & VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

PLEASE OUTLINE BRIEFLY YOUR EXPERIENCE/UNDERSTANDING OF PRE VOCATIONAL AND/OR VOCATIONAL PROVISIONS OFFERED BY SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND/OR F.E. INSTITUTIONS.

PRE-VOCATIONAL:- \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

VOCATIONAL: - \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

None of the companies acknowledged any awareness of PVE. This was hugely disappointing but not totally unexpected. However this finding may be considered as something of a double edged sword as although disappointing it must be acknowledged that the lack of cognizance of PVE demonstrated by the companies and to a certain extent by the schools does possibly reflect the lack of definition of PVE and therefore validate the exercise undertaken in Chapter 1.8. In 1998 companies were able to comment upon a specific pre-vocational, albeit a misnamed provision, the Diploma of Vocational Education. (There is no such provision today which may be considered as an indictment of the state of PVE in the contemporary secondary education sector.) This lack of recognition has to be a source of



concern and will be very difficult to overcome as it is not a concrete entity such as a GCSE. All were aware of the existence of vocational provisions and were aware of the progressions within them but none suggested that they considered them as legitimate entry qualifications for school leavers. It is apparent (Jessup: 1991) that the younger respondents viewed the acquisition of NVQ qualifications as career options for themselves.

The themes, ideas and strands running throughout this study must now be tied together.



## CHAPTER SIX      CONCLUSION

### 6.1      Conclusion

This final chapter will be broken down into the following relatively brief subsections.

- 1) Possible topics for future research.
- 2) The future of PVE.
- 3) Has the study achieved the original aims and objectives?
- 4) What are the significant contributions this study has made to the body of knowledge concerning secondary education?

### 6.2      Possible topics for future research.

When dealing with a topic such as the history of education the scope for research appears to be almost endless. This realisation begs the question as to why someone would want to get involved in a project that can become so all consuming in terms of finance, time, dedication and commitment. For some the answer lies in their need to advance careers or perhaps to earn money. For others, like this researcher, the answer to the question is simply to address a personal challenge. This means that the suggestions for further research raised during this study are based upon the idea of addressing personal challenges and not necessarily because of career aspirations.

The most pressing need in order to address the poor status of PVE (as suggested by the case study questionnaire responses) is to write a history of PVE in all of its different guises.

Earlier in the study it was noted how Birmingham school Inspector James Legge had reported the unfortunate death of a pupil at the Shustoke Industrial School. The boy's death was reported in a journal for the 1897 - 98 school session. In commenting on this incident this study noted the difficulties of making judgements or offering interpretations of events that occurred a hundred years before. However, this incident did provoke some thoughts: What



were the physical and mental conditions like for the instructors and pupils in the industrial schools at the end of the nineteenth century? Why does Legge's reporting of the boy's death appear to be so matter of fact? Why was the reporting of industrial schools not as rigorous as those for the mainstream schools? Even the fastidious Inspector Broscomb was not as meticulous when reporting on provisions outside of the mainstream. For the social historians there are obvious prospective considerations in looking at specific aspects of the industrial schools and for looking at the backgrounds of what Inspector Legge referred to as the "*inmates and staff*." This reference also suggests another area of possible research. The phraseology in Legge's reporting is similar to that used by the other inspector of this era highlighted in this study. Broscomb, for example, used comments such as "*dull boys*." There are several questions which occur: How does the language of Broscomb and Legge compare with the language used by contemporary Ofsted inspectors? Are the inspectors of today required to comment on the same issues as those in 1897? If not, why not, what has happened to change their focus? Has the relationship between inspectors and individual schools changed significantly since the days of Broscomb and Legge?

There were a series of questions posed in this study about the Evening Classes run in Birmingham and elsewhere at the beginning of the twentieth century. The data provided in this study suggests that the further north in the country the classes were run the better the attendance figures. There is some potential here for social and educational historians to investigate this observation and establish if the better attendance figures were consistent with other years and to investigate why this should have been the case. As regards the situation in the City of Birmingham Evening Classes there is some potential to explore if there was any significance in the attendance figures and the fact that some classes were segregated. Was the practice of segregating classes undertaken elsewhere in the country?



Referring to the City of Birmingham throughout the study was particularly enjoyable for this researcher. On various levels this researcher has interacted with several of the places, characters and events noted in the documents relating to the City of Birmingham e.g. working in a particular school or being a pupil in a highlighted cohort. The significance of Plantsbrook and Mirfield schools as highlighted in Chapter 2 of this study when discussing recurring themes and PVE are further such examples. This raises the idea of considering the notion of living history or making historical studies more tangible. For example this researcher recalls being taught by someone that had played a small part in the development of aspects of secondary education within Birmingham and indeed of the country as a whole as a member of the Newsom Committee. The notion of living history can even perhaps be extended to just touching upon some of the historical documents that record events that have had a direct bearing on the career or life of an individual. In recent years there has been a debate among historians, academics and teachers about the role and the nature of the subject of history as taught in schools. This is a debate to which this researcher is not qualified to make a substantial contribution. However a limited contribution can be made in terms of offering a personal suggestion about a piece of research that this researcher would enjoy undertaking purely because of the fact that it would bring to life aspects of history. The minutes of various City of Birmingham committees and the details contained in local newspapers reported the elections to the BSB in 1897. There is a sense of some frustration in not knowing the precise outcome of the elections and the fate of the candidates that stood. The same frustration extends to not knowing what happened to the teachers that apparently fell foul of the whims of Inspector Broscomb. Looking at the lives of these people would give readers a glimpse of the lives of real, if not particularly famous, people who worked in Birmingham one hundred or so years ago. Did the likes of Mr. Rees, Miss Slain or Mr. Watts remain in teaching or indeed remain in Birmingham? Is it possible to find connections



