THE TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL TO NON-SCHOOL:
A STUDY IN FIVE LABOUR MARKETS

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Submitted for the Degree of Ph.D.
December 1989
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As with all postgraduate students in the Social Sciences, I have received assistance, support and guidance from many people during the preparation of this thesis.

My thanks must go first to my supervisor, Professor Gerald Bernbaum, for his advice, encouragement, incisive comment and good humour throughout this project, and for finding time for me over a period of seven years.

I am especially grateful to the staff, headteachers, careers officers and, above all, the pupils of the five schools in which the research was carried out. Hopefully the pupils are all now well established either in the labour market or in higher education. Without the help and co-operation of these people the research would not have been possible.

Thanks are due to Roger Appleyard of the School of Education, University of Leicester, for his patience when teaching me to use SPSS, and also to Professor Bob Burgess of Warwick University, first of all for planting the idea of research at the very beginning and for his valuable comments towards the conclusion of the project. I am also indebted to the Economic and Social Research Council for providing financial support during the first three years of the project.

In addition, I must give thanks to my parents for their support, not least of which was in typing the first drafts of this thesis. Finally, the project owes a great deal to my wife, Jacqueline, for her encouragement and patience ... I promise now to finish decorating the house.
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Chapter One
STATEMENT OF AREA OF INTEREST AND MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

Introduction
With the present organisation of schooling in England most young people leave full time education at the end of their fifth year at Secondary School. The event of leaving school is particularly important as the end of compulsory education leaves the individual free to make decisions and choices which are likely to influence the pattern of his/her future in a variety of ways. Traditionally, leaving school and starting to work has marked the beginning of adult status, as the young person leaves the protection of the child centred school and enters the adult work place. These two different worlds of school and work are brought together briefly as the individual makes the transition from one to the other. The question of transfer has been the subject of debate for many years, and a substantial body of literature has built up around it. In the light of the existing literature one might justifiably ask the question, why another study of school leavers? In this chapter I intend to answer this question and offer some vindication for my own study, both in terms of my own interest in the area and the identification of omissions in the existing literature.

Personal Interests
Traditionally, sociologists have explained the genesis of their work in terms of a dissatisfaction with the state of existing or current literature on their particular topic, or in terms of a conceived need for further study in the light of changed circumstances. Whilst I could genuinely offer these reasons as motivating my own study, I feel that to
do so would be to point to the secondary forms of motivation, omitting a
particular set of circumstances which hold particular relevance to my
subject matter. Corrigan (1979) says that while sociologists claim to
become interested in an area of study through reading the work of other
sociologists, "the main reason for choice is to be found in the
biography of the researcher". This is certainly true in my own case.
My own experience of two very different kinds of school leaving
processes provided an initial interest and motivation for study in this
particular area, leading to the present research topic. It may be
useful, therefore, to consider these two experiences and relate them to
this study.

After failing the Eleven Plus examination at the age of ten and
a half, I began the next stage of my education in a Secondary Modern
School which drew its pupils from a predominantly working class
catchment area. Whilst at this school I received a particular kind of
education which, in retrospect, I interpret as providing preparation for
entry into the working class. Throughout my time spent at this school
there was an emphasis on practical education and the need to be equipped
with the skills required by industry for the boys, or home for the
girls. Parallels with the work of Willis (1977) are obvious. In
particular, I recall being encouraged to take C.S.E. in Woodwork so that
I might get an apprenticeship with a local firm. I didn't. Instead, at
the end of the fifth year in this school, I left to begin a three year
sixth form at an all male Grammar School. Where one school was working
class, the other was middle class and, most importantly, where one was
practical the other was academic.
The point of drawing these distinctions here is to highlight the way in which these different schools prepared their pupils for leaving, how their approach to education and the functions which they saw education serving acted to produce two different kinds of school leavers. To illustrate this point it is useful to look at the organisation of careers work in these different schools. In the first, emphasis was largely on skilled working class jobs, entered immediately after leaving school at the age of sixteen. Little consideration was given to Further or Higher Education, or to more middle class careers which might require longer periods of education and training. In the Grammar School the situation was almost totally reversed. Pupils were expected to continue in education after the minimum leaving date and to enter professions or managerial type careers. This difference was manifested in the 'careers visits' which were organised by the different schools. For example, with the secondary modern school I visited local shops, the City Transport garages, a Catering College and had talks from each of the Armed Services. With the Grammar School, however, I attended presentations from two Universities, visited banks, a solicitor's office and the administration department of a hospital.

These two different organisations of careers education were designed to fit two different kinds of school leavers, who had been prepared for life outside school in particular ways, to perform different functions and adopt different roles in society. These differences did not arise merely by chance.

Although at the time I may not have realised the significance of these two different kinds of education, and especially the careers education programmes, my particular interest in education, more
specifically careers education, which I developed at University, led me
to reinterpret my experience of schooling and the school leaving process
in the light of studies conducted in this area. My own school leaving
experiences provided a personal illustration of how a young person's
experience of leaving school may differ in accordance both with the type
of education he/she receives and the social class orientation of the
school attended. My experience of the secondary modern school, in
retrospect, demonstrated that preconceived ideas about pupils and labels
applied by the organisation of schooling can deny opportunities and
waste abilities. Accordingly, careers education provided by the school
may act to limit opportunities and prepare young people for a narrow
range of post-school destinations.

Like Corrigan (1979), personal experience acted as a spring
board for my interest in the area of school to non-school transfer and
careers education and, ultimately, in this research project. However,
personal experience is always limited. For example, my school leaving
experiences had been limited to two schools in one city during a period
of relatively full employment. Although I experienced two very
different school leaving processes they were defined by the location in
which they occurred, the nature of the local labour market and the types
of school. They were sufficient, however, for me to ask questions about
careers education and school leaving on a wider scale. For example, I
was interested in investigating whether such differences as I
experienced were sustained or accentuated throughout different areas of
the country, to identify any kind of uniformity or common experience in
the school leaving process. In short, the questions which arose as a
result of reflection on my own experiences and of studying the
literature in this area were: what kinds of careers education exist in different parts of the country? What is the effect of different kinds of local labour markets on careers education provided? What implications did increasing youth unemployment have both for the contents of careers education and the whole process of leaving school? I was concerned to form a comprehensive picture of careers education and the school leaving process in a number of different areas of the country. I proposed to conduct a research project which would examine these questions through a comparative approach, focusing on the views and experiences of school leavers, teachers and careers officers involved in the process.

Reflections on my own experiences of careers education and leaving school are not intended to imply that they were in any way typical of the school leaving process in England. Identification of a typical process may indeed prove impossible, given the variation in labour market conditions which exist throughout the country. Furthermore, as I began to develop my proposal for ESRC funding, I became increasingly aware of the fact that the mid 1970's (the period when I experienced the school leaving process) were very different from the early 1980's (the time of the research proposal) in terms of the availability of jobs for school leavers. Moreover, a sharp rise in youth unemployment over this period tended to reduce the contemporary relevance of many of the studies in the school to work transfer. Many of the studies which may be seen as corner stones in this field were carried out during times of either full or relatively full employment and the kind of analyses which they made were largely limited to the particular economic context within which they were carried out. As a
result many of these could contribute little to an understanding of the situation facing many school leavers in 1983/4. A study of the school leaving process which took account of the higher than ever rate of youth unemployment was required.

On starting the study in 1983/4 it was important to recognise that, although youth unemployment stood at record levels nationally, there were considerable regional variations. Statistics demonstrated that, whilst there were many unemployment black spots, there were other areas which remained largely unaffected by unemployment, where school leavers still enjoyed a choice of jobs. It became clear from my early research that existing literature had failed to give sufficient attention to the variations which occur between different areas and their labour markets. There had been a tendency for studies to move away from large scale investigation towards smaller groups of school leavers for research, often focusing on one particular area, for example, Carter (1962, 1966), Willis (1977), Bazalgette (1975). As a result, there was little effective comparison of the school leaving process between different areas. As my experience had shown, considerable differences existed between careers programmes in the same area. It seemed likely, therefore, that these differences would be of far greater magnitude between different areas which incorporated different labour markets and accompanying rates of unemployment. In the light of this I concluded that my own study needed to be comparative. If I was to contribute towards a more complete picture of the process of transfer from school to non-school in the light of different labour markets and regional economic climates, then the research needed to be carried out in a variety of areas.
Having identified the need for a comparative study across a number of different local labour markets, the number of areas and schools which could be included in the study was, of course, limited by the resources available to me and by what a postgraduate student is able to achieve, in terms of gaining access and managing data collection, working essentially on his/her own. It was important, therefore, that a project was defined which was manageable yet provided sufficient scope for effective comparisons to be drawn. Furthermore, as the study was to be school focused, it was important that the schools used were to be representative of those in the areas where the research was to be based. Identifying a typical school is obviously difficult (does such a school exist?) but, as will be discussed later, efforts made in this direction were generally successful.

Having outlined the motivation for this study in terms of personal experience and interest, the question remains to be answered, why is another study in this well-researched area required? In relation to this question it is also important to ask how this study differs from those which have preceded it. I have already stated that the rise in unemployment during the early 1980's warrants a closer investigation of the school leaving process. It is to a consideration of the changing labour market conditions which I now turn in order to answer the above questions.

The Changing Youth Labour Market
Throughout the prosperous 1950's and 1960's the position of young people in the labour market was fairly clear; they were industry's new recruits necessary for the maintenance of a stable workforce. During the period following the second World War to the mid 1970's, experienced adult
workers enjoyed a relatively strong position in the workforce. Skilled labour was in demand and adults were therefore able to command good wages and improved conditions of service based on their experience. Demand for new workers was constant and the school leaver occupied a well-defined place at the beginning of the work hierarchy as an apprentice or trainee. Although positions as trainees were often poorly paid, there was no shortage of school leavers seeking positions. The ethic of 'getting a trade' was held strongly amongst many school leavers and their families (Williams, 1957, 1963). Entry to an apprenticeship or period of training was, therefore, an important stage in a career. During the thirty years after the second World War the demand for new labour was generally high, school leavers enjoyed good prospects and often a choice of jobs. The effect that this had on the school leaving process and on careers education was very positive. Schools knew in general terms what was going to happen to their pupils at the age of fifteen/sixteen and were able to prepare them accordingly. As will be discussed later, such preparation usually involved matching pupils with suitable jobs and ensuring appropriate introductions were made, usually through the Youth Employment Service. In some schools an important part of the matching process was guidance techniques in the developmentalist tradition. This approach was advocated by Williams (1957) who, although recognising that the needs of young workers in choosing a career were different from adult workers changing jobs, considered it was merely a case of fitting the young person to the right job. Williams realised, however, that there may be several different occupations into which the young person might fit. To facilitate a good fit, she considered guidance in choice to be vitally important. She states,
"For the young worker, then, guidance in the choice of an occupation is as important as, if not more important than, finding an available vacancy."

It would be wrong to assume, however, that all schools engaged in guidance and matching programmes during times of good employment prospects for school leavers. Some schools offered little by way of preparation for leaving, assuming that the range of opportunities open to the young person and his/her capacity to try perhaps two or three jobs in the first few months after leaving school (Veness, 1962), made preparations for leaving and careers education unnecessary.

With the advent of youth unemployment things changed. Not only was there concern over the shortage of jobs for school leavers, but there was also ambiguity over the role which the school should play in this changed situation. For example, was it the job of the school to prepare pupils for work even though this may no longer exist, or should they try to educate for unemployment, which some interpret as an admission of defeat? Unemployment brought uncertainty. Many school leavers were unable to make realistic plans for the end of compulsory schooling as they had no way of knowing what this would bring, if anything. At the same time the effect of unemployment was not uniform and, in areas where jobs still existed for school leavers, traditional careers education programmes which sought to place the school leaver in a job, or at least aid the process of choice, were still used. As a result of the differential effects of unemployment there developed a situation of confusion in terms of the aims of careers education and the preparation for leaving school.

In the early 1980's it was difficult to identify clear aims for careers education, and this augmented the debate around the contribution
which careers education could make to the school leaving process. At the same time there were frequent calls from industry for a workforce which was better prepared for the working world, for the content of education to be more relevant to the needs of industry. Such calls Finn (1984) interprets as a reflection on industry's fear of the demise of a compliant workforce and, in some ways, a convenient excuse for their reduced requirement for school leavers. The sharp rise in unemployment throughout the country necessitated very different approaches to careers education in different areas of the country.

In 1982/3, when the proposal for this research was developed, there had been no systematic study which compared the impact of youth unemployment on careers education across different geographical areas and their local labour markets. The object of this study, therefore, has been to consider the role of careers education in the school to non-school transfer process in five different areas of the country. The areas provide important points of contrast in terms of their local labour markets, their schools and their approach to careers education.

Having discussed the motivation for and background to this study, it will now be useful as part of this introductory chapter to look more specifically at the content of the study and the approach taken which underlies the methodology.

Content of the Study

Whilst the specific aims of this research project, together with the methods employed, are discussed in a later chapter, my concern here is to establish the parameters within which the study has been conducted, and to define some of the terminology which is used throughout the thesis. It will now be clear that the general concern of the study is
with the transfer from school to non-school. Previously, work carried out in this area has been couched in terms of the transfer from school to work. As the discussion so far has revealed, however, for many of the school leavers in 1983/4 the transfer could no longer be seen in such simple terms. Many of the young people with whom this study has been concerned, and in many areas of the country more generally, had little prospect of finding a job before leaving school or in the immediate future thereafter. To consider the school leaving process only in terms of the transfer from school to work, therefore, would be to ignore the situation in which many school leavers found themselves.

This study considers the transfer process in the widest sense and, as such, the term 'school to non-school' is intended to incorporate the whole range of post-fifth year destinations. This will include not only those transferring immediately from school to work but also to further education (either within the same institution or, for example, by entering a sixth form college or joining an F.E. college), those joining the Youth Training Scheme and those who would be unemployed. By taking this broad approach to the study the diversity of the school leaving process will be demonstrated and the factors which determine this diversity will be discussed. One of the most important issues which underpins the research is the interaction of the local labour market with the school and the school leaver. The data collected will demonstrate how the buoyancy of the local market can affect not only the post-school destination of the young person but also the way in which he/she is prepared for the end of compulsory schooling.

In taking a comparative approach to the research the intention has been to ask a series of questions about the school leaving process
which would be relevant across the five different areas where the research was conducted. The questions defined the scope and direction of the study. In the traditional sense, the study did not have an hypothesis which was tested, then confirmed or rejected. Corrigan (1979), in the introduction to *Schooling the Smash Street Kids*, describes a similar approach to his research. He says he did not put forward an hypothesis, then go out and test it; his research "did not happen that way". Rather, he organised his research around a series of questions, which in his case were relevant to the topic of education and male working class youth. Furthermore, the questions were not planned out at the beginning of the research, but suggested themselves in the course of the work. Corrigan says: "What this portrays is the actual process of Sociological Research".

In my case, many of the questions which have shaped the research have arisen as a result of initial investigations and data collection. Given the breadth of the subject area and the five different areas across which the study was conducted, the identification of a particular hypothesis at the beginning of the research may have produced a narrowing and limiting effect. Many of the issues which have become important as the study has progressed may have been overlooked if the principal emphasis had been on testing an hypothesis.

Glaser and Strauss (1967), in outlining what they term 'Grounded Theory', discuss the relationship between theory, method and hypothesis. They criticise the traditional approach of sociologists to their subject which relied on the identification of an hypothesis, followed by the collection of empirical data to test if facts fit the theory. Glaser and Strauss turn the process around. They say that a social scientist
does go out to study an area with a focus, a general question or problem in mind, but,

"he can (and we believe should) also study an area without any preconceived theory that dictates prior to the research, relevancies in concepts and hypotheses."

My intention at the outset, therefore, was not to identify a particular hypothesis but, as Glaser and Strauss suggest, to address a series of questions about particular issues, thereby giving the study a focus. This fairly broad approach facilitated a comparative investigation of the subject area which enabled me to learn about relevant issues as data were collected and analysed, and ultimately contribute to a fuller understanding of careers education and the transfer from school to non-school in the early 1980's. Throughout the research programme I have endeavoured to allow sufficient latitude to incorporate developments which have become significant during the course of my research. For example, the Youth Training Scheme was introduced after I began working and now forms an important part of the school leaving process. Not to include consideration of this important development would have been to ignore one of the major changes in youth training policy ever devised and implemented. Similarly, in the conclusions to this thesis, consideration is given to the reports published by the Institute of Manpower Studies (Metcalf, 1988), and the National Economic Development Office (1988) which discuss the likely effect of changing demographic trends, in particular, the impact of the shortage of school leavers on employers' recruitment policies and practices. The flexibility in the approach taken to the research is also reflected in its methodology. The use of both quantitative and
qualitative methods has produced data of different kinds which, when analysed together, provide a balanced picture of the area being studied.

In planning the comparative approach and identifying the impact of unemployment on careers education as one of the key issues, it became clear that the research needed to be located within the context of the local labour markets where the transfer from school to non-school took place. School leavers, being largely dependent on families for housing, emotional and financial support, are unlikely to look beyond their local labour market for their first job. The nature of the local labour market, its ability to offer employment and occupational choice to school leavers was, therefore, seen to be fundamental to the research. Consequently the five local labour markets provide the base for much of the analysis throughout the study. The use of the local labour market as the base for analysis throughout the study is also useful in that it facilitates a link with the leaving programmes operated in the five schools and macro-economic trends. This issue is dealt with in Chapter Six, which looks at the five areas and their local labour markets within which the research was carried out.

Sustained Interest in School to Non-School Transfer

My own interest in the area of school to non-school transfer has been explained in terms of personal experience of being a school leaver in two very different kinds of establishment. As will be shown in succeeding chapters, however, the topic of school to non-school transfer has attracted considerable interest from social scientists for many years. It may be useful, at this point, to consider some of the reasons for the sustained interest in this area. Traditionally, leaving school has been regarded as the beginning of adulthood. When schooling ended,
the young person started to bring home a wage, to pay for his/her own upkeep and contribute to the family income. At the same time, this newly acquired status brought with it certain forms of behaviour which further demonstrated and confirmed adult status. For example, many new workers spoke of being able to stay out later at night, some admitted to going into pubs although legally under age. A generally more adult role was adopted by the school leaver as he/she began working life. The action of leaving school performs an important social function in this respect. Furthermore, this stage in the development of the individual is important insofar as decisions taken at this time can often determine or contribute to particular patterns which may shape the individuals' future life experiences in terms of career, income, peer groups and social class. For this reason alone considerable interest has been shown by social scientists in the school leaver and the young worker.

Constituent parts of the school to non-school transfer process have also attracted interest, for example Chapter Three details a number of studies which have focused on occupational choice, and others where the main concern has been with the content of careers education. Much of the literature in this area, up to the early 1980's, was, however, primarily concerned with the transfer of the young person from school into employment and had failed to consider the possible effects of unemployment on him/her. Few studies have considered the unemployed school leaver and the effect which the failure to secure a job has on his/her social and material well being. For example, does the failure of the young person to bring home a wage and the failure to adopt the role of worker mean that he/she is denied access to independence and to adult status? Similarly, much of the materialism which is associated
with leaving school and starting to work will be denied the unemployed school leaver. As a result, the unemployed school leaver may find him/herself in an ambiguous situation, having left the child centred world of school but being prohibited from entering the world of work and the adult role proper. Many of the studies of the 1950's/1960's considered the question of stress experienced by the young person on moving from school to work. It may be, however, that stress is now more common amongst school leavers who are unable to find work than amongst those entering the work place for the first time, due not least to the ambiguity of their situation and society's expectation that they should find a job. Alternatively, for young people in many areas of the country in the early 1980's, unemployment had become the norm within their peer and family groups. Leaving school and signing on the dole or joining a government scheme, therefore, carried no social stigma. In such situations the school leaver was powerless and unable to exercise any influence over his/her post-school destination.

The subject of school to non-school transfer has clearly interested social scientists over a long period of time for a combination of reasons. Questions of labour market demand for young workers, adult socialisation processes, careers education programmes and labour market structures have all contributed to the continued research interest in this area. In 1983, when this research commenced, the situation facing school leavers was generally confusing, the different opportunity structures and labour market conditions existing throughout the country made the subject of particular interest to the social scientist. Some school leavers continued to find jobs fairly easily whilst others had to be content with government schemes or unemployment.
Some schools engaged in a broad form of vocational education specifically geared to the prospect of unemployment, and others merely concentrated on academic study for examination success, believing this to be the best form of preparation for leaving school and finding work. In the light of this variation it was no longer possible, if indeed it ever was, to speak of a school leaving process as though it maintained some kind of national homogeneity. Many aspects of careers education and vocational guidance were challenged, as many schools and careers services were forced to reconsider their practices in the light of changed labour market conditions.

The changed labour market conditions and the uncertainties they brought for school leavers in the early 1980's provide the background to this study. This introductory chapter, apart from discussing the motivation for the study, has outlined some of the questions raised by the uncertainties. The chapter has also shown that the labour market change and the uncertainties had reduced the contemporary relevance of many studies in this area, making expedient a more up to date study of the school leaving process. It has also been my intention in this introductory chapter to evince that the approach taken to the study, one of comparative investigation, correlates with the subject matter. I hope, therefore, to have described both the background to the study and to have provided something of the context within which it was carried out.
Points of transition frequently make interesting topics of research for the social scientist. The breaking of an established pattern or way of life and the adoption of a new and often very different one, can present a variety of issues which are of interest to the sociologist, the psychologist or the economist. The process of transfer from school to non-school incorporates such a transition point. The wealth and diversity of literature which has been produced over the last forty years, about or around this process, demonstrates the interest that social scientists have shown in what is an important stage in the development of the young person. The body of knowledge and literature incorporates many different styles, theories and methodologies, demonstrating the eclecticism of thought and approach towards the process. Furthermore, the literature contains examples of a number of different theoretical approaches, and these may be seen as reflections of the varied economic, social and political climates within which the studies and the process of transfer itself took place.

Like all processes, the transfer from school to non-school does not take place in isolation, but is rather a collection and interaction of factors within a particular social scenario. The individual school leaver does not leave school and enter the world of non-school without coming into contact with a variety of individuals, institutions and processes. It is the way in which these factors act to influence and constrain the process of transfer which is interesting, and the way in which local labour market conditions shape these factors which is the
focus of this study. An effective appraisal of the literature in this area needs to be selective. The intention of this review is to focus largely on the work of sociologists and, to a lesser extent, psychologists who have attempted to place the process of leaving school within the wider context of educational and socialisation processes.

In describing a representative cross-section of the literature, the way in which much of its overall content and style has changed will be highlighted. For example, many of the early studies were functionalist in their approach, concerned with the way in which school leavers would adapt to the work environment. Later, the emphasis changed to give greater consideration to structural influences on occupational choice. More recently, the whole question of leaving school has been seen as more problematic, emphasising the school leavers' position in the light of increasing unemployment. These changes have often been accompanied by, or in many cases are a direct result of, wider social and economic factors. For example, much of the literature concerning occupational choice arose during the 1960's, and can be seen as a reflection of the relative prosperity of that decade. During those years concern was with fitting the right kind of person to the right kind of job and, as jobs were readily available, this was seen as an accessible goal for the practitioners of careers education and guidance. Obviously the buoyancy of the labour market at that time was conducive to such work. In comparison, the literature which arose during the 1970's reflected the greater difficulty experienced by young people in trying to find jobs, and frequently called for the final years of schooling to be more directly relevant to industry and the work place. Meanwhile, much of the literature of the late 1970's to the
present day is concerned with the realities of youth unemployment, and with the special government measures designed to counteract this.

For the social scientist, the question of transfer from school to non-school holds interest on many counts. First of all the world of school appears, on the surface, to be very dissimilar from the world of work, school being protective and child centred while work is an adult world often harsh and competitive. As a result, leaving school and starting to work has traditionally been regarded as the beginning of adulthood and independence for the young person. Similarly, this may be the first time that a young person has had to make an important decision, for example, whether to leave school or to stay in education, or what kind of work to look for. The time of leaving school has for many years been regarded as particularly important in the development of the young person, attracting attention not only from researchers but also from government bodies. For example, one of the earliest references to the transfer from school to work may be found in the comments of the President of the Board of Trade in 1916. On the occasion of setting up a departmental committee to look into "... the period of difficulty between leaving school and taking up an apprenticeship", he reported that:

"... The effect in discouragement, disillusionment and disappointment on the morale and the health of young people on the threshold of adult life is one of the gravest menaces of our times, and a contributory cause to permanent and intermittent unemployment and to juvenile delinquency."

From the beginning of the twentieth century there has been concern with the transfer from school to work, both in terms of the individual's ability to cope with it and the effect that a difficult transition could have on wider society. The ambiguity of the situation
facing the young person at this stage in his/her life is also made apparent by the above quotation. The young person is seen as being on the threshold of adult life, too old for institutionalised schooling yet too immature and inexperienced for integration into the adult world proper. Only entry into the labour market can bring this status. Few people would disagree that this is a difficult time for the young person. Sofer (1974) says,

"Young people are going through an emotional upheaval relating to biological development, social expectations, strivings for independence, and relations with adults."

It is, then, a time when the young person may experience a degree of social anomie, belonging neither to the world of school or work. It is also at this time that the individual may come into contact with a variety of institutionalised forms of help, for example, the school careers teacher and the local authority careers officer, who may seek to aid the transfer from school to non-school. The role of such agents is important in attempting to review the collected literature, as their practices often represent the practical application of the theories expounded in the literature.

**Schooling and Work**

Many of the developments in British education may be seen in terms of responses to the needs of industry and the production, by the education system, of the right kind of school leaver equipped for the work place. For example, Bowles, Gintis and Meyer (1975) point to the industrial revolution and the development of the factory as catalysts for institutionalised schooling, the rationale for the 1870 Education Act being clearly based on the need for a populace educated sufficiently to
make an effective contribution to developing Britain as the workshop of the world.

In a similar way the 1944 Butler Education Act, which introduced secondary education for all, may be interpreted in terms of the needs of industry and for the competition in post-war Europe. This Act sought to provide a fit between particular types of school leavers and particular types of jobs. By establishing a tri-partite system of secondary education, the intention was to facilitate a fit between the process of leaving school and entering work, to the extent that it was assumed that the particular type of education received would make the transfer to a particular kind of work a smooth one. The type of education received, therefore, was preparation in itself for entry into the world of work. The Grammar school emphasised the importance of learning for its own sake, preparing its pupils for higher education, the professions or managerial work. Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, the Secondary Modern school, with its emphasis on practical education, was intended to provide the labouring classes for industry, the semi- and unskilled workers. With such a system of secondary education it was assumed that the transfer from school to work would be straightforward.

Much of the literature of the 1950's and 1960's in the area of school leaving suggests, however, that the transition to work may not have been as smooth as was intended by the legislation. Much of the social and educational research at this time was concerned with the stress a young person might experience on leaving the protection of the school environment for the impersonal and perhaps hostile atmosphere of the work place. Miller and Form (1951), for example, were concerned with the organisational structures of the school and the work place, and
with how the individual school leaver coped with moving from one to the other. They argued that the young person entering industry experiences difficulties arising from differences of position, situation and value orientation, these being the three major ways in which they see school differing from work. In terms of situation, for example, all the pupils are of a similar age, whereas ages vary over a wide range at work. In terms of position, a final year school pupil is familiar with the institution, often having some status or a position of responsibility within it. At work, however, the new entrant is a minor figure, having neither experience nor authority in his/her new surroundings. Finally, in terms of value orientation, Miller and Form (1951) claim that these are many and varied. In the school context they include co-operation, morally correct behaviour, and full self-development. These are to be contrasted with those of self-interest and amorality found in the work place. They claim that a shock occurs from the confrontation of the realities of the work situation with the expectations carried over from the school situation. The work of Miller and Form (1951) is important as it demonstrates the way in which school and work were regarded as being very separate and different kinds of institutions. Although one was intended to serve the needs of the other, there was little contextual overlap identified between the two worlds at this time, and the school leaver merely moved from one to the other.

In general, much of the literature generated during times of economic prosperity and good prospects for school leavers tended to identify two separate worlds of school and work, and a gap between them which the school leaver had to bridge. It discussed the two worlds largely in isolation with little consideration of the wider social and
economic context within which the transfer between the two worlds took place. It assumed a rather simplistic and abrupt break with one environment and an equally abrupt start in another. Keil, Riddell and Green (1966), however, have a different interpretation of the transfer from school to work. They view those studies which see the worlds of school and work as entirely separate as too simplistic. They point to many complexities in the last year at school and the first at work which play an important part in the transfer from one to the other. With specific reference to Miller and Form they say that these complexities are ignored with the assumption that all work and school situations are the same. However, while Keil et al emphasise the complexity of the transfer, they do not question the existence of stress for the school leaver, but rather see this as inevitable. Their work is important in signalling that the transfer from school to work can be a complex process, which is shaped by more than the forces of supply and demand of labour.

Similarly, Musgrave (1967), whilst criticising Keil et al, also sees the school to work transfer as a complex issue. He believes that the work of Keil et al should be set within a framework of a general theory of occupational choice. To this end, he offers a theory which takes account of influences operating on the individual from birth onwards. His overarching theory is an integration of role theory, organisational theory and socialisation theory, which he believes to be applicable to job choices other than the first.

The work of Musgrave may be seen as an attempt to create a more sophisticated approach to occupational choice and the transfer from school to work, by creating a conceptual framework as an approach to a
sociological theory. However, Coulson, Keil, Riddell and Struthers (1967) believe that Musgrave places too great an emphasis on the individual and, by doing so, fails to give sufficient attention to social structure. In short, they see Musgrove's theory as a form of over-simplified functionalism, which is unable to cope with conflict which may occur between the worlds of home and work.

The importance of this debate between Musgrave and Keil et al is in the increasing theoretical sophistication which it brought to this area. Explanations of school to work transfer and occupational choice no longer rested on simple theories of supply and demand or mechanistic developmentalism, but clearly required a sophisticated conceptual framework upon which empirical studies could be based.

Bazalgette (1975) also provides a different interpretation of the transfer process. Whilst he identifies a clear gap between the worlds of school and work, which may lead to stress for the young person on transferring between them, his explanation for the gap is the converse of that of Miller and Form (1951). Bazalgette suggests the environment of the work place is actually more friendly and congenial to harmonious relations than that of school. In his Coventry study he found that work places tended to be organised in small groups which included a range of ages and social backgrounds. The groups were basically stable and secure with working relationships based on co-operation. Bazalgette believes this contrasts sharply with the situation to be found in the large comprehensive school where pupils work in large groups which are constantly changing, and where the relationship between teacher and pupil may be fairly superficial. Bazalgette goes on to identify a lack of understanding between teachers,
employers and parents. This lack of understanding he sees as contributing to minimal parent contact between both the school and work organisations. All of these factors, Bazalgette argues, contribute to widening the gap between school and work. Like Miller and Form, he argues that the two environments are so different as to make the transition between the two stressful. As explanations for the perceived gap between school and work, the work of Miller and Form (1951) and of Bazalgette (1973, 1975) may be too simplistic. Miller and Form assume all school situations to be similar in organisation and in the kind of internal environment they engender. Whilst there may have been a greater degree of uniformity between schools in the 1950's, the five schools described in my study show quite clearly that this is not the case in the 1980's. Similarly, Bazalgette, in his assumptions about the harmonious work place, fails to consider the effects of industrial conflict on the cohesion of the work place and, again, there is an implicit assumption that all work environments are similar in nature.

Although more than twenty years apart, the studies of Miller and Form (1951) and Bazalgette (1975) discuss similar issues. However, the localised nature of the studies raises questions about the degree to which the theories they purport can be applied to the school to work transfer process more generally. For example, the studies give little attention to factors such as social class, academic ability, the state of the labour market, or the kind of job the school leaver seeks to enter. They tend to see the school to work transfer operating largely in isolation from these important influences. Furthermore, the studies of Miller and Form (1951), Keil et al (1966, 1967) and Bazalgette (1973, 1975) were carried out during periods of relatively full employment for
school leavers. They offer few insights, therefore, into the situation which faced many school leavers in 1983/4 in areas of high unemployment, when this study was conducted.

The studies considered so far have been concerned largely with the structural and organisational aspects of the transfer from school to work. Whilst the issues they raise are very important, for a full understanding of the transfer process it is necessary to look beyond structural explanations. Linda Clarke (1980) points out that most of the studies from the 1940's to the late 1970's which have been concerned with the transfer from school to work, have paid some attention to young people's attitudes towards work, and towards the final year of schooling. These attitudes are important as they often reflect the socialisation process through which the individual has passed, and may give insight into the philosophy and practices of such things as careers guidance. For example, Jahoda (1949) discovered that the vast majority of his sample were nervous yet excited by the prospect of going to work. At the same time these young people knew very little about the details of working life, having received very little preparation for leaving school. More recent studies (Ashton and Field (1976), Kirton (1976), Hill and Scharff (1976)), also give some consideration to how well informed young people are about work before leaving school. The studies suggest they have been fairly well informed about pay and hours of work, etc., but know little about the actual content of the work or of the way in which their careers are likely to progress.

Carter (1962) considered attitudes of school leavers in Sheffield. In a study of two hundred secondary modern pupils he concluded that the final school year brought about a negative attitude
towards school. Most of Carter's sample thought that the final school year was a "waste of time" and "childish", whilst teachers were "bossy and unsympathetic". The majority of the sample were looking forward to leaving school and to starting work. The findings of Carter's study suggest, therefore, that the school itself was responsible for the negative attitudes of the leavers, rather than any kind of maturity on their part. As the study was conducted in 1962, when the minimum leaving age was fifteen, it suggests a relationship between the final year and the negative attitude, rather than chronology. It may be interesting to compare the attitudes towards schooling of present fourth year pupils, as they would be the same age as Carter's school leavers, to 'test' the theory that it is the final year per se which produces the negative attitudes.

A later study by Keil (1976) made similar findings to that of Carter. Sixty two per cent of her sample of fifth years felt that the final school year was of little use, and was by no means an adequate preparation for entry to work. These findings would appear to corroborate the view that it is the final school year itself, rather than the age of the pupils, which is responsible for engendering negative attitudes. In contrast to this view, however, Maizels (1970) showed that while substantial numbers of her sample of three hundred and seventy boys and girls wanted to leave school, not more than one in five actually disliked their final school year and more than half felt positively towards it. Maizels warns, however, that we must not be misled by this, as it may be the fact that it was the last school year which had to be endured which made it enjoyable. This in itself may be seen as something of a negative attitude towards the final school year.
Maizels also points out that attitudes to the final year were by no means uniform. For example, pupils in the lower streams were most likely to complain of boredom or of repetitive activities during their final year.