between the characters mentioned in the reports of the inspectors one hundred years ago to individuals teaching in Birmingham today? Indeed, what happened to Mr. Broscomb?

A reading of the works of Professor Watts reaffirms the realisation of this study that no one topic can be taken in isolation. There are always contributory factors and other influential considerations. Of special significance to the time frame of this study is the appendix (*"History of Education,"* Nov 2005, 34:6.) attached by Professor Watts to her Presidential Address contained in a previous edition of the same publication. (Oct 2005, 34:3.) She lists the many articles published between 1976-2004 in the *"History of Education"* which consider the theme of gender. The most striking observation is the breadth of areas into which the topic of gender can easily slide. Watts herself is concerned that gender is not isolated from other considerations such as class and race. Her most recent publication (Watts: 2007) considers the role of women in science. The book covers more than the topic of secondary schoolgirls and therefore may be considered as another source of background material for any researcher wanting to know how the prevailing situation within which Callaghan operated came into being. The topic of PVE and gender issues cries out for further research.

From the point of view of a researcher I am aware how contentious the idea of considering newspaper articles and firsthand accounts of emotions as primary sources may be.

Considering the validity of such an exercise is a project waiting to be written. In the meantime I remain convinced of its validity within the context of this study.

Some thought must be given to advancing the cause of PVE, one of the main purposes of this study. Research within this field could have consequences for a person undertaking a higher level qualification for their career advancement or for financial remuneration. Ironically for someone such as this researcher, who is keen to improve the status of PVE, the fact that there



are financial opportunities for researchers in this field makes this the least popular choice as an area of research. The next section of this chapter is concerned with the future of PVE and it is here that suggestions will be proposed for further specific research.

### 6.3 What is the future of PVE?

The stark results of the questionnaire findings are not encouraging for an advocate of PVE. This study has striven to establish recognition and the acknowledgement that PVE had existed for many years prior to Callaghan's speech and that it has a valid contribution to make to contemporary secondary education. This researcher is convinced that PVE should become an integral part of all secondary school curriculum provisions for 14 to 16 year olds. A brief comparison between a similar piece of research conducted in 1997/8 and the present day would suggest that the situation with regard to the status of PVE has not changed significantly in the intervening years, indeed it may have even worsened. Therefore it is easy to proclaim that quite unashamedly it is one of the stated intentions of this study to campaign for the cause of pre-vocational education. If the barriers or divisions between the academic and the pre-vocational camps are going to be removed and PVE is going to achieve parity of esteem then the following actions have to be undertaken with the appropriate research undertaken to supplement a desire for change.

This study has already called for the establishing of a strategy to break down what Dr. Ken Barton (TES: 21/3/2003) of the QCA referred to as the "*academic/vocational divide*." This study has listed the many aspects of PVE e.g. profiling, work experience or work shadowing which teachers, industrialists and so on would recognise but may not realise that they are actually aspects of PVE. Research needs to be undertaken by both those involved in education and perhaps by market researchers to establish how the cause of pre-vocational education can best be proclaimed. In addition, some work needs to be undertaken about how



best to measure the effectiveness of aspects of PVE upon individual students or pupils.

Examples of this research would include: How does work experience actually benefit a pupil?

Can potential employers benefit from the criterion referencing undertaken in schools on potential employees?

In addition it is important to recognise that school pupils are individuals and therefore some thought must be given to working out how individual pupils can best utilise the strengths and/or facilities of learning or resource providers in order to benefit their own education.

Pupils must be allowed to utilise the facilities and courses of schools etc. other than the one at which they are registered. As suggested earlier in this study, for this idea to work, apart from changing the mindset of the teachers and parents, there would also need to be attention paid to the tremendous number of logistical considerations in organising such a provision. It is understood that individual institutions such as schools often want to guard their possessions and utilise the success of individual students in order to display their results in the GCSE league tables that the LEA is now obliged to produce. Some research should be undertaken to see if it is feasible to have teachers attached to a consortium of local schools, and not necessarily to be attached to one particular school, whereby the teacher could take his or her skill around the consortium schools not as a teacher of PVE but as a teacher of hairdressing for example. This is not an original idea. For many years the idea of peripatetic music teachers has been accepted. Perhaps the same organisational acceptance could be applied to delivering subjects such as hair dressing, motor mechanics or particular sports. These should not be considered as teachers of PVE but as specialists who would comply with the assessment protocols of each school and recognise the aspects of PVE engaged with by each individual student. Additionally the pupils in a consortium could benefit from the specialist amenities housed in one of the individual institutions e.g. a drama studio could be used by pupils other than by just the pupils of the host school whilst a specialist craft area could be



used in a similar fashion. For long periods of time such facilities often lie unused in the institutions in which they are housed. PVE would thrive in this sort of environment. It would allow individual students to progress at their own pace following individual study programmes and have their capabilities assessed in a far more flexible way. One potential consequence of this organisation would be the scrapping of the present examination system which requires all students to sit examinations on the same day at the end of their compulsory schooling. Assessment and examination periods would need to be far more flexible than the present arrangements. There would also have to be a commitment by competing institutions to work together in order to provide a wider curriculum choice for all of their respective students. Very importantly it would also require an understanding that all pupils, not just the less able and/or disruptive pupils, be allowed to benefit from the new system. However it must be considered that for the immediate future such a drastic change in both mindset and organisation is unlikely to occur. Such a drastic reorganisation of the examination system would also require a concerted effort to address the problem of the continuing association between the less able pupil and PVE. (Burchell: 1987) This has to be eradicated before PVE is going to achieve parity of esteem with the academic provisions and subsequently the benefit of PVE to all pupils realised.

If the ability of a student on a given day of external examination is to list, for example, historical data or the effects of soil erosion are examples of the only method of assessment to be employed by schools and examination boards in order to judge the progress of students, then the future of PVE will perhaps be one of stifled development. Perhaps an exception to this negative scenario is the practice followed by the examination boards in the assessment of P.E. and Drama. which requires an analysis of the performance of each individual student as well as their ability to work collectively. The comparison made in this study between the various reports such as those presented by Holland (1977) and Tomlinson (2004) illustrate



how a learner's attributes and experiences are considered by interested groups to be valued commodities. Indeed the ability of a candidate to list historical data and the effects of soil erosion are valid attributes in their own right. However the methods and experiences employed by different students to learn and remember these lists or to witness at first hand the effects of soil erosion are equally valid as factors to be assessed or measured and recorded. During the 1970s the City of Birmingham recognised the need to record various other aspects of a student's school career in addition to academic qualifications when producing a pupil's leaving certificate. This was followed in the 1980s by a national initiative to introduce a National Record of Achievement for individual pupils. This researcher considers that to the detriment of PVE the continuing development in the measuring and recording of a pupil's assessment or progress has been slow since the initial furore over the introduction of the RoA.

As in many walks of life it may be a case of "who you know" that is the best way of advancing a particular cause. Had Callaghan in 1976 or Tomlinson in 2004 named many of the initiatives they were talking about as examples of PVE then the status of PVE may be different from that which it is today. This recognition however does not undermine an assertion of this study that Callaghan's Ruskin speech on education was not as some have suggested (Williams: 1992) a catalyst for further developments within secondary education. Following on from this is the idea that it is important for advocates of PVE to educate individuals in a position of influence within education to the difference between pre-vocational and vocational education. For this situation to be realised there would have to be a period of sustained indoctrination, in-service training and advertising aimed at the officials at the QCA, NCC, DfES and so on to make sure that everyone involved in education were aware of the fundamental difference. This study argues that one way of officials and authorities being able to influence the positive development of PVE would be for them to



abandon the idea of referring to elements of the curriculum as either “academic” or “vocational.” These titles could be replaced by references to the level at which a candidate was working e.g. diploma or GCSE. Some discussion took place earlier in this study about the idea of abandoning titles in favour of references to the level of the work. This would mean that the expectancies required of someone doing an “A” level in Physics would be exactly the same as someone working in a curriculum area based upon Horticulture or Building Studies. This idea requires people to accept that the title “A” level, for example, reflects the ability of a student to work at a particular level and not necessarily within a particular subject. The insistence of the authorities to produce league tables based upon particular subjects does not help to eradicate the idea of subject boundaries. PVE works in, across and around discrete subjects and therefore cannot be acknowledged in league tables. This study also discussed the problem of PVE being considered as a bolt on provision to the curriculum. Quite simply this study argues that PVE should not be considered in this way and should be accepted as an integral part of any curriculum.

The progress or development of PVE will continue to be slow or thwarted until the authorities decide to get on board and accept that PVE has a very important part to play for all pupils involved in secondary education, not just the less able and/or disruptive pupils. It has been noted regularly throughout this study that the topic of secondary education is one where almost every adult has an opinion and/or an experience which they remember. Therefore this means that it is going to take many years to establish the idea of the benefits to all of PVE and create the situation where a parent can pass onto their child the positive experience that they had of PVE.

When compiling a report or conclusion the content of the report should reflect the progress or otherwise as measured against the original aims or objectives. The following is concerned



with this issue.