Maizels' (1970) work is interesting as not only does it stress the importance of the final year in the school leaving process, but it also highlights the different experiences of school leaving for different ability groups and different social classes. She states that certain factors in the school environment acted to discourage many school leavers from taking advantage of the educational opportunities that the school offered. She says this inhibited rather than stimulated their educational development, encouraging premature entry into employment. Her concern is largely with those who failed to fit with the schools' academic goals, and the way in which their particular attitudes are deemed most suitable for generally lower level occupations, by both school and industry. She believes that a labelling process occurs which ensures that the school leaving experiences of those who do not accept the academic goals of the school are very different from those who do.

In considering the role of attitudes in the school leaving process it is important to consider not only those of the school, however, but also those of the employer. Keil (1976) draws attention to the attitude of employers to school leavers and their perception of the way in which they are prepared for leaving school. Her study, conducted over a period of eighteen months, points to a lack of communication between schools and work places. She identifies clear differences in terms of the formal and informal information passed between the
institutions of school and industry. Whilst many managers appreciated the difficulties facing schools, they thought that the school could do more to prepare young people for working life. Specific reference was made by managers to the raising of the school leaving age, which was topical at that time, and the possibility of linking of this 'extra' year more closely with industry. On the whole they believed that young people did not have a good understanding of work or the workplace before they entered it. Many employers saw it as their job to re-educate their new workers. Often, they would de-emphasise formal qualifications and reject the ideology of traditional education, calling into question the school system in general. Keil's (1976) study is important in demonstrating the interaction of the attitudes and values of school and industry and shows that the two parties do not necessarily share the same values and ideologies. Clearly, the school leaver may have to cope with changes of this nature when moving from school to work.

Finn (1982) also gives some consideration to the attitude of employers to school leavers, and believes that industrialists are often mistaken about how much school leavers know and understand about the workplace. He says that employers often accuse young people of ignorance of the work situation but, in doing this, they are often confusing ignorance with knowledge. He believes that what worries employers is that young people will know all too well what work involves and, because of this, may not be compliant or willing workers. He quotes one manager who sees today's school leavers as over-aspiring, expecting too much from the world of work. If Finn's theories are accepted, the criticisms frequently voiced of schools producing ignorant and ill-informed young people must be seen in terms of their failure to
produce young workers who are willing and compliant, rather than unable to fit into industry. Again, Finn's work points to the existence of a gap between the worlds of school and work. In this instance, however, it is the different attitudes of the school leavers and the employers which are responsible for the gap, rather than any structural or organisational factors.

Most of the early studies in the area of school to work transfer were conducted during times of full employment when, almost without question and without great difficulty, the young person left the child-centred world of school for the adult world of work. As the economic climate changed, however, the transfer did not become so automatic. Finding a job was no longer easy and as a result, leaving school became generally more problematic. There are, therefore, many aspects of the present day school leaving process which these early studies do not take into consideration.

Gradually, throughout the 1960's and 1970's, the transfer from school to work began to be seen as increasingly more complex. Leaving school ceased to be regarded as something which happened 'one day' at the end of the final school year, but rather became part of a transfer process which itself was part of the wider process of adult socialisation. Interest began to focus on the interaction of the school leaver with different kinds of people and institutions, and the effect that this might have on the actual choice of a career. Furthermore, with rising youth unemployment throughout the 1970's, the concept of careers education attracted more attention. Employers began to demand more from school leavers both in terms of formal and informal qualifications. The need for young people to be better equipped in
order to compete in the labour market gave rise to new ideas for the fields of careers education and vocational guidance. The practice of leaving school became integrated into the general educational and socialisation processes which prepared the young person for life outside of school, enabling him/her to cope with either the world of work or unemployment.

It would be incorrect to assume, however, that all the studies carried out during times of full employment saw the worlds of school and work as entirely separate. Keil et al (1966) discuss the process of adult socialisation and how the act of leaving school and starting to work form an important part of this. They discuss many different elements which contribute towards the socialisation of the school leaver. They say that entering the world of work involves the individual with many different people, groups and experiences. For example, family, neighbourhood, peer groups, mass media, general academic education, as well as careers education or vocational guidance, are all part of the transfer process. They claim that these influences can be both formal and informal and, as the transfer takes place within the context of a labour market situation which differs from area to area, the process will show little, if any, national uniformity. Keil et al identify a relationship between home, school and work which to a greater or lesser extent facilitates the process of transfer from school to work, insofar as certain structures and values may be common to all three of the home, school and work situations. For example, the school may reinforce patterns of the neighbourhood and home, it may present a situation similar to the one found in the work setting, the relationship between teacher and pupils may be similar to that between worker and
management. In general, Keil et al imply that there may be more similarity between home, school and work than might be assumed on first impressions, and this overlap may serve to aid the transfer from school to work.

Ashton and Field (1976) developed the theory of overlap between the worlds of school and work ten years after Keil. They conducted a study of eleven hundred and fifty school leavers in the Leicester area, and were concerned with their differential entry to and choice of occupations. Ashton and Field identify three types of school leaver, whom they believe it is possible to place into three different types of career paths. They claim that the entry into any one of the career paths depends on the extent to which the school leaver either accepts or rejects the ideologies presented by the school and the educational process. It also depends on the individual's desire and capacity to accept the concept of and to practice deferred gratification. The three types of career paths identified are: the short term career, the extended career and the careerless. Depending on the experiences of schooling and the general socialisation process, the transfer from school to one of the career paths may not be stressful to the young person. Rather than identifying a gap between school and work, this study suggests that the experience of school may actually facilitate a smooth transfer to one of the three career paths.

The careerless school leaver, for example, is likely to reject much of what is presented to him/her at school, seeing this as largely unimportant and to be avoided whenever possible. Ashton and Field (1976) believe that such an experience of schooling can actually ease the transfer to work. They say that work for this type of pupil may be
welcomed as a release from school; it will not be seen as a central life interest, but rather as a means of supplying finance for social gratification. Furthermore, the pursuit of short term high financial reward will be all important to the careerless worker, as this is likely to be the main motive for work. Frequent job changes in order to facilitate this will not be uncommon. Transfer to work for these pupils can in no way be seen as stressful. Attitudes towards work tended to be positive among these leavers, compared to their attitudes to school. In this case, the gap between school and work appears to have been bridged by playing one situation off against the other, the work situation actually being welcomed as a release from school. As a result, stress and trauma are avoided. The differences between the two situations are not ignored but rather seen as aiding the transfer.

Ashton and Field (1976) warn that the case of the extended career leaver may be the reverse of that described above for the careerless leaver. For the extended career leaver, they found there is likely to have been a good fit between the attitudes of the pupil and the ideologies of the school. The school will have played an important part in his/her life, and it is likely that he/she is among the more able pupils. Ashton and Field believe that it is these pupils who are likely to experience stress on moving from school to work. For them there is a clear gap between the school and the work situation in terms of content, ideology, operation aims and objectives. Thus the attitudes and expectations which this type of school leaver brings from school to the work situation are more likely to produce a bad fit. Neither will relief be gained from leaving school, as it is likely that school has been enjoyed. Pupils falling into this category may be reluctant to
leave school and, therefore, choose to remain in full-time education as long as possible. Where this is not possible, stress is likely to occur in the transfer process, as not only is the school leaver forced to enter an alien environment, but he/she may also be experiencing downward social mobility. Ashton and Field (1976) give as an example the grammar school boy who, perhaps because of failing examinations, finds himself working on a factory floor. Here the boy, who has been an extended career pupil, is presented with a totally alien situation, with different values and circumstances from the school situation, and has failed to achieve his potential.

Ashton and Field's (1976) work shows how the same situation, structures and experiences, can operate differently for different pupils according to ability, social class and socialisation process. Young people's experiences of leaving school and entering work are by no means uniform and, when the variable of the local labour market is added to this, a very complicated picture emerges.

Another study which demonstrates the different experiences of school leaving is that of Willis (1977). His concern was with the way in which the school prepared particular kinds of pupils for particular kinds of jobs. Like Ashton, Willis suggested that for some pupils, entering work may not be traumatic at all, but rather a natural progression from the informal preparation given by membership of the school 'counter culture'. Willis identified two groups of pupils in a Birmingham comprehensive school. One he terms "the lads", which was comprised of the non-conformist members of the school, the 'counter culture'. The other was known as "the ear'oles", the conformists. Willis shows how the experience of the final school year differs for
members of these two groups. "The lads" rejected the ideology of school and brought to it their own set of alternative attitudes and values which shaped their behaviour within school. "The ear'oles", on the other hand, whilst not necessarily of high academic ability, accepted the ideologies of the school along with its goal of achievement and deferred gratification. On following these boys through their final school year and into their initial experiences of work, Willis (1977) maintains that the school counter culture acts to facilitate an easy transition for "the lads" from school to work. He says, "... the school counter culture acts as a vital preparation ground for entry into the working class culture proper of the shop floor". The school experiences of "the lads" teach and generally prepare them to cope with the tedium and boredom of the workplace. This is achieved by social diversions which allow "the lads" to attach some kind of meaning and goal to their time spent in school. Willis maintains that this behaviour is important as it not only gives "the lads" an identity, but also reproduces the social order of the workplace and the shop floor culture. At school, "the lads" rejected the idea of progress and academic success in favour of their own goals and status within the counter culture. Similarly, work was rejected as a necessary evil in order to provide the finance for more meaningful social activities.

"The lads", like Ashton and Field's (1976) careerless pupils, are therefore well prepared for leaving school and entering working class shop floor culture, which in terms of attitudes, values and orientations appears to be little different from school. For these pupils, leaving school is not stressful and the overlap between the school counter culture and the shop floor culture acts to bridge any gap
which might exist. Furthermore, Willis posits that employers often prefer to employ the non-conformist school leaver as he/she fits into the accepted behavioural pattern, possessing the necessary qualities and value orientations for the shop floor. The informal 'training' received by way of the school counter culture enables him/her to fit in with the work situation in only a short time after leaving school. For the conformists, who have accepted the school goals and ideologies of achievement and ambition, Willis believes there is likely to be a difficult transition. He maintains that the opportunities and occupations which face this type of school leaver are likely to be in conflict with the attitudes and aspirations learnt and developed at school. For this type of school leaver the situation is likely to be one of frustration and their experience of entering work is likely to be stressful. If they are denied entry to the occupations which can accommodate the conformist ideologies learnt at school, then there is likely to be a bad fit between individuals and the types of jobs available.

The studies of Ashton and Field (1976) and Willis (1977) are important in illustrating the complex nature of the transfer from school to work. The studies demonstrate how, even within the same school, the nature of the transfer from school to work may be very different for different kinds or groups of pupils. Furthermore, unlike the more simplistic studies discussed earlier, they do not assume that the transfer need necessarily be stressful.

The studies of Ashton and Field (1976) and Willis (1977) are also indicative of the change in the nature of the literature in this area: change from theories which identified and focused on the gap
between school and work to an approach which was concerned with the different experiences of schooling and how this, together with general socialisation, could aid or hinder the transfer process. The new approach looked at the informal mechanisms and influences on the pupil as well as those structured formally by the institutions. This approach took little for granted and identified the transfer process as a complicated procedure. The studies which embodied this approach suggested that, whilst there were some clear differences between the worlds of school and work, the majority of young people coped with the transition fairly well. Explanations as to why some people experience stress on entering work must, therefore, incorporate a consideration of more than just the organisational structure of the different institutions. They must consider attitudes of the individual, the socialisation process, the nature of the labour market, the aspirations and expectations which may be held, together with preparations for leaving school of both a formal and informal nature. The transfer from school to work must be seen in terms of a process rather than an isolated occurrence.

Approaches to the Study of the School Leaving Process

A variety of approaches have been taken in studies of the school to non-school transfer process both in terms of methodology and discipline. For example, the quantitative approach of Carter (1962) and the ethnographic approach of Willis (1977) have both made important contributions to the literature. Similarly, the topic has been tackled by sociologists, psychologists and economists. Whilst the different approaches and perspectives adopted may contribute to a comprehensive picture of the transfer from school to non-school, they have also
contributed to a fragmentation in the literature which has hindered the development of a general theory of the school leaving process. Clarke (1980) believes that attempts to form such a theory have often had to rely on "intuitive assumptions rather than empirical evidence", and on research material which lacks systemisation. She says that the research has been fragmentary with

"different researchers studying the effects of different variables, asking different questions of different sizes and types of samples, and analysing their data in different ways."

Apart from differences in the size of studies and their accompanying methodologies, their geographical location has also contributed to the fragmentation. Studies have been conducted in virtually all areas of England. The different economic, social, industrial and commercial trends evident in the areas, together with the different organisation of secondary schooling therein, has often made generalisation of findings and theories across the different areas very difficult. Similarly, as a result of the variation in scope, content, location and method, a comprehensive national picture of the transfer from school to non-school does not exist.

So far, the studies considered in this chapter have taken a sociological approach to the topic. As has already been stated, however, the school leaving process and transfer to non-school has also been studied and explained in terms of psychological theories. It will be useful to consider these studies and, in particular, to discuss their influence on careers education and the preparation of young people for leaving school.

With the work of the psychologists, the focus of the literature shifts from the structure and organisational aspects of the topic, such
as the gap between school and work, to a consideration of more individual and interactive issues. Furthermore, the psychologists attempt to bring a more rational, scientific perspective to the subject area, which differentiates their approach from that of the sociologists. Occupational choice and its influence on the preparation for leaving school has been the focus of many psychological studies in the area of school to work transfer. Much of the work in this area has concentrated on 'trait' and 'factor' theories which relate occupational choice to an individual's personal characteristics and his/her experience of the final school year. It is an approach which has as its focus the individual's personality, values and actions. The work of Crites (1969) is typical of the approach of many psychologists to the question of occupational choice and work entry. He says,

"because individuals differ in their aptitudes, interests and personalities, and because occupations require varying amounts of these traits and factors, different individuals choose to enter different occupations."

If one accepts this, then it is difficult to see how, from such an approach, a general theory of occupational choice and work entry can be derived. If, as Crites (1969) says, occupational choice is such an individual act, then surely each case will be different, subject to its own influences. Whilst many psychologists would argue that this is true, they would also recognise that occupational choice is part of a wider process of school to work transfer. Their approach would be sufficiently flexible to accommodate a variety of factors of influence. This 'process' approach emerged in a comprehensive form with the work of Ginzberg et al (1951). They were concerned with the identification of theory to explain occupational choice, maintaining that it is possible
to identify three distinct periods in the process of occupational choice. These periods may be identified as the individual gets older and more mature, having access to wider experiences.

The initial period is associated with childhood and involves what is termed as "fantasy choices" of occupation. During this period ideas are developed about certain kinds of occupations based on childhood experiences. These may be associated with such things as play, and the people with whom the child comes into contact, for example, doctors, postmen, teachers, policemen, etc. The second period identified by Ginzberg (1951) occurs between the ages of eleven and seventeen, and is characterised by "tentative choices". During this time the individual passes through a series of stages involved with personal interests, attempts to find outlets for particular values and comes to terms with personal abilities. All of this occurs before the young person reaches the third and final stage of "realistic" choices around the time of school leaving and entry to a job or college. During the period of "tentative choice" the individual draws on his/her experiences whilst exploring various career alternatives before "crystallisation" and "specification" of choice is reached. After passing through these stages the individual should have gathered all the information required or available to commit him/herself not only to a field of work but also to particular career objectives. The overall conclusion which Ginzberg et al draw is that occupational choice is not a result of one single, specific decision, but is rather a series of decisions made over a period of years. Each step in the process, therefore, has a particular relationship to those which precede and
follow it. At the same time each step is largely irreversible, with decisions being dependent on individual development.

Critics of Ginzberg's approach have suggested that the work is over deterministic, seeking to categorise people in accordance only with personality traits, having little regard for any social or economic factors which might influence the individual and affect the process of occupational choice. Indeed, it has been suggested that the psychological studies as a whole, whilst explaining things in terms of personality types, fail to explain how these types actually arise in the first place. Furthermore, they fail to explain why particular attributes should lead to particular kinds of behaviour within the process of occupational choice.

In spite of these criticisms the developmental approach of Ginzberg has been used as the basis for much of the practice of careers guidance both in schools by careers teachers and by members of the careers service. Such an approach allows a gradual appraisal of personal abilities, qualities and aspirations, etc., before the particular occupational choice is made in light of this appraisal. This approach to occupational choice seeks to achieve a 'fit' between the individual and a particular occupation, and allows the teacher or careers officer to identify particular attributes of the individual and to match these with those of particular occupations. As such, the choice of occupation may be guided and a suitable 'fit' produced.

Several psychologists have taken similar approaches to careers guidance and occupational choice to that of Ginzberg. Among them is Kline (1975). For him, the question of vocational guidance and occupational choice is quite simply a matter of job specification and
person specification: a matter of fitting the right type of person to the right type of job. Kline believes that the best way to do this is with the use of psychological tests, which can determine an individual's suitability for certain kinds of work. Again, with this approach, there is little consideration of the school leaver's relationship with wider society and the effect that this may have on job choice. Furthermore, this approach assumes that personality traits can be isolated, tested and measured. The results may then be used in a sort of social engineering to produce the correct fit between individual school leaver and a suitable occupation. A detailed outline of this method of job fitting is given by Holland (1966) in his theory of personality types and environmental models. This involves matching people with a particular work environment. He believes there are basically six types of people who can be labelled as follows:

- Realistic
- Intellectual
- Social

- Conventional
- Enterprising
- Artistic

Holland suggests that these labels can be used to identify the six types of work situations which he identifies. Using these six categories with what he describes as his "vocational preference inventory", he believes it is possible to fit the right person to the right kind of job. Holland believes that, in an effort to find suitable kinds of jobs, people search for environments which will permit them to exercise their skills and abilities and, at the same time, express their attitudes and values.

Holland's process works by people choosing, from a list of eighty four, those jobs which they find most appealing. The jobs are
divided into the six categories outlined above. The more jobs the person chooses from any one of the categories, Holland believes, the more likely they are to resemble that category. Accordingly, there are certain jobs which fit the personality and work environment type. For example, Holland suggests that the 'enterprising' type of person is characterised by being

"adventurous, dominant, enthusiastic, impulsive and extroverted. Empirically among the jobs to which he is best suited are car salesman, rep, auctioneer, T.V. producer, restaurant manager."

On the basis of this model, Holland (1966) claims it is possible to produce a fit between an individual and an occupation. This scheme and others like it have been used as careers guidance techniques in schools over many years, particularly when labour market conditions have been sufficiently buoyant as to allow a wide choice of occupations.

Critics of Holland have questioned how much "the vocational preference inventory" can reveal of a person's personality. They suggest that it is merely a means of recording, albeit systematically, a person's interests, any analytical value it has being at a minimum. The method says little of how a person becomes a particular type, or why certain kinds of people should be suited to certain kinds of jobs. Nevertheless, this type of approach has been and still is widely used in careers guidance programmes which aim to produce a match between the individual and the right kind of job.

The psychological studies which have been considered so far appear, however, deterministic in their attempts to test and classify personality types and traits. Furthermore, although psychologists place great stress on personality types, they fail to offer any explanation of
how such personality types arise. Neither is there any systematic account taken of wider social and economic factors which may influence not only the process of occupational choice, but also the personality types themselves.

A psychologist with a different approach to this topic is Super (1953, 1957). In his "Theory of Vocational Development" (1953), he maintains that vocational development cannot be separated from life development. Having said this, however, he falls into the same trap as Ginzberg (1951), Holland (1966) and Kline (1975) by positing that five life stages can be identified. His theory is quite simply that as a person progresses through five stages from childhood to old age, he/she comes to know more about specific occupations. Throughout the five stages there is a delineation of progress involving six tasks. These range from crystallisation of occupational choice, through implementation of it, to consolidation and advancement. Critics of Super's work see it as merely descriptive, explaining past events, they suggest it has little analytical value. Kline (1975) goes so far as to say that Super's work cannot realistically be regarded as a theory, as it "states what is obvious and accepted, giving little insight into procedures for vocational guidance". Nevertheless, Super's work has been and still is influential in the practice of vocational guidance, providing a framework or rudimentary timetable for advice and actions.

From the studies of the psychologists so far considered it would appear that, rather than attempting to produce a general theory of occupational choice and entry, psychologists are often concerned with more practical or applied aspects of the subject matter. The theories and schemes which they devise offer a means by which school leavers may
be tested and examined in order to produce a good occupational fit. Such practices are common in the work of careers officers and guidance teachers (cf. Avent, 1974, Craft, 1973, Jackson, 1973). However, in the context of the youth labour market of 1983, which severely restricted occupational choice for many school leavers, the degree to which such tests proved useful was questionable.

Whilst theories of occupational choice outlined by the psychologists may be restricted in terms of their application and validity to times of full or near full employment, the question of occupational choice per se is also likely to be restricted. In times of high unemployment, as in 1983, few would disagree that the range of opportunities available to school leavers was reduced. In areas of the country where youth unemployment was particularly high, and where industries which had traditionally taken on school leavers had been hard hit, the most relevant question facing school leavers was not what kinds of jobs should they choose, but rather were there any jobs for them to choose from at all. Where this was the case, developmental theories of occupational choice were difficult to apply. Many school leavers who are likely to be denied the chance of entering work may see little point in giving serious consideration to a particular choice of occupation if the labour market is closed to them.

Restrictions on Occupational Choice

Roberts (1977) addresses the question of occupational choice in relation to socialisation and opportunity structures, seeing the existence of job choice as a function of these factors. He says,

"It may be true that the school leaver has some scope for choice. This is not in dispute ... [but] ... within their own localities school leavers' opportunities can be extremely
limited. When unemployment is a real possibility, there are strong pressures to take any job that is offered."

If this is the case, and trends among school leavers in certain areas suggest that it is, then this must surely place many different kinds of pressures on the school leaving process. Roberts (1977) questions the importance of occupational choice in this process, placing it within the structure of the local labour market and the opportunities for choice which this allows. The personal preferences of the individual are to a large extent irrelevant if the opportunity structure cannot meet them. Roberts says,

"The point being argued is that whilst individuals certainly have some scope for choice, the relationship between choice and opportunity is not simply arithmetical. The crucial fact is that choices, both in education and the labour market, are determined within parameters that are independently and previously cast by structural processes."

Within his theory of opportunity structures, Roberts (1977) also considers the role of social class in occupational choice. He believes that through the socialisation process, which occurs largely within the family, educational and occupational aspirations are determined, and consequently differentiated by social class. Roberts believes that the socialisation process is essentially conservative and leads to young people repeating the educational and occupational experiences of their parents. With this theory of occupational outcome, Roberts is eschewing the individualist approaches of the psychologist and by so doing is casting grave doubts about the efficacy of the perspective of psychology in this particular area. In a wider context, Roberts' work also raises doubts about the practice of careers education and vocational guidance. If the process of occupational choice can be seen to take place largely within the confines of the family and the socialisation process, then
the influence which outside agencies such as schools or careers officers can have may be minimal.

The essence of the debate between sociologists and psychologists working in the area of school to non-school transfer is epitomised by the debate between Roberts (1977, 1981) and Daws (1977, 1981). By emphasising the influence of the socialisation process and the importance of opportunity structures, Roberts (1977) clearly sees the opportunity for individual free choice as minimal. However, Daws (1977), in a critical appraisal of Roberts' work, points to limitations in his theory. He believes it is restricted to those who leave school at the earliest possible age, and is unable to accommodate those who are unlikely to choose an occupational area until later in their educational career. Moreover, Daws (1977) believes that Roberts (1977) has misunderstood the question of occupational choice, in so far as it is a psychological concept and "is not therefore an admissible element in a structural explanation ... it cannot be claimed not to exist merely because it is not observed." He goes on to say that one cannot argue "that a course of human action was not freely chosen merely because one cannot offer a reasonably full account of the factors that explained why it happened."

The debate between Roberts (1977, 1981) and Daws (1977, 1981) hinges on fundamental differences between their two disciplines. Roberts, as a sociologist, stresses the wider structural influences on occupational choice, whilst Daws, as a psychologist, looks to explain actions more centrally in terms of the individual. Despite these differences in approach, Daws (1977) identifies similarities in the work of Roberts (1977) and Ginzberg (1951). He uses these perceived
similarities as a criticism of Roberts. Daws believes that Roberts' theory of 'progressive limitation of opportunity' is matched by a parallel psychological concept in the writings of the developmental theorists. Roberts (1977) sees occupational choice and decision making as part of the socialisation process, which occurs over a period of time, as the individual becomes immersed in his own particular culture and is limited by its location within the opportunity structure. Similarly, Ginzberg's (1951) theory stresses the development, over time, of occupational choices. The concept of progressive decision making is present in both of these theories. Although the content and nature of the approaches remain fundamentally different, it is the concept of progression which Daws identifies as important.

The work of both Roberts (1977, 1981) and Ginzberg (1951) may be seen to incorporate a degree of determinism. The developmental approach gives primacy to the various stages through which the individual will pass, whilst the structural approach almost excludes the individual from the process, seeing him/her largely as a pawn in the interaction of the wider social forces. There is a mechanistic compulsion suggested by both of these theories although their foundations remain very different.

Several studies have attempted to produce a synthesis between sociological and psychological approaches to the study of occupational choice and school leaving. The success of these approaches has not been great, often producing a compromise which has lacked a particular direction. An early attempt at this was made by Blau et al (1956), which Linda Clarke (1980) interprets as having "a more inclusive conceptual framework" which emphasises occupational choice and selection, suggesting the variables necessary for such a study of joint
processes. With this approach the social structure is seen not only as responsible for the development of the personality of the person choosing the job, but also for the opportunity structure which limits the ambitions and the realisation of particular occupational choices. Of this approach Clarke says,

"occupational choice is perceived as a compromise between preferences for and expectations of being able to enter into various compromises."

So, rather than producing an effective synthesis of the two approaches it would appear, in this case, that the perspective of sociology has attempted to impose itself over that of psychology. Although this theory can accommodate the factor of personality, it explains the development of personality in terms of social structure. The effect is to produce an all encompassing theory which fails to take us much further.

Another study which endeavours to integrate the approaches of psychology and sociology is that by Veness (1962). She posits that certain broad categories are useful for identifying the reason for and influences on job choice. She asked her sample of school leavers the simple question, "What gave you the idea of going in for that job?" and, using Riesman's (1950) trichotomy of classification, she suggests that the answers to this question may be categorised accordingly. She believes that people were directed towards certain occupations for one of the following reasons; either because choice was pre-determined by a family or neighbourhood tradition, to the extent that no other choice would be conceivable: this type of choice she said was "tradition directed". The second category of choice is that which is "inner directed", where a decision is made with reference chiefly to the young
person's talents and interests. Finally, she identifies the "other directed category" which encompasses those choices made with primary reference to outside sources of information, or to considerations of the chooser's position in the general social order. With this approach, occupational choice remains a conscious decision by the individual, but is located within the parameters of a social framework. Like Roberts (1971), Veness stresses the limiting and directing effect which this may have on occupational choice. The work of Veness (1962) appears to be a more successful attempt at a synthesis of the sociological and psychological approaches than those discussed earlier, not least because neither one of the approaches attempts to subjugate the other. However, the categorisation of reasons for choice of occupation has led to criticism of her approach, particularly from sociologists who have seen such an approach as prescriptive and limiting.

Although there are clearly limitations in the two attempts at synthesis which have been considered so far (Blau, 1956 and Veness, 1962), they do, nevertheless, represent an attempt at a different kind of perspective. Their approach has, however, been very broad, attempting to provide very general theories of the transfer from school to work. In taking a broad approach such theories over-simplify the transfer process. For example, the two studies offered general theories relating to occupational choice and the transfer from school to work without taking account of any regional variations. In particular, the studies have failed to consider, in any detailed way, the availability of jobs for school leavers, the influence of the local labour market, different kinds of schools, or the impact of careers education.
So far, none of the studies considered in this chapter, from either a psychological or sociological perspective, have given detailed attention to the school leaving process in areas of high youth unemployment. They have failed, for example, to consider the situation where a young person may leave school to enter a local labour market where occupational choice is severely limited due to the nature of the industries therein, or where occupational choice simply cannot exist because of the level of unemployment.

Although Veness (1962), in her description of 'tradition directed' occupational choices, considers a situation where choice may be severely limited, and Roberts (1977, 1981) refers to unemployment imposing pressure on young people to accept whatever jobs are available, they do not give the detailed consideration, for example, of continual unemployment, bad jobs and government schemes that Coffield, Borrill and Marshall (1986) give in the mid-1980's. Clearly, the supply of jobs for young people through much of the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's meant theories dealing with youth unemployment were of little contemporary relevance and studies focusing on unemployed school leavers difficult to conduct. Not until the 1980's did the existence and effects of high youth unemployment warrant such attention.

By 1983/4, when the fieldwork for this study was carried out, unemployment had increased drastically in many areas of the country. Many young people in cities such as Newcastle, Liverpool, Birmingham and in South Wales were denied the opportunity to work altogether. For many school leavers in those areas, the question of occupational choice was, therefore, irrelevant. Furthermore, the existence of widespread youth unemployment has serious implications for many of the studies of school
leavers and the theories of occupational choice considered so far. The contribution of many of the studies and theories to an understanding of the school to work transfer process relies on the availability of jobs for young people. For example, in the case of Ginzberg's (1951) developmental theory, the phase at around fifteen or sixteen includes the evaluation of different occupations by the individual in accordance with his/her own perceived abilities, aspirations, etc. Ginzberg calls this the "realistic stage". For many young people in 1983 this stage would clearly not be realistic. They may see little point in assessing their own suitability for particular jobs if they no longer exist in sufficient numbers to accommodate them. The existence and effect of youth unemployment is to cause a breakdown in the developmental theory at arguably the most critical point, where final realistic decisions are made.

If developmental theories are to maintain credibility and relevance in different socio-economic environments, then surely the 'realistic stage' must consider unemployment and the alternatives to work. Furthermore, as long term unemployment becomes the norm in some areas, it is conceivable that this may have some effect at an earlier stage in the developmental process. For example, childhood choices based on experience of personal contacts and role models may become severely restricted in areas of high long term unemployment. Similarly, it is possible that the socialisation process, within homes and neighbourhoods where unemployment is particularly acute, acts to produce a non-work ethic. Thus, in terms of Roberts' (1981, 1984) structural opportunity theory, which stresses the importance of socialisation, there is likely
to be little evidence of socialisation towards particular occupations or towards work in general.

Defining Careers
The theories considered so far have assumed that a conscious decision is taken concerning the particular occupational area a young person wishes to enter. Although the decision is often determined by socialisation processes and develops over time, there is ultimately, according to the theorists, a point when the final decision is made. The rise in unemployment again raises questions here. Does the individual always go so far as to differentiate between jobs in a general field, for example, if the school leaver is looking for manual work generally, how important is it for this work to be in, say, bricklaying as opposed to plastering? On the other hand, if the school leaver is looking for a job specifically in bricklaying, is it likely that he will abandon this search if presented with a job opportunity in another fairly similar field? In short, the question is to what extent does the young person differentiate between job choices in a general field?

Roberts (1977) goes some way to addressing this question. He says,

"The majority of jobs open to school leavers require no talents or skills, have no prestige or satisfaction, and promise no career development. These offer, therefore, no meaningful choice and cannot be said to have been chosen in any significant psychological sense by those who enter them."

Roberts sees little difference between many working class jobs, and thus choice between them may be seen as unnecessary, as they offer virtually the same kinds of experience and require similar abilities. Choice is therefore superfluous. If this is the case, then surely many of the theories and practices of careers education and vocational guidance
serve little useful purpose. It may be argued, however, that Roberts approaches his consideration of working class jobs from a middle class perspective which stresses the importance of the career. In doing this, he may be failing to recognise many of the qualities of and differences between working class jobs.

The question of occupational choice is obviously not a simple one, and the literature discussed so far may be seen to highlight something of a dichotomy in the process of occupational choice and the transfer from school to non-school. Not all people have the same experience of leaving school and finding work, and the theories considered can be seen as demonstrating some class differences which pervade the process. For example, the blocked opportunity structures which Roberts (1977) speaks of may be seen to refer largely to those leaving school at the earliest possible age. Traditionally, these people have been from working class families. Ginzberg's (1951) theory, on the other hand, is perhaps most applicable to those experiencing longer term education where there is more time for assimilation and crystallisation of intentions. Similarly, Ashton and Field's (1976) conception of a career may be seen as essentially middle class, in so far as it depends on a long term commitment to a particular work role which is usually accessible only to those with the capital of academic success or competence. In the light of this, we have seen that Ashton and Field describe jobs which fail to fit this model as "careerless". One suspects that their criteria for this are that these kinds of jobs do not have the attributes of the more middle class occupations, which they interpret as "extended careers". Such categorisation reduces the analytical value of their work. The concentration on middle class
values resulted in failure to identify certain types of occupations as long term or extended careers simply because they are different from middle class definitions of a career.

The definition of career is important to the study of the school leaving process. As will be shown in succeeding chapters, all five schools in my study provided careers education for their fifth year pupils. By Ashton and Field's (1976) definitions, however, not all pupils would actually have a career. The definition of the career by careers teachers, by careers officers and by others involved in the process of transfer from school to work is important in defining what should be appropriate content for careers education. The definition of the career is also important for the individual's expectation of what he/she should get from a job. For example, Hughes (1937) provides a very broad definition of the career which incorporates many different experiences in life. He says that a career is,

"the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions and things which happen to him."

Meanwhile, Wilensky (1961), drawing on the work of Durkheim (1947) and Mannheim (1940), is a little more specific in his definition of a career. He sees it as

"a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered (more or less predictable) sequence ... by holding out the prospect of continuous, predictable rewards, careers foster a willingness to train and achieve, to adopt a long term perspective and defer immediate gratification for the later pay-off."

This definition would appear to be more in line with what Ashton and Field see as the "extended career", with its reference to deferred
gratification and its implied progress. In this instance it is clear that Wilensky has in mind middle class occupations.

For many of those involved in the school leaving process, however, a wider definition of the career has to be taken in order to incorporate those likely to enter middle class occupations and those described by Ashton and Field as the careerless. In short, careers education in schools has to offer preparation for those entering middle class careers and those entering working class jobs. The difference between the two is expressed succinctly by a seventeen year old boy quoted by White and Brockington (1983). He says,

"A career is something that's going to last you your whole lifetime; you start off at the bottom and try to work your way up; the pay gets better, conditions, everything ... a job is something you start and you don't progress much, and it's really boring; you just do it and you stay in a rut all your life."

The contrast is clear, and the difference in the type and quality of the occupations which can be seen to apply to these categories is apparent. It is important for the careers teacher and the careers officer in providing preparation for all school leavers to take a wide definition of career. It may also be important to recognise the connotations of social class which the terms career and job carry. The careers teacher and careers officer must ensure not to ignore or devalue a particular occupation, describing it as lacking in career attributes or careerless simply because it does not fit into a middle class definition of a career. Similarly the researcher must keep his definition clear and avoid bringing to bear his own class and career experiences on the subject. Roberts (1977) is criticised for doing precisely this. With reference to his claim that there is no need to differentiate between
certain kinds of low level jobs, Daws (1981) says that this is a "mistake which arises from a middle class intellectual bias from those who have never experienced or have rejected working class values."