#### 6.4 Addressing the objectives.

In stark terms this completed study has not addressed fully the objectives which this researcher had in mind when the project was first conceived. However to the relief of this researcher anecdotal evidence suggests that this situation is not unusual and in many respects may be considered to be the normal situation. Apparently, more often than not, the aims, objectives and rationale eventually addressed by individual researchers are not the ones that were originally conceived but reflect more accurately the realities of educational research after the initial euphoria has died down. The recognitions of the previously cited Bell are pertinent.

*The project outline is for guidance only. If subsequent events indicate that it would be better to ask different questions and even to have a different aim, then change while there is time. (Bell: 1995, 22)*

As the research matures so the goals for the study will alter. The developing maturity of this study reflects an acknowledgement of the overly ambitious initial goals. In this instance the wisdom of the supervising tutor was all important in helping to formulate a solid or realistic base line upon which to build the research.

The biggest regrets have been the inability to make personal contact with Callaghan and the failure to make use of just one of the Birmingham LEA secondary schools for a case study in order to dispel the myths about the Ruskin speech and to trace developments within PVE. Contact with Callaghan and with just one school would have also helped to speak up louder for the cause of PVE. Understandably access to Callaghan was denied although the limited access to his personal papers was most fortuitous. However the lack of direct access to Callaghan had the knock on effect of deciding not to seek an interview with Bernard, now



Lord Donoghue. This was in order to maintain a sense of balance to the research. It would have been very interesting to question both parties, Callaghan and Donoghue, about their differing accounts of the events of 1976. Perhaps a belated addition could be made to the considerations for future research when the views of Donoghue could be gained or when Callaghan's papers have been catalogued finally in the Bodleian Library. As indicated earlier creating access to Callaghan's papers is a work in progress with this researcher only being allowed access to incomplete versions of them. However, even this brief glimpse proved to be quite enlightening. It was a conscious decision not to press Donoghue more thoroughly on his recollections. Contact with Donoghue's office in the House of Lords only yielded a recommendation to consult various documents and books already in the public domain. Concern regarding confidentiality meant that access to the more recent records of the Birmingham LEA and the Central Library of Birmingham were curtailed. This made it impractical to attempt a detailed case study of one Birmingham secondary school. However a limited case study was undertaken by treating all of the Birmingham schools as a single entity and many of the local industries likewise. This meant that a reasonably accurate understanding of the present status of PVE could be developed.

With regard to other objectives then, the rest of the conclusion can be a little more upbeat. The study can be considered as making a substantial contribution to the ongoing Great Debate on education. Readers of this study may be forced to question their acceptance of some of the myths regarding the impact of Callaghan's speech on developments within secondary education. It may force some people e.g. Tim Devlin, to remove the rose coloured spectacles that they have been wearing.

As stated at the outset the contribution of this study to the Great Debate should be read in conjunction with a general analysis of the period from 1970 onwards offered by the many



established authorities on this period. For example this study has already made use of the works of the likes of Aldrich, Chitty, Lowe and Simon.

It is possible to put a simple tick in the completed column against elements of the rationale listed at the outset of this study. However for an advocate of PVE this form of assessment is frowned upon. In order to maintain the tradition of PVE, the extent to which each of the elements has been addressed has to be considered by both the pupil and the supervising tutor or teacher. This is an invitation for each reader of the study to consider the extent to which they think the rationale for this study has been addressed.

Initially the idea of the telling of the story of PVE was floated. This intention was perhaps a little ambitious. As the research unfolded it became increasingly apparent that the story of PVE needs to be told independently and not as part of a process which considers a wider range of issues. The story of PVE needs to be told as a straight forward narrative which means that the problem of accessing the most recent records of the LEA etc would have to be given serious consideration.

The PVE tradition of including a summative assessment in a report in conjunction with the thoughts of the individual being assessed means that the final section of this chapter, and indeed of the study, can be given over to addressing the contribution this study has made to the body of knowledge about secondary education. Once again, in order to maintain a PVE tradition, if possible, the comments in the summative assessment should be positive.

## 6.5 Significant contributions made by this study.

Whilst completing the study this researcher has been conscious of the need to make the study distinctive. The study has to be different from other studies completed on the same general topic. In some respects this was a relatively easy task as the specific topic of PVE has not



been considered by other authors to the extent that it has been in this study. PVE has perhaps been considered to be something of a Cinderella aspect of secondary education which is reflected in the number of words produced by other authors on the subject. One of the main reasons for this lack of consideration being given to PVE is the fact that it is not a solid entity or something tangible for curriculum planners to easily recognise. The vagueness or lack of understanding about PVE stems from the fact that there was not an established or accepted definition of the term. The creation of such a definition has always been considered to be a most important undertaking of this study. Right from the earliest days of the conception of the project the plan was to create a definition of PVE - this has been achieved and is the most significant aspect of this study. Although as previously stated at the end of Chapter One in many respects the importance of the creation of the definition lies in its potential to provoke reasoned debate among academics and practitioners on the appropriateness of the definition. The definition will be returned to later.