The debate over the definition of the career is important not only for determining appropriate content for careers education but also in demonstrating the complexity of the issue. The terms careers, careers education, careers officer, etc. are used freely in the context of the school to work transfer process, and as such may be seen to imply uniformity of common experience. My study will show quite clearly that young peoples' experiences of moving from school to the labour market are many and varied. To have relevance to the school leaving process, therefore, the definition of the career must be broad. Similarly, careers education will need to encompass this wide range of different experiences, expectations and aspirations.

Many of the studies discussed have failed to consider the variations in the school leaving process, which may occur between different areas. They have failed to consider the impact of the local labour market on the transfer process and, in particular, the effects of high unemployment. All of the studies and theories discussed have assumed that pupils would either remain in education after reaching the minimum leaving age, or immediately transfer to the workplace. None of the studies considered transfer from school to unemployment, and the fact that the youth training scheme was the first destination for many school leavers in 1983/84 brings a new perspective to careers education, to opportunity structures and occupational choice. For example, how far can theories of occupational choice extend into government training schemes, and how does unemployment or the YTS fit into the definition of a career?
To acquire a full understanding of the school leaving process which is relevant to the school leaver in the 1980's, the impact of unemployment and government schemes must be taken into consideration. Similarly, the differential impact of unemployment across different areas should be recognised. To this end, my own study takes a comparative approach, illustrating the process of transfer from school to non-school within the context of different local labour markets which are broadly representative of many throughout the country.

**Careers Education and Guidance**

The literature considered so far has been primarily concerned with theories of occupational choice and general explanations of the transfer from school to non-school. Little attention has been given to the practical aspects of the transfer process such as careers education and guidance, which aim to facilitate a smooth transition for the school leaver. Daws (1972), in his account of the role of the careers teacher, says there was little published about careers education until the 1960's. At this time, careers teachers became more numerous and careers education became more clearly defined in schools. The 1960's brought full employment for school leavers, and real occupational choice. The activities of the careers teacher and the content of careers education at this time reflected the general buoyancy of the labour market, and focused on placing pupils in appropriate jobs. To this end, the role of the careers teacher centred around discovering what the individual school leavers' abilities and aspirations were and fitting these traits with a particular kind of job, often with the use of the various classification systems considered earlier. Although, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, such practices did still occur in 1983/84, the role of the
careers teacher and of careers education has, through necessity, become more complex. For example, the increased opportunities for post-compulsory education which now exist for young people, and the dramatic increase in youth unemployment during the early 1980's, together brought about the need for a careers education programme which did more than attempt to place school leavers in jobs. The nature of the youth labour market during the late 1970's and early 1980's meant functionalist approaches to careers education, seeking to fit pupils to jobs, became invalid in many areas of the country. As many young people were being denied access to the traditional goal of a job on leaving school, the function of careers education had to be changed. It was no use preparing young people for work which did not exist. Careers education had to take on a wider role which, as well as encouraging school leavers to identify suitable kinds of jobs, also provided a form of social education. Furthermore, with the introduction of various government schemes designed to cope with the rise in youth unemployment, it had to take an approach which did not assume that the transfer from school to work was automatic.

The uncertainty of the youth labour market of the late 1970's and 1980's brought into question the purpose of careers education and necessitated the identification of an appropriate role for it. However, it would be wrong to assume that all approaches to careers education prior to this time had been narrowly focused, concerned only with matching school leavers to appropriate jobs. For example, Howden and Dawson (1973) put forward a wide remit for careers and guidance teaching which gave it a relevance through periods of high and low unemployment. They say it is a
"process aimed at helping the individual towards a better understanding both of himself and of his potential and of his relationship to the world in which he lives."

Similarly, Hayes and Hopson (1968) provide a very broad definition of careers education, which may also be applied during times of high youth unemployment. They say the primary aim of careers education is "the promotion of personal satisfaction with life as a whole". However, they do go on to qualify this definition, suggesting that the process of careers guidance should enable the individual to

"discover information about himself, be provided with information about his environment, and a frame of reference in which to see himself in relation to educational and vocational opportunities."

Fifteen years later, Ryrie (1983) saw careers education in similar terms. He believes educational and vocational guidance should include

"all those activities of a school which are aimed at assisting young people to know about occupations and the world of work, and to make appropriate decisions."

Where careers education does not have a clearly identified role of fitting individuals to specific jobs, definitions of its purpose have tended to be fairly generalised. Some of the definitions offered may indeed be seen to pertain equally to definitions of education per se. However, if Super's (1953) definition of the career and careers education is to be applied to the school leaving process in the 1980's, then it may not be necessary to distinguish between careers education and a general social education. Super sees jobs as one part of the career of life. As such, he says,

"careers education is, therefore, aimed at assisting people to understand themselves and to plan their path through life wisely."
From the different definitions of the career and careers education advanced by the different writers and theorists over the years, it is possible to adduce a general definition of careers education which will be applied throughout this study. Careers education may be defined as: developmental subject area with a broad base, providing information and assistance for the individual to make decisions about jobs and life styles in accordance with the environment within which he/she lives.

Careers and the Curriculum
This definition raises questions about how it should become part of the school curriculum and how it should relate to other subjects. Several writers (Watts, 1978, 1983, Avent, 1988 and HMI, 1979) have suggested that careers education is inevitably present in elements of many other subjects, and careers lessons merely identify and bring these elements together.

The Department of Education and Science survey of careers education (1973), whilst advocating a need for clearly defined careers education, also saw many elements of careers education present in other areas of the curriculum. The survey concluded that

"careers education is not a new concept: it identifies and accentuates certain specific features in the profile of general education familiar to every secondary teacher."

If careers education is present in the school curriculum via other subject areas, then the necessity for separate career lessons may be questioned.

The view of careers education as a part of general education has found increasing support with the rise in youth unemployment. For example, Watts (1978) advocates a greater integrating of careers education with other elements of the curriculum. Similarly, Ryrie (1983)
believes that such integration could prove valuable, but is uncertain over how careers education could then be differentiated from a broad liberal education which may also be described as preparation for life. He warns of the danger of careers education losing its specifically vocational element if it should be subsumed by a broad, general education.

The debate around integration and independence of careers education remains largely unresolved and, within the five schools where this research was conducted, there are examples of both approaches. These will be discussed in subsequent chapters. In discussing the definition of careers and raising the issue of its place in the school curriculum, the uncertainty which often surrounds the subject has been highlighted. Furthermore, the uncertainty over the status and organisation of careers education in the schools in the mid-1980's may perhaps be seen as a reflection of the general uncertainty which surrounded the school leaving process, and as one of the results of the declining demand for school leavers in the labour market.

Careers Education and Unemployment

Several writers have discussed the changing nature of careers education and guidance in the light of increasing youth unemployment and moves towards greater vocational education (Roberts, 1977, 1984; Peck and Robinson, 1986; Avent, 1988; Ransom and Ribbins, 1988; Raffe, 1988). In general, they have argued that the role of careers education, and that of the careers teacher and officer, has become less simplistic. The lack of jobs in the early to mid-1980's meant careers officers often had to incorporate many different aspects of an all embracing social education. Similarly, the role of the careers officer changed from one which
emphasised placement to giving greater attention to guidance for the young person. Roberts (1977) argues, however, that the role of careers education in times of high youth unemployment will be severely limited due to the structural constraints of the labour market. He says,

"The role of careers guidance is so structured by other influences upon the entry to employment that its own contribution must inevitably by incidental."

He suggests that there is a need for careers work to get its aims right, in so far as it should concentrate on the practical problems of working life, rather than encouraging the crystallisation of self-concepts. For Roberts (1977), therefore, careers education, careers teachers and careers officers are able to exert very little influence on the entry to work or on occupational choice. He goes on to state:

"The careers service has been sardonically mistitled for many of its clients. Opportunity structures limit the genuine careers that are available, restrict the scope for individual occupational choice, and likewise circumscribe the role available for vocational guidance."

Daws (1981), on the other hand, takes issue with Roberts. He believes that Roberts over-emphasises the structural constraints on the transfer to the labour market. He states there is a need to look at school leaving in micro as well as macro terms in order to get the complete picture. He believes the careers education programme has a role in questioning and examining much of the socialisation process through which the individual has passed. Whilst Daws adheres to the developmentalist model of occupational choice he sees careers education more in terms of a catalyst than merely fitting square pegs into square holes.

Watts (1978, 1983, 1987) also addresses the role of careers education with specific reference to high youth unemployment. He suggests (1978) that in situations of high unemployment, careers
education can have any of four very different socio-political functions:

- As an agent of social control, adapting individuals to careers opportunities
- As an agent of social change, to make students aware of the deficiencies in the employment system and how they can help change it
- As an agent of individual change, accepting the social system as it is and aiming to maximise the chances of individual students within it
- Non-directive: making students aware of the range of opportunities and helping them to be more autonomous in choosing the alternatives best suited to their own needs and preferences.

Watts clearly believes that careers education is able to remain relevant in situations of unemployment, playing an active part in the process of transfer from school to the labour market. He suggests that these approaches can be distinguished along two dimensions. In one, careers education focuses on change, emphasising the need for either society or the individual to change. In the other, it focuses on social control when, through a non-directive approach, there is acceptance of the status quo.

The studies discussed have illustrated a lack of coherence over the role of careers education, its aims and objectives and the way in which it might be integrated with wider social education, which accompanied the rise in youth unemployment. The challenge which high unemployment posed for careers education made it difficult for many schools to identify the most effective kind of careers education for the 1980's. Furthermore,
the Department of Education and Science (1981) were unable to offer clear
directions as to what should constitute effective careers education at
that time. For example, in a paper on 'Schools and Working Life: Some
Initiatives', they do little more than suggest that schools should help
pupils to be adaptable. They say:

"Many will publicly agree that there is a need for schools to
help pupils prepare for working life. However, there is no
agreement in detail on the form that this presentation should
take. The World of Work ... is extensive and complex. A
highly technological society is likely to produce rapid
changes in the types of jobs available and the nature of work.
In order to cope with these changes young people need to be
adaptable and prepared to take advantage of the opportunities
offered."

Nine years before this, the Schools Council, in their working paper
on 'Careers Education in the 1970's' (1972) made much the same point:

"It is no longer possible to contemplate a relatively stable
employment world within which a pupil can find a place that
will provide him with a living for half a century. Today's
young people must accept a future that is likely to bring a
number of changes of employment and a number of periods of
retraining in new techniques ... It follows from this that
the most needed qualities of today's school leavers are
adaptability and flexibility, together with basic skills
that will enable them to undertake new and successful
learning throughout their lives."

During the nine years between these two statements, much had
changed in the labour market for school leavers. A time of uncertainty
had been reached, which necessitated the adaptability suggested by the
Schools Council (1972) statement. The school leaver was required to be
flexible, not only about the kinds of career he/she intended to follow,
but also about employment per se. The nature of the labour market in
many areas was such that the school leaver was forced to consider
alternatives to work. Although nine years had elapsed since the
influential Schools Council had made its statement, there appeared to
have been little progress by 1981 in the identification of appropriate guidelines and directives for careers education by the D.E.S. In the absence of such guidance, careers education policy was left to ad hoc development in many areas, as schools and the careers service sought to devise and implement careers education programmes to meet the changing youth labour market situation as it developed.

Few writers in the area of careers education had, by the early 1980's, considered in any detail how school leavers should be prepared for a period of uncertain labour market prospects and ultimately for unemployment. However, Catherine Avent (1974) stated that the careers education programme should, amongst other things,

"lead to an acceptance of alternatives by those pupils who have made reasoned choice of careers which might yet prove unattainable."

She goes on to state that careers education should be made available to all pupils,

"even when some of them consider it irrelevant, either because they have made a sensible choice of career themselves or because they realise they are unable to get work easily."

The enlightened approach of Avent (1974) represents considerable progress from that described earlier which saw the aims of careers education merely in terms of fitting pupils to jobs. She says, "Careers education is a preparation for adult life, not a course of occupational information." Her approach to careers education and advocacy of what amounted to some kind of education for unemployment challenged many traditional theories and practices. At the same time, Avent stressed the importance of careers education for all school leavers, whether they were likely to move straight into employment, join a government scheme, or be
unemployed. Although she does not give details of how careers education should provide for all these options, the specific content is likely to be quite different from that practised during times of full employment and in areas where the majority of school leavers could be sure of finding a job. Avent's work emphasises a need for careers education to be flexible, the nature of the labour market for school leavers in 1983/4 being such that a single approach to school to non-school transfer would be unlikely to remain relevant for a majority of school leavers.

As my thesis will demonstrate, the great variation in labour market conditions which existed in the early 1980's made the recommendation of guidelines for careers education which were to be implemented on a national basis very difficult. Furthermore, the great variations between local labour markets also made formulation of theories of occupational choice, or more generally those relating to school to work transfer, very difficult. The differences between the five local labour markets in this study, for example, demonstrate quite clearly that overarching theories of this nature would not prove to be relevant to school leavers in all five of the surveyed schools, unless they were to be so general as to be virtually meaningless.

Conclusion
The impact of high unemployment in the early 1980's has raised many questions about the theory and practice of careers education. In particular, its capacity to remain relevant to all school leavers, whether they are likely to find employment or not. It has brought about an ambiguity not only to the function of careers education, but also to the role of the careers officer. Kushner and Logan (1985), in their
evaluation of the Careers Guidance Integration Project (CGIP)\(^1\) identified changes in the role of the careers service. They believed it was in the process of role transition from vocational placement to counselling, the transition being necessitated by changes in labour market conditions. The rise in youth unemployment, argue Kushner and Logan, has resulted in the need for the careers service to face many different directions at once. For example, whilst taking on a greater counselling role which often involves greater involvement in the curriculum, careers officers are at the same time directed towards what Kushner and Logan (1985) describe as a 'system's maintenance role'. This involves keeping the traditional role of placing pupils in jobs when possible, and also the promotion of government schemes designed to accommodate youth unemployment. In short, the impact of youth unemployment has meant the careers officer, and the careers teacher, have been forced to develop their roles, to engage in a wide range of activities which go beyond traditional placement or matching activities.

It should not be inferred from the literature, however, that preparation and socialisation for the world of work can only take place in schools. For example, Roberts (1984) states that new workers will always be unsure of their objectives and will not possess the necessary technical skills, and industry itself will be left to rectify this situation. At the same time, Harland (1988) points out that young people do not lack information about the nature of work. She suggests that training in the social and gender relations of work is a continuous part

\(^1\). Part of the European Pilot Programme, 'Transition from School to Working Life'. This sought to extend and improve transition provision for school leavers. The programme considered the possibility of involving employers, parents, peers and community generally in careers work.
of whole life socialisation. Moreover, Finn (1984) and Wallace (1986) see the juvenile labour market of Saturday and part-time jobs as important in this respect, whilst Eggleston (1982) and Sims (1987, 1988) make similar claims for work experience. Clearly, access to part-time work and/or work experience is likely to contribute to the wider socialisation of the young person into the ethic of the work place but this assumes such experiences are readily available for young people. In 1983/84, in many areas of the country, Saturday and part-time jobs were very difficult to find. As a consequence, this source of work place socialisation was not available for all of the fifth year pupils in my study and contact with the careers officer was particularly important for these young people, as it represented one of their few links with the labour market.

Socialisation for the world of work, as we have seen, is the concern of Ashton and Field (1976), Willis (1977) and of McRobbie (1978), who identify the organisation of schooling per se as instrumental in the preparation of working class and female pupils for entry to the labour market. Furthermore, the work of Bowles and Gintis (1976), Bourdieu (1976) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) goes so far as to interpret the main role for schooling as the reproduction of cultural and social class differences for entry to the labour force. Harland (1988) argues that the rise in youth unemployment denied the school leaver experiences which might widen horizons and counter the fundamental work place socialisation provided by the process of schooling. As a result, social class and gender perceptions of the labour market were reinforced in the absence of any alternative role models. Harland goes on to suggest that the greater emphasis on vocationalism in education has made explicit the process of
social reproduction, bringing it directly into the classroom, whilst Blackman (1986) suggests that the rise in youth unemployment coupled with the new vocationalism was responsible for reducing the aspirations and expectations of young people. They resulted in limiting job choices to their immediate knowledge of the work roles offered by their local labour market. It follows, furthermore, that if the local labour market is characterised by unemployment, then the young person's job choice or job horizons may be completely curtailed.

The rise in unemployment, together with the new vocationalism of the 1980's, has raised many questions over the most appropriate methods of preparing young people for leaving school. Clearly, careers education could no longer rely on a simplistic attempt to match and place school leavers with appropriate jobs. Similarly, the debates around the school leaving process and careers education have changed a great deal since the early functionalist writers were concerned primarily with the stress encountered on moving from school to work. With the rise in youth unemployment, the proliferation of government schemes and changes in access to further education, the school leaving process has become increasingly complicated. These changes have been reflected in the literature which, by the late 1970's and early 1980's, took on an approach which questioned much of the school leaving process which was hitherto taken for granted. The uncertainty which surrounded the school leaving process for many young people led to a reappraisal of many theories and practices. Wider aspects of schooling and the needs of industry were drawn into the debate as the emphasis turned towards more efficient preparation of the school leaver in order to compete in the shrinking labour market.
Broadly, two things seemed to have happened in the literature. From some writers, educationalists and industrialists, there have been calls for a more instrumental attitude towards careers education and the preparation for leaving school. They have stressed the need for greater links between school and industry. The way a young person was prepared for leaving school was seen as very important and the role that careers and vocational guidance played in this was seen as paramount. At the same time, however, there were those who believed that with the lack of jobs for young people, careers education programmes had lost their relevance and were no longer of any use. The result of this difference of opinion was confusion: confusion over what the aims of careers education and the school leaving programme should be, confusion over exactly what careers education was.

In looking for a comprehensive understanding of the school leaving process, regional variations must be recognised, and the context of the local labour market taken into consideration. Many of the studies considered in this review have taken an over-generalised approach, seeking to apply general theories to specific situations. The result has been to over-simplify explanations and understanding of the process.

The study described in this thesis, through a comparative approach in areas of the country very different from each other, will discuss the school leaving process in the context of different local labour markets. The thesis will show that careers education programmes and the school to non-school transfer process do not occur arbitrarily, but are a direct reflection of the local labour market opportunity structure within which they take place.
Chapter Three

OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE AND THE PROCESS OF TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL TO NON-SCHOOL

An elementary consideration of the transfer from school to non-school may identify the process involved as a fairly simple one. A young person considers possible types of employment, chooses a specific field, applies for a job within it, is eventually successful in securing such a position, and so the transfer takes place. Such a description is of course too simple. Even in an economy which allows full employment, to assume that the transfer takes place on this basis would be to ignore not only the needs of industry and the demand for specific types of school leavers, but also much of the school leaving process and the careers education programme likely to be offered by the school. Nevertheless, this description is useful as an ideal type or a model against which the actual process of transfer from the five schools with which this thesis is concerned can be judged. It may be useful, at this stage, therefore, to consider the ideal type in some detail and to draw comparisons with data collected for my own study, where appropriate.

Let us look primarily at the first part of the 'ideal type': that the individual school leaver considers a number of career paths before settling on the one which is most suitable to him/her. If we are to understand what actually happens at this point we must look at the factors which influence this choice and, most importantly, at the question of occupational choice per se for the sixteen year old school leaver. As we have already seen, Ginzberg et al (1951) identified a process through which an individual progressed, leading from childhood
fantasy choices of occupation to realistic adult choices at the age of about seventeen. He contended that occupational choice was not something which occurred at the end of schooling or at any one single time, but was rather a progression and gradual appraisal of occupations and personal suitability, which took place over a number of years. Taking such an approach with my own study, it is possible to identify a similar sort of process occurring. For example, many of the boys recalled wanting to be stuntmen, astronauts and footballers, whilst the girls showed interest in nursing, modelling, acting and becoming an air hostess. Clearly, such choices are often reflections of a child's imagination, influenced by television and early reading material, along with patterns of play. As the child grows up, he/she becomes exposed to more mundane and 'realistic' socialisation forces from society in general, the family, the peer group and the school. At the same time the young person develops an awareness of his/her own abilities and limitations. The individual will therefore make his/her career choice in the light of these experiences and the socialisation process through which he/she has passed. The type of career which is considered is thus likely to vary in accordance with the individual's particular circumstances.

However, whilst Ginzberg's and other similar theories may illustrate that occupational choice can be a complex process, they assume that young people are free to make occupational choices, and that the labour market is able to accommodate those choices. Ginzberg's theory is one which relies on a good supply of jobs for school leavers. In spite of this weakness in Ginzberg's theory and in developmentalist theories generally, they are, nevertheless, useful in demonstrating that
occupational choice is likely to be considerably more complex than the ideal type would imply.

The ideal type would also assume that occupational choice is equally distributed amongst school leavers. In reality, the availability of choice is likely to depend on the state of the local labour market and its capacity to take on young workers, as well as the individual's qualifications and suitability for work. The social class background, gender and race of the school leaver may also act to aid or restrict the magnitude of choice. Given these various factors, it may be pertinent to ask if occupational choice actually exists in reality for all school leavers, and how the interaction of the various factors can reduce or enhance the choice.

In answer to the above questions, and to illustrate some of the points raised, I shall draw on examples from my own study. I refer, in the first instance, to the case of a Leicester school girl of fairly low academic ability who wished to become a veterinary surgeon. On learning of the qualifications required for this occupation, however, she was forced to give up the idea and the careers officer encouraged her to take a Youth Training Scheme which involved working with horses. Is it fair to say, then, that this girl has had a choice of career? Her general career direction, like many other fifth years in the study, had been shaped long before entering the fifth year at school, and long before discussing her intentions with the careers officer. The girl's own lack of academic ability, together with her traditionally working class background, which stressed the importance of entering the labour market as soon as possible, meant that this and many other similar occupational choices were not open to her.
By way of contrast, it is interesting to consider a boy from the Windsor School, who came from a professional, middle class background and was taking nine 'O' levels. He, too, was interested in becoming a veterinary surgeon. For him, the choice is seen as realistic. Unlike the girl from Leicester, he is likely to have both the social and academic qualifications to make this choice a real possibility. The careers teacher had advised the boy about which 'A' levels to take in order to gain entrance to an appropriate university course. For this pupil, occupational choice appeared to have few limitations.

The circumstances of a third pupil provide a further example of the complexities of occupational choice. Attending the Newcastle school, this pupil, of apparently average academic ability, was unable to provide an answer when I asked about his choice of occupation. The nature of the local labour market was such that he considered choosing an occupation and seeking to pursue it to be a waste of time. He expected to be unemployed on leaving school, but to avoid this he was prepared to try for any available job, regardless of whether it would be one of his choice. In effect, for this school leaver, the scarcity of jobs seemed likely to preclude any real occupational choice.

These examples illustrate that occupational choice exists within limits defined by the individual's academic ability, social class background and, perhaps above all, the number and kind of jobs available in the local labour market. For example, it would be regarded as realistic for the Leicester girl to choose between a career in the hosiery trade or shop work, as these types of work would appear to suit her, both academically and socially, and were available in the local labour market. Would it, however, be realistic for the Windsor boy to
choose between these same occupations? Although one would not doubt his ability to do these jobs, such a choice would be regarded as unrealistic and a waste of his ability and potential, but the possibility of choice would remain, along with that of veterinary surgery, law, teaching, accountancy, etc.

The extent of occupational choice enjoyed by a school leaver is also likely to be shaped by the kinds of industry and commerce which are present in his/her local labour market. This is likely to influence not only the availability of jobs, but also their content. Again, the local labour markets where research was carried out for my own study illustrate this point. For example, in Stevenage, the existence of British Aerospace factories and subsidiary firms which, in 1983, were thriving, offered many job opportunities for school leavers. Working in the Aerospace industry featured highly among the occupational choices of fifth year pupils in that town. Similarly, in Leicester, the large hosiery and footwear industries were able to absorb large numbers of school leavers. This provided a popular first destination, particularly for female school leavers, many of whom were joining their mothers or other relations in similar kinds of work.

The two examples above show how occupational choice may be influenced significantly by the type of work available. In Stevenage and Leicester, whilst the Aerospace and hosiery industries were not the only ones recruiting school leavers, the fact that they did offer jobs, and that the industries were familiar to the young people, meant that many considered only these jobs. A similar situation had, of course, existed in the Newcastle area some years ago, when most male school leavers entered either ship building, heavy engineering or mining. The
decline of these industries forced school leavers to consider a much wider range of occupations, however, and the shortage of any kind of jobs in this area casts doubt over whether such considerations can be regarded as occupational choice.

The transfer from school to non-school is clearly a far more complicated process than the ideal type transfer would suggest, and the discussion so far has emphasised the complexity of occupational choice in the process. Nevertheless, data collected from careers officers during my own study illustrate the importance with which occupational choice is viewed. Careers officers attached to each of the five schools reported that much of their time during individual interviews with pupils is given to the identification of suitable careers. Similarly, most careers teachers recalled lessons which were given to encouraging pupils to make occupational choices and, following these lessons, answering many individual queries from pupils, and providing them with information about specific jobs. It would appear, therefore, that even allowing for the limitations discussed above, occupational choice remains an important aspect of careers education in schools. However, the examples of occupational choice described earlier imply a degree of determinism which not only constrains the scope of choice for the school leaver, but also suggests that careers education offered by the school can have little impact on it. Given that occupational choice appears to remain an important part of the school to non-school transfer process and a significant proportion of careers education programmes are given to it in one form or another, it is pertinent at this stage to give some further consideration to it, to examine some of the attempts to identify explanatory theories of occupational choice.
From the discussion so far, it is clear that occupational choice is not necessarily a straightforward action and, if we are to understand it fully, considerable consideration must be given not only to the individual making the choice, but also to the circumstances within which the choice is made. The capacity for occupational choice is not something which is distributed uniformly among all school leavers, but rather depends on the interaction of a variety of factors, which often results in patterns of inequality. However, until the 1950's, explanations of occupational choice tended to lack a theoretical base. Ginzberg (1951) drew attention to this lack of theory and, as we have seen, attempted to rectify it by presenting his own developmental theory of occupational choice. In doing this he criticised various general approaches to the subject which may loosely be seen as early theories of occupational choice. It may be interesting, however, to look at some of these early theories before going on to consider Ginzberg's theory and others which seem more applicable to the situation facing school leavers in the 1980's.

Ginzberg (1951) states that the first and most generally accepted theory of occupational choice posits that individuals make decisions about their future accidentally. He maintains that this "Accident Theory" must be given serious consideration not least because of the frequency with which people claim to have entered a particular occupational field, by accident. Furthermore, this occurs across the entire spectrum of jobs from 'Presidents of large Corporations to Truck Drivers.' Ginzberg believes that insofar as the accident theory stresses the importance of external factors in the choice process, it is at least feasible. However, he goes on to qualify why the accident
theory cannot always be applicable, seeing it as over-simplified. He says:

"In all his actions the individual must take account of external factors but the way in which he does so depends on how he perceives and reacts to them ... it [the accident theory] relies uncritically on external factors of exposure and chance circumstances and ignores a wide range of individual options."

It is, then, a theory which relies primarily on chance and, as such, is unable to explain events in causal terms. Whilst it may be true that many people 'end up' in particular jobs 'by accident', to present a theory of occupational choice solely on these terms would be to ignore many other factors which contribute to it, and any kind of planning or self-determination on the part of the individual.

The second general theory to which Ginzberg (1951) draws attention is one which explains individual behaviour primarily in terms of unconscious forces and basic impulses. For example, he quotes cases of boys who demonstrated particularly sadistic streaks as children, becoming surgeons when they grew up. Such examples were used to form the basis of a psychological theory of occupational choice, of which Ginzberg claimed that,

"although a direct and unique correlation between a basic impulse and occupation may be established in individual cases, this connection cannot be made the basis of general theory, it [occupational choice] involves more than basic impulses."

Again this theory is rejected on the grounds that it is too narrow, being unable to cope with the many variations which occur in the process of occupational choice. Like the 'accident theory', 'impulse theory' assumes that the individual is largely a passive participant in the choice process, that he/she can do little to avoid what Ginzberg calls either the "overwhelming impact of a stimulus" or "the strength of his
basic impulses". Clearly this is not the case. Not all individuals who have similar basic impulses, or who have similar experiences, enter the same kinds of jobs, and as a serious attempt at a theory of occupational choice, which could be applied across the spectrum of job choices, both of these theories must be viewed as spurious.

It was Ginzberg's intention to develop a theory of occupational choice which was so comprehensive as:

"to permit the identification and analysis of the major factors in the vocational decision making of the individual."

What he presented was, as described earlier, a theory of occupational choice based on a developmental process. He concluded that occupational choice was not a single decision, but a series of decisions made over a period of years. In this process each step has a meaningful relation to the ones which precede and follow it, and is largely irreversible. Decisions made are in accordance with chronological age and individual development, but within these parameters there has to be a balance of interests and external factors in the final choice. The process usually ends in a compromise. Occupational choice is thus part of a wider learning process, during which the individual considers various jobs and matches them against his/her own perception of personal abilities and aspirations, before making a commitment to a particular choice.

Ginzberg's (1951) theory is clearly very different from the accident or impulse theories, stressing socialisation influences on the choice of occupation whilst maintaining the independence of the individual to make the ultimate decision. The theory was instrumental in offering a foundation for the Guidance Counsellor, the Careers Officer and Careers Teacher. It gave them a process to work on and
become involved with, enabling them to direct their work where it would be most effective, by identifying the particular stage in the process that the individual has reached. The theory remains influential in the work of careers and vocational guidance officers both in Great Britain and America today.

However, Ginzberg's theory is not without its critics. One of the principal criticisms of this developmentalist approach is put forward by Roberts (1977), and has itself been developed into a theory of occupational choice which has found credence, particularly in areas of high youth unemployment. Roberts makes the point that, as Ginzberg's theory focuses almost entirely on the role of the individual in the process of occupational choice, it offers little in terms of a structural explanation. The theory assumes the individual has an open choice of career which is governed only by the chronological sequence of the process. Roberts contends that the crucial element of the occupational choice process, which Ginzberg fails to take into consideration, is the opportunity structure.

Ryrie (1983) presents another theory of occupational choice and work entry, which may be seen as a synthesis of the work of Ginzberg and Roberts. He refers to the opportunity structure in the occupational choice process, believing that particular job intentions held when people are at school owe little to the direct influence of the labour market or the structure of opportunities in the locality. At this stage, Ryrie maintains that there appears to be a genuine occupational choice which adheres to a developmental process, albeit within the parameters of social class and academic performance. As the individual approaches leaving school, however, Ryrie believes that the local labour
market begins to have some influence, particularly if difficulty in finding work is experienced. This may result in young people changing or abandoning original ideas. The extent to which this occurs will depend not only on the state of the local labour market, but also on the extent to which original intentions happen to coincide with the labour market opportunities. So, in short, Ryrie (1983) sees the interaction of individual intentions with opportunity structures as crucial in determining the kind of job that an individual enters. He says,

"... it is a mistake to take the opportunity structure in isolation, as if it were the only determinant of work entry. Rather we should see it as the final element in a process which consists firstly of a channelling into different levels through the school's assessment of performance, secondly the making of individual choices based on performance, but in relative isolation from the labour market, and thirdly the imposition of the reality of the opportunity structure onto their choices."

Ryrie's theory is less deterministic than those of Ginzberg and Roberts, allowing scope for individual intentions, whilst placing these within the framework of the opportunity structure and the labour market. It also maintains the role of the careers officer or teacher giving him/her an important fourfold task:

1. To understand the process they are involved in.
2. To develop flexible intentions for the future.
3. To engage with the labour market and the structure of opportunities.
4. To cope with life in the working world.

Clearly, Ryrie (1983) recognises the constraints placed on occupational choice by the opportunity structure, but is not over deterministic in this. He allows some scope for individual aspirations and preferences, placing these within a structural context. Similarly, he identifies a role for careers education and guidance, but stresses the need to be
flexible and able to cope with the restrictions of the opportunity structure and the changes which may occur within the local labour market.

Conclusion
A thorough consideration of the role of occupational choice in the school leaving process is important at this early stage in the thesis, as it remains an important part of school to non-school transfer. The identification and securing of a suitable job for the young person remains the most successful conclusion to the school leaving process in any local labour market. The theories discussed here show that occupational choice may be a complex procedure, and that the actual transfer from school to non-school may differ significantly from the ideal type transfer. The issues identified as important in the theories of occupational choice, and in the criticisms of them, have significance for careers education programmes generally. The extent to which the local labour market facilitates occupational choice may be instrumental in defining the aims, objectives and content of careers education programmes. Furthermore, the role of careers education and the careers teacher may be seen to have changed and developed as theories of occupational choice have changed and the centrality of occupational choice to the school leaving process has declined in the wake of rising unemployment. The way in which careers education has changed and developed since its introduction to schools during the 1930's will be discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter Four

THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CAREERS EDUCATION

Introduction

Having defined my research project in terms of the transfer from school to non-school it follows that, within this, considerable attention must be given to the practice of careers education in schools. It is to the topic of careers education that I now wish to turn.

In defining the area for study in the first chapter, the content and practice of careers education were taken as largely unproblematic. At the same time, however, in defining the area of my research I have made reference to the considerable differences which occur between different geographical areas and their local labour markets in the way in which fifth year pupils are prepared for leaving school. As careers education often forms an important part of this process, it is likely that this will also vary from area to area. If it is assumed that the careers education which is carried out in a school should attempt to aid the young person as he/she comes to leave school and enter the labour market, then it is logical that this careers education should respond to the demands of the labour market that the young person is attempting to enter. If the labour market makes no demands, insofar as it does not require any recruits, then it may be fair to assume that the careers education programme should respond to this situation accordingly. What is clear from my observation and reading on the subject of careers education, is that the approach which is taken to careers work by schools is shaped by the wider economic forces which determine the state of the local labour market.
An interpretation of careers education which sees it primarily as a function of the local labour market assumes flexibility in content, in order that relevance is maintained under a variety of different economic scenarios. In general terms, this may make the whole concept of careers education more problematic and its definition more difficult to determine. Bearing this in mind, I intend to discuss various aspects of careers education in an effort to clarify what its aims are, what its content might be, and how it relates to education in a wider sense. A full understanding of the concept of careers education is important if we are to understand the role it plays in the process of transfer from school to non-school. In an effort to reach a more complete understanding it will be useful if an historical approach is taken to the subject. In doing this, I shall show the links between careers education and the changing economic situation which faced school leavers in the early-mid 1980's, and within which careers education has to function.

The Emergence of Careers Education and the Careers Teacher

Unlike many subjects on the school timetable, careers has developed and changed, both in content and approach, in response to changes in the labour market. In this sense, careers education may be seen as providing a service not only for the school leaver, but also for industry and the labour market. As the economic climate changes, it is likely that the needs of industry will change, specifically in terms of the number and type of young people it wishes to recruit. In response to this the nature of careers education has to change to meet these new needs. Careers education has to be a dynamic subject, in terms of both its aims and content, and one of the prime concerns of this study is to
consider the extent to which careers education does change to meet new and different needs of industry.

There has been considerable conjecture about the aims of careers education and its contribution to the process of leaving school. This has often delayed the acceptance of careers education as part of the school curriculum. The development of careers as a specific subject area is something which has occurred quite slowly, and indeed it often remains something of a 'Cinderella' subject on many school timetables today. Nevertheless, most school leavers can now claim to have had at least some experience of careers education.

The acceptance of careers education as an appropriate subject for the school curriculum has occurred as the role of the specialist teacher has emerged in schools. The history of careers education and the position of the careers teacher may, in many respects, be seen to run in parallel. Daws (1972) in his article 'The Role of the Careers Officer', shows that their history is a relatively recent one. He points to various publications which went some way towards establishing the careers teacher as an individual specialist in schools. For example, the influential Hadow Report (1926), although making no mention of a careers teacher per se, refers at some length to the school's "obligation to be mindful of the working lives that await its pupils."

The organisation of schooling in the early twentieth century, however, may be seen as precluding the necessity for any kind of institutionalised careers education. The division of education into elementary and secondary stages meant that the majority of the country's children left school at the age of fourteen to enter the world of work, and often the question of job choice or careers guidance was irrelevant.
To a great extent, work was expected to be harsh, and certainly not something to be enjoyed. The school leaver was expected to learn about work from the actual experience of it, and in this respect the school could do little to aid this process. The practice of a family member 'speaking for' the young person at their place of work was common, and in many areas this was the major form of recruitment to industry. For the few who enjoyed the benefits of a secondary education, the position was often very different but, nonetheless, there was little institutionalised help offered by the schools. Many of those who matriculated, and whose parents could afford it, went to university, whilst others could rely on school reputations and the tag of a Grammar school education to secure them suitable employment.

Guidance in career choice and in the general process of the transfer from school to work, developed in schools as employment opportunities for some school leavers improved. For example, the development of management as a specific occupational field, and greater access to the professions, led to a need for some kind of guidance or assistance in the process of choosing a career, at least for those with the required social and academic qualifications. As industry and commerce developed during the early decades of this century, many secondary schools began to identify the need to guide their pupils into suitable positions appropriate to their abilities and social standing. At the same time, they began to identify a need for a particular member of staff to provide such guidance.

Macrae (1932) records perhaps the initial appearance of the careers master. He says,
"Recently, numbers of schools have appointed careers masters who in addition to their ordinary teaching work are charged with the duty of helping boys to obtain suitable employment. These observations give a useful insight into early forms of careers education, beginning in the early 1930's. At that time, the careers master's job was to ensure that school leavers were placed into appropriate jobs, and essentially he dealt only with boys, the home being considered as suitable employment for female school leavers.

Later in the 1930's the Spens Report (1938) made brief reference to the careers master. It said,

"Our evidence also leads us to commend the growing practice in large schools of including on the staff a 'Careers Master' who by establishing friendly relations with employers and employment bureaus, is able to help pupils in finding posts when they leave school. In smaller schools this position is naturally filled by the Headmaster or Headmistress."

Daws (1972) believes that this documentary evidence makes it possible to locate the emergence of the careers master as a specific post within secondary schools between 1926 and 1938.

Higginbotham's (1967) description of the early careers master suggests that he was, in effect, a public relations officer, providing a form of school and industry liaison, seeking to find placements for his school leavers. However, as Daws points out, the pre-war careers master was to be found only in the secondary schools, not the elementary. Furthermore, within the secondary schools, his help was restricted to the early leavers and lesser able boys, whilst those continuing to higher education were advised by the headmaster. At this early stage careers education was by no means incorporated into the school curriculum, and the careers master was a person whom only a minority of school leavers would encounter. This situation remained largely the
same throughout the 1930's while the 'slump' presented many problems for school leavers, and through the years of the Second World War.

Daws (1972) points out that there was very little published about the role of the careers master during the 1940's or 1950's, in fact not until post-war reconstruction was well advanced, and the Butler Education Act (1944) had succeeded in establishing the tri-partite secondary education system, did the careers master become well established within schools. In 1959 the Ministry of Education introduced a short course for teachers intending to engage in careers work. This may be seen as the first formal systematic attempt to introduce any kind of specialised training for such work. The early 1960's, meanwhile, brought a series of influential publications from the Ministry of Education and The Scottish Education Department which were widely circulated among schools. These included: Forward From School (1962); The Brunton Report (1963), and The Newsom Report (1963).

These publications helped to focus attention on the work of the careers teacher and to emphasise the importance of the role within the school. In particular, the Newsom Report introduced a new dimension to careers by referring to the 'careers teacher'. Previously, it was assumed that such work would only be carried out by masters, and that what they were attempting to do was not strictly a form of education, but rather a method of guidance and placement. The recommendations made by the Newsom Report (1963) were important both in establishing the role of the careers teacher and in the development of careers as a separate area of education, worthy of time and resources and on a par with other subjects. The report called for the last year of compulsory schooling to be
"... deliberately more outgoing ... taking the pupils mentally and often physically beyond the school walls ... an invitation into the adult world of work and leisure."

It recommended a wider use of television and radio and the strengthening of links with the Youth Employment Service, Further Education and other adult organisations. Taking things even further, it suggested that forms of work experience be introduced into British schools as they were in Swedish schools. It said

"Experiments enabling some pupils over the age of fifteen to participate to a limited extent, under the auspices of the school, in the world of work, in industry, commerce or in other fields, should be carefully studied."

To implement these recommendations the report stated that it is

"important that there should be at least some one member of the staff whose special business it is to be knowledgeable about employment and further education, to organise reference and display material, and to make the essential liaison between school, parents, Youth Employment Service, and employment."

Many of the recommendations made in this report were adopted by Local Authorities throughout the 1960's and 1970's and remain familiar aspects of careers education programmes in today's schools. The Newsom Report represents perhaps the most important document in the establishment of careers education and careers teachers in secondary schools.

In the wake of the Newsom Report came the publication of four guides which were particularly influential in the expansion of the role of the careers teacher (Preparation of Young People for Employment (I.Y.E.O., 1964); Careers Guidance in Schools (D.E.S., 1965); The Careers Teacher (Joint Four, 1967), and Memorandum on Careers Work in School (E.C.A., 1968)). These guides were not all published by central government, as may have been expected, but by local organisations of careers teachers and youth employment officers and, as Daws (1972) says,
they remind us that progress in this field has been made largely through the work of local organisations over a number of years, without much official help or recognition. These guides were important in suggesting methods of practice for the careers teacher, and for aiding the integration of him/her into the mainstream of the school.

The Role of Careers Education

Progress in careers education has, therefore, been made quite slowly and, although it is now a common feature on almost all school timetables, we must not infer from this that the state of careers education in our schools is in fact perfect or, indeed, satisfactory (cf. Cleaton, 1987). As Daws (1972) points out, and as my own research verifies, careers education often suffers from a lack of resources, teachers appointed purely for careers work remain scarce, and the role of the careers teacher frequently suffers from a lack of specialist training, recognition and time. The low priority which is frequently given to careers education is often reflected in the pupils' attitudes towards the subject. Opinions that careers is merely a lesson to fill in the timetable, or is unimportant because it is not an examination subject, are frequently expressed among fourth and fifth year pupils. At the same time, many pupils appear to reject careers lessons on the grounds that they offer little help to those about to leave school. These and similar charges require serious investigation. If pupils fail to see careers lessons as useful or relevant to their own situation, then the nature, content and style of these lessons needs to be considered. Careers education needs to respond to changes of circumstances which face the school leaver, it needs to respond to changes in the labour market, within schools, within youth culture and
with changes in the aspirations, beliefs and life style of the young person. If careers education does not respond to such changes and to the new needs of the young person, then it may well be rejected as being of little use, and will in turn result in people looking elsewhere for guidance. For example, the school leaver may look towards the more informal networks of family, friends and people who have experienced the world of work for themselves. In such cases the school-based guidance may become second best. A quotation from one of the fifth year pupils in my study illustrates this point very well:

"I think careers lessons are not very important. If a person wanted to know the qualifications and information about a job badly enough, they will find out about it for themselves. Some careers teachers have never heard of the jobs some people want to do, so wouldn't be able to help anyway."

If this opinion is typical of many present day school leavers then it must raise serious questions about the very purpose and use of careers education. If it is not offering the school leaver anything which cannot be acquired from the family and the general socialisation process, then is there any point in including such a subject in the school curriculum? Furthermore this question takes on greater relevance in the light of high levels of youth unemployment. If one interprets the role of careers education solely in terms of finding a job for the school leaver, or of helping him/her settle into a job, then the absence of jobs may make such education redundant. However, as subsequent chapters will show, a purely instrumental view of careers education ignores many of the developments in careers education, and fails to take account of its role in areas of high unemployment. As one of the prime concerns of this thesis is the relevance of careers education to the
local labour market, it may, at this stage, be appropriate to consider in greater detail some of the perceived aims and objectives of modern careers education.

Daws (1972) gives some attention to the educational aspects of careers work in schools. He says that the careers teacher still has to convince his colleagues that his contribution to the curriculum is a "genuinely educational one". Whilst the traditional role of careers education in placing pupils in suitable employment may not be construed as particularly educational, changes in approach to careers education and in employers' requirement of school leavers, have led to a wider and more comprehensive role for it (Smith, 1989). Furthermore, changes in the youth labour market, and the differential availability of jobs for school leavers, would make the operation of careers education merely as a placement service very difficult. Careers education needs to include preparation for both employment and unemployment if it is to be relevant to all school leavers. This approach may, however, place the careers teacher and the school in general in something of a dilemma. Many teachers, headmasters, educationalists, etc. would regard education for unemployment as admitting defeat, as a failure for education. Watts (1978) states that many teachers fear that raising the issue of unemployment may lead to pupils challenging not only the work ethic in wider society, but also the work ethic within school. These two forms of work ethic are often clearly aligned by teachers in suggesting that if a pupil works hard he/she will be able to get a job. As Finn (1982) points out, to make such a challenge would be to challenge much of the legitimisation for schooling itself.
Watts (1978) suggests that teachers may also be reluctant to educate for unemployment for fear of labelling and conditioning certain groups of pupils to expect unemployment, and thus initiate a self-fulfilling prophecy, as they leave school and attempt to find work. Clearly these are cogent arguments against education for unemployment, and evidence suggests that they are effective in many schools. Watts (1978) quotes a Newcastle headmaster who says,

"I hope we shall never 'educate for unemployment' which is a contradiction in terms and a sort of defeatist realism we can do without."

Whether we interpret this as defeatist or not, the fact remains that it is realism and an attempt to face the fact that for many school leavers in the 1980's unemployment is a definite threat.

Refutation of education for unemployment does not come solely from teachers and headteachers. Tomlinson, as Chairman of the Schools Council (1978), in evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee, said:

"We utterly refute the notion that we should in the schools train children for unemployment. This is not what we are for, any more than we specifically train them for particular employment."

What Tomlinson fails to accept is that, although schools may not train pupils for particular kinds of employment, they do train them for employment and the world of work in general terms. The work of Willis (1977), for example, shows how the school counter culture facilitates the transition from school to work, acting as a training in life skills for the shop floor, and is a good example of a general preparation for work in an informal way by schools. Similarly, Bowles and Gintis' (1976) descriptions of the hidden curriculum are convincing theories of
the informal preparation for the work place which occurs in schools. Moreover, rationale given for many traditional school subjects, in particular those with a practical or vocational element, is that they will be useful for the school leaver in the work situation. Similarly, patterns of behaviour, for example, respect for authority, punctuality, etc., are all learnt during the process of schooling, and may be considered as attributes which will aid the young person as he/she enters the world of work and continues through a career. If this is the case in times of full employment, then it might reasonably be assumed that in times of high unemployment the school should offer some kind of extra preparation, to equip its leavers to face a different kind of environment. Watts (1978) says,

"... a school in the current economic climate which avoids giving unemployment any curricula attention is abdicating one of its most important responsibilities, that of preparing students for their transition to the outside world."

After rejecting education for unemployment as undesirable, Tomlinson (1978) goes on to talk about the necessity for school leavers to be prepared to face the world outside school. He says,

"What we are here to do is to release the maximum of their [the school pupils'] human capacities so that whatever life they may face, they can cope with it to the maximum of their capacity."

Given that many school leavers in the late 1970's/early 1980's were likely to face a situation of unemployment, this statement appears contradictory to the one quoted earlier from Tomlinson.

The early careers of many school leavers are likely to be punctuated with spells of unemployment. If these school leavers are to 'maximise their human capacities', as Tomlinson believes they should, then education for unemployment should surely be an instrumental part of
this. Furthermore, if pupils follow a traditional careers education and schooling pattern and, as Tomlinson would like, have plenty of capacity to maximise, but are still unable to find a job on leaving school, then, as Ashton and Field (1976) discovered in their study of young workers, they may consider themselves failures. If they were to receive no guidance or support to help cope with such a situation it may be that the sense of failure is accentuated. Surely if, as Tomlinson (1978) would like, school leavers are able to maximise their human capacities to face any kind of situation, then some form of preparation for unemployment is essential.

If one accepts that education for unemployment is an essential concomitant to careers education, then the question of what form it should take, and how it should relate to the general school leaving process, must arise. To treat education for unemployment separately from more traditional forms of careers education and guidance may place too much stigma on unemployment, labelling particular groups of pupils and, as a result, be counter-productive.

A careers officer responsible for one of the schools where my research was conducted expressed his support for education for unemployment. He described an approach which locates the preparation within the context of the local labour market, which takes account of the trends of employment and unemployment within the locality in which the school leaver is most likely to be looking for a job. At the same time, the young person should be made aware of all the possibilities which are open to him/her, both at the present and those that are likely to be open in the future. The individual must be able to cope with unemployment, in terms of possessing the correct information about
entitlement to benefits and the existence of special government schemes. On a less instrumental basis, he believed it important that the individual be able to achieve some kind of personal fulfilment if he/she is unemployed. To this end, he suggests some form of leisure education should be incorporated into the programme.

**Approaches to Careers Education**

Having considered the development of careers education within schools, its general aims and objectives, and the necessity for it to respond to local labour market needs, it may be useful to consider a general approach to the subject. Hayes and Hopson (1972) offer an outline of a careers education programme which, although developed during times of relatively high employment levels for school leavers, may be adapted in the light of the above discussion to maintain relevance for a majority of school leavers.

Hayes and Hopson (1972) say that primarily the programme should enable the individual to discover information about him or herself, that is to say, abilities, interests and aspirations, limitations and what causes them. Secondly, the young person should be provided with information about his own environment, levels of unemployment, opportunities which do exist both in terms of jobs and government schemes. He should also be given information about qualifications necessary for entry into specific jobs. The careers programme should therefore provide the school leaver with a frame of reference in which to see him/herself in relation to the opportunities which do exist, or to enable him/her to locate the experience of unemployment in a wider context which removes the tag of personal failure or incompetence. Furthermore, it should orient the school leaver towards the various help
agencies available to both those in work or unemployment. Hayes and Hopson (1972) also advocate counselling for the school leaver in order to promote self-understanding and to develop educational and occupational plans, whilst alerting him/her to future decision making points in his/her career. In connection with this they suggest that a placement or work experience service should be available to help the individual realise the consequences of his/her plans. Similarly, a follow-up service should be established to help, if necessary, with future decisions or with the failure of plans, for example redundancy or long term unemployment. Hayes and Hopson are also quick to point out that values and choices should not be imposed on or provided for the individual. He/she should be encouraged to define his/her own problems, and to make his/her own decisions in the light of information and experience which has been received from the careers programme, and from his/her own socialisation process. Careers guidance must thus concern itself with the total life of the individual and the promotion of personal satisfaction. It should help to develop the individual's self concept, his/her occupational concept, and his/her 'extra-occupational' self concept.

This approach to careers education is obviously very different in content and in style from traditional functionalist approaches. The intention is to move away from the model which concentrated mainly on instruction and placement, towards one which emphasises the need for the school leaver to discover things for himself and about himself. Most importantly, this approach does not assume that the school leaver will find a job automatically on leaving school. What it does is attempt to prepare the school leaver for life as a whole and sees the acquisition
of a job as only one part of the school leaving process. This is not to infer that the approach does not look upon work as important, but rather that it takes a wider view than a functionalist approach to careers education, which has the priority of placing school leavers into jobs and becomes largely redundant when unemployment rises. A developmental approach, such as the one suggested, is able to cope with situations of unemployment by emphasising the need for education for life in general, with access to adequate support services and the location of the school leaver within the wider context of the local labour market.

Furthermore, this approach relies on the individual coming to terms with his/her own situation and then taking the appropriate, informed action. The developmental approach is best understood if seen as a part of a learning process. It attempts to prepare the young person for life outside of school by taking him/her through a series of stages where decisions are made, and actions taken accordingly. By taking this approach the sudden 'cut off' point is avoided, as the individual gradually prepares to enter the labour market and/or comes to terms with the possibility of unemployment.

If one accepts an approach to careers education such as that outlined above, then relevance can be maintained throughout periods of high youth unemployment as well as during more buoyant times. Ryrie (1983) gives a useful description of such an approach. He says that careers education is to do with preparation for life as a whole and, as such, it should be aimed at assisting people to understand themselves and to plan their path through life wisely.

Adopting this general approach as a basis for their school leaving programme, schools should be able to plan the content of careers
education in accordance with the likely employment opportunities in the local labour market. At the same time, the broad approach which emphasises not only preparation for the labour market, but also stresses the provision of personal and social education, aims to help young people to come to terms with themselves as individuals and as members of the wider community.

Conclusion
Approaches to careers education such as those outlined by Hayes and Hopson (1972) and Ryrie (1983) are clearly very different from those practised by early careers masters who were concerned merely to place school leavers in jobs. Whilst current practice in careers education is likely to vary from school to school and area to area, it should not necessarily be assumed that traditional placement approaches have, in all cases, been replaced by developmental approaches. An important element of this study is to identify different approaches to careers education evident in the early 1980's. It has been important, therefore, in this chapter to consider the development of careers education in schools, and the way in which the nature of the subject may have changed significantly since its first appearance on timetables in the 1920's/30's.

Throughout this thesis the major concern will be with the practice of careers education in five different schools in five different local labour markets. The chapters will discuss the provision and practice of careers education in these different schools, and the pupils' reactions to what they have received.
Chapter Five
FIELDWORK AND METHODS

"Although there are now many accounts of the social process in 'doing sociological research', there are still relatively few systematic analyses of being a Ph.D. candidate. Accordingly, many post-graduates could gain the impression that established researchers did not experience the trials and traumas associated with writing a Ph.D. thesis."

(Burgess, 1984)

For the inexperienced postgraduate student the thought of embarking on the first independent research project can be a daunting one. No matter how much preparation and reading of other people's work is undertaken, the real test comes with the entry into the field, and attempts to put into practice the theory and the techniques frequently read, but never previously experienced at first hand. The importance of making the right start, of being well organised, of developing useful contacts, collecting and recording data, along with many other aspects of the research process, may all be paramount yet confused within the mind of the first time researcher. Together with this, as Burgess (1984) suggests, there is the legacy of previous research carried out by established researchers with which the novice has to contend and in some ways compete. From many of the completed, accepted and celebrated studies one might easily assume that social research follows some sort of natural order and, as though by its own laws, it is clinically and always expertly executed and assimilated into the body of knowledge. All of these factors act to place a pressure and an uncertainty on the new researcher, as he/she seeks to make a contribution to the revered literature.
The postgraduate researcher is likely to be keen yet apprehensive about the task he/she faces, realising how important the first attempt at work in the field can be. Early experiences are not always positive. For example, Hammersley (1984) describes how he abandoned initial observation in Downtown County Secondary School after only five days. He says,

"with a rapidly mounting sense of my own incompetence and increasing doubts about the value of my work, I abandoned the field work after only five days."

Such fears about one's own inadequacy or inability to work in an unfamiliar environment whilst ensuring to present an acceptable face to both those being researched and those in authority, the gatekeepers, must surely be common to any new researcher who realises the importance of establishing good relationships and contacts in the early stages of research. Delamont (1984) warns of the difficulties of conducting the first piece of independent research. She says,

"Today I warn graduates that research is a lonely, unsettling experience, and doing a thesis is rather like an initiation ceremony where the young warriors have to live all alone in the wilderness for long periods before rejoining the tribe as adults."

Nevertheless, there is clearly no substitute for actually doing the research. Ball (1984) says,

"... fieldwork is like riding a bicycle. No matter how much theoretical preparation you do there is no real substitute for actually getting on and doing it."

However, for the inexperienced postgraduate research student, it may be worth bearing in mind the note of caution raised by Moser and Kalton (1971). They say:

"... one does sometimes suspect social scientists of being excessively eager ... to leap into the field as soon
as they have a problem, collect data, tabulate answers, write a report and regard the research as finished."

Before launching into the field, the researcher must do adequate preparation, ensuring that the area for investigation is clearly defined, and the aims and objectives of the research are identified. As part of this, the postgraduate researcher must have a good idea of what is achievable with the often meagre resources which are at his/her disposal. In short, the researcher must identify appropriate scope for the project, considering the implications of this for the methodology. Having done this, however, it may also be useful and comforting to bear in mind Hammersley's (1984) comment that "social research will always be a learning experience, and so it ought to be."

Bearing these comments in mind, I commenced fieldwork in the Autumn term of 1983. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to describe my own experiences in the field, the methods used, the way in which contacts were made, and to evaluate the success of the fieldwork in the light of the data collected, and the subsequent analysis.

The Area for Research
As Chapter One described, interest in this subject area developed from personal experience in careers education in two different types of schools, and an interest in the general area of vocational education and preparation for entry into the labour market. However, in describing the process of developing and defining an area for research it is difficult to separate the course of events which lead to the preparation of a research proposal. For example, does the student, in the first instance, decide that he/she wishes to undertake a research project and then begin to consider suitable areas for research, or has he/she had
the idea for a research topic for a number of months/years, before deciding to embark on a postgraduate studentship?

In the case of this project, initial motivation was a result of a combination of the two processes described above. There was a desire to engage in some research at first hand and, at the same time, a keen interest in the subject area through personal experiences and a recognition of major changes in the circumstances facing many school leavers.

A general area of interest was identified which focused on the transfer from school to non-school, and the intention was to collect data from pupils, teachers and careers officers, via a variety of methods, about their experiences of careers education and the preparation for leaving school.

The Data

The required data can be divided into three different types. In the first instance there is that which was collected from the pupils. This is concerned with the way in which they experience and perceive the process of school leaving, their aspirations, and the factual information concerning the extent to which they have been prepared for leaving school in terms of frequency of careers lessons, interviews, etc. In short, this forms the 'consumers' view of the school leaving process. It allows the comparison of the views of school leavers, at the same stage in their education, across different areas of the country.

The second kind of data required concerned the organisation of the school leaving programme. For example, this related to the provision of careers education, the links between the schools and the
local labour market, the role of the local authority careers service and the actual content of the careers education. This information was collected from schools and careers offices. Whilst some of these data are of a factual nature, the principal emphasis was again on the perceptions and experiences of those involved in the school leaving process, in this case, those involved in the organisation and provision of the careers education programme, largely careers teachers and careers officers.

The third kind of data relate to the background information gathered in each of the five areas. This enabled the school leaving process in each of the five schools to be located within the wider context of the local labour market. In particular, information on unemployment levels, the availability of work for school leavers, the incidence of government schemes, etc. was collected in each area. This background information is important not only in providing more detail on each of the areas individually, but also in providing criteria which facilitate the comparative approach to the study.

General 'historical data' relating to the five labour markets were also collected. For example, information on economic fluctuations in the areas was considered along with general employment trends. These data are useful in providing a longitudinal context within which to view the school leaving process in the early 1980's.

It will be clear from the brief description of the three different kinds of data that their collection necessitated the use of different kinds of methods. Before discussing the methodology, however, it will be useful to consider the scope of the study and the size of the different populations from which data were collected. Clearly,
questions of size and scope were important contributors to the identification of the appropriate methods.

The Scope of the Study

From the outset it was intended that this study should take a comparative approach, seeking to contrast the different kinds of school leaving processes which operate in different labour markets, in different parts of the country. From the beginning it was important to identify the number of areas which were to be used in order to facilitate an effective comparison and to have some idea of the number and type of pupils required.

As the central concern of the research was to consider the impact of the labour market on the school leaving process, it was essential that data should be collected from areas which incorporated different levels of employment, different kinds of industries and different industrial and economic histories. Given all these criteria it was likely that the areas chosen would be geographically distinct.

Having defined the criteria for the research areas, it was necessary to identify specific geographical areas which met the criteria and, within the areas, to identify schools where the research could be carried out. In the first instance, it was assumed that the identification of the areas and schools would be separate activities and, in the ideal research situation, perhaps they would be. The position of the postgraduate research student, however, is not a powerful one and gaining access to schools and pupils during their final year may be difficult. Rarely is the student in a position to offer the school anything in return for the inconvenience he/she may cause, but
gaining access to suitable 'friendly' schools was clearly essential to this research project.

In effect, the areas and the schools in which fieldwork was conducted were identified simultaneously through a series of personal contacts. Five areas were identified which, when considered collectively, offered considerable variation in terms of local labour market conditions and accompanying prospects for school leavers. In each area I approached a personal friend or acquaintance who, in each case, was a teacher in a school which I considered appropriate for inclusion in the research. In this respect, personal contacts were instrumental in the identification of the five areas. However, in using personal contacts, I approached people only in areas which would be appropriate for the study, and consequently was able to ensure that sufficient scope for comparison was achieved.

After initial enquiries had been made by my contacts about the possibility of basing a study in their schools, I approached the headteachers. In each case I provided a detailed proposal and requested a meeting to discuss the research. In all five cases the meeting proved to be successful and access to the fifth year pupils was agreed.

The areas identified for the research were Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Stevenage, Windsor and Leicester. Collectively, they represented a wide range of labour market trends and appropriately offered different kinds of experiences and opportunity structures for the school leavers therein.

Although the schools were not identified in any systematic way, my visits to the areas and conversations with teachers did not lead me to assume that they were in anyway atypical of schools in the areas.
Consequently the school leaving experiences of the pupils from the 
schools may be seen as representative of the school leavers generally 
within those areas. In making statements about typical areas and 
representative data, however, it is worth bearing in mind a comment of 
Corrigan (1979), who says,

"The typical town does not exist to be studied, instead we 
must try to draw some of the conclusions that we can ... 
whilst being aware of the different characterisation of the 
area."

To avoid problems of sampling it was decided that in each school 
the entire population of fifth years should be contacted. This would 
have amounted to approximately 750 pupils. As will be shown, however, 
total coverage was not achieved and the total population completing a 
questionnaire was 624.

Having established the scope of the study, the size of the 
population and the nature of the required data, it is now appropriate to 
consider the methodology. It should not be assumed, however, that 
methodologies were considered and identified after the definition and 
scope of the study had been worked out. The actual sequence of events 
which leads to the production of a full research specification is 
difficult to itemise, and to do so is perhaps to understate the degree 
of interaction that occurs between subject matter and methods. Clearly 
both are central to any research project, with each serving to define 
and clarify the other.

Methodologies

The nature of the required data, described earlier, necessitated the use 
of a mixed methodology. The size of the sample, and the need to collect 
sufficient information to identify trends in particular areas, made
questionnaires the most suitable method of wide scale data collection. The intention was to use the census surveys of the fifth years (see Appendix 1) to collect quantitative, factual information from the pupils, together with attitudinal data on their opinions, perceptions and aspirations. The surveys would be supported by interviews conducted, where possible, with a 10% sample of fifth years in each school. In all cases a balance between the quantitative and qualitative information would be sought. Pupils for interview would be selected with the aid of members of staff to ensure that the sample was representative of the range of ability in the fifth year and, where possible, of social class. It should be stressed, however, that although these criteria were identified as important for producing representative data, the final 'choice' of pupils for interview was left to the teacher. As such, the sample was stratified, but it was not random.

Interviews with the pupils were structured and lasted approximately twenty minutes. In most cases interviews were tape recorded, covering many of the issues raised in the questionnaire (see Appendix 2 for interview schedule), giving the pupils the opportunity to elaborate on their opinions, and to outline in greater detail their plans and aspirations for after the end of the fifth year. Considerable attention was also given to the extent to which pupils felt their experiences and aspirations had been influenced by the nature of the local labour market.

1. A total of three pupils refused to be tape recorded during their interview. Data in those cases were recorded in note form.
Data from careers teachers, local authority careers officers and members of the school staff were also collected in each school by means of interview. These interviews were of a semi-structured nature (see Appendix 3 for interview guide), the intention being to achieve flexibility to 'explore' issues pertinent to each of the different schools and their labour markets. Data from teachers and careers officers were also collected by more informal means during conversations at various points during the time spent in the schools.

Background data, the third of the types described earlier, was also collected in each area from libraries, careers offices and job centres. For example, information on unemployment levels, vacancies for school leavers, and historical information about the local labour market was collected by these means.

In summary, a methodology was identified which would afford collection of quantitative data from a fairly large population. This would be balanced and supplemented wherever possible by qualitative data collected from interviews conducted with key personnel in each of the schools. During discussions with headteachers to negotiate entry to the schools, the methodology of the proposed research was outlined and each case was approved.

Having defined the focus and scope of the study and identified the methodology, it was important to conduct some form of pilot exercise, to consider the compatibility of the subject and the method. More specifically, it was also necessary to 'test' questionnaire content and interview schedules in situ. A plan for a small pilot study was, therefore, devised.
The Pilot Study

Apart from trying out specific aspects of the methodology, the pilot study provided the opportunity to become generally familiar with the school environment, and to practice interview, discussion and data recording techniques. For the postgraduate research student the pilot study is often the first opportunity to experience data collection and engage in actually 'doing research' at first hand. It is, therefore, an important stage in the research project, the success of which will be important in giving confidence for the main project.

In this project, the pilot study was not only important because it afforded the opportunity to practice data collection techniques and style, but also because it enabled the identification of issues and concerns relevant to school leavers. The construction of research instruments for the main study resulted from the data collected during the pilot study.

Pilot work was carried out in the Leicester School which was later to be used for the main study. After negotiation with the head and senior teachers, access was gained to a group of fifth year pupils. Over two terms, the group were brought together for an hour each week. The time with the group was spent in a variety of ways, the main purpose being to discuss issues relevant to their careers education, their aspirations, and their general preparation for the end of compulsory schooling. Most weeks a particular topic allied to the subject area was chosen for discussion. At other times, individual conversations/ interviews were held with the pupils. Towards the end of the pilot work, questionnaires were administered and discussed with the pupils.
Different questions and subject matter were 'tested', proving invaluable for the preparation of the questionnaires for the main survey.

The pilot study also facilitated contact with careers teachers and the careers officers associated with the school. Again this contact proved invaluable for the identification of issues to be included in interview schedules for the main study. During the pilot stage contact with members of staff was generally informal, providing latitude for discussion of a variety of topics and the opportunity to receive their opinions of the instruments intended for use with the pupils.

In general, the pilot study proved to be very successful, providing more than merely a means of testing data collection methods. The study provided familiarity with the world of the school leaver, giving access to his/her environment, helping to provide a focus for the main study. In addition to the development of questionnaires and interview schedules, the pilot study gave the opportunity to discover the limits of data collection by identifying which information was best collected by which method. The pilot study was important in establishing both a familiarity with the topic, and a confidence that the issues with which it was concerned were relevant to school leavers.

The Methods in Practice

Approximately one week was spent in each school, the entire period of fieldwork taking place over approximately three months.

The Survey

The administration of questionnaires differed in each of the schools and a variety of methods were employed in order to contact all fifth year pupils. For example, in the Middlesbrough school all fifth years were brought together in the school hall and all questionnaires were
completed during one double period. This proved to be the most successful method as all pupils received the same instructions at the same time and any problems were dealt with on the spot. The method facilitated greater control over the data collection process. Furthermore, as data collection was completed via questionnaire during the period of approximately one hour there was more time for interview and observation work.

In the other schools it was not possible to bring all fifth year pupils together. Questionnaires were, therefore, completed by different groups of pupils throughout the time spent in the schools. In Stevenage, for example, questionnaires were completed during careers lessons, taking three days before all fifth years had taken part. In the Newcastle and Windsor schools, questionnaires were completed in tutor groups during active tutorial sessions which lasted for forty minutes. Finally, in the Leicester school, a double period of English was given over to the questionnaire. Again, this meant completion over a period of three/four days.

In all cases, the majority of the fifth years completed a questionnaire. However, those who were absent from school for whatever reason were omitted, as were those who were absent from the particular lesson during which questionnaires were completed. Furthermore, in each school a small number of questionnaires, a total of thirteen across the five schools, were deliberately spoiled and consequently could not be included in the analysis.

In general, the questionnaire proved to be successful. After initial instructions and explanations given at the beginning of each session, there were few questions asked or difficulties encountered.
Those that were usually related to particular language or phrases used in the questionnaire. For example, definitions of what constituted a careers lesson were required in the two schools that incorporated careers as part of social studies. Questions about the status of the institution at which pupils intended to continue their studies were also asked, for example, were they Technical, F.E. or Sixth Form Colleges. Questions of this nature were usually answered by members of staff present during the completion. Overall the quality of information collected by the questionnaires was high. Furthermore, a number of pupils included comments in their responses stating they were grateful that the questionnaire had, for the first time, encouraged them to think seriously about their post fifth year intentions.

As is perhaps inevitable when administering a survey to a mixed ability group, time taken to complete the questionnaire varied considerably. Questions were pitched at such a level that even the lowest ability pupils could provide an answer; language and layout were given careful consideration to ensure this. As a result, many of the high ability pupils completed their questionnaires much more quickly than those of lower ability. This did not, however, appear to have any detrimental affect on the data collected.

The Pupil Interviews
In each school a 10% sample of the fifth year population was selected by a member of staff for an individual interview, after completion of the questionnaire. Although pupils were actually selected by members of staff, the importance of a representative sample in terms of ability, sex and, where possible, social class was stressed before the selection took place. In each school the selection criteria were adhered to and
samples were identified which, I was reliably informed, were broadly representative of the fifth year.

In each school the same general issues were included on the interview schedule, but amendments and additions were made to take account of the different labour market conditions and their effect on the school to non-school transfer process in the different areas. Latitude was also allowed to explore issues of particular concern to the individual pupil. This often yielded important information which could be pursued with other interviewees.

Most interviews were tape recorded but only with the knowledge and consent of each pupil. In general this proved to be a successful method of data collection and there is nothing to suggest that pupils felt hindered by the presence of the tape recorder. The tape recorder does, however, produce a great deal of data, not all of which is central to the topic in question. As transcription facilities were unavailable to me, notes were usually taken on the content of the tapes, which were played constantly. A method of indexing was also devised which enabled salient issues and quotations to be extracted.