Whilst the creation of a working definition of PVE was planned from the very beginning of the study another potential contribution of this study to the body of knowledge about education emerged from the workings of the study. The notion of spiral evolution developed from the idea that there appear to be a few recurring themes concerning education which can be recognised in any era. Callaghan considered several of these themes in 1976 as Tomlinson did in 2004. Within this study there are numerous examples of these recurring themes being cited from the different eras. What also became apparent was that developments within these themes appeared almost to go around in circles without ever actually completing the cycle. If the initiatives or way forward were considered as developments then it appeared that there should be some form of progression. It became obvious to this researcher that this progression was often similar to the results of previous initiatives, hence the idea of spiral evolution. Since first raising the idea of spiral evolution it has occurred to this researcher that



several of the recurring themes may have progressed in a manner that mirrors or runs parallel to other of the themes. For example, the blaming of standards within education for the state of the economy may run an obvious parallel path in conjunction with discussions about the relevance of the contemporary curriculum. This suggests the creation of a mathematical shape resembling a double helix with at least two of the themes following a synchronous path of spiral evolution. To pursue the idea of pairs of themes following parallel spiral paths would initially be something of an academic or intellectual exercise. However it would be hoped that some practical implication, perhaps along the lines of resource management, would emerge from such potential further research.

It has been another one of the main aims of this study to challenge the myths that have developed since Callaghan gave his speech in 1976. This has been done and, as said a little earlier, it is hoped that those that have been taken in by the myths may reassess their positions. Further it is also hoped that the undergraduates of the future may now be able to consider that there is a different interpretation of the events at Ruskin College and therefore be better armed for any work they have to do which may make reference to the events of October 1976.

As this study unfolded this researcher was struck quite markedly by the realisation that so called historical events cannot be taken in isolation. Therefore an important lesson to pass on to the aforementioned undergraduates is the idea that Callaghan's words at Ruskin in October 1976 cannot be taken as a one off isolated event. Indeed this study has illustrated that a path can be drawn between the words of Callaghan in 1976 and those of Tomlinson in 2004. Equally valid is the realisation of this researcher that any aspect of Callaghan's speech cannot be taken in complete isolation. An excellent example of this is the focus that this study gives to Valerie Banks, a secondary schoolgirl who the local press in Birmingham had reported as



wanting to do boys' subjects. At the same time Callaghan was asking at Ruskin about the number of girls that were abandoning science based subjects. The idea of subjects being suited for boys or for girls goes against the principals of PVE. Nevertheless as the tale of Banks illustrates there had developed the notion of boys' and girls' subjects. This study recognises that PVE does not differentiate between the sexes and has regard to a meritocracy and the contribution made by individual students. Rightfully so, this development has meant that the topic of girls' in education has become a particular drive for recent historical research as exemplified by the work of the previously cited Professor Ruth Watts.

To conclude, the main contribution made by this study to discussions on secondary education, specifically the creation of a definition of PVE, should be returned to. It is hoped that the content of the definition which has been constructed will be challenged by others. This researcher considers that if this is happening then it is apparent that PVE is being considered by others as a topic of further investigation. This must be good for PVE in terms of addressing the status and esteem attached to the provision. As stated previously this researcher has never been able to uncover an attempt to create a working definition of PVE. Although the definition offered in this study comprises only a few sentences there was a tremendous amount of work and research that went into the construction. Hopefully anyone who is involved in education in general or pre-vocational or vocational education specifically will be challenged by the content of the definition and give some serious thought as to what it actually says. Perhaps someone will be stirred to challenge the definition and to write their own – this can only be good for the esteem of PVE. Perhaps after reading the definition and considering the benefits of PVE to pupils and subsequently industry, those managers charged with developing or constructing a curriculum for their school will give proper consideration to utilising PVE. For any initiative or idea to prosper it must be understood by those who may come into contact with it or may want to use it as a form of currency in the



job market. Creating a definition of PVE allows those curious or those tempted by the provision to become more informed.

The challenge has been laid down to those who would like to advance the cause of PVE. They must question and improve the definition of PVE as well as interrogate further the myths that have developed out of Callaghan's Ruskin College speech.



# APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1

CITY AND GUILDS OF LONDON INSTITUTE  
365 VOCATIONAL PREPARATION (GENERAL)

STATEMENT

This Profile records for \_\_\_\_\_ the range of abilities, attainments and Experiences throughout the course of Vocational Preparation (General) at \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Course Tutor) (Student)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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This Profile has FOUR components:

Sheet 1 – examples of basic abilities demonstrated on the course.

Sheet 2 – a grid of best attainments in basic abilities achieved.

Sheet 3 – a list of experiences with examples gained within the Economic, Social and Environmental Studies element

Sheet 4 – details of Extension Studies, Work Experience, Other Qualifications and Personal Comments.

Any other relevant documents may be added to this Profile.

TO THE STUDENT

- 1 The Profile in this folder is designed to help you rather than provide an opportunity to criticise you and your work.
- 2 The entries will be made by you and your Tutor(s) after discussion.
- 3 You will be given the opportunity of discussing the entries on your Profile. If you disagree with anything that has been said, you should say why you disagree.
- 4 When you leave the scheme/course a Profile will be completed.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This Profile records what the Student has experienced during the programme of Vocational Preparation.