The interviews proved to be invaluable, providing data which corroborated those collected by the questionnaires. They offered an insight beyond the factual survey information, whilst at the same time providing a context for it.

Other Interviews and Observations

Interviews with careers officers and teachers were generally less structured than those with the pupils, although similar issues were covered in all five areas. In most cases useful information was collected, although on one occasion considerable suspicion and concern
about the use of the data was expressed by a careers officer. Nevertheless, the majority of interviewees were very co-operative, providing essential information both on their own contribution to the careers education programme and, more generally, in the school to non-school transfer process.

Observation was carried out throughout the time spent in each school. This was not undertaken in any systematic or quantifiable fashion but was, nevertheless, an important means of collecting background and supporting information. The actual process of this informal observation is difficult to describe, but Delamont (1984) seems to have had similar experiences during her early fieldwork. She states that what she did cannot be described as participant observation in any "meaningful way ... instead I lurked and watched.

I think I fell into the category in the school occupied by student teachers, who also lurked about the school, often without any clear function."

Observations of many aspects of school life were undertaken during the time spent in the schools, with the intention of gaining as full a picture as possible of the fifth year activities which related both directly and indirectly to the school leaving process. Careers lessons, school assemblies, careers visits, careers interviews and a parents evening were among the more formal activities observed. In addition, time was spent in school careers libraries, in fifth year common rooms, staff rooms, dining halls, and generally around the schools watching the various activities of the pupils and staff and, when appropriate, engaging in conversations with them. Whilst it is difficult to quantify data collected by these informal observations, they were, nevertheless, important in producing an all round view of the school to non-school transfer process in each of the schools. At the
same time, they also brought to light sources of information and support available to the school leaver which were outside the formal aspects of the careers education programme. Being privy to some of the conversations which took place between peers, for example, gave insight into the support which pupils gave to each other, and to the processes by which information was passed among pupils.

Although it was clearly not possible to actually experience the transition from school to non-school, the observations and time spent generally around the schools did, nevertheless, offer some insight to the process and helped to provide a context within which the quantative and more systematic data could be viewed.

The Follow-up Study

During the individual interviews, pupils were asked if they would consent to being contacted again after the end of their fifth year. Sixty one pupils agreed to this. Approximately three months after the end of the pupils' fifth year, the autumn of 1984, follow-up questionnaires were despatched (see Appendix 4). As will be discussed in Chapter Eleven, the follow-up study allowed a 'progress report' on the young people after decisions and action had been taken. It also provided an opportunity to collect data on their opinions of their careers education, and of schooling in general, after having had time for reflection and the experience of different institutions and lifestyles.

The questionnaire was despatched by post and, after one reminder, a response rate of 80% was achieved. The data yielded by the questionnaire facilitated an important insight into the immediate post-school experiences of the young people, and provided information which
largely corroborated that collected by the main questionnaire and interviews. Furthermore, the survey also provided information on the provision of support by the careers service for young people in the first few months after leaving school.

Evaluating the Methodology

The methods employed, facilitated the collection of balanced data, producing a comprehensive picture of the school leaving process in the five schools. At the same time, however, the selection of schools to be broadly representative of those in their areas allows the data to be attributed a greater generality, providing an indication of the likely school leaving processes taking place in many other geographical areas with similar characteristics to those in the study. It may be incorrect to claim, however, that the data, when taken together, offer a representative picture of the school to non-school transfer process in the country as a whole. The areas were chosen to illustrate different labour market conditions and were not, for example, selected with consideration of race or gender. Clearly these and other factors may play a significant part in the school leaving process in different areas. Overall, it would be fair to assume that the data collected and the subsequent analysis, provides a general picture of the school to non-school transfer process which takes place in different areas. When the five areas are viewed collectively, they provide an insight into the different kinds of transfer processes experienced by school leavers in areas and labour markets similar to the five used in the study.

Generally, the periods of field work and data collection were carried out without any great difficulties. Once access had been negotiated and the aims and objectives of the study explained to
relevant members of staff, co-operation was forthcoming. In more than one school, considerable adjustments to timetables and work programmes were affected in order to accommodate the research activities.

Completion of questionnaires, for the most part, was conducted sensibly by the pupils. Instances of non-response or 'spoil'd papers' were not common. The highest response rate from the five schools was that from the Middlesbrough school, where questionnaires were completed by all fifth year pupils simultaneously. In all schools a sufficient number of interviews was conducted to provide a balance of qualitative and quantitative data, to allow exploration of issues which were raised in the questionnaire and which came to light as a result of observation in the schools.

In evaluating the success of the methodology, it is important to bear in mind many of the points made earlier in this chapter. That is, in most cases the postgraduate research student is coming to fieldwork for the first time. Until actually venturing into the field his/her experience of research and data collection techniques will be limited to what has been read of other peoples' studies. Consequently, early fieldwork experiences and, in particular, the pilot study will form important parts of the learning process for the postgraduate research student.

One of the difficulties of this research project in the early stages was the identification of what was to be considered as data. Ball (1984) recalls similar difficulties at the beginning of his study of Beachside Comprehensive. He says,
"In many respects inevitably, of course, I had little idea of what kind of material would actually come to constitute 'data' later in my work."

In the case of the questionnaire there was no particular problem. Generally, factual information was gathered which could be compared and contrasted between and across all five schools, to identify trends. The same questionnaire was used in each school which facilitated the comparative approach to the data analysis. With interviews and observations, the situation was not so clear cut. For example, during interviews and discussions with pupils and staff, a great deal of information was usually conveyed, from which material perceived to be relevant was selected. The difficulty arises in the identification of which data are relevant and important. In this situation, as with all research, it is the judgement and the perception of the researcher which is brought to bear. Clearly, he/she must engage in a process of selection according to his/her perception of the situation, in the light of the aims and objectives of the research project.

In this particular study, the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods produced two different kinds of data which are indicative of the position of the researcher vis a vis the subject matter. In the first instance the quantitative, largely factual information collected by means of questionnaire, represents the view of the researcher from outside the situation looking to collect quantifiable, measurable data. The interviews and observation techniques, on the other hand, indicate an attempt by the researcher to get closer to the subject, to view and understand the process from the inside, through information provided by the key actors.
Looking back on the period of fieldwork, given the constraints of time and resources, and the fact that postgraduate research students are rarely in a 'powerful' position with regard to the research population, in this case being beholden to the goodwill of heads and teachers, etc., the methods employed proved most successful. A comprehensive picture of the school leaving process was produced across five different schools and areas, the comparative analysis being based not only on factual information, but also on the views, interpretations and expectations of those centrally involved in the process of transfer from school to non-school.
Chapter Six
THE AREAS AND THE SCHOOLS

The principal concern of this study has been to consider the impact of the local labour market on the school leaving process and the provision of a careers education programme. In particular, the study has been concerned with the leaving experiences of pupils in five different areas of the country. The selection of the areas has been of central importance to the study, and this chapter provides details of these areas. It gives information about their local labour markets, the opportunities open to school leavers, and about the schools within which research was carried out.

Providing certain labour market conditions could be satisfied in order to facilitate effective comparisons between areas, the geographical location of the areas was not seen as greatly important. Areas selected were required to reflect different rates of unemployment, different industrial and commercial compositions and different economic histories. The interaction of these three factors was expected to result not only in the provision of different kinds of careers education by the schools in different areas, but also in the way in which the pupils viewed their career prospects, their preparation for leaving school and their long term aspirations. Having identified the three central criteria for the selection of areas, Middlesbrough, Stevenage, Leicester, Newcastle and Windsor were chosen as appropriate locations. As outlined in Chapter Five, the choice of areas and schools was not completely open. As a post-graduate student working alone, access to research populations often depends on personal contacts. For my study
this was certainly the case. However, this is not to imply that any offer of access was necessarily accepted and, despite having personal contacts of some sort in each of the five schools, the final choice of areas was rigorously based on the criteria outlined above.

In describing the areas and the schools, it is my intention to provide an economic and social background to the study, and a context within which each school and the school leaving process may be located. Leicester

Leicester and its county offer a variety of economic and geographical characteristics. In the north there are important mining and quarrying industries, whilst in the east the economy is predominantly agricultural. The city itself has a population of some 282,000¹ and is able to offer employment principally in the manufacturing industries of knitwear, hosiery and the boot and shoe trade, together with small engineering and a large service sector. Leicester has, therefore, enjoyed a broad economic base with its industries mainly in small units. As a result the city has been able to offer relatively full employment to its working population, with according opportunities for school leavers. Like many other comparable areas, however, Leicester was adversely effected by the economic recession of the early 1980's. Consequently unemployment increased moderately and some difficulty was experienced by school leavers attempting to enter the labour market.

Throughout the 1970's in Leicester, unemployment remained fairly static at approximately 5,000. By January 1983, however, the number of unemployed had jumped to approximately 30,000, some 11% of the population.1 Nevertheless, in comparison to other areas in the study, Leicester remained a fairly prosperous city where jobs were still available for school leavers. However, the rise in the unemployment rate to approximately 11% by 1983 obviously had adverse effects on job prospects for school leavers. Local firms, more than ever, enjoyed a situation where they had a wide choice of potential recruits. By contrast the choice of careers for the school leavers narrowed. Whilst most could find some kind of job, securing a position of their choice became more difficult. Fifth year pupils remained generally optimistic about their prospects but realised the need to be well equipped in order to compete in what was increasingly an employers' market.

Some general statistics provided by the Leicester Careers Office revealed that of approximately 4,000 school leavers in Leicester and Leicestershire in 1983, 30% found jobs, 15% joined the newly established YTS scheme and 12% were unemployed. The remaining 43% continued in some kind of fulltime education. An interview with a Leicester careers officer revealed that the number of school leavers continuing in education had increased by approximately 5% between 1982 and 1983. The careers officer attributed this rise to panic about rising levels of unemployment and to a lack of information and confusion about YTS. He felt there was a scepticism towards YTS in Leicester which came partly from teachers, parents and careers officers. He explained that good

wages had traditionally been available to young workers at an early age. As a result, school leavers were often reluctant to accept YTS, mainly because of the money it offered. He felt, however, that panic about unemployment in the city was unnecessary. In 1983, approximately 180 vacancies per month were notified to the Careers Office, and most school leavers who wished to were able to secure some kind of employment.

In spite of the increasing strength of the employers in the relationship between schools and industry, good relations and communications between the two parties remained. Since the early 1960's industry and education have had close links within Leicester, and an Education and Industry Committee brought together teachers, employers and trade unionists in an effort to promote co-operation between education and industry. This relationship helped promote a variety of links between schools and the local labour market over the years. For example, there is a scheme which facilitates the secondment of teachers to industry, and encourages employers to visit and spend time in schools. Local industry has also contributed to the commitment to provide work experience for fifth years in the county as well as providing some teacher fellowships in an engineering scheme. There has also been co-operation over project Trident, the Schools Council Industry Project. In addition, T.V.E.I. has provided the impetus for a variety of school/industry links throughout the city. In general, the relationship between schools and the local labour market has remained productive and reciprocal, with many interesting initiatives being promoted and actively supported by both sides. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, these initiatives contributed to a mood of optimism among the school leavers taking part in the study. In some cases,
however, this optimism was tempered by a recognition that unemployment was an increasing possibility.

Having considered the general characteristics of the local labour market, it will now be useful to consider in some detail the school in which research was conducted. In order to preserve the anonymity of its pupils and teachers, the school will be referred to as 'The Leicester School'.

The Leicester School is an eleven to eighteen co-educational Comprehensive situated on the edge of the city which, until reorganisation of secondary education in Leicester in 1976, had housed an all female Grammar school. As a Grammar school, it enjoyed a very good academic reputation, drawing pupils from all over the city. With the reorganisation of secondary education, however, the school had to open its doors to pupils of all abilities and both sexes. For the first time the school could be seen to have an identifiable catchment area from which to draw its 1176 pupils. Furthermore, the location of this catchment area meant that the school lost its predominantly middle class composition as many of its new pupils were drawn from a traditional working class area of the city. However, the catchment area for the school is fairly large, incorporating a mixture of both private and council housing. This contributed to a fairly heterogeneous social class mix among the school's population in 1983.

As an all girls Grammar School, the Leicester school had only limited experience in type of school leavers. Until comprehensivisation the demands of most of the fifth year pupils had centred around either further education or occupations deemed suitable for intelligent middle class girls. The new organisation thus presented a variety of different
kinds of school leavers, with different demands and requirements. For the first time, the school had to make provision for leavers who were of low academic ability, interested in jobs which were very different from those which interested the Grammar School girls. Similarly, the school had to provide careers education for boys and, again, this required new initiatives from the school. In many ways, although the Leicester school has a long history, in 1983 it was a relatively new organisation with only the name and part of the staff cleaving to the old traditions.

The new status and organisation of the school had been important in developing the careers education programme and in changing the emphasis of school-industry links. During the 1950's and 1960's the buoyancy of the local labour market, the good reputation of the Leicester school and the wide choice of careers open to its leavers, meant employers were often keen to foster links with the school for recruitment purposes. The change in labour market conditions and the composition of the school's fifth year in the late 1970's to early 1980's, however, placed a greater emphasis on the school to court and maintain good relations with employers. The school required contact with a wider range of employers, able to offer careers for school leavers across the ability range, for boys and girls.

Similarly, in terms of careers education and guidance, the school could no longer place its greatest emphasis on encouraging pupils to continue in education. If it was to be successful in achieving its new comprehensive aims, adequate provision had to be given to those who intended to leave school at the earliest opportunity. When fieldwork began in the Leicester school in November 1983, there was a degree of uncertainty among some of the staff about the careers education
provided. Although they approved of recent efforts to offer careers education commensurate with the school's comprehensive status, they felt the underlying philosophy of the school leaving programme remained firmly rooted in the school's Grammar school tradition. Careers education was, therefore, an issue of some importance in the school and my presence was usually met with interest from those involved with careers, most of whom were committed to the provision of an effective and relevant school leaving programme.

In recent years, therefore, the Leicester school had changed its provision of careers education in line with educational and labour market developments in the area. The changes which had occurred made the school an interesting subject for research in 1983. At the same time, it should be stressed that the educational and labour market changes which had impacted on the Leicester school and its leavers were likely to be common to most of the schools and school leavers within the Leicestershire Education Authority. There is no reason to suggest, therefore, that the school leaving experiences of the pupils in the Leicester school differed significantly from school leavers generally in the L.E.A.

Middlesbrough

The second area upon which I wish to focus is that of Middlesbrough. Located in the North East of the country, along the banks of the River Tees. The area presents many contrasts to the one previously discussed.

In 1983, the Middlesbrough labour market, and that of the North East more generally, was in serious decline. Much of the traditional industry of the area had disappeared completely, many firms were struggling for survival, and few were recruiting any new workers.
School leavers faced great difficulty in finding any kind of job, and it seemed likely that the great majority would become unemployed or enter a government scheme. Middlesbrough provides a considerable contrast, therefore, with the areas of Leicester, Stevenage and Windsor but, at the same time, has many similarities with the area of Newcastle.

Middlesbrough is a relatively new town, having become established as an industrial centre during the middle of the last century. The area has a population of approximately 159,000, of whom many still rely on the town's heavy industry for their livelihood. For many years the economic base of the town has been concentrated within the steel industry, the petro-chemical industry and the docks. However, the contraction of all three industries during the late 1970's and early 1980's meant unemployment in the area in 1983/4 was approaching record levels. The impact of unemployment on opportunities for school leavers had been dramatic. Statistics relating to 1983 school leavers in Middlesbrough demonstrate higher than ever levels of unemployment. Of the 2,753 fifth year leavers, only 12% succeeded in finding permanent employment. Although only 15% were registered as unemployed, a further 38% were engaged in the Youth Training Scheme and 32% had continued in some kind of further education, either in sixth form or F.E. Colleges.\(^1\) Clearly there is no accurate method of deducing how many of those engaged in Further Education would, under circumstances of full employment, have opted to enter the labour market. However, the

\(^1\) The remaining 3% of leavers were either unavailable for work or could not be traced by the careers office. (Information provided by Middlesbrough Careers Office.)
traditionally low level of continuing in post-compulsory education in this area suggests that unemployment encouraged many pupils to postpone looking for a job, preferring the relative 'safety' of education.

In September 1983, unemployment in Middlesbrough was 20.3%. The general shortage of jobs in the area meant that school leavers were often the hardest hit in terms of employment prospects. Local industry no longer required large numbers of young people to fill places as apprentices or trainees, when skilled labour was readily and cheaply available. As a result, school leavers in the area increasingly looked towards the acquisition of qualifications for some kind of aid in a highly competitive labour market. Considering the unemployment figures for Middlesbrough more closely and comparing them with the national averages, the Northern Region strategy of the Department of Employment team has calculated that the Cleveland Sub-Region reacts more significantly than any other sub-region in the northern region to changes in the national unemployment level. The co-efficient of sensitivity of Cleveland was found to be 1.5%. This means that an increase of 1% in the national unemployment rate would result in a 1.5% increase in the Cleveland rate. It is against this background that I began my research into the school leaving process in Middlesbrough in 1983.

The school within which I worked was a six form entry Roman Catholic school situated approximately three miles from the centre of the town. At the time that I carried out my fieldwork there were just under 1,000 pupils on the school roll, 141 being in the fifth year.

1. Information provided by Middlesbrough Careers Office.
Like the Leicester school this had previously been an all girls Grammar school which, during the 1970's, had become a co-educational comprehensive. Consequently, issues over the provision of a broader-based careers education had also been faced in this school. Again, similar to the Leicester school, the Middlesbrough school had enjoyed a good academic reputation for many years, and continued to attract pupils from many different areas of the town.

To identify the school's catchment area is difficult. As I have already pointed out, the Middlesbrough school is Roman Catholic and parents of the pupils attending the school have made a conscious decision that their children should receive a Roman Catholic education. They have thus chosen the Middlesbrough school for its religious status. The effect of this is that the catchment area extends over a much wider area than that of a non-denominational comprehensive school like the other four schools in my study. As a result, despite being situated at the heart of a predominantly working class neighbourhood, the social class composition of the school is far more heterogeneous than that of a non-denominational comprehensive school which draws only from its immediate neighbourhood.

The fifth year pupils with whom I worked were clearly aware of the situation which faced them in terms of employment opportunities, and realised the need to be well equipped to compete in the declining local labour market. Similarly, from the school's point of view, the high level of unemployment within the area put pressure on it to equip its pupils not only for competition in the local labour market, but also for the probability of unemployment. Under such circumstances the school's relationship with the local labour market was strained. The lack of
employment opportunities for school leavers meant that any initiative in this relationship had to come from the school. Local firms did not require new labour, therefore they did little to court good relations with the schools in the area. The relationship between the schools and the local labour market rested largely on industry's use of Government training schemes. In order to utilise the schemes effectively, the local labour market required the mediation of the careers service, which provided information to school leavers, and often 'fitted' pupils with particular schemes, a function not unlike that carried out by the careers service in times of fuller employment.

According to local authority careers officers, many schools in the Middlesbrough area put great effort into developing and maintaining links with local employers. The fact that employers could count on having the cream of school leavers should they require them, however, meant these efforts were rarely reciprocated. Provision of an effective careers education programme was, at the same time, very difficult. The level of unemployment demanded some kind of education about alternatives to work, yet to provide such education may have been construed by pupils and parents as an admission of defeat by the school and the careers service. The problem highlights questions about the role of careers education and its capacity to maintain relevance when employment for school leavers is unlikely. Whilst it may be argued that schools have a moral and social responsibility to provide education for unemployment, this is often balanced against political considerations of education and its role in producing a willing work force for industry. Such a work force would not be available, it is argued, if preparation for alternatives to work were included in the school curriculum.
For a variety of reasons, therefore, Middlesbrough presented an interesting area in which to conduct research in 1983. Again, as with the Leicester school, the experiences of the Middlesbrough school pupils were likely to be broadly similar to those of their peers throughout their county of Cleveland and the North East more generally.

**Stevenage**

The third area within which research was conducted provides considerable contrasts with those already considered. Stevenage, a new town in Hertfordshire of some 75,000 population, was chosen for a variety of reasons. For example, the new town status presented an interesting scenario. Stevenage did not really exist prior to the second World War, the local labour market into which school leavers sought to transfer, therefore, lacked the history and tradition of the other areas in the study. Unlike Middlesbrough and Newcastle, in 1983 Stevenage had a labour market with a real need to recruit school leavers. Many of the town's employers had been established in the area since the 1940's when the bulk of their recruitment took place. By the 1970's/80's many companies had an ageing work force. There was an urgent need for these companies to recruit new staff to counter the wastage they were experiencing due to retirement. There was a definite demand from the Stevenage labour market for new workers. The town was able to offer good employment prospects to school leavers. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, many fifth year pupils in the Stevenage school expected to obtain apprenticeships and other trainee positions on leaving school, which would ultimately provide them with good careers. This characteristic alone warrants comparison with other areas included in the study.
The level of unemployment in Stevenage in October 1983 stood at 11.1%, 1.5% below the national average and a considerable contrast from the levels in Newcastle and Middlesbrough. Furthermore, an unemployment level as high as 11% existed partly by design. In 1966, twenty years after the town's establishment, there began a planned slow down of industrial intake in the area. This was a deliberate effort to avoid the danger of an excess of employment in relation to the town's planned population. The number of employers seeking to establish a base in the town was, therefore, strictly controlled. As a result, and not unlike Middlesbrough in this respect, Stevenage has become a town reliant on a relatively small number of employers. Figures produced by the borough's department of technical services showed that in 1982, 2% of all companies in Stevenage employed 63% of the town's total workforce.

These statistics have particular relevance for school leavers in the town. Although several multi-national companies employed young people in large numbers, the number of potential employers was relatively small. As a consequence, the types of jobs available to school leavers were accordingly restricted. The relatively small number of employers in the area likely to recruit school leavers placed pressure on schools to develop and maintain links with the local labour market. In some respects the smaller number of employers made co-operation between schools and industry easier, and enabled both parties to get to know each other fairly well. In other respects, links were

1. Department of Employment Gazette Area Statistics.
more difficult, as each school was likely to look towards links with the same employers. Employers were, therefore, under constant pressure from schools to forge and maintain links. There was evidence, however, of co-operation between Stevenage schools, the careers service and local employers which demonstrated that school-industry links in the area had been very successful. A good example of an effective link which existed for a number of years is the Stevenage Education/Industry Forum. This was designed to encourage dialogue between schools and employers, providing a vehicle for communication. The Forum has facilitated a variety of initiatives, for example, an exchange scheme for industrial trainers and teachers enabled trainers to work in schools and teachers to work in a first year apprenticeship school for up to a year. Furthermore, co-operation between the Borough Council, the New Towns Commission, local industry and three secondary schools resulted in the establishment of the Open Terminal Community Computer Centre. This enabled schools and industry to work together on projects in a business like environment. The scheme also gave pupils access to state of the art information technology. Further links were encouraged through the Young Enterprise Scheme, and since 1981 the Engineering Employers Federation has operated an engineering apprenticeship test for school leavers hoping to follow a career in engineering. Successful completion of the test has been shown to enhance pupils' chances of securing an apprenticeship.

The school-industry links are examples of a constructive relationship which existed between employers and schools in Stevenage in 1983. The relationship was based on employers' need to recruit trainees, and an approach to the school leaving programme which sought
to ensure that pupils were well informed before making occupational choices. The comparatively low level of unemployment in the area meant that most school leavers enjoyed good career prospects and, within the scope of the local labour market, were optimistic about securing a job of their choice.

Data provided by the Stevenage Careers Office relating to pupils eligible to leave school at the end of the academic year 1983 show that, of the 1419 sixteen year olds, 47% chose to continue in fulltime education. A further 22% found a job, whilst 15% joined the Youth Training Scheme. 5% of the school leavers were still unemployed by October of that year. The remaining 11% were either unavailable for work, had moved away from the area, or could not be contacted by the Careers Office.

Few fifth year pupils who took part in my research saw unemployment as a particular threat. However, in common with the rest of the country in 1983, the level of unemployment in Stevenage was increasing. The buoyant nature of the local labour market was, nevertheless, evident despite this increase, as the rate of increase had declined between June 1982 and July 1983. Moreover, the decline in the rate of increase was greater in Stevenage than in the country as a whole. The statistics show (Stevenage Careers Office) that the rate of increase had fallen by 1.2% in Stevenage during this time, compared with 0.6% nationally.

In comparison to the areas of Middlesbrough, Newcastle and to a lesser extent, Leicester, the local labour market for Stevenage school leavers in 1983 was buoyant, offering good employment prospects. Following chapters will demonstrate that this buoyancy was reflected in
the careers education and school leaving programme offered to the Stevenage school pupils. Having considered the Stevenage labour market and the nature of the school-industry links in the town, it will now be useful to give some attention to the organisation of secondary education therein, and in particular to the school where research was conducted.

Secondary schooling in Stevenage is organised on the basis of complete parental choice. In 1983 there were ten 11-18 comprehensive schools in the town, with a total population of just under 8,000 pupils. All schools were of a similar size with between 600-800 pupils on their roll. The town, like many others in 1983 and increasingly throughout the 1980's, was suffering from a declining secondary school population. This, together with the policy of parental choice, created considerable competition between schools for pupils. All schools were, therefore, concerned to present a good image to parents. The school within which I worked, 'The Stevenage School', was no exception to this. An 11-18 comprehensive, the school had 720 pupils on its roll, 151 of whom were fifth years. Although a policy of parental choice existed, most pupils came from the area surrounding the school and, like the other schools so far considered in this chapter, its catchment area constituted a mixture of private and council housing which gave the school a heterogeneous social class mix. For teaching purposes, the fifth year was divided into five forms with the basic divide occurring between those taking 'O' levels and those taking CSE. All pupils, however, were encouraged to take some kind of public examinations during their fifth year, and the school was concerned that its pupils should receive a broad based education. In its efforts to present a good public image, and so attract pupils, the Stevenage school was keen to maintain and develop
links with local employers, and had been largely successful in this. One of the tests of a 'good' school is often seen as an ability to secure jobs for its leavers. Being able to demonstrate that its leavers were successful in the job market was, therefore, important to the school's image in the local community. Apart from aiding the 'marketing' of the school, the successful industry links had a positive effect on the careers education offered by the school and the school leaving process more generally.

The issues discussed above clearly illustrate that Stevenage in 1983 was an interesting location within which to investigate the process of school leaving and the transfer to non-school. The purpose built nature of the town, together with its high technology industries, presented an interesting picture which may be interpreted as representing both the post war progress of Britain and, in many ways, the future of the country as a whole in terms of high technology industries. The buoyancy of the local labour market and its capacity to absorb school leavers provided contrast with other areas in the study and, as will be shown in succeeding chapters, shaped the nature of the careers education programme offered by the school.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and 'The Newcastle School' proved suitable for inclusion in the study for a variety of reasons. In the first instance the city's association with the traditional primary industries of mining, ship building and heavy engineering was clearly a contrast to other areas in the study whose local labour markets were constituted largely by secondary industries, the service sector or a combination of the two. In common with Stevenage and Middlesbrough, the
Newcastle economy was dependent on a narrow range of employers and, as was the case with the Middlesbrough area, the general economic recession in the North East had resulted in massive unemployment as many large employers were hard hit. Similarities may be identified with Middlesbrough and Newcastle pupils in terms of employment prospects, whilst those enjoyed by pupils in the other areas, particularly Windsor, provide sharp contrast.

In order to appreciate fully the position which faced school leavers in Newcastle in 1983, and to understand something of their attitudes towards the prospect of unemployment, it may be useful to look briefly at the industrial history of the area, in order to locate the modern day school leaver in the context of fluctuations in the Newcastle labour market.

Enjoying the prosperity of the Victorian Era, Newcastle was the epitome of the term "the workshop of the world". From the 1850's, with the birth and development of the railways in the North East, Newcastle became the industrial capital of the country. For engineering, Newcastle became world famous with large works developing for bridge building and railway construction. Similarly, along the banks of the River Tyne ships of all sizes were under construction, the largest of them being used to transport Newcastle's coal to all parts of the world. However, the prosperity of the Victorian era was short-lived. By 1914 the city's population had swollen to 270,000, with most of its workforce being employed in the four basic industries identified above. This heavy concentration of the workforce inevitably brought problems in times of economic recession, when the basic industries slumped. As Bean (1980) points out, Newcastle had "insufficient light industry to tide it
over to better times. Its eggs were big but they were in too few baskets." A pattern of economic peaks and slumps was one which was to become increasingly familiar as the twentieth century progressed. The 1930's are still remembered as the worst years in the city's history by many of its older people today. As shipyards closed, factories went out of business, unemployment, poverty and hunger became rife. Only the outbreak of war in 1939 relieved the situation. Rearmament on a massive scale meant orders for industry, Britain at war meant Newcastle at work. The war-time boom in Newcastle continued through the 1950's and 1960's as post-war reconstruction meant demand for Newcastle's industries. Despite or because of the prosperity, however, the local economy remained dependent on the same four basic industries and, as a consequence, remained precarious, a fact recognised by the City Council as some attempts at diversification were made. For example, there was an increase in building and construction work in the city during the late 1960's along with the development of some small trading estates around its edge. Similarly, there were some developments in the Service Sector during the 1970's. These developments made little impact on the overall distribution of employment and the majority of the city's workforce remained employed in the traditional industries, or those related closely to them.

In 1981, the population of Newcastle was approximately 254,000.1 As the employment base of the city remained very narrow the recession of the early 1980's hit very hard. The labour market did not have the

capacity for diversification to absorb the thousands of workers laid off from the shipyards and the engineering companies. As a result in 1983, when I began fieldwork in the city, the unemployment rate stood at 22%. It was against this background that the fifth years with whom I worked experienced the process of transfer from school to non-school. Statistics relating to young people who left school in the summer of 1983 show clearly the impact of the recession on the youth labour market. The Newcastle-upon-Tyne careers office revealed that of the 3,946 school leavers in 1983 only 11% had managed to find a job by September of that year. Meanwhile 31% of the leavers were involved with YTS, and a further 32% had remained in some kind of full-time further education, a figure seen by careers officers to be particularly high, given the tradition for pupils to leave school at the earliest possible opportunity in this area. The remaining pupils were reported either to be unemployed (18%), not eligible for work (1%), or were unable to be contacted by the careers office (7%).

By 1983, the capacity of the Newcastle labour market to absorb large numbers of school leavers had diminished. Very few school leavers could expect to find employment. Their immediate and mid-term future held the prospect of either a government training scheme, or unemployment. The history of the area shows, however, that unemployment had been present from time to time throughout the twentieth century and, although the cyclical nature of unemployment did not make the situation any easier for school leavers in the early 1980's, unemployment had, in a sense, become part of Newcastle. School leavers were aware that they were not the first generation to face the difficulties of unemployment. Most school leavers interviewed in the course of my research, for
example, knew someone (often an older relative) who had experience of previous recessions in the city. There was a sense, therefore, in which the new unemployed were part of the history of Newcastle.

The school within which research was conducted is situated approximately four miles from Newcastle's city centre, in a traditionally working class area typical of many in the city. Accordingly, most of the school's 844 population came from working class homes. The school itself is fairly drab, located in pre-war buildings, it has no playing fields and few modern facilities. Prior to comprehensivisation in the 1970's the school was a secondary modern with a fairly bad reputation. In spite of its new status as a comprehensive school with a small sixth form, its poor reputation remains. This, together with the unemployment problem in the city, meant that relations between the school and the local labour market were poor. Local employers did not need to recruit school leavers and therefore did not need to court good relations with the local schools, and particularly not with a school which had a bad reputation. This had repercussions for the careers education programme and the general process of preparing pupils for leaving school. For example, as will be shown in the next chapter, things such as work experience were difficult to arrange for the fifth year pupils, and very little contact with the real world of work was available to them.

The threat of unemployment and the nature of the local labour market influenced many aspects of the fifth year curriculum in the Newcastle school. As subsequent chapters will discuss, Newcastle pupils were under no illusion about the situation which confronted them, facing it with a sense of realism which at times gave way to fatalistic
acceptance. For these reasons alone, the Newcastle school made an interesting subject for research in 1983/4, which at the same time was very different from the other areas included in the study.

Windsor

The area of Windsor provides a contrast with those areas considered so far. One of the criteria for selection of areas in which to conduct research was that, when taken as a whole, they should reflect differences which existed between local labour markets throughout the country in general. The area of Windsor was selected, therefore, to represent those areas in 1983/4 whose labour markets remained particularly buoyant, and were able to offer good employment prospects to school leavers. Further points of contrast with other areas in the study include the size of the town. With a population of approximately 32,000, Windsor is the smallest area in the study. Furthermore, the social composition of Windsor is essentially middle class. This, as will be shown, had implications for the nature of schooling in the area and the extent to which links with local employers could be formed. The choice of Windsor, therefore, was an attempt to balance the research population by looking at middle class school leavers in a prosperous area, who enjoyed good job prospects in a vibrant local labour market.

When research in the area began at the end of the Autumn Term 1983, unemployment stood at 6%. Jobs were obviously available in the area and fifth year pupils' expectations of not only being able to find a job but also one of their choice, were clearly a reflection of the general buoyancy of the local labour market.

Located in the County of Berkshire, Windsor has very little traditional or manufacturing industry. The prosperity of the area rests
on its connections with the Royal Family, its proximity to London and the generally prosperous south east of the country. Connections with the Royal Family contribute to the prosperity of the area in two ways. The town supplies both goods and labour to the Royal Estate, many hundreds of people are employed either directly or indirectly by the Crown, and many local families are proud of connections with the castle which go back over many generations. The largest contribution to the local labour market made by the Royal connections, however, is through tourism. Outside London, Windsor ranks as one of the most popular attractions in the country. The masses of visitors to the area throughout the year bring a great deal of revenue to the local economy, and create many jobs. At the same time, Windsor falls conveniently within the commuter belt for London, and other industrial areas such as Slough and Reading, which offer many employment opportunities. In short, Windsor and the surrounding areas are prosperous, with little unemployment. This made for very good prospects for school leavers in the area who generally looked forward to entering the labour market with a great deal of optimism.

The fifth years who took part in my study were all from the same school, 'The Windsor School' which, unlike the others so far discussed, was an all male Comprehensive. The school had a population of 682, 155 of whom were members of the fifth year. The school, built at the beginning of this century, is situated in the centre of Windsor and has enjoyed a good academic reputation for many years. First of all as a Grammar school and, more recently, as a Comprehensive, the Windsor school has sent an average of 6 pupils a year to Oxford and Cambridge. The change to comprehensive education in the 1970's brought little
change to the school. It remains a single sex institution, most of the staff stayed on after comprehensivisation and, as a result, most of the organisation, curriculum, careers education and standards of the school have remained unaltered. Similarly, the type of pupils, with regard to social class and ability, have remained much the same. As in Stevenage, parents in Windsor have a free choice as to which secondary school their children should attend. Due to its good academic reputation, the Windsor school is a popular choice with parents. The school is forced, therefore, to operate some kind of selection procedure and, although the basis of this selection was not made clear during the course of my research, one of the school's careers officers did admit that the majority of its pupils were of above average ability.

In 1983, the Windsor School enjoyed a particularly good relationship with local employers. School leavers were in demand, especially those from a school with a good reputation. Most of the fifth years from the Windsor school could feel fairly confident about finding a job at the end of compulsory education. Statistics from the Windsor careers office show that their confidence was not misplaced. Of approximately 500 Windsor pupils eligible to leave full-time education in 1983, between 140 and 150 (30%) were able to secure full-time employment. At the same time almost 250 (50%) pupils continued in some form of full-time education. Ninety six (19%) chose to take part in the youth training scheme. The careers office estimated that a maximum of 10 (2%) pupils were either unemployed or unavailable for work. These statistics provide a stark contrast with those provided by the Newcastle and Middlesbrough careers offices, reported earlier, for their 1983 school leavers.
In the light of such good employment prospects it may have been easy for the Windsor school to become complacent about links with local employers. As will be described later in this thesis, however, this was not the case. The school went to vigorous lengths to ensure that good relationships with local industry were maintained and that its pupils were well prepared in order to use these links productively. The relationship between school and industry in Windsor was more balanced than in the other areas. The local labour market in this area needed school leavers to fill vacancies which existed, and to be trained in particular skills. The relationship between the school and the local labour market was, therefore, reciprocal. In crude functionalist terms, the school provided the workforce to fill jobs offered by industry. Although similarities did exist with Stevenage, the situation in Windsor and the prospects for its school leavers were very different from the other areas included in the study. Similarly, the approach taken to the school leaving process in the Windsor school was accordingly different. Thus, the area proved to be particularly interesting for research into the transfer from school to non-school in 1983/4, and provided an almost total contrast to the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle.

Summary

This chapter has shown that the nature of the relationship between a particular school and local labour market is by no means arbitrary. The relationship is, in many aspects, a function of the labour market's demand for young workers, and the need for schools to prepare leavers for entry to it. The purpose of describing each area has been to place the individual schools and their fifth year pupils within their own social and economic context. In order to fully understand the school
leaving process in any area, it is necessary to look at the history of the labour market, its composition and its susceptibility to, and experience of, unemployment. By considering these factors it can be seen that the relationship between the individual schools and the local labour market is tempered to a large extent by the economic climate and fluctuations in the demand for new labour. As such, the school leaving process within each school is a function of this relationship, and is likely to vary in accordance with the composition of the local labour market. This study has been designed to investigate variations which may exist in the school leaving process in different areas in England.

The extent of some of these variations can be seen in Table 6.1, which provides a comparison, by area, of the first destination statistics for 1983 school leavers discussed earlier in this chapter. The table illustrates quite clearly the division between the areas of high unemployment and the more buoyant areas. Particular differences can be seen between the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle and those of Windsor, Stevenage and Leicester in terms of the percentage of pupils entering work and YTS. In Middlesbrough and Newcastle, the newly established YTS obviously absorbed a significant proportion of school leavers, whilst in Stevenage, Windsor and Leicester a far higher proportion of school leavers were able to secure employment than were their peers in the other areas.

The table also illustrates the importance of further education, with high proportions of pupils in all five areas opting for some kind of fulltime study after their fifth year. The table is unable to show, however, the extent to which the threat of unemployment had influenced the number of pupils staying on, particularly in Middlesbrough and
Newcastle. It was against this background that fieldwork commenced in 1983. Furthermore, the statistics provided by the various careers offices (Table 6.1) provided a guide to the likely destinations of and the opportunities open to the 1984 school leavers with whom this study is concerned.

By describing the areas, local labour markets and schools where research was conducted, and describing their influence on the school leaving process, the analysis of data collected within the schools which follows has a social and economic framework. Taken as a whole, the five areas help to assemble an impression of the school to non-school transfer process experienced by large numbers of young people throughout the country in the early/mid 1980's. The chapters which follow consider the process in detail.

Table 6.1 First Destinations of 1983 School Leavers by Area (Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>No. Leavers</th>
<th>Fulltime Education</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>YTS</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Don't know/Unavailable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>1419</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>2753</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>3946</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each case data were provided by careers offices. In Windsor and Leicester, however, careers offices were only able to provide estimates of first destinations. Data were collected in October 1985 and relate to September/October 1983.
Chapter Seven

CAREERS EDUCATION PROVIDED

Introduction

One of the principal objectives of this research has been to demonstrate how social and economic factors influence the nature of the school leaving process. The previous chapter described the five different areas where research was carried out and discussed the way in which the nature of the local labour market influenced the school leaving programme. The intention of this chapter is to compare and contrast the careers education provided by the schools in those five areas, and to consider the way in which social and economic factors, in particular the nature of the local labour market, affect the content of careers education. The assertion is, that the content of careers education is not determined solely by pedagogical and educational considerations but is principally a function of the opportunity structure which determines the process of transfer from school to non-school. If this is the case, then some differences should be apparent in the content of the careers education offered by the five different schools, reflecting the different labour markets within which they are located.

In order to conduct this comparison it is first necessary to define the term careers education. For the purposes of this study, it is useful to define it in terms of 'formal' attempts by the school to prepare its pupils for the world of non-school. The methods by which this is achieved, as will be shown, may be many and varied, and will vary with the nature of the local labour market. Apart from the content, the rationale for the careers education provided by the
different schools is also likely to vary in accordance with the opportunity structure. In Windsor, for example, the buoyancy of the local labour market was sufficient to afford opportunities of employment to the vast majority of school leavers. Consequently, careers education in the Windsor school was concerned, essentially, with employment and its content was accordingly designed to ensure that pupils had a suitable job to go to on leaving school. By way of comparison, the Newcastle labour market was able to absorb very few school leavers and, as a consequence, the rationale for careers education in the Newcastle school was developed out of the need to equip pupils with the skills necessary to cope with unemployment, to maximise their chances of securing what employment may exist, and the effective use of leisure time. Clearly, the objectives of careers education in these two schools were very different. In the Windsor school, they were well defined and achievable. Success at meeting them could be judged by the number of pupils who secured post-fifth year destinations of their choice. In the Newcastle school the situation was not so clear, and success was more difficult to judge. In both cases it was the nature of the local labour market, the different economic and social contexts within which these two schools were located, which determined the rationale and objectives of the careers education. Furthermore, as will be demonstrated, these different objectives demanded different methods and a different content for careers education if they were to be successfully achieved. However, both sets of objectives, although different in content, may be regarded as similar in a broad sense, in that they are concerned with preparing the young person for the world of non-school. It is the
different areas and their different circumstances which necessitate different approaches to careers education.

Many of the key aspects of careers education varied between the five different schools, for example, the organisation of careers teaching with regard to its timing and location on the timetable, including the frequency and duration of the lessons. The role of the careers service and their activities in the schools also varied, as did activities such as work experience, mock interviews and work place visits. These variations resulted in different kinds of careers education in each of the five schools, and different approaches to the subject. Before considering the content of the careers education offered by the five different schools it may be useful to look at the different approaches taken.

Approaches to Careers Education

The approaches taken to careers education by the different schools were clearly functions of the underlying objectives of the subject which, as we have seen, were determined to a general extent by the local labour market. For example, taking the Windsor and Newcastle schools as representing the two extremes in the research, their approaches to careers education were very different. The Windsor school offered largely traditional careers education, employing matching techniques seeking to determine suitable careers for its pupils and, where possible, place them in jobs. The approach identified the school as the 'matching agent', acting as the facilitator for the pupil, encouraging exploration and self-guidance. In Newcastle, the scarcity of jobs for school leavers necessitated a wider approach to careers education. Pupils received a broad social education which considered many aspects
of both employment and unemployment. Little emphasis was placed on matching pupils to particular kinds of jobs.

It may be argued that careers education provided by any school, in any labour market, should serve the same overall purpose: to be useful to the school leaver. The extreme examples of the Newcastle and Windsor labour markets demonstrate the necessity for careers education to complement local circumstances, to offer content which is relevant to the opportunity structure which pupils are likely to encounter on leaving school. Although careers education programmes may have the same overall aim, their particular objectives may be specific to the local labour markets within which they are provided. It may be useful, therefore, to consider in some detail what the objectives of careers education might be.

Objectives of Careers Education

Producing a definitive list of what might be considered appropriate subject matter for careers education is difficult (cf. Summerson, 1979). Recommended syllabi are not as common for careers education as they are for many other subjects. Furthermore, the absence of any public examinations for careers often means the content of a syllabus is never formally identified or adhered to. Some careers teachers in this study argued that this is responsible for the low status frequently attached to careers education. Others saw the absence of specified content in a more positive light, arguing that it allows greater latitude, enabling the subject to respond to pertinent issues as and when they arise. This is not to imply, however, that careers education must necessarily be without structure. Law and Watts (1977), for example, produce a general typology for careers education and outline four basic objectives for the
subject. The four objectives they identify are:

- Opportunity awareness
- Self awareness
- Decision learning
- Transition learning

By adapting this general typology, and applying content which is specific to the area in which it is implemented, these four objectives may be seen to provide a structure for careers education in any local labour market. For example, it may be argued that in areas of high unemployment, some kind of education for unemployment should be provided as part of careers education. In Law and Watts' (1977) typology, this would be identified as an essential element of opportunity awareness. In areas with a more vibrant labour market, meanwhile, opportunity awareness would be unlikely to demand this kind of approach but information about the range of opportunities available would be essential. The content of careers education offered by schools in such different kinds of areas would be likely, therefore, to be quite different. Law and Watts' objective of opportunity awareness, nevertheless, would be achievable in the different schools, by different means. Similarly, the objective of self awareness, which involves the pupils developing an understanding of him/herself as an individual and in relation to the opportunity structure, may be seen as important for all young people. At the same time, decision learning, helping the school leaver to develop implementable decisions, would seem to have a place in any careers education programme. Finally, Law and Watts argue that the objectives should be integrated through transition learning,
which seeks to aid pupils to cope with decisions they have made and with transition consequent upon their growing up.

Whilst Law and Watts (1977) do not identify specific content for careers education, their typology is important in identifying a general approach and a relevance for careers, in a wide variety of local labour markets. As has been discussed, however, whilst general objectives of careers education may be held constant across different areas, the specific demands of the local labour market may dictate the content of careers education. Furthermore, general principles and objectives of careers may offer little more than guidelines when dealing with individual pupils in the context of specific labour market conditions. Nevertheless, the Law and Watts typology is important in putting forward a framework for careers education which may be adapted to meet the specific concerns of different areas.

The Careers Education Programme

It is to a comparison of the careers education provided by the five different schools that this chapter now turns. Data on which the comparisons are based have been drawn from observations, made in the schools, of careers lessons and other activities, and from interviews conducted with a sample of fifth year pupils in each of the schools.

Despite differences in the careers education programmes offered by the five different schools, some similarities also became apparent. As with the objectives of careers education, the similarities were not always those of specific content, but were often of a more general nature. For example, all five schools had some involvement with the local authority careers service, all had some kind of contact with local employers for careers visits and the like, and all included careers
education in some form or other on the school timetable. The way in which these and other aspects of the careers education programme were organised in the five different schools was influenced to some extent by the nature of the local labour market. To examine the influence exerted by the local labour market in more detail, it will be useful to look at those aspects of the careers education which were common to each of the five schools. In particular these aspects relate to:-

- The organisation and structure of careers education, including its place on the timetable, the frequency and duration of careers activities.
- Staffing of careers education.
- The content of careers lessons.
- The role of the local authority careers service. The nature of their work, etc.
- Work experience and work place visits.

The Organisation of Careers Education

The organisation of careers education within a school may be seen as a reflection of the status it attracts relative to other aspects of the curriculum (Avent, 1988). Observations made in the five schools suggest that the nature of the organisation and accompanying status varies according to the nature of the local labour market, and the perceived use value of careers education. For example, the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools, located in areas of particularly high youth unemployment, incorporated careers education into their general studies lessons. As such, careers lessons did not appear on the school timetable. However, interviews with pupils and observations of general
studies lessons revealed that many activities traditionally associated with careers lessons took place during these periods.

In the Newcastle school, all fifth year pupils received one forty minute period of general studies every week. In Middlesbrough two thirty-five minute periods of general studies were provided each week for every fifth year. Apart from these regular timetabled lessons, pupils also took part in a variety of other careers activities from time to time. These included work experience, work place visits, interviews with careers officers, all of which contributed to the general careers education programme.

In the Leicester and Windsor schools, careers lessons were organised on an alternating or 'roundabout' basis. R.E., general studies and careers education were timetabled at the same time, and pupils alternated between these different subjects, usually on a half-termly basis. Again, there were other activities which took place independently of careers lessons, particularly in the Windsor school, which included work experience and mock interviews.

The Stevenage school showed the most organised approach to careers lessons. All pupils received one thirty-five minute careers lesson every week from the time of the third year onwards. Careers, unlike any other subject on the timetable, was taught to mixed ability groups. The deputy head responsible for organising, but not teaching, careers education, felt that this made a positive contribution to careers education. Through mixed ability groups she hoped pupils would develop an appreciation and understanding of the concerns and problems facing different kinds of people in society. She stressed that pupils needed to have experience of working with people of different interests
and abilities, as part of their preparation for entry into the world of work.

What is interesting is the different organisation of careers education when viewed in relation to the different local labour markets. In the areas where pupils stood the best chances of securing employment, careers lessons were clearly identified to the pupils who, as the interviews have shown, had a clear understanding of the objectives of these lessons. In the areas where pupils were likely to experience difficulty in finding jobs, careers lessons were integrated with wider social education objectives. The link between these lessons and entry to the labour market was not as strong. Content of careers lessons in the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools was not solely about the world of work; emphasis was on social education, helping the pupil to make the general transition from school to non-school. Careers teachers in these schools were aware that by over-emphasising employment in careers lessons pupils could develop unrealistic expectations of the labour market, expecting against the odds to secure a job on leaving school. At the same time, there would be a danger of them leaving school unprepared for unemployment and the world of non-school in general. As a consequence, traditional careers education was seen as only a part of the more general school leaving programme provided by these schools, and was incorporated with general or social studies.

The question of use value and opportunity structure (Roberts, 1977, 1981) is clearly important in the organisation of careers education. All schools were concerned to provide the most useful kind of preparation for leaving school for its pupils. In Windsor and Stevenage in particular, the labour market required an influx of school
leavers, consequently careers education could be geared towards matching pupils to jobs. The objectives of careers education were clearly defined and its content designed to equip the young person with knowledge and experience, which would be put to use upon leaving school. In Middlesbrough and Newcastle the situation was very different. Careers education was not organised or presented to its pupils in such an instrumental fashion. Its incorporation in the general studies programme emphasised social education, of which preparation for the transfer from school to non-school formed only a part and, as will be shown below, its organisation as part of general studies reflects its wider content and objectives.

Staffing of Careers Education

Members of staff who specialise in and have been formally trained for careers teaching are in short supply (DES, 1973). Despite an increase in the number of teacher training institutions which now offer diplomas in careers teaching, the great majority of careers teachers have received very little formalised training for the subject, and many take on responsibility for careers education in addition to other duties (Cleaton, 1987).

In three of the five schools, responsibility for careers was held by members of staff responsible for pastoral care in the school. Only in two schools, Windsor and Stevenage, was there a designated head of careers. In the Middlesbrough school, careers or rather general studies, was taught by the head and deputy head. This, being the only teaching in which they were engaged, acted to add weight to the general studies programme. In the remaining schools careers was taught by a number of different teachers; they did not, however, constitute a
careers department. In three of the schools, Leicester, Stevenage and Newcastle, the group of teachers responsible for teaching careers changed significantly each year. As a consequence, very few of the careers teachers had prolonged experience of teaching the subject. Furthermore, some of the careers teachers were new to the areas where their schools were located, and admitted knowing very little about the local labour market.

In general, staffing arrangements for careers education in the five schools were fairly similar. In the Newcastle, Stevenage and Leicester schools, staffing appeared to be dependent on who was available rather than on which members of staff had an interest in or experience of careers teaching. Whilst it is likely that staffing arrangements for careers education are more a reflection of the general status of careers education per se than of the local labour market, where careers education had remained the responsibility of one or more teachers over a number of years, contacts with local industry tended to be well established. This was particularly obvious in the Windsor school, where the two careers teachers had established a good relationship with many local employers, and enjoyed a reputation for their ability to provide good recruits. In Middlesbrough, the deputy head had established contact with employers over a number of years, some of whom were used for the provision of work experience and other similar activities. In spite of these good relations, however, the nature of the local labour market often precluded the development of these contacts to any practical benefit to the pupils.
The Content of Careers Lessons

The content of careers lessons varied considerably between the five schools. In order to meet the different objectives of careers education, determined largely by the demands of the local labour market, the content of careers education programmes was adapted accordingly. For example, where the aim of careers education was defined in terms of matching pupils to jobs, lesson content was concerned principally with pupils learning about different kinds of jobs and the procedure for applications and interviews. Where the aims of careers education were seen in wider social terms, however, this was reflected in lesson content, which considered many aspects of social and personal education.

The variations in the content of careers lessons are evidenced by comparing those offered in the Windsor school with those offered in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools. For example, pupils from Windsor recalled lessons which took the form of lectures about different kinds of jobs, qualification requirements, likely career paths, etc. Their descriptions portrayed a fairly limited content, which was designed exclusively to assist the pupils in their choice of career, and to maximise their chances of getting the job of their choice. Apart from this, pupils learnt about particular aspects of work. For example, lectures were given on Income Tax and National Insurance and a discussion was held on Trade Union membership. Little consideration was given to unemployment and special government measures aimed particularly at young people. The assumption was made, by the careers staff, that those pupils who had decided not to continue in full-time education would move from school into a job of their choice. The content of
careers lessons was designed principally to aid this transfer in a labour market which required a regular supply of new recruits.

The content of lessons in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools was very different from that in Windsor. Employment of young people was not the norm in these areas and the content of careers lessons reflected the fact that the majority of pupils who left school at the end of the fifth year were either unemployed or taking part in a government scheme. Little time was spent on traditional diagnostic activities designed to match pupils to jobs. Whilst pupils were encouraged to learn about different kinds of jobs and qualifications required for entry, they were also encouraged to keep an open mind about careers and not to dismiss any opportunity which might be made available to them, without due consideration. The broad approach taken to careers education in these schools is clearly reflected in the fact that careers lessons were incorporated into general or social studies. Content of these lessons included a wide range of subjects. Rarely were lessons centred solely on employment, much of the content being concerned with general education for adult life and the world of non-school. For example, pupils in Middlesbrough recalled a lesson which had provided information on banking, mortgages and hire purchase, whilst pupils from Newcastle had been given a lesson on aspects of the law and how it applies to young people. In both schools, pupils had been encouraged to consider ways in which their leisure time might be used constructively, and to give thought to how any hobbies or particular interests and abilities might be developed to form the basis of a career through self employment. It was also during these lessons, however, that pupils were
provided with information about their entitlement to social security and unemployment benefits.

Considerable attention in both the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools was given to the Youth Training Scheme. The principles and objectives of the scheme were explained to the pupils, as were application procedures, payments and certification processes. Attention was also given to the Y.T.S. scheme during interviews with careers officers. Generally, pupils were encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities offered by Y.T.S. and emphasis was laid on the possibility of permanent employment arising out of the industrial placement. As will be shown in the following chapter, however, many pupils remained less than enthusiastic about the scheme.

Whilst the wider social aspects of careers education were given prominence in the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools, more traditional careers education was not entirely neglected. For example, pupils did learn about different kinds of jobs, qualifications required for positions in which they were interested, and about application forms and interview practices. Many of these aspects were clearly very similar to those offered by the Windsor and Stevenage schools. The fact that youth unemployment was so common in Newcastle and Middlesbrough, however, seemed to negate, to a certain degree, those aspects of careers education which focused principally on entry to the work force. The careers education provided by the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools sought to prepare pupils for a situation of uncertainty. Consequently, the content of the careers lessons was wide ranging in its attempt to prepare them for a variety of first destinations.
In the Stevenage school, careers education covered a comprehensive range of issues and subject areas. Schemes of work shown to me by a careers teacher demonstrated that, although employment prospects were good for most pupils, the school also gave attention to unemployment and to government schemes. The teacher explained an intention that pupils should develop a degree of economic awareness and an understanding, in simplistic terms, of labour market trends. The careers syllabus, therefore, drew from the disciplines of economics, geography and sociology, seeking to provide a wider context to the subject.

In addition, attention was also given to information about specific careers and to matching pupils to particular work areas. The approach taken, however, encouraged pupils to make their own investigations, to conduct research into particular occupational areas in which they were interested. The allocation of one 35 minute period per week for careers throughout the fifth year gave sufficient scope for such a comprehensive approach. It allowed a balanced syllabus to be followed which went beyond instrumentalism, seeking, in many respects, to achieve the objectives identified by Law and Watts (1977) of self awareness, decision learning and opportunity awareness. In this sense, although the overall approach of the careers programme centred around notions of employment, and assumed that pupils would be able to find jobs, the approach sought to equip the pupil for the world of work and adulthood, not merely to fit pupils to jobs.

In the Leicester school, teachers and pupils often appeared confused about the aims and content of careers education. The organisation of careers in terms of a 'roundabout' meant that teachers
felt they were often pushed for time. One teacher explained that, whilst it was his intention to be positive in careers education and to help pupils find jobs, the increasing threat of unemployment in the area brought into question some of the content. Careers teachers were given considerable latitude as to what they included in their lessons, consequently large variations occurred between groups. Similarly, the identification of a syllabus or even general schemes of work proved difficult. Interviews with pupils where lesson content was discussed suggested that links between one lesson and the next, or one topic and the next, were often tenuous. For example, over a three week period, one fifth year pupil recalled careers lessons which had discussed life in the armed forces, involved completing a cross-word which was concerned with qualities necessary for different kinds of jobs, and had discussed health and safety issues when working in a factory or garage.

During an interview, a careers teacher who was new to the Leicester school complained that careers lessons lacked any particular purpose or direction. Furthermore, he expressed surprise that no guidance had been provided in this area by either the LEA Advisory Service or the Careers Service. He voiced considerable concern over the future of careers in that school, and in particular its ability to cope with changes in the local labour market and increasing youth unemployment.

Overall, the content of careers education varied considerably between the five schools, as each leaving programme attempted to equip its leavers according to the demands of the different local labour markets. Variation was not only apparent in the content of the careers lessons, but also in the emphasis placed on particular aspects of it.
For example, although all schools engaged in diagnostic practices to some extent, such activities were attributed much less importance in the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools where the chances of pupils finding any kind of job were not great, than in the Windsor and Stevenage schools where the main concern of careers education was to match pupils with suitable jobs. Clearly, as with the other aspects of careers education, the demands of the different labour markets determined, to a large extent, the content of careers lessons and the emphasis accorded to different parts of it.

The Role of the Careers Officer

In each of the five schools the local authority careers service contributed to the provision of careers education. At least one careers officer was attached to each school. Contributions made by the careers officers tended to focus on traditional aspects of careers education, providing information about jobs, government schemes and further education courses. Where possible, careers officers also attempted to match pupils to suitable jobs, usually through diagnostic methods. In this respect their role was similar in each of the five schools, although the extent to which they could actually arrange introductions between pupils and employers was determined by the demand for youth labour from local employers. Nevertheless, even in the areas of high unemployment, the careers officer continued to be seen by pupils, and to a lesser extent by teaching staff, not only as a source of contacts and information, but also as an intermediary with the world of work.

The most important aspect of the careers officer's work was frequently identified, by staff and pupils, as the careers interviews held with fifth year pupils. Interviews took place in each of the five
schools, though not all schools made them compulsory for fifth years. Consequently, not all pupils took advantage of the offer of an interview. In Windsor, for example, many of those pupils who had decided to continue in full-time education after the fifth year saw little point in a careers interview. Similarly, those who had succeeded in securing a job through their own efforts rarely saw the value of such an interview.

In the remaining four schools, careers interviews were compulsory for fifth years. In spite of this, as will be shown in the following chapter, not all pupils received an interview. In each of the schools, careers interviews were scheduled to take approximately fifteen minutes and similar techniques were employed. Emphasis was placed on the pupil to outline his/her career intentions and to discuss likely courses of action after the end of the fifth year. In most cases, pupils had some idea of the kinds of jobs they found interesting and had career intentions. Where such ideas were not forthcoming, careers officers attempted to stimulate thought and action at first by suggesting broad occupational areas. In some cases, careers officers employed reductionist methods by rejecting those work areas or occupations which were obviously of no interest to the pupil. The overall objective of the careers interview was seen in terms of encouraging the pupil to begin thinking about leaving school, to collect information and, where appropriate, to take the required action. Careers interviews were, therefore, usually arranged during the first term of the fifth year in an attempt to encourage the pupil to plan and make decisions over a period of several months, rather than rush into decisions and actions as the end of the year approached. Consequently
the careers interview was often identified by pupils and careers staff as signalling the beginning of the school leaving programme, the point from which decisions would begin to be made and actions taken.

Second interviews with careers officers did not appear to be common in any of the five schools. Where they did occur they were usually initiated by the pupil, who perhaps required some further information or advice. This is not to imply, however, that careers officers refused to see pupils individually on more than one occasion, but rather their work schedule, often having responsibility for up to six different schools, precluded a second round of interviews for all pupils. The emphasis was, therefore, placed upon the individual pupil to seek assistance when it was required, to use the careers officer as a resource.

Apart from interviews, careers officers engaged in a range of activities in each of the schools. In general, these activities were fairly similar, having the overall objective of stimulating thought and action among the pupils, and providing specific information. Typically, careers officers spoke to fifth year and, in some cases, fourth year pupils during careers lessons from time to time about particular aspects of the school leaving process. The careers officer responsible for the Stevenage school, for example, led discussion groups about interview techniques and how to complete an application form.

The similarity in contributions made by careers officers in the five different schools reflects broadly common objectives of the careers service in the different local authorities. Many of their activities were geared towards helping the individual to find a job. Despite the different labour market conditions and their opportunity structures,
careers officers in each area appeared to underpin many of their activities with this objective.

In the areas of high unemployment, careers officers provided information about unemployment benefits, and contacts for places on Y.T.S. schemes. However, one careers officer admitted that striking a balance between optimism and realism in a depressed labour market proved particularly difficult. Whilst it was important not to raise pupils' hopes and expectations unduly, it was also important to maintain the work ethic and encourage pupils to apply for the jobs that were available. Consequently there was a degree of ambiguity about the role of the careers officer in such a situation. In many cases the careers officer remains clearly identified with placing the school leaver in suitable employment. Where the labour market conditions prevent this role being successfully filled, however, it may be argued that the careers officer loses his/her relevance to the school leaving process. Similar claims have been made about careers education per se. For example, Watts (1978) believes that careers education loses much of its relevance in such situations. Similarly, attempts to refine careers education in the light of poor labour market conditions by offering education for unemployment have been rejected as inappropriate and a form of defeatism (Watts, 1983).

Overall, data collected from the schools and from the careers officers themselves, suggest that few changes were made to their work due to high levels of youth unemployment. In most instances the careers officers' primary concern was to provide information about particular jobs and to satisfy the pupils' requests for specific kinds of knowledge about jobs or the labour market in general. Their main objective was to
help facilitate transfer between the worlds of school and work, through contact with employers, where possible, but increasingly through the Youth Training Scheme. The objectives were fairly narrow and, unlike other aspects of careers education discussed so far, varied little between the five schools. The degree to which pupils found the input from careers officers to be useful will be discussed in the following chapter.

Work Place Visits and Work Experience

Work place visits and work experience have, in recent years, become important constituents of the careers education programme (DES 1974, Carmichael 1976, Walton 1977, Stevenson 1982). In attempting to construct links between the worlds of school and work, work place visits and particularly work experience have been introduced to careers education programmes, to provide the pupil with firsthand experience not only of a particular job, but also of the work environment in general (Eggleston 1982, Jamieson 1983, Sims 1987, 1988). They have also come to represent an important part of the pupils' social education, giving access to different situations, different kinds of people and different kinds of behaviour (cf. Moor, 1970). Four of the five schools surveyed arranged work experience placement for their fifth year pupils. In the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools work experience was identified as being of particular importance by pupils and careers staff. For many of these pupils, a work experience placement represented the best opportunity of gaining an insight into the work environment. A placement was seen as especially valuable where a pupils' parents and family were unemployed (cf. Finch, 1982). In such cases, exposure to the world of work, and to the values and qualities of the workplace, was
likely to be severely limited. Work experience was seen, therefore, as an attempt to compensate for this.

In Windsor and Stevenage, work experience often contributed to an employer's selection procedure. In these areas where employers needed to recruit school leavers, there was no shortage of work experience placements. Many companies openly used work experience as an opportunity to screen potential recruits, and asked careers teachers to suggest suitable pupils for placements. Several pupils every year from the Windsor and Stevenage schools were offered jobs as a result of a successful work experience placement.

In Newcastle and Middlesbrough, work experience rarely resulted in job offers being made. Nevertheless, interviews with the pupils revealed that many remained optimistic that a good impression made during work experience would result in a job offer, if not immediately then at some time in the future. Considerable importance was therefore attached to work experience by the pupils in these schools. In these two schools, work experience was not available to all pupils. Poor school-employer links meant places for work experience were often hard to acquire. Pupils were, therefore, selected for work experience according to the value they were expected to gain from it. Details of work experience placements were posted on the careers noticeboard and pupils were invited to apply for placements in which they were interested. Applications in the first instance were made to the careers teachers and then, in most cases, to the company offering the placement. The intention was clearly to simulate the process of job search and application, with pupils being encouraged to take the initiative and appropriate actions. Although the Middlesbrough and Newcastle careers
staff regretted the fact that work experience was not available to all pupils, they did feel that by organising work experience in this way they were able to reflect some of the competition of the local labour market. Pupils were usually selected for placements after consultation between the employer and the careers teacher.

Work experience was not offered in the Leicester school. The careers teacher explained that very few links existed between the school and local employers for the purposes of careers education. He felt this was perhaps a legacy of the school's Grammar school history, when work experience was thought unnecessary for pupils who either continued in full-time education, or secured jobs from a fairly buoyant local labour market by traditional procedures of application and interview. Similarly, work place visits were rare occurrences in this school. The teacher responsible for careers education, however, recognised the value of work experience and intended to introduce it the following year.

In general, work experience was regarded as an extra qualification. The ability of the pupil to show successful completion of a placement and experience of work environment could prove to be beneficial when applying for a job. More than one careers teacher expressed the belief that successful completion of work experience may prove sufficient to differentiate between candidates for a job, who were otherwise equally matched. Furthermore, work experience was particularly popular with the pupils, many of whom identified it as a way into the labour market. The extent to which it was felt to achieve its objectives and to make a useful contribution to the school leaving process will be discussed in the following chapter.
Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the principal components of careers education as it is offered in the five schools. The comparison of the different approaches to careers education has shown that, although considerable similarities exist in what is seen as relevant careers education, there are at the same time many differences. The differences are principally of a structural nature relating, for example, to the way in which careers education is organised, its specific objectives, and to its content vis-a-vis the local labour market. Furthermore, it is clear that these differences are, to a large extent, reflections of the local labour markets' requirement of school leavers. In its attempt to prepare pupils for the world of non-school, and to maintain its relevance to the different opportunity structures, the organisation and content of careers education, its aims and specific objectives, have been adapted to maximise its use value for the school leaver.

In terms of the typology of careers education outlined by Law and Watts (1977), the comparison has illustrated the ways in which overall objectives may be held constant across a variety of different kinds of labour markets, and be met by different content and methods. Moreover, the fact that common objectives have been identified for careers education in the different areas serves to counter the premise that careers education maintains its use value only in areas or times of relatively full employment. For example, the objective of opportunity awareness is clearly relevant to pupils in any area, bringing an appreciation of the opportunity structure, together with decision learning, helping the school leaver to take appropriate actions based on informed decisions which will aid the transfer from school to non-
school. In short, the four objectives identified in Law and Watts' typology may be viewed as a social tool-kit, the precise composition of which is likely to vary in accordance with the demand of the local labour market. Law and Watts' typology for a careers education programme is, therefore, a useful means by which a structure can be provided and adhered to, regardless of the local labour market conditions.

The comparison of the careers education provided by the five different schools has demonstrated quite clearly that, if careers is to be useful and relevant to fifth year pupils, it must ensure that the information it provides, together with the decisions and actions it encourages, are relevant to the labour market into which pupils seek to enter. Above all, the comparison has shown a necessity for content and method to be adaptable to different labour market conditions, as it is precisely these labour markets and economic factors which are the prime influences on careers education. Whilst the general aims of careers education may be seen as common across the five areas, the methods by which the aims are achieved clearly are not.
Chapter Eight  
CAREERS EDUCATION RECEIVED: CONSUMER VIEWS  

Introduction  
The previous chapter described the provision of careers education in the five schools where the research was conducted and compared the different approaches taken by the schools to the key aspects of the careers education programme. In particular, the nature of the local labour market, and its requirement for school leavers, was identified as important in shaping both the organisation and content of careers education. The intention of this chapter is to consider the consumer's view of careers education. Through comparison of the five different schools, this chapter will examine the extent to which pupils found their careers education useful, it will discuss their perceptions of its quality, frequency and the degree to which it was perceived as relevant to the demands of the local labour market. In short, it considers the extent to which pupils from the different schools consider themselves sufficiently well prepared to make the transfer from school to non-school. The data for this chapter have been drawn principally from a questionnaire administered to pupils during the first term of their fifth year, and from individual interviews held with pupils to add detail to issues raised in the questionnaire. The interview data have been used not only to corroborate the quantitative data but also to highlight issues which have not been represented in the questionnaire.  
The timing of the initial questionnaire is an important factor in the nature of the data collected. The questionnaire was administered at the end of the first term of the fifth year for two reasons. For
purely practical purposes the Autumn term was chosen as it proved to be the most convenient time of the school year at which to gain access to an entire fifth year population. Furthermore, in terms of the school leaving process it offered the opportunity to sample the day to day proceedings of careers education, rather than particular periods of high activity which occur at other times of the year and may not be representative of the careers education provided as a whole. Apart from considering pupils' reactions to their careers education, the chapter will also examine their general career aspirations and, where appropriate, the degree to which they feel they have been adequately prepared for the possibility of unemployment. In the first instance, however, it will be useful to consider their assessment of the key aspects of their careers education; in particular, the frequency with which careers lessons were received, the degree to which they were found to be useful, and the amount of time spent on careers education each week.

**Frequency of Careers Lessons**

Pupils were asked to state how often they received careers lessons.  