Sheet 1

EXAMPLES OF BASIC ABILITIES DEMONSTRATED ON THE COURSE

Topic/Integrated Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNICATION

- 1 Talking and Listening
- 2 Reading
- 3 Writing
- 4 Using signs and diagrams
- 5 Computer appreciation

PRACTICAL and NUMERICAL

- 6 Safety
- 7 Using equipment
- 8 Numeracy

SOCIAL

- 9 Working in a group
- 10 Accepting responsibility

DECISION MAKING

- 11 Planning
- 12 Obtaining information
- 13 Coping

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Student) Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Tutor)



(Basic Level)

(High Level)

COMMUNICATION

## TALKING &amp; LISTENING

Can make sensible replies when spoken to.

Can hold conversations &amp; can take messages

Can follow &amp; give simple descriptions &amp; explanations.

Can communicate effectively with a range of people in a variety of situations.

Can present a logical &amp; effective argument. Can analyse others' arguments.

## READING

## WRITING

Can write words and short phrases

Can write a critical analysis, using a variety of sources.

## USING SIGNS &amp; DIAGRAMS

## COMPUTER APPRECIATION

PRACTICAL & NUMERICAL

## SAFETY

Can explain the need for safety rules.

Can maintain &amp; suggest improvements to safety measures.

## USING EQUIPMENT OF THE

[THERE ARE 5 LEVELS OF ATTAINMENTS FOR EACH ATTAINMENTS OR SKILLS]

## NUMERACY

SOCIAL

## WORKING IN A GROUP

## ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY

DECISION MAKING

## PLANNING

## OBTAINING INFORMATION

COPING

Can cope with everyday activities with help.

Can help others to solve problems



Below is a list of typical learning experiences which gives the activities relating to the part of the course covering Economic, Social & Environmental Studies. The space on the right hand side may be used to state what the student has done for each activity/ indicates that the student has satisfactorily completed the activity.

CAREER -  
PLANNING

WORLD OF  
WORK

UNDERSTANDING  
SOCIETY

ECONOMIC  
UNDERSTANDING

ENVIRONMENTAL  
UNDERSTANDING

OTHER RELEVANT  
EXPERIENCES

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## APPENDIX 2

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The following data is collated from statistics provided by the *Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development*, a body to which most of the leading industrial nations affiliate. The figures are only a snapshot of the depth and range of figures that the organisation collates. The OECD does not offer any interpretation of their data, merely presenting the data as volunteered by the affiliating nations. They are the sort of figures that the likes of Sanderson and Graham should have based their arguments about the apparent decline of the U.K. economy. The period being highlighted is 1960 – 1976, which is the period of Callaghan's rise through the political ranks. This period is particularly convenient as it was the time that the OECD began to collate the data. Also a brief study of this period allows for an insight to be gained into what was actually happening at the time of Callaghan's ascent to the most senior political office. It also allows for greater scrutiny of the assertions of Sanderson and Graham etc. A look at the statistics will also provide some evidence for the assertions of this study that the attacks upon education standards and a perceptions about economic performance were perhaps more to do with political expediency and ulterior motives than with genuine concerns. For example, Table 2 highlights the increasing rate in the unemployment figures in the UK. Can these figures be attributed directly to standards in education? In addition the information and analysis contained in Tables 1 – 3 supports commonly held assumptions about the period, specifically that the USA was already a mighty trading nation, Japan was emerging quickly as an economic force and that Australia had turned around an adverse Balance of Trade figure, none of these factors could be attributed to education standards within the U.K. However providing evidence of what is already assumed may give more credence or credibility about other interpretations of the data, especially with regards the U.K.

A broad sweep of the data suggests that the U.K. was maintaining a relative position which it had established after the First World War. More specifically during the period 1960 – 1976 the U.K. had improved Balance of Trade figures, improving by 71.4% over the period. This compared well with Germany, the other European nation featured. There were also increases in both Government and Consumer Expenditure. Admittedly these increases were not as great as some of the other leading nations. It must be remembered that the U.K. was starting from a position of greater advancement in the first instance. There is also an argument to suggest that both Germany and Japan were helped in their post war reconstruction to the relative detriment of the Allies.

There are some other individual examples of the data from other countries having a striking difference with that of the U.K. Generally however it may be argued that the U.K. remains an economic force, it appears to be "holding its own" in comparison to the other major industrial nations. Indeed the U.K. Unemployment statistic, as a percentage of the labour force, is far more favourable than both Canada and the USA and very similar to both Germany and Australia. There is also an obvious correlation between the data for Unemployment and that of the Consumer Expenditure. However Callaghan was obviously unable to "spin" such figures to his benefit or indeed hide the reality of a 231.3% rise in unemployment between 1969 and 1976. (As a percentage of the work force.)