Although information on the frequency with which these lessons were provided had been collected from members of staff, the objective of

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1. For the purpose of the questionnaire, careers lessons were defined in terms of those lessons or particular periods on the timetable which formed part of the careers education programme. This fairly loose definition of what qualified as careers lessons was necessary in order to incorporate the general studies lessons in Newcastle and Middlesbrough. Information relating to what should be included under the term 'careers lessons' was given to pupils at the time that they completed the questionnaire.
asking the pupils this question was to compare the 'official' statement of the school with the actual experience of the pupils.

Responses to the question indicate that in each of the five schools a very high percentage of pupils claim to have received some kind of careers education by the end of the first term of their fifth year. Only at the Leicester and Windsor schools did substantial numbers of pupils claim not to have received careers lessons. Table 8.1 shows that in the Leicester school, 13% of pupils claimed not to have received careers lessons, and in the Windsor school 26% made the same claim. As careers lessons in both of these schools were organised on a 'roundabout' basis (see previous chapter), it is feasible that some pupils had not received a careers lesson by the time they completed the questionnaire. As the roundabout continued, more pupils would, of course, receive careers lessons. However, the responses do indicate that the majority of students in each school were receiving careers lessons on a regular basis. In Stevenage, for example, 99% of pupils claimed to receive careers lessons once a week, whilst in Middlesbrough 59% made the same claim. In Leicester only 4% of pupils said they had careers lessons every week. In this school the great majority of pupils (78%) received only a few careers lessons each term.

Table 8.1 shows that some clear differences do exist between the schools with regard to the frequency of providing careers lessons. The data appear to reflect the patterns of provision outlined in the previous chapter, suggesting that policy on provision of careers lessons is translated into school lessons which are received and recognised as such by the pupils. In terms of the frequency of provision alone, the influence of the local labour market does not appear to be significant,
with schools in areas of both high and low unemployment offering careers lessons on a regular and frequent basis.

**How helpful were careers lessons**

Further to the question about frequency of careers lessons, pupils were asked to assess how helpful they found their careers lessons to be. The intention in asking this question was to gather some data on the extent to which pupils felt that their careers lessons and the wider careers education programme were relevant to their entry to the labour market. **Table 8.2** highlights a number of interesting differences between the schools in the pupils' perceptions of their careers lessons. Pupils were asked to rate the degree to which they found their careers lessons helpful on a scale which ranged from 'very helpful' to 'a waste of time'. It is interesting to note from the overall responses to this question that less than one quarter of all pupils who completed the questionnaire considered their careers lessons to be 'very helpful'. The majority (54%) of pupils did, however, claim to find the careers lessons 'quite helpful'. Eight percent felt that they were 'not very helpful' and 6% found them to be 'a waste of time'. In general terms, therefore, it is clear that pupils in all five schools tended to look on their careers lessons in a positive light.

A more detailed comparison of these responses across the five schools, however, brings to light some interesting differences. **Table 8.2** shows, for example, that 44% of the Middlesbrough respondents found their careers lessons to be very helpful. In contrast, only 5% of the Leicester respondents made such a claim, whilst in Newcastle 26% of pupils found their careers lessons 'very helpful'. In the two areas of high unemployment, therefore, pupils demonstrated a particularly
positive attitude towards their careers lessons. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in both the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools, careers education was offered as part of a wider programme of general or social studies where the emphasis was not placed solely on employment and job choice. In the context of high unemployment, both the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools sought to provide a preparation for their pupils which would maintain its value in a variety of local labour market situations. From the questionnaire responses, it would appear that the schools were successful in achieving that. What is also interesting from the responses is that from the Windsor school only 15% of pupils claimed to find their careers lessons 'very helpful'. Pupil interviews revealed that many Windsor pupils expected to enter the labour market without great difficulty. Consequently careers lessons were not always regarded as central to the process of securing employment, or continuing in full-time education.

A positive view of careers lessons was not shared by all pupils responding to the questionnaire. In Leicester, for example, 20% of respondents felt their careers lessons were 'a waste of time'. Given that this school provided careers lessons only on an infrequent basis, it would appear that there were problems of both quality and quantity in the programme provided. No more than 5% of respondents in each of the other schools made this claim.

In general, these data indicate a positive view of careers lessons held by the fifth year pupils. It would appear, however, that where careers lessons are provided in a wider context, as part of general or social studies, pupils' views of the lessons have been
particularly positive. Furthermore, during interviews, pupils from the two schools in areas of high unemployment expressed an interest in, and a willingness to accept, anything which was designed to aid their transition to the labour market, and in particular to find a job. Their positive view of careers lessons is borne out in the high percentage of pupils in both the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools stating they were either 'very helpful' or 'quite helpful'.

**Time spent on Careers Education**

As part of the overall evaluation of the provision of the careers education programme, pupils were asked to assess the amount of time given to careers each week by their school. Table 8.3 illustrates that responses to this question tend to support the general trends highlighted by the two previous questions. For example, over 50% of respondents were happy with the amount of time spent on careers education each week, identifying this as 'about right'. Just over a third of all respondents, however, felt that too little time was spent on careers education. This opinion was expressed strongly among the Leicester pupils, 62% of whom felt there was 'not enough' time spent on careers education each week. These responses would seem to compound the Leicester pupils' general dissatisfaction with their careers education.

Responses from both the Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils again demonstrate a generally positive view of careers education. 65% and 50% respectively of pupils from these two schools found the amount of time spent on careers each week to be 'about right'. However, it should also be noted that sizeable minorities from these schools (46% from Middlesbrough and 31% from Newcastle) felt that too little time was spent on careers education. The most positive response given to this
question, however, was that of the Stevenage pupils, 77% of whom felt the time spent on careers education in their school was 'about right'. The regularity and frequency of provision in this school would seem, therefore, to be well received by its pupils.

In all five schools only a minority of pupils (less than 7% in each school) felt that they received 'too much' careers education each week. This, together with the generally favourable views of careers education expressed by pupils during interviews, would seem to confirm a positive view of the careers lessons received.

The Role of the Careers Officer

So far, consideration has been given only to the careers education provided internally by the schools. In the previous chapter, however, it was shown that in all five schools contributions were made to the school leaving programmes by local authority careers officers, their principal contribution being the careers interview. To assess the degree of contact between pupils and careers officers, pupils were required to state if they had received a careers interview. Table 8.4 shows that the incidence of these interviews was not as prolific as many of the members of careers staff described. For example, although the Stevenage school was visited each week by a careers officer, only 19% of fifth years in this school had received a careers interview. Similarly, only 12% of the Leicester respondents had such an interview. In the Newcastle school, 98% of respondents had received an interview with a careers officer, whilst in Windsor and Middlesbrough 50% and 39%

1. Questionnaires were completed towards the end of the first term of the fifth year. Careers officers would usually have completed their first round of individual interviews by this time.
respectively had done so. The pattern of responses to this question does not suggest, therefore, any particular labour market influence on the provision of individual interviews with careers officers. Overall, Table 8.4 shows 46% of the survey population had received an interview with a careers officer. It should be borne in mind, however, that according to the different circumstances, abilities and intentions of the pupils, it is likely that the degree to which they found these interviews useful would vary considerably both between and within the different schools.

During interviews with the pupils it became clear that they held differing expectations of their careers interviews. For example, some pupils from Windsor expected to be given names and addresses of employers by the careers officer, who could then be contacted for jobs. These expectations were quite different from those of the Middlesbrough pupils, who saw the interviews as providing the principal link with the YTS scheme. Leicester pupils, meanwhile, appeared not to have any particular expectations of these interviews. Furthermore, some of these pupils seemed to have little idea of their purpose.

The different expectations that pupils brought to their careers interviews and the extent to which these expectations were realised seemed to have a strong influence on their evaluation of the interviews. In an effort to obtain a clearer picture of how useful careers officer interviews were deemed to be, pupils were asked to indicate whether they found them 'very helpful', 'quite helpful', 'not very helpful' or 'a waste of time'. Table 8.5 shows the responses to this question by the five different schools.
In each school, the non-response rate to this question was particularly high owing to the numbers of pupils who had not received a careers interview and were, therefore, unable to comment on how helpful this was. However, in general terms, pupils from the Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Windsor schools found careers officer interviews to be most helpful. In the case of the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools these data may be seen to support the contention made earlier that pupils from these two schools tended to ascribe particular value to those aspects of the school curriculum which were designed to aid the transfer to the labour market. Furthermore, the positive view of careers interviews may, to some extent, be a reflection of the tendency of pupils from the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools not to hold high expectations of the interviews. Pupils from these schools did not generally expect careers interviews to result in them making contact with employers or finding jobs. Their expectations of the interviews were not high, and usually related to the provision of information about government schemes and an opportunity to discuss their chances of finding a job with someone who had detailed knowledge of the local labour market. These expectations were easily met.

Windsor pupils, on the other hand, did have high expectations of their careers interview and of the careers officer. In this school, the careers officer was able to function as an intermediary between pupils seeking work and local employers. Careers officers often provided contacts which resulted in offers of employment being made to pupils. Many pupils expected this kind of service from their careers officer, and their expectations were often fulfilled. Consequently, many Windsor pupils regarded their careers interview as particularly helpful.
In the case of Leicester and Stevenage the percentage of pupils who had received a careers interview and were able to express an opinion of how helpful this had been was particularly low. It is not possible, therefore, to identify any general trends from pupils in these two schools with regard to the degree to which careers interviews were found to be helpful.

Nevertheless, the data from Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Windsor suggest that interviews with a careers officer were regarded as useful by the pupils and, as such, constituted an important part of the careers education programme. It also appears that pupils from different schools had different expectations of these interviews, hoping that they would fulfil different needs. Evaluation of the interviews made by the pupils, therefore, were made against different criteria, dependent on their perceptions of the function of the interview. Nevertheless, the questionnaire and interview data indicate a positive reaction to them, emphasising their centrality to the careers education programme.

**Work Experience**

The importance of work experience placements to the school leaving process has already been discussed in the previous chapter. In four of the five schools, work experience was an important aspect of the school to non-school transfer process. As with the careers officer interviews, pupils from the different schools tended to have different expectations of work experience, expecting it to fulfil a variety of functions. For many reasons, pupils tended to regard work experience as a valuable component of their preparation for entry into the labour market. For example, Windsor pupils tended to look on work experience as part of an employers' selection and recruitment procedure. Many of these pupils
expected to be offered a job at the end of their work experience. In Middlesbrough and Newcastle, meanwhile, pupils were keen to go out on work experience, seeing it as another form of qualification to add to their curriculum vitae which would demonstrate their real interest in a particular job, and hence be of help in the highly competitive local labour market.

Pupils were asked to state the extent to which they thought work experience made an important contribution to their school leaving process. Table 8.6 shows the overall response to this question was very positive. A majority (62%) of all pupils completing the questionnaire considered work experience to be 'very important', only 6% thought it 'not very important', and less than 1% to be 'a waste of time'. In each of the schools over 50% of pupils considered work experience to be very important, confirming the view of the careers teachers, who identified work experience as one of the most important aspects of the careers education programme. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that, although the Leicester school did not offer work experience, 61% of surveyed pupils in this school thought work experience was 'very important', a further 32% considered it to be 'fairly important'. As well as emphasising the general importance attributed to work experience by school leavers, the responses from the Leicester pupils may be seen as the expression of a desire for work experience to be introduced in their own school.

1. Pupils were asked to state how important they felt work experience was to the school leaving process regardless of whether they had been on work experience themselves. Many of the pupils responding to this question had not been on work experience. The data represent, therefore, pupils' expectations as well as actual experience.
Information about work experience collected from pupils during interviews tends to bear out the high expectations brought to light in the questionnaire. Generally pupils expected it to offer an insight into the adult work environment, to act as an added 'qualification' and, in several cases, mainly in the Windsor and Stevenage schools, pupils expected it to result in a job offer being made. Those pupils who had already been on work experience by the time they were interviewed recalled a generally positive experience, and involvement in a wide range of activities. These tended, however, to be of a fairly low level. For example, several pupils worked as a general 'dogsbody' running errands, taking messages and making tea. These pupils enjoyed this role and valued the fact that they were made to feel part of the workforce. Other pupils recalled experience in clerical and office duties, which included the use of computers and VDU equipment. Again this was regarded as valuable experience. More than one pupil, however, explained their work experience had been almost entirely constituted by observing the work process. Although this may have involved observation of several different tasks, the pupils found this to be boring, and would have preferred a greater degree of involvement in the work being carried out.

The most popular kind of work experience, and that deemed to be most useful by the pupils, was that which involved them in specific tasks, and may have had an end product. For example, two Stevenage boys who had a week in an engineering firm spent much of their time making a bench clamp. This involved a variety of basic engineering processes causing them to visit several different departments within the firm. By the end of the week they had a fairly good idea of what it would be like
to work in an engineering environment. They also had a finished product to show for their efforts.

Whatever kind of work placement was available to pupils, the experience and opportunities it afforded appeared to be well received and valued. Furthermore, there was evidence that pupils' expectations were being met. For example, some Windsor pupils had been offered jobs at the end of their placement, whilst many Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils felt that they had gained the kinds of experience which would be valued by potential employers, giving them an advantage over other pupils who may be applying for the same kinds of jobs. From both questionnaire and interview responses, therefore, a positive attitude towards work experience was expressed by pupils. Across all five schools there was a feeling that it played a valuable part in the school leaving process, and in the preparation of young people for entry into the labour market.

Visits to Employers' Premises
In a similar vein to questions about work experience, in both the questionnaire and interviews, pupils were asked to make an assessment of the importance of workplace visits to the school leaving process. In some respects, these visits were seen as being similar to work experience placements. Although they did not offer prolonged contact with an employer, or the opportunity to participate in the work process, they did offer a pupil access to an employer's premises and a chance, albeit short, to observe and sample a work environment. Furthermore, it appears that pupils had easier and more frequent access to employers through 'one off' visits than they did through work experience. Such visits took place throughout the school year, and by the end of the
fifth year a pupil may have visited several different kinds of employers' premises.

Table 8.7 shows that, although visits to employers' premises were not attributed the same degree of importance as work experience, there was a general opinion that they made an important contribution to the careers education programme. Approximately half (48%) of all respondents regarded employer visits as 'very important' and a further 40% as 'fairly important'. Only 10% of respondents felt that they were either 'not very important' or 'a waste of time'. Between the schools there was some variation in the degree to which these visits were regarded as important. The responses to the question demonstrate trends which are similar to those apparent from previous questions. The Newcastle pupils showed the most positive attitude to this aspect of their careers education programme, which again may be seen as further evidence of their tendency to value any activity designed to aid their transfer from school to non-school, within a highly competitive labour market. By comparison, Windsor pupils demonstrated the least positive attitude to these visits. Just over one sixth (17%) of these pupils felt that such visits were either 'not very important' or 'a waste of time'. Again, these attitudes would appear to be in line with those discussed earlier, relating to the buoyancy of the Windsor labour market and the better prospects it promoted for school leavers. In Windsor there did not appear to be any particular urgency about careers education as pupils expected to be able to find jobs irrespective of what was included as part of their school leaving programme. In Leicester, many pupils were particularly enthusiastic about work place
visits as they often represented their only contact with employers prior to leaving school.

In general, the data have shown that visits to employers' premises were regarded as an important aspect of the careers education programme. Interview data suggests that they made an important contribution to pupils' career choice, simply by the fact that they afforded access to employers' premises and enabled pupils to observe particular jobs and work environments.

Presentations from Employers

Many pupils claimed to have received some kind of presentation from an employer. Teachers in each of the schools gave details of organising such presentations as part of the careers education programme, or the social studies course. It appears that presentations were of two different sorts. In the first instance, and most common in the surveyed schools, were presentations which offered information about a particular kind of industry or organisation. The objectives of these presentations was to contribute to the stock of information which pupils held about different careers. The other kind of presentation given by companies had a greater instrumentalism, forming part of their selection and recruitment process. In particular, the Windsor school had hosted a number of the latter kind of presentations and planned to do more at a careers convention scheduled for the spring term. The Stevenage pupils had also received presentations of this nature. Despite the fact that presentations of one kind or another had been made in all five schools, pupils did not appear to attach a great deal of importance to them. For example, Table 8.8 shows that less than one third of all respondents regarded such presentations as 'very important', whilst approximately
one sixth (17%) thought they were either 'not very important' or 'a waste of time'. Furthermore, between the schools, pupils' opinions of the importance of presentations did not appear to vary to any great extent. Despite the enthusiasm of many careers teachers for presentations they had either arranged or planned to arrange, the data show that pupils did not identify them as of central importance to their careers education programmes.

The Use of a Careers Room/Library

As part of the series of questions about particular aspects of their careers education programme, pupils were also asked to assess the importance of having access to a careers room or library. All schools in the study provided this facility, and during field work observations of pupils' use of these facilities were made in each of the schools.

Careers libraries did not appear to receive a great deal of use by the pupils. In all schools there had been a formal 'introduction' to the library and, in some, careers lessons were occasionally carried out there. Frequently they were the venue for the individual careers officer interviews. Careers teachers actively encouraged pupils to make use of the facilities by making their own inquiries about particular jobs, using the literature supplied therein. However, observations and interviews with pupils indicated that this rarely happened, and questionnaire responses revealed that pupils did not attach a great deal of importance to the provision of such facilities. Table 8.9 illustrates that only just over one quarter of all pupils regarded a careers library as 'very important', whilst a further quarter said it was either 'not very important' or 'a waste of time'. In general there appeared to be a feeling of indifference towards a careers library, and
pupils did not appear to regard its use with the same degree of importance as careers staff did. Some of the pupils interviewed thought they might use the library as the time for leaving school came closer and, as one pupil said, they began "to get desperate to find a job". Others said that they would use the library prior to going for an interview, to ensure that they were well briefed about the job. In the main, however, pupils did not regard the provision of a careers library/room as of central importance to their preparation for leaving school.

Success in Examinations

In addition to questions about particular aspects of their careers education programme, pupils were also asked to comment on the importance of success in public examinations to the school leaving process, and the extent to which examination success would aid the transfer to the labour market. Across all five schools, pupils tended to regard success in examinations as the most important factor influencing their chances of finding a job. Interviews with pupils brought to light their awareness of employers' increasing demands for qualifications for jobs in all sectors and at all levels (cf. Moor 1970, Maguire and Ashton 1981 and, in the USA, Berg and Gorelick 1971). The need for examination success was the most frequent reason given by pupils for remaining in fulltime education after the end of their fifth year. For example, the following comments from two Newcastle pupils are typical of many expressed both in that school and the Middlesbrough school. In answer to the question, 'What is your main reason for wanting to stay at school after the fifth year?', one pupil said:
"Well, if any jobs come up and quite a few people apply, they are obviously going to choose the person with more qualifications."

Another pupil from the same class confirmed this view:-

"There aren't many jobs around, so I will need the best qualifications I can get."

In the Windsor school, where employment prospects for pupils were good, success in examinations was still identified as important for entry to the labour market, although, for many of these pupils, their concern was over the level at which entry was achieved rather than entry per se. One pupil expressed this very succinctly in his reason for remaining at school beyond the fifth year:-

"It may be easy to get a job but not a career. Qualifications will help me with this."

In more instrumental terms, another Windsor fifth year pupil explained his decision to stay on thus:-

"With better education you get better qualifications which can help you enter different promotion scales and better money brackets."

For different reasons, success in public examinations and the acquisition of qualifications were important to fifth year pupils in all five schools. This is shown clearly in the questionnaire data. Table 8.10 shows that 86% of the pupils surveyed considered success in examinations to be 'very important' in their preparation for leaving school, a further 10% thought it to be 'fairly important', whilst only 3% considered it to be 'not very important' or 'a waste of time'. The data clearly illustrate a high degree of agreement among the surveyed pupils as to the importance of examination success. Questionnaire and
interview responses suggest that this was viewed as the single most important aspect of the school leaving process.

The question of the importance attached to qualifications was taken further and pupils were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt particular kinds of qualifications would help them to obtain a job. Particular attention was given to C.S.E. and G.C.E. 'O' and 'A' level examinations, these being the public examinations most commonly offered in schools in the survey. Those pupils who were interviewed were asked about vocational qualifications and the degree to which they expected them to be valued by potential employers. Table 8.11 shows that, overall, pupils held a comparatively low estimation of the degree to which C.S.E. qualifications would assist them in securing a job (cf. Freeman, 1982). For example, only 18% of all surveyed pupils expected C.S.E.'s to afford 'a great deal' of help in finding jobs, and a further 31% thought they would provide either 'not much help' or 'no help at all'. However, 48% of respondents did expect C.S.E. examinations to offer 'quite a lot' of help in getting a job, and between the different schools there was considerable variation of opinion as to the value of these qualifications. For example, the most positive view was expressed by the Newcastle pupils, 22% of whom expected C.S.E. qualifications to give 'a great deal' of help in finding a job. This is to be contrasted with the Windsor school, where only 11% held the same expectation. Furthermore, almost half the Windsor pupils (49%) felt that C.S.E.'s would offer 'not much' help, whilst only 14% of the Newcastle pupils had similar feelings. It is difficult to attribute this difference of opinion between these two schools to any one particular reason. However, interview data suggests that due to the shortage of jobs for
school leavers, Newcastle pupils regarded any kind of qualification as potentially helpful to the job finding process. At the same time, in Windsor, the buoyant youth labour market, with its ready supply of jobs, many of which required no qualifications whatsoever, may have acted to devalue the importance placed on C.S.E. qualifications.

With regard to 'O' levels, there was a general expectation among the respondents that their acquisition would prove to be very helpful when they sought to enter the labour market. Table 8.12 shows that 64% of all pupils in the survey expected 'O' levels to provide 'a great deal' of help when they came to look for a job, whilst less than 1% of respondents expected to receive 'no help at all' from the acquisition of these qualifications. Between the schools there was a high degree of consensus about the value of 'O' levels. In each school over 90% of those pupils who completed the questionnaire expected 'O' levels to provide either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of help when they came to apply for jobs. These data are substantiated by those collected during interviews with the pupils. These indicated that pupils placed a high value on traditional academic qualifications, expecting employers to attach greater 'currency' to these than to more vocational qualifications. Although some pupils intended to pursue qualifications which were specific to an occupation or trade, in particular City and Guilds and BTEC, most respondents felt they would need to demonstrate a basic academic competence which was best done through the acquisition of 'O' levels. Furthermore, for many of the pupils who intended to remain in fulltime education beyond the minimum leaving age, 'O' levels were seen as one of the important stepping stones which would enable progression to further and higher education, a job related training
course, or would eventually facilitate entry to a particular occupation. Clearly, the wide variety of reasons given as to why 'O' levels were regarded as important, illustrates their central position in the school to non-school transfer process. In all schools there was an overwhelming belief that 'O' levels would be seen as important by employers, that they were indicative not only of general academic competence, but also of the ability and determination to pursue a particular course of study or action through to a satisfactory conclusion.

Apart from 'O' level qualifications, 'A' levels were also seen to be particularly important to the school leaving process by the majority of pupils in the survey. Table 8.13 shows that 85% of all respondents anticipated that the acquisition of 'A' levels would provide 'a great deal' of help when they came to look for a job. In each school at least 90% of pupils expected 'A' levels to provide either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of help when they came to enter the labour market. Regardless of school and labour market, it appears that pupils held high expectations of the traditional academic qualifications. It is clear, furthermore, that they expected employers to view these qualifications with a commensurate degree of importance.¹

Although most pupils held a high regard for academic qualifications, interview data demonstrate that some pupils did place a

¹ It should not be assumed that such a high regard for academic qualifications among the respondents is indicative of a high expectation of success in these examinations. Pupils were merely asked to indicate the extent to which they felt these qualifications would prove to be helpful in the labour market, regardless of whether or not they expected to acquire such qualifications themselves.
high degree of importance on some vocational qualifications. BTEC, RSA and City and Guilds courses were seen to be valuable by some interviewees. In most instances, however, these qualifications were seen as being of secondary importance to more academic qualifications, and were to be pursued only if the pupil knew which occupational field he/she wished to enter.

In general terms it appears that many pupils took the view that their chances of finding a job corresponded, in a crude sense, to the number of academic qualifications they were able to accrue. Between the schools, however, there were differences of opinion as to which kinds of jobs academic qualifications would facilitate access. For example, in the areas of high unemployment, pupils tended to identify academic qualifications as increasingly important for fairly low level jobs. Due to increased competition for all jobs, it was not uncommon for employers to specify a required number of 'O' levels or even 'A' levels for jobs which would have been readily available several years ago without any kind of formal qualifications. In the areas of Stevenage, Leicester and particularly Windsor, a very different picture emerged. In these areas academic qualifications appeared to maintain their more traditional role in giving access to jobs which required some further training or demanded a higher level of skill or ability. In these areas, there did not appear to be evidence of 'qualification inflation' to the extent that there was in the others. As a consequence there were still jobs available for school leavers without any, or only very few, formal qualifications.

For a variety of reasons, the data show that academic qualifications are regarded as particularly important to the school
leaving process by pupils in each of the five schools. Pupils have demonstrated a clear belief that employers look for success in academic examinations first and foremost when selecting recruits, and regard vocational qualifications as useful additions to the curriculum vitae but by no means as one of the principal selection criteria. The general role that academic qualifications were expected to play in the school to non-school transfer process is perhaps best illustrated by comments made by the pupils themselves. One pupil from the Stevenage school, for example, expressed his belief in the value and function of academic qualifications which was typical of many held by pupils in this and the Windsor school and, to a lesser extent, the Leicester school. He said:

"The more qualifications you obtain, the less competition there will be for better jobs."

In these schools, it was not access to the labour market per se which was the principal issue, but access to better kinds of jobs. In the schools from areas of high unemployment, however, entry to the labour market at any level was the issue. One girl from Newcastle expressed this clearly during an interview:

"Well, if any jobs come up and quite a few people apply, they are obviously going to choose the person with the most qualifications."

These two remarks typify the different views of qualifications held by pupils in the different schools. Clearly, qualifications, and particularly academic qualifications, were regarded as important by pupils in all five schools. However, the different labour markets within which the schools are located influenced the 'currency' of the qualifications. In areas with a vibrant local economy, qualifications gave access to 'better' kinds of jobs. In areas of high unemployment,
meanwhile, qualifications were a pre-requisite for any kind of job. The effect on the value of qualifications is interesting. As qualifications came to be demanded for more and more jobs, it may be argued that they were devalued. At the same time, however, the increasing emphasis on qualifications increased the importance with which pupils viewed them. In all five schools, therefore, success in public examinations was regarded as particularly important to the school leaving programme.

The Relevance of School Subjects

Whilst it is important to consider those elements of school experience which have been specifically designed to facilitate the transfer from school to non-school, it is also important to appreciate that those kinds of activities constitute only a small part of the school curriculum and a pupil's timetable. For most fifth year pupils, the timetable is taken up largely by the subjects which they study for public examinations. Apart from the statutory Religious Education, some kind of P.E. and usually the careers activities with which this thesis is concerned, most of the pupils taking part in this research will have spent the majority of their school time during the fifth year engaged in preparation for their examinations later that year. Given that so much time was spent on this preparation and that qualifications were held in such high esteem by the pupils, it should be interesting to consider the kinds of subjects they felt would prove to be useful in the jobs that they eventually hoped to obtain. Whilst it is unlikely that pupils would regard every subject they were taking as useful to the kind of job they eventually hoped to do, it may be fair to assume that they placed more occupational value against some subjects than against others. It may also be the case that many pupils chose to take particular subjects
in anticipation that they would be beneficial both to the process of finding a job, and in carrying out that job. For example, Reid, Barnett and Rosenberg (1974) and Ryrie, Furst and Lauder (1979), in their studies of option choice at the third year stage in secondary schooling, have pointed to a subject's perceived relevance to the labour market as particularly important to the pupil's decision to choose the subject in the first place. With this in mind, pupils were asked to indicate the extent to which they expected particular subjects to prove useful in the kinds of jobs that they hoped eventually to secure.¹

Although qualifications are regarded as particularly important to the school leaving and job acquisition process, it is clear that different subjects are attributed different values in terms of their relevance to this process. It may be fair to assume, therefore, that the value placed on qualifications by pupils may be tempered by the subject in which the qualification is held.

Table 8.14 shows that English and Maths were regarded as the subjects most important for any future job that a pupil might get. Across all five schools, 81% of pupils saw both Maths and English as very important to their future careers. Science subjects were also regarded as very important for future jobs by over one third (37%) of all respondents. Information from interviews shows that some pupils considered some sciences to be more useful to their career prospects

¹ Pupils were not asked to make a judgement about every subject on the timetable. As subjects differed between the schools, the question was asked only about those common to all five schools. To facilitate comparison between the schools, broad categories were used to incorporate groups of subjects.
than others. In particular, computer science/studies were seen by many pupils as directly relevant to the kind of jobs that they hoped to do. This expectation was common in the Newcastle school where many pupils, aware of the shortage of jobs for school leavers in the traditional sectors, were looking towards computing and the new technologies for the chance of a career. One Newcastle fifth year articulated this aspiration quite succinctly:

"The Computer Industry is the coming thing, soon nearly all jobs will be computerised."

For many of the pupils who held this belief, computer science/studies was seen as a highly relevant subject.

Other groups of subjects which pupils regarded as likely to be of particular value in the labour market included practical subjects. Questionnaire responses show just over one third of pupils expected practical subjects to be 'very important' to their future career.¹ The fact that many pupils expressed intentions to enter occupations which relied on the practice or application of basic skills introduced in these subjects emphasises their importance to the school leaving programme. However, it should be stressed that, although practical subjects were seen as important, some pupils appeared to be sceptical about how much could be learnt from these subjects. During interviews, some pupils expressed a belief that what they were likely to learn of

¹ The term 'practical subjects' was intended to include all those subjects (apart from Computer Studies and Business Studies) which incorporated a 'hands on' element. Typically, practical subjects have been offered in schools for many years and include cookery, needlework, woodwork, metalwork and pottery. More recently, many schools have introduced a wider range of practical subjects including craft design technology (CDT), engineering and motor vehicle mechanics.
these subjects whilst in school would be of only secondary importance to what would actually be learnt in the workplace, in the real world of industry. Nevertheless, this should not detract from the fact that many pupils, in all five schools, welcomed the opportunity of gaining a basic familiarity with practical skills whilst still at school, and anticipated that they would prove to be useful on entering the labour market. Among the respondents there was almost total agreement that Religious Education contributed very little to the school leaving process. Only 2% of all respondents expected R.E. to be very important in the job that they would eventually get whilst 48% of respondents declared that R.E. would be a 'waste of time'.

The other subject groups, History/Geography, Social Studies and P.E., show approximately 10% of pupils in each case who expected these subjects to be 'very important' to their future occupations. In general, these kinds of subjects were not considered to have a particularly high degree of vocational relevance by the pupils. However, an examination pass in one of them would, of course, be regarded as indicative of a certain level of academic ability, and consequently would be regarded as a tool to assist in the entry to the labour market.

It appears that pupils regarded the traditional academic subjects of Maths and English as those most likely to be valuable for entry into and progression within a career. Whilst some did identify practical and science subjects as being especially relevant to the world of work, most pupils regarded a basic academic competence to be most valuable in the job finding process. At this stage in their school leaving programme, most pupils tended to rate academic subjects as more
important to career prospects than vocational subjects, with many pupils seeing the workplace as the most suitable and effective location for the learning of work related skills.

**Conclusion**

The data have shown that the majority of pupils who took part in the study held a generally positive view of the careers education they were receiving. Although respondents from different schools expressed differences of opinion relating to specific aspects of their careers education programme, the overall belief of most pupils was that they were being given a useful preparation for their transition from school to non-school.

Questionnaire and interview data demonstrate that careers lessons were regarded as particularly valuable when they were integrated into a wider scheme of general or social studies. In particular, pupils welcomed those aspects of careers education which gave them access to employers' premises, work experience and workplace visits being seen as especially valuable. Such activities, which put the pupil in the 'real world' of work, were frequently pointed to as those from which they learnt the most about life outside school. They were also regarded as extra qualifications to be drawn upon when applying for jobs. It is also clear from the data that pupils from the different schools held different expectations of their careers education. For example, whilst the buoyant labour markets of Stevenage and Windsor allowed pupils from these schools to regard their careers education in traditional functionalist terms, expecting it to facilitate the securing of a job, the depressed economy of the North East, on the other hand, necessitated that careers education took a wider remit. As a result, pupils in the
Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools tended not to look towards careers education merely as the means by which they would get a job, but as a more general preparation for adulthood. This is not to imply, however, that pupils from these schools did not expect to receive preparation for competition in the labour market as a result of their careers education. Interview data show that they clearly did.

The importance of qualifications in the school leaving process has also been highlighted by the data. Responses have shown that pupils from all schools attached particular significance to the acquisition of qualifications. In the more economically vibrant areas, qualifications were deemed necessary to gain entry to better kinds of jobs and more pay. In more depressed areas, where 'qualification inflation' appeared most common, they were regarded as prerequisites for any kind of job. Furthermore, the data show that 'O' and 'A' level qualifications were regarded as likely to provide the most help to a pupil in gaining entry to the labour market. Some pupils stressed the importance of vocational qualifications, though these were generally thought to be of secondary importance. This belief in the value of academic qualifications was further demonstrated by the majority of pupils from all schools, who felt that traditional subjects like English and Maths would be of most use in the labour market. Whilst some pupils did see a need for experience in practical and vocational subjects, most felt that skills of that nature would be best learnt in the workplace.

In conclusion, therefore, these data collected from the pupils show a generally positive attitude held towards careers education across the five schools. It is clear that, although there were many common aspects to the careers education programmes offered by the different
schools, there were particular differences in content, objectives and expectations. It is also interesting that, although positive views towards the same issues were sometimes expressed by pupils in each of the five schools, it was often the rationale for the positive views which differed and were determined by the local labour market conditions. For example, pupils in all five schools expressed generally positive views of work experience. The positive views were, however, expressed for different reasons. In the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools pupils welcomed work experience as an opportunity to sample the workplace and to have some experience, albeit limited, of the labour market. In Windsor, Stevenage and, to a lesser extent, Leicester, pupils were enthusiastic about work experience as they expected it to constitute part of employers' recruitment activities and to be likely to lead to a job offer. Similarly, Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils expressed positive views of interviews with careers officers, as they welcomed the information they provided and the opportunity for discussion. At the same time, Windsor pupils expressed positive views, as the careers officer was often able to provide contacts which would lead to offers of employment. In these two examples, therefore, the views of pupils towards these particular elements of their careers education were similar. However, the reasons for these views were different. The rationale for the views appeared to rest firmly on the level of demand for youth labour in the different local labour markets.