Any attempt by Callaghan to make favourable comparisons with the likes of Canada and the USA would have held little sway with an electorate who themselves, or whose parents, would have experienced the great depression and had recently witnessed the sights of litter strewn streets and power cuts. Callaghan was also unable to illustrate to the electorate the changing face of British industry e.g. from a primary to a tertiary based economy. This change would necessitate employment casualties. As a consequence Callaghan was unable to confront head on the trade unions who in some instances were holding back developments because of their intransigence over working practices. Callaghan's career had been built on the back of his involvement with the trade union movement and so therefore his reluctance to confront them is perhaps a little understandable. This was not a conundrum faced by the next Labour party Prime Minister in 1997. However at this time Blair was astute enough to appoint an apparent trade unionist, John Prescott, as his deputy.

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### OECD DATA

Notes for Tables 1 – 3.

Currency: - Australian Dollars, Canadian Dollars, German Marks, Japanese Yen, U.K. Stirling and U.S.A. Dollars.

A = 1967 figures      B = 1964 figures      m = million(s)      b = billion(s)

TABLE 1A

	<u>GNP</u>		<u>CONSUMERS' SPENDING</u>	
	<i>1960</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1976</i>
AUSTRALIA	14371m	78171m	25006m A	37326m
CANADA	38359m	191166m	33392m	75059m
GERMANY (W)	302.9b	1125b	226.4b	441b
JAPAN	15487b	167295b	15281b	54433b
U.K.	22616m	109958m	45578m	63852m
U.S.A.	506b	1702.2b	453b	820.6b



TABLE 1B

% difference between 1960 and 1976

	<u>GNP</u>	<u>CONSUMERS' SPENDING</u>
AUSTRALIA	+444	+49.3
CANADA	+398.4	+125
GERMANY	+271.4	+94.8
JAPAN	+980.2	+256
U.K.	+386.2	+40.1
U.S.A.	+236.4	+81

TABLE 2A

	<u>GOVT. SPENDING.</u> (Annual)		<u>UNEMPLOYMENT</u> (% of the labour force)	
	<i>1960</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1976</i>
AUSTRALIA	10753m A	15696m	1.4 B	4.6
CANADA	11360m	25590m	7.0	7.1
GERMANY	69.5b	141b	1.3	4.6
JAPAN	4943b	15905b	1.6	2.0
U.K.	15566m	23477m	1.6	5.3
U.S.A.	172.9b	263.3b	5.5	7.7



TABLE 2B

% difference between 1969 and 1976

	<u>GOVT. SPENDING.</u>	<u>UNEMPLOYMENT</u>
AUSTRALIA	+46	+228.6
CANADA	+125.3	+1.43
GERMANY	+102.9	+253.8
JAPAN	+221.8	+25
U.K.	+50.8	+231.3
U.S.A.	+52.3	+40

TABLE 3AGOODS & SERVICES

	<u>EXPORT.</u>		<u>IMPORT</u>	
	<i>1960</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1976</i>
AUSTRALIA	6575m A	10836m	6739mA	10095m
CANADA	8717m	26220m	10347m	32149m
GERMANY	72.4b	225.3b	57.5b	198.6b
JAPAN	2023b	17380b	1889b	11626b
U.K.	13039m	29447m	16024m	30297m
U.S.A.	35.8b	96.1b	30.3b	80.4b



TABLE 3B

% difference between 1960 and 1976

	<u>EXPORT</u>	<u>IMPORT</u>
AUSTRALIA	+64.8	+49.8
CANADA	+200.8	+210.7
GERMANY	+211.2	+245.4
JAPAN	+759.1	+515.5
U.K.	+124.9	+89.1
U.S.A.	+168.4	+165.3

TABLE 3C

BALANCE OF TRADE, GOODS & SERVICES  
(Export minus Import)

	<i>1969</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>%age change</i>
AUSTRALIA	-164m	+741m	+551.8
CANADA	-1630m	-5929m	-263.7
GERMANY	-14.9b	+26.7b	+79.2
JAPAN	+134b	+5754b	+4194
U.K.	-2971m	-850m	+71.4
U.S.A.	+5.3b	+15.7b	+196.2

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### APPENDIX 3

## **SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **SECTION A** DETAILS ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL COMPLETING THE FORM.

- 1) GENDER :- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) AGE:- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) JOB TITLE/DESCRIPTION:- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) No. OF YEARS IN POST:- \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) No. OF YEARS TEACHING:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **SECTION B** THE SCHOOL

- 1a) APPROX. No. OF STUDENTS ON ROLL:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 1b) APPROX. No YRS 10 & 11 PUPILS:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 1c) APPROX. No YRS 12+ PUPILS:- \_\_\_\_\_

2) PLEASE OUTLINE ANY FORMAL CURRICULUM LINKS HAS WITH ANY OTHER EDUCATION PROVIDER (e.g. other schools or F.E. Institutions)

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3) PLEASE OUTLINE ANY FORMAL LINKS WHICH THE SCHOOL HAS WITH LOCAL INDUSTRY. \_\_\_\_\_

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### **SECTION C** PRE-VOCATIONAL & VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

PLEASE OUTLINE THE DETAILS OF YOUR SCHOOL'S INVOLVEMENT WITH PRE VOCATIONAL AND/OR VOCATIONAL PROVISIONS FOR PUPILS FROM YR 10 ONWARDS.

PRE-VOCATIONAL:- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

VOCATIONAL: - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX 4

**EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE**

**SECTION A** DETAILS ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL COMPLETING THE FORM.

- 3) GENDER :- \_\_\_\_\_  
4) AGE:- \_\_\_\_\_  
3) JOB TITLE/DESCRIPTION:- \_\_\_\_\_  
4) No. OF YEARS IN POST:- \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**SECTION B** THE COMPANY

- 1) APPROX. No. OF EMPLOYEES:- \_\_\_\_\_  
2) WITHIN WHICH SECTOR OF INDUSTRY DOES THE COMPANY  
PRIMARILY OPERATE, MANUFACTURING OR SERVICE? \_\_\_\_\_  
3a) WOULD YOU PLEASE LIST THE FORMAL ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS  
EXPECTED OF A 16 OR 17 YEAR OLD JOINING THE COMPANY. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
3b) ARE THERE ANY INFORMAL ATTRIBUTES REQUIRED OF THE SAME  
YOUNG APPLICANTS? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
4) WOULD YOU PLEASE DETAIL ANY FORMAL LINKS THAT YOU HAVE  
WITH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 

**SECTION C** PRE-VOCATIONAL & VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

PLEASE OUTLINE BRIEFLY YOUR EXPERIENCE/UNDERSTANDING OF  
PRE VOCATIONAL AND/OR VOCATIONAL PROVISIONS OFFERED BY  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND/OR F.E. INSTITUTIONS.

PRE-VOCATIONAL:- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

VOCATIONAL: - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**The Aims of the Diploma of Vocational Education at Foundation Level.**

- A4 Foundation Level programme should
- a provide, for all ability levels, suitable programmes of work which emphasise relevance to adult life and which help students to develop a range of core skills and related knowledge and understanding.
  - b provide opportunities to gain an insight into the nature and purpose of a broad vocational area.
  - c provide opportunities to gain a knowledge and understanding of the structure of the vocational area and of the various personnel and their functions within the area.
  - d provide opportunities to gain a knowledge of processes, procedures and materials used in a vocational area.
  - e provide opportunities for student involvement in active learning through carefully structured practical exercises, activities or coursework.
  - f include a procedure for recording achievement in a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
  - g involve students in monitoring, and taking responsibility for, their own learning and progress.
  - h bring together a range of aspects of the curriculum such as GCSE, PSE, cross- curricular skills, and themes and dimensions, enterprise, community activities, work experience and action planning.
  - i provide a structure within which the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study may be integrated and delivered.
  - j address the objectives of TVEI.

**The Structure of the Foundation Level.**

- A5 The main features of the structure are
- a **Contexts** which broadly describe the areas of vocational content and experience that form the total programme.



- b **Context Components** which describe topics to be covered within each Context in order to ensure that programmes are broad and balanced.
- c **Core Skill Areas** which identify the essential skills to be developed through students' programmes.
- d **Work-related or Community Experience** which is an essential part of programmes. It gives students opportunities to gain skills in environments outside their previous experience and to integrate their school based work with the needs of local community and adult work.
- e **Case Studies** which are the main method of delivering the programmes. They are assignments or projects that identify the work to be done and provide opportunities for assessment of specified skills. Each Case Study comprises a number of tasks which together form a substantial and coherent piece of work. A complete programme will require the completion of a number of Case Studies.
- f **Assessment** which has a formative element involving regular discussion between student and teachers about progress made and future plans and targets. The summative element provides final reporting of Context components completed and skills achieved through Case Studies. An assessed national assignment (case study) is produced annually by City and Guilds to enable differentiation between students whose work merits recognition as credit or Distinction.

## Student Programmes

- A6 The timetabling patterns possible within the Diploma at Foundation Level are very varied. As a guide, students would be expected to spend a period of time equivalent to that required for a GCSE option. The overall course of study must satisfy the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988. Some students follow a full range of GCSE subjects along side their Diploma course which may deliver a core curriculum to include, for example Careers and Personal, Social and Health Education. Others have a proportion of their GCSE work integrated into Case Studies. Following a pilot of the approach, some centres are providing access to GNVQ units as part of these programmes.

## Timetabling

- A7 Foundation Level programmes may be included in the timetable of students in years 10 and 11 as
  - a **discrete time** – when a set period of identified time is allocated to work for the City and Guilds Diploma. Usually the Case Studies form



a major element in the delivery of personal, social, health and environmental programmes.

- b **integrated time** – where Case Studies are used in the delivery of, for example, aspects of GCSE. Foundation Level programmes are not separately identified in the timetable but the work is done within the subject time. This option requires cross-curricular integration and encourages educational and organisational links between departments
- c **A mixed programme** – some specific time is given for Foundation Level programmes with related Case Study work being carried out in subject time. This option allows the additional input of specialist staff to appropriate aspects of the Case Studies.
- d **complete timetable** – an arrangement where a very large proportion of the total curriculum is delivered through the medium of Case Studies. This arrangement has been adopted very successfully by Special Schools.



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