Pupils' intentions with regard to the length of time they intend to remain in fulltime education may also bring different kinds of demands and objectives for careers education. The following chapter will, therefore, consider pupils' views of careers education in
accordance with the length of time they intend to remain in fulltime education.
Table 8.1 Frequency of Careers Lessons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once a week</th>
<th>More than once a week</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Few each term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Number of total population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.2 How helpful were Careers Lessons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very helpful</th>
<th>Quite helpful</th>
<th>Not very helpful</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>131</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Table 8.3 Pupils' assessment of the amount of time spent on Careers Education each week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response (%)</th>
<th>About right</th>
<th>Too much</th>
<th>Not enough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.4 Interviews with Careers Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response (%)</th>
<th>% of respondents in each school claiming to have had an individual interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Table 8.5 How helpful were interviews with Careers Officers

% of respondents in each school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very helpful</th>
<th>Quite helpful</th>
<th>Not very helpful</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.6 Pupils' assessment of importance of work experience

% of respondents in each school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
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<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Table 8.7  Pupils' assessment of importance of visits made to employers' premises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 624 2 48 40 9 1

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.8  Pupils' assessment of importance of presentations made by employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 624 3 28 52 15 2

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Table 8.9  Pupils' assessment of the importance of a careers room/library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>46</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.10  Pupils' assessment of importance of success in examinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>77</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>92</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Table 8.11  Pupils' assessment of the amount of help in getting a job to be gained from the acquisition of CSE qualifications

% of respondents in each school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>None at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.12  Pupils' assessment of the amount of help in getting a job to be gained from the acquisition of GCE 'O' level qualifications

% of respondents in each school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>None at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Table 8.13 Pupils' assessment of the amount of help in getting a job to be gained from the acquisition of GCE 'A' level qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
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<th>Not much</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 8.14 Pupils' assessment of the importance of school subjects to jobs which they will eventually get

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hist/Geog</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.E.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical subs.</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E./Games</td>
<td>624</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total survey population. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.
Chapter Nine
THE DECISION TO REMAIN IN FULLTIME EDUCATION

In the previous chapter, data relating to pupils' reactions to the careers education they had received were discussed. Whilst the data demonstrated a generally positive response from pupils, they also illustrated quite clearly that careers education is expected to fulfil a variety of roles and to meet a number of different objectives. The different roles and objectives are determined to a great extent by the nature of the local labour market within which careers education is provided. Whilst the influence of the local labour market on these different roles and objectives has been recognised, the pupils' decision whether to leave school or remain in fulltime education after the end of the fifth year is also important in defining the nature of the careers education provided. Clearly, those pupils choosing to leave school at the earliest opportunity are likely to have different needs and expectations of a careers education programme from those who intend to continue in fulltime education. The different needs of these two groups of pupils are important in this research. This chapter is concerned with those pupils whose intention it was to remain in fulltime education after the end of their fifth year.

As earlier chapters have discussed, the decision whether or not to leave school at the end of the fifth year is not made in isolation, and is likely to be the most important decision made by the pupils up to that time. It has also been shown that the extent to which this decision is taken consciously by the pupil varies in accordance with a variety of socio-economic factors, and with the nature of the local
labour market into which pupils seek to enter. For example, work by Ashton and Maguire (1977) in the area of Sunderland, showed that pupils from schools in that area sought to leave fulltime education at the earliest opportunity. By so doing, they would be able to take advantage of any work opportunities that occurred. Getting into the labour market at the earliest opportunity was seen as the best way of maximising employment opportunities.

Of the 624 pupils participating in my study, 52% intended to continue in fulltime education beyond their fifth year. However, information from the five surveyed schools shows wide variations with regard to pupils' post-fifth year intentions. What is immediately apparent from the data (Table 9.1) is the great difference in intentions expressed by the pupils from the two schools in high unemployment areas. Whereas 67% of the fifth years in the Middlesbrough school hoped to remain in education (the highest percentage of all five schools) only 29% from Newcastle had the same intention. Explanations for these wide differences are difficult to identify, given the similarity of the labour markets within which the schools are located. The social class composition of the school may be one explanation. As was discussed in an earlier chapter, whilst the Newcastle school drew almost entirely from a traditional working class catchment area, the Middlesbrough school, being Roman Catholic, drew from a larger and socially more heterogeneous area. As a consequence, a greater proportion of the Middlesbrough pupils than the Newcastle pupils were from middle class homes. Many studies have shown the greater propensity, for a variety of reasons, for pupils from middle class homes to continue in fulltime education longer than their working class peers (e.g. Halsey, Floud and
Anderson 1961, Jackson and Marsden 1962, Corrigan 1979, and Furlong 1989). The greater percentage of Middlesbrough pupils than Newcastle pupils opting to stay in education after their fifth year may, to some extent, be accounted for in this way.

Between the other three schools there were also considerable differences in the proportion of pupils intending to remain in education. As Table 9.1 shows, 62% of Windsor pupils intended to stay on compared with 57% and 39% of Stevenage and Leicester pupils respectively. Again the differences may be explained, to some extent, by social class differences, but also by the traditions within the schools. In Windsor, for example, the norm for fifth year pupils was to continue into the sixth form, to pursue academic studies and, for many pupils, to continue into higher education. For Leicester pupils, although their school had a well established sixth form, those continuing in education were in a minority. The norm, amongst the pupils from largely working class families, was to enter the labour market at the earliest opportunity.

It should be borne in mind that the data in Table 9.1 represent the intentions of the pupils with regard to staying in education after their fifth year, and not actual numbers who did. As will be shown in Chapter Eleven, the percentage of pupils who did stay in education was considerably smaller than this. Nevertheless, the intentions and aspirations which pupils hold during their fifth year are important to the careers education programme. Clearly, pupils intending to stay on would have different needs with regard to careers education from those intending to leave school. Similarly, they would be likely to judge their careers education in the light of their intentions. Furthermore,
careers staff need to be aware of these different intentions in order to provide effective careers education for all pupils.

Reasons for staying in fulltime education

Interview data collected from the schools suggest that a significant proportion of those pupils choosing to stay on had done so because of the lack of job opportunities in their area (cf. Corr, Jamieson and Tomes 1989). The choice was, in a sense, made for negative reasons. For example, a number of pupils from the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools saw further education as an alternative to unemployment, a more useful way of spending their time which could result in more qualifications being acquired, making them more attractive to employers (cf. Bynner 1989). One Middlesbrough pupil expressed his reasons very clearly, which were typical of many in these two schools. He said:

"My main reason for staying on in education is to stay off the dole queue and to learn something at college, in the time I may have spent on the dole."

Other pupils preferred to reserve their decision about staying in education until they had personally tested the job market. One Middlesbrough pupil expressed this intention quite simply:

"I think I will look for a job at sixteen, if I don't find one I will go to college."

For many pupils, staying in education after their fifth year was regarded as second best. Questionnaire data (Table 9.2) illustrate this quite clearly. When those pupils who intended to stay in education were asked if they could definitely find a job before the end of the fifth year, whether they would accept it in preference to staying in fulltime education, 25% of respondents stated that they would accept the job. A further 37% thought perhaps they would, whilst 37% said they definitely
would not. These data imply, therefore, that for at least one quarter of the fifth years who intended to remain in education, further education was being considered principally because of a shortage of jobs for school leavers.

Between the five schools there were some clear differences with regard to remaining in education. For example, whilst half the Windsor respondents said they would definitely not accept a job, implying that their decision to stay in education had been made regardless of the local labour market conditions, only 20% of Middlesbrough pupils and 18% of Newcastle pupils made this same claim. At the same time, approximately one third of both Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils said they would definitely accept the job in preference to further education. Only 17% of both Windsor and Leicester pupils made the same claim. These quantitative data clearly support those from individual interviews which show that a sizeable proportion of pupils from the areas of high unemployment had intentions of continuing in fulltime education only because of the absence of job opportunities.

The view of remaining in education as 'second best' is further corroborated by the data collected from pupils when asked explicitly about the influence of unemployment on their decision to stay in education (Table 9.3). Thirty eight percent of Newcastle pupils and 26% of Middlesbrough pupils, who intended to stay on at school, stated that unemployment had influenced their decision 'a great deal'. Only 7% of Windsor pupils and 6% of Leicester pupils made the same claim. Surprisingly, however, given the relative buoyancy of their local labour market, 32% of Stevenage pupils who intended to remain in education also made this claim. Whilst it is important to recognise that pupils'
decisions of whether or not to remain in education after reaching the minimum school leaving age are influenced by a wide range of factors, the data discussed so far show the level of unemployment and the opportunity structure in the local labour market to be particularly influential in their decisions.

Whatever pupils' reasons for intending to stay in education, there was a clear expectation that by doing so they would enhance their chances of finding a job. Table 9.4 shows that, overall, just under half (48%) of those pupils who intended to continue in education expected to gain 'a great deal' of help in finding a job due to the fact that they had remained in education. A further 46% expected the 'extra' education to provide 'quite a lot' of help. None of the respondents expected to receive 'no help at all'. Furthermore, the low non-response rate for this question may be seen as indicative of the fact that pupils had clear expectations of the benefits, in terms of their potential for employment, to be gained from continuing in education. Responses varied little between the schools. Slightly fewer pupils from Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools expected 'a great deal' of help to be gained, but there remained a general expectation that more education would prove beneficial to their chances even in their labour market.

In addition to generally enhancing their chances of finding work, a majority of pupils anticipated that, as a result of further education, they would be able to get a better kind of job. Fifty eight percent of all pupils thought they would definitely get a better job. A further 48% thought they would perhaps get a better job as a result of further education, whilst only 2% expected not to get a better job. In particular, pupils defined the better job in terms of better pay, a
higher level of entry and better promotion prospects. Across all five schools there was an expectation that more education would facilitate entry to the better jobs. Nevertheless, in Newcastle and Middlesbrough, as has been discussed earlier, the principal objective of staying in education was to increase the chances of gaining entry to the labour market at any level.

Much of the data discussed so far has highlighted pupils' beliefs that continuing in education beyond the statutory period would enhance their chances both of finding a job and of finding a better kind of job. It should also be borne in mind, however, that many pupils intending to remain in education do so regardless of the labour market situation. Interviews in the five schools revealed a number of pupils, in each school, with aspirations for jobs which required F.E. and/or H.E. qualifications. Others expressed intentions of continuing in education for several more years before deciding on a particular career. Although it has been the concern of this thesis to highlight the influence of the local labour market on pupils' intentions and aspirations, it should not be assumed that this has been dominant in every case.

Post-Sixteen Education
Having expressed an intention to stay in fulltime education after their fifth year, pupils were asked a series of questions, in both the questionnaire and individual interviews, relating to their specific intentions. Responses show that, although most pupils had an idea of where they intended to continue their studies and what kind of course they would follow, many were not sure of the procedures of application
for courses, of closing dates, duration of courses and a variety of other important issues.

The 52% of pupils who expressed an intention to stay in fulltime education were asked to indicate where they intended to continue their studies. The data show quite clearly (Table 9.5) that where a school had its own sixth form, this proved to be the most popular place for pupils to continue their education. In particular, this option was popular with pupils from the Windsor and Newcastle schools. In each school, over 80% of those pupils who expected to remain in fulltime education intended to do so at their present school. In Stevenage and Leicester, over 60% of respondents intended to continue in their schools' sixth form. Information collected from interviews with pupils suggests that familiarity with the institution and, most importantly, with teachers, was particularly important to pupils when choosing where to continue their education. Many spoke of the wish to avoid any unnecessary turmoil likely to be caused by joining a new institution whilst coping with the demands of further study.

Interviews with members of staff in each of the schools with a sixth form revealed that pupils intending to remain in education were strongly encouraged to do so at their present school. The four schools with sixth forms were under increasing pressure, due to falling rolls, to justify the need for their sixth forms through pupil demand, the growth of sixth form and F.E. colleges making competition for pupils

1. Pupils were asked to indicate the most likely institution from a choice of four: their present school, sixth form college, technical college, F.E. college. It should be recognised that only four of the five survey schools had a sixth form. It was not possible, therefore, for all pupils to continue their studies in their present schools.
quite intense, particularly in Stevenage. From the questionnaire data it would appear that staff encouragement was having the desired effect.

Further education and technical colleges were the second most popular option for those staying in fulltime education. For Stevenage pupils they represented the only real alternative to staying at school, as the local education authority did not operate any sixth form colleges in that area. Consequently, 37% of the continuing pupils expected to continue their education at a technical or F.E. college. This also proved to be a popular option for Middlesbrough pupils. Table 9.5 shows approximately one third of those respondents expected to continue at such a college.

In general, sixth form colleges were not a popular option. Only in Middlesbrough did a substantial percentage of pupils express an intention to transfer to such a college. Sixty six percent of pupils from this school who intended to continue in education expected to do so at a sixth form college. However, this high percentage may be directly attributed to close links the school enjoyed with a Roman Catholic sixth form college located very close to the school. In the absence of its own sixth form, it had become the norm for pupils to continue their education at this sixth form college.

The only other school from which a substantial number of pupils intended to continue their education at a sixth form college was the

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1. For the purpose of the questionnaire, technical colleges and F.E. colleges were presented as separate institutions to respondents. In some schools F.E. colleges appeared to be referred to as 'Techs'. To avoid confusion in different schools, therefore, these two options were given. For the purposes of analysis, however, technical colleges and F.E. colleges have been combined.
Leicester school. Twenty percent of pupils from this school who intended to stay on after the fifth year, expected to join a sixth form college. During interviews, a number of these pupils explained this intention in terms of aspirations for more adult status. By staying at school to continue their education, some pupils felt they would be regarded as childish by their peers and, in some cases, by their families. Sixth form college, on the other hand, would offer a change of environment and a more mature approach to study. One Leicester pupil summed up the situation, saying:

"At school you are a schoolboy, but at sixth form college you are a student."

Clearly, this adult status was important to some pupils when deciding where to continue their education.

Overall, however, the data show that the majority of pupils preferred to remain in a familiar environment to continue their education. Furthermore, no particular regional variations are apparent in the data. The decision seems more likely to be predicated on the pupils' experience of his/her present school, the reputation of the school, and the existence of attractive and convenient alternatives. In some cases, however, where pupils wished to follow a specifically vocational course, for example, catering or hairdressing, which necessitated further fulltime education, the decision of where to continue their education was predetermined. In Stevenage, for example, there existed only one college which offered hairdressing and catering courses.

In general, the pupil interviews revealed that considerable thought had been given by pupils as to where they should continue their
education, although for many the existence of a good sixth form at their school which could adequately meet their needs meant the decision was easily made.

Courses pupils intended to follow

Having stated their intention to stay on in education after the fifth year, and indicated where they hoped to continue their studies, pupils were asked to state what kind of course they intended to follow, in particular what kind of qualification(s) they hoped to achieve at the end of the course. During interviews, pupils were questioned about their aspirations in terms of qualifications and the courses they intended to follow.

The questionnaire data show that the great majority of pupils had clear ideas about the courses they hoped to follow. At the same time, however, interview data demonstrate that considerable confusion existed over courses and qualifications. 'O' and 'A' level courses were most popular with the pupils, being seen as particularly important for gaining entry to the labour market or higher education. However, a number of pupils were unsure of how many 'O' and 'A' level courses they could realistically expect to attempt. Confusion also existed over the length of courses. Some pupils assumed a one year 'A' level course to be the norm, whilst several assumed it to be three years.

Confusion was most common in relation to vocational qualifications. Across all schools there was a generally low level of knowledge about vocational qualifications. Few pupils were aware of the full range of courses which could be open to them, or of the nature and content of such courses. Only where pupils needed a specific vocational qualification for a particular job, for example RSA qualifications, was
any detailed knowledge of these courses evident. For example, most pupils had heard of City and Guilds, usually from their parents or older brothers and sisters, but few had any idea of the range of such courses available to them, or of the content and end qualifications they offered.

The interview data show quite clearly that, where pupils had definite career intentions which necessitated further education, then it was likely that they had identified the appropriate courses, both in terms of subject and qualification. Furthermore, they were usually well-informed about application procedures, closing dates, etc., for the courses. These pupils, however, were in the minority. Although most had some idea of the kind of career they wished to follow, only a few had clear plans.

Those intending to stay on in education could be seen to fall into one of three groups with regard to career plans. In the first instance, there were those with clear career plans who had identified the appropriate courses and qualifications. Secondly, there were those pupils who wanted to gain more qualifications in the hope that they would help to secure any kind of job, many of these pupils had decided to opt for further education purely as an alternative to unemployment or a government scheme. Thirdly, there were those pupils who perhaps had no clear career intentions, but intended to continue to further and then higher education, before beginning a higher status career in their early twenties. For these pupils, 'A' level courses were the principal concern after their fifth year.

Table 9.6 shows quite clearly that courses leading to academic qualifications ('O' and 'A' levels) were the aim of the majority of
pupils choosing to remain in education after their fifth year. For all vocational courses specified in the questionnaire, and those identified by the respondents themselves, only a small number showed intentions of following such courses. Furthermore, analysis of these intentions by the individual schools (Table 9.7) confirms pupils' interests in academic qualifications. In every school high percentages of pupils intended to follow 'O' and 'A' level courses, whilst far smaller percentages expressed any such intention with regard to vocational qualifications.

The fact that 'O' and 'A' level courses were so popular is, to some extent, a result of the fact that the majority of pupils intending to stay on in education expected to do so at their present school. In the four schools where this was possible, the only courses offered in the sixth form were 'O' levels, 'A' levels and the newly introduced CPVE. In order to follow more vocational courses, pupils would be required to move to a further education college or similar institution. Nevertheless, in Middlesbrough, where pupils had no choice about changing institutions if they wanted to stay in education, the majority of pupils still intended to pursue 'O' and/or 'A' level courses. Slightly more pupils from this school did, however, express intentions of following specific job related courses than they did in other schools.

Interview data support these findings, with pupils identifying further education principally as a route to the acquisition of academic qualifications. More than one interviewee expressed a belief that vocational qualifications could offer very little in the way of preparation for entry to the labour market, believing that work-related
skills were better learnt in the workplace than in school or college. Both the questionnaire and interview data indicate a belief held strongly among the pupils, that academic qualifications will prove important and valuable when they seek to enter the labour market. In a sense, many pupils tended to view academic qualifications as themselves vocational, in that their acquisition would demonstrate a certain level of ability and determination to an employer. At the same time, it was clear that many pupils regarded vocational qualifications as inferior and unlikely to impress employers as much as more traditional academic qualifications.

Guidance and support in decision making

Decisions of whether or not to remain in education and, if so, at what kind of institution, what kind of course to follow and ultimately what sort of career to pursue, are likely to be the biggest decisions made by fifth year pupils up to that time. Although, for the purpose of this research, pupils were required to outline decisions they had made or to indicate what intentions and aspirations they held, it is clear that many were still in the process of making these decisions. As will be discussed later, decisions about staying in education, etc. were taken right up to the beginning of the following academic year, often after examination results were known. Although this research has shown the nature of the local labour market to be particularly important in influencing decisions and intentions, there are clearly many other factors which influence a young person when making his/her decisions, in particular, the influence, advice and recommendations of 'significant others'. Pupils do not make important decisions overnight or in isolation. A number of studies have highlighted the role played by
significant others in the option choice process at the end of the third year (for example, Reid et al 1974, Ryrie et al 1979, Pole 1987), and have highlighted the sources of support, both formal and informal, upon which pupils draw when they are taking these decisions. The time at which decisions about leaving school are made is likely to be when this support is again required (cf. Ryrie 1981, Burnhill 1984, Corr et al 1989).

Those pupils intending to remain in fulltime education after the end of their fifth year were asked about the advice and support they had received or were receiving when coming to their decisions. They were asked to indicate, from a list in the questionnaire, which members of the teaching staff, their families, friends and the careers service they had talked to about their decision of whether or not to stay on in education.1

The survey data show (Table 9.8) that pupils had talked with a wide range of people about their decisions. Of the 322 pupils intending to stay on, 6% claimed not to have talked to anyone about their decisions. The data show, not surprisingly, that it was most common for pupils to have spoken to their parents about their course of action after the fifth year. Eighty three percent claimed to have done this. Similarly, pupils' friends were frequently consulted during the decision making process, 58% of pupils had discussed their intentions with friends. Interviews with pupils have shown that peer group activities and pressure are often important in making the decision of whether

1. Pupils could indicate up to six people from the list with whom they had talked about leaving school. They could also add other people to the list.
to leave fulltime education or not. More than one interviewee mentioned the intentions of his/her friends in relation to their own post-fifth year intentions. Approval from their peer group was regarded as important by many pupils when making their decisions.

Within the school and careers service context, one quarter of pupils had talked to a careers officer about their decision. Only 21% had discussed their decision with their careers teacher. In fact, the level of discussion with all teachers was not high. For example, only 14% of pupils had talked to their form teacher, the member of staff with whom they were likely to have enjoyed most regular contact, about their decision to remain in fulltime education.

Interview data indicate, however, that the majority of pupils had discussed their intentions with a wide variety of people, parents, other members of the family and friends being most commonly called on for advice. It was also clear that most interviewees had received support and guidance from members of the school and careers staff in relation to these decisions. None of the pupils interviewed complained about or made reference to a lack of support from their schools or of opportunities for discussion with members of staff. It became clear, however, that in each school, but particularly in the Stevenage and Windsor schools, there were some pupils who had not felt the need to discuss their decisions to any great extent with anyone. For these pupils the decision had not been difficult to reach. In many cases it was the norm for pupils to continue in fulltime education after the fifth year, parental and/or peer group expectations making this the only realistic course of action. Consequently no great degree of guidance or discussion was seen as necessary.
The interviews showed that much of the guidance from members of staff had been provided informally and may not have been offered during designated careers lessons. Consequently, pupils may not have recognised it as a form of guidance. This may, to some extent, explain the difference between the data collected by the questionnaire, which suggested that guidance from school staff had not been extensive, and by interview which suggested that it had. It is possible that pupils interpreted the survey questions as referring only to formal kinds of guidance.

Careers education and guidance required

Pupils' needs for and requirements of careers education vary according to their different post-fifth year intentions (Heppell 1972, Howden and Dawson 1973, Jackson 1973). The interview data have shown, for example, that where pupils had clear ideas about staying in education and where they had decided on which courses to follow, their requirements of guidance and careers education were relatively straightforward. One Stevenage pupil explained that his intention had always been to stay on in education, to go to university or polytechnic. Consequently, discussions held with the careers staff were not about whether or not he should stay on, but about which subjects he should take at 'A' level. He expressed an opinion of careers education which may have been commonly held by many of the pupils who had clear intentions of continuing to further and perhaps higher education. This pupil felt that much of the content of careers lessons was irrelevant for his needs, being aimed primarily at those pupils who intended to enter the labour market at 16. Specifically, he felt that information about jobs, and generally about the world of work, had been provided too soon. For
this pupil, and many more like him, entry to the labour market was at least two and a half years away, and could be as many as five to six years away. Coping with the workplace environment, tax, National Insurance, interview techniques, etc., was not, therefore, one of his principal concerns during the fifth year. One high ability girl from the Middlesbrough school, who expressed broadly similar views to the boy from Stevenage, took her criticisms of the careers education she had received a step further. She asserted that careers lessons and other allied activities had wasted time which could have been better spent in study for the seven 'O' levels she was taking. She made the same comment about the time taken to complete the questionnaire and interview!

For these kinds of pupils, therefore, careers education was rarely identified as a key constituent of the fifth year curriculum. They perceived their careers education and guidance needs to be relatively small in comparison with most other pupils. Furthermore, one careers teacher admitted that those pupils who had clear, well thought out intentions tended to require little in the way of guidance or careers education. This enabled him to devote more time to those pupils who did. Moreover, the interview data have shown that many of the pupils whose intentions were to remain in fulltime education had made their decisions irrespective of local labour market conditions. Their intentions would always be to continue in education whatever their chances of finding a suitable job at sixteen.

The data have also shown, nevertheless, that the level of unemployment in the local labour market has influenced a sizeable proportion of pupils in their decision to continue in fulltime
education. One careers teacher from the Middlesbrough school expressed some concern over the number of pupils for whom further education was identified as an alternative to unemployment. He tended to view this in a negative light, seeing it merely as a means of delaying entry to the labour market (cf. Bynner 1989), keeping off the dole or a government scheme. He questioned, in particular, the academic ability of many of these pupils and their capacity to cope with further education. Whilst he could understand their motives for staying in education, he doubted whether it would "result in anything productive". He was also critical of the sixth form colleges for accepting pupils of particularly low ability, merely to increase their numbers. He explained that these pupils often required "prudent advice" to ensure that they knew why they intended staying in education, and were aware of all the other alternatives open to them. He explained that quite often he would advise pupils against staying in education merely because they doubted their ability to find a job. He stressed, however, that the role of the careers or guidance teacher was not always to go along with the pupils' intentions and decisions, but to question and, by doing so, ensure that the pupil had thoroughly thought through his/her intended course of action.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the various reasons given by pupils for remaining in fulltime education beyond the end of their fifth year. The data suggest that pupils may be divided into three general groups, according to the reason for their decision to remain in education. In the first instance, there are those pupils for whom staying in education was seen as the norm, whose decisions have been made regardless of any
labour market influences, and whose aspirations have been expressed not in terms of a particular career, but in terms of further and/or higher education per se. Succeeding in education and in public examinations is clearly the immediate ambition of these pupils who are likely to be of a high academic standard.

Secondly, there are those pupils for whom further education and possibly higher education is identified as a means to an end. For these pupils, entry to a specific career is the goal which can only be achieved after further and/or higher education. These pupils will have identified the relevant courses and qualifications, probably from the early part of their fifth year, if not before. Again, for these pupils, the decision to stay in fulltime education beyond the fifth year will not have been difficult to reach.

Thirdly, there is the group of pupils, concentrated particularly in the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools, for whom further education is an alternative to unemployment or a government scheme. The data have shown that these pupils tend to be the least likely to have identified the courses they intend to follow or to have a specific objective motivating their decisions. Furthermore, it seems likely that these pupils may delay their decision to stay in fulltime education until very late. Many of the pupils in this category spoke of testing the employment market before making their decision. For these pupils, further education was seen as second best, and was entered into in the hope that it would make them more attractive to employers at their second attempt to enter the labour market.

These three types of pupils not only have different expectations of further education, but also different requirements in terms of
careers education and guidance. The interview data have shown that those requiring the most guidance were pupils in the second and third categories. The second group tended to require specific information about courses, qualifications and institutions. Their requests for information were usually well-defined. One careers teacher from Stevenage explained that these pupils tended to require "facts rather than guidance". Pupils in the third category often required both. Many were not sure why they intended to continue in education, other than the fact that it was an alternative to unemployment, or where it might lead in terms of career opportunities. Many of these pupils also required basic information on types of courses available, qualifications, etc.

The first group of pupils, meanwhile, often required the minimum of guidance or information, having well-defined and informed objectives. In the light of these different requirements, careers teachers tended to provide appropriate guidance on an individual level when requested to do so by the pupils. Assessments of the guidance and careers education received by pupils intending to stay on in education were generally mixed. Whilst the interview data suggest the majority found it to be satisfactory, there were clearly groups of pupils for whom this was not the case. Particular dissatisfaction was voiced by the first category of pupils for whom staying in education was almost a foregone conclusion. Many of these pupils felt no great need for careers education or guidance, having identified their course of action. On more than one occasion such pupils complained of too much time spent on careers education, which would be better spent on preparing for their examinations. Whatever their feelings about the need for guidance, however, the data have shown the great majority of pupils had consulted
at least one other person about their intentions, parents and friends being the individuals most commonly talked to about future plans.

Whilst this chapter has shown the influence of local labour market conditions on the decisions made and intentions held by many of the pupils in the five schools, it has also discussed a number of other important influences. It has drawn attention to the influence of family and peer groups, and suggests that some pupils appear to reach decisions quite independently of local labour market influences. Furthermore, it has shown that, according to their different reasons for choosing to stay in fulltime education, pupils' needs of careers education and guidance varied. Their evaluation of careers education received was, to a very great extent, determined by the extent to which these needs were met.

The following chapter will consider those pupils whose intention it was to leave education after the fifth year. It will consider the role of the local labour market and other factors influencing their decisions, their need for and assessment of careers education.
Table 9.1 Pupils intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage of population in each school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Total population in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of N.

Table 9.2 Pupil responses to the question: 'If you could definitely find a job before the end of the fifth year, would you accept this in preference to staying in fulltime education?'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Non-response</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Perhaps</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = Number of pupils in each school intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.
### Table 9.3 Influence of unemployment on pupils' decision to remain in fulltime education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>None at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(n = \) Total number of pupils in each school intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of \(n\).

### Table 9.4 Pupils' expectation of help to be gained from staying in fulltime education in finding a job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Non-response</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>None at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(n = \) Total number of pupils in each school intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of \(n\).
Table 9.5 Where pupils intended to continue their education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Present school</th>
<th>6th Form College</th>
<th>Technical College</th>
<th>F.E. College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = Number of pupils in each school intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.

Table 9.6 Courses pupils intended to follow after their fifth year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>%* of all pupils remaining in education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'O' Levels</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'A' Levels</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and Guilds</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific job related</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPVE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSA/Pitman (Typing)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified Art/Design</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 322

*Percentages total more than 100% as pupils could state an intention to follow more than one kind of course. For example, many pupils intended to follow both 'O' and 'A' level courses.

n = Total number of pupils intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.
Table 9.7 Courses pupils intend to follow after their fifth year: By school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>'O' levels</th>
<th>'A' levels</th>
<th>City &amp; Guilds</th>
<th>Job Related</th>
<th>CPVE</th>
<th>RSA/ Pitman</th>
<th>Art/ Des.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = Number of pupils in each school intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.

*Percentages total more than 100 as pupils could state an intention to follow more than one kind of course. For example, many pupils intended to follow both 'O' and 'A' level courses.

Table 9.8 People consulted by pupils about their decision to stay in fulltime education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% of all pupils remaining in education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers teacher</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form teacher</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teacher</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers officer</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head/Deputy</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 322

n = Total number of pupils intending to remain in fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.
Chapter Ten

ENTERING THE LABOUR MARKET

The Youth Labour Market

In 1983, 55% of all sixteen year olds in England and Wales chose to leave fulltime education at the end of their fifth year. Among the pupils surveyed for my research, however, a smaller percentage (48%) expressed the same intention. At the time of completing the questionnaire, very few of these pupils had the promise of a job, and many had only vague ideas of the kind of career they intended to follow. As we have seen in at least two of the five areas where the study was conducted, pupils' chances of finding any kind of job were likely to be severely limited by the nature of the local labour market. As Roberts et al (1986) point out, entering the labour market in the early 1980's was a very different process from that prior to 1970. During the 1950's, 1960's and the first half of the 1970's most young people could be assured of transferring directly from school to work, often to a job of their choice. As was shown in Chapter Two, many transition studies carried out during this period were largely concerned with the abrupt nature of school to work transfer and the ability of the young person to cope with the change. For many school leavers the nature of the change from school to non-school is now very different.

The concern of studies throughout the late 1970's and early 1980's has been with the school leavers' capacity to cope with periods of unemployment and with the uncertainty of the youth labour market,

rather than with the environment and culture of the workplace. Furthermore, the question of the school leavers' ability to secure a job in an increasingly competitive labour market has been the concern of a number of writers in this field (Finn, 1984; Gleeson, 1983; Fiddy, 1983; Coffield et al, 1986, and Junanker, 1987). Competition comes not only from other school leavers, but also from other sectors of the workforce seeking re-entry to the labour market. The result of this increased competition has been an erosion, in some areas, of the traditional youth labour market. Young, inexperienced, untrained school leavers have been forced behind experienced adult workers, willing to accept relatively low paid positions and offer the employer a quicker return on investment, than he would get by appointing a trainee.

Ashton and Maguire (1983) argue that the pool of jobs traditionally entered by school leavers has shrunk by the decline of particular sectors. This would clearly be a feasible explanation for the increase in youth unemployment in the Middlesbrough and Newcastle areas, where dependence on a narrow base of primary industries and its subsequent decline has meant an erosion of many of the traditional openings for school leavers. Whether for reasons of increased competition from different sectors of the workforce, or of decline in the number of actual vacancies for school leavers, national statistics reveal a dramatic decline in the employment rate of sixteen year olds. In 1974, 61% of sixteen year olds were in employment, by 1984 this had dropped to only 18%. In the light of this

dramatic decline, the question with particular relevance to this research is, what now happens to sixteen year olds?

National statistics show that approximately 40% of sixteen year olds in 1983 chose to remain in fulltime education after reaching the minimum leaving age. Since the early 1970's and the arrival of further education which did not necessarily demand a high degree of academic ability, increasing numbers of sixteen year olds have chosen to stay on in education. The introduction of the one year sixth form, enabling pupils to retake examinations which had been failed, or to try some examinations for the first time, encouraged many pupils to try further education at least for one year. Furthermore, it has been shown earlier that many pupils, unable to find a job of their choice or, in some cases, any kind of job after their fifth year, are likely to choose further education as a second best option. In the areas of high unemployment this was often a more favourable option than unemployment or a government scheme. Many more sixteen year olds during the 1980's are, therefore, remaining in education beyond the minimum leaving age.

**Government initiatives**

Apart from the growth in further education, increasing government intervention in training and in the youth labour market (cf. Markell and Gregory, 1982) provided an effective buffer between education and employment. Government initiatives in this area began in the early 1970's with the New Training Initiative and the youth opportunities programme (YOP). In 1975, various work experience schemes accompanied YOP, which

graduated in 1983 to the one year Youth Training Scheme (YTS) (cf. MSC 1982). This was subsequently extended in 1986 to become a two year programme. These initiatives represent one of the most important developments in the school leaving process since the introduction of secondary education for all in 1944.

In 1983 many school leavers saw the Youth Training Scheme as representing their best chance of gaining entry to the labour market. In the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle, some of the pupils identified YTS as their only hope of gaining access to the labour market. In spite of this, however, YTS was not popular with the school leavers in the study, most of whom saw it as a poor substitute for a 'proper job' and were prepared to consider it only if nothing else was available and if further education was out of the question. Very few of the pupils interviewed saw YTS in constructive terms. The main criticisms of the scheme were that it was a form of cheap labour for employers, which offered few longterm prospects and paid nothing like a realistic wage.

Despite the emphasis placed on training, none of the interviewees in the study regarded YTS as an efficient or desirable way in which to train for employment. Whilst most pupils valued workplace training, there was a requirement that this should be provided within the structure of employment, 'a proper job', before its value could be realised and capitalised on. Furthermore, in 1983, the YTS was new and closely associated with its much criticised predecessor, the Youth Opportunities Programme (cf. MSC 1981). Many of the pupils taking part in the research had older brothers, sisters and friends who had taken part in YOP, finding it unsatisfactory, failing to provide entry to the
labour market, and were now unemployed. Many of the school leavers in my study were suspicious of YTS, anticipating that it would be merely a different and longer version of YOP. As a result, very few identified YTS as a respectable alternative to employment.

Suspicions of the school leavers about YTS were matched, to a great extent, by those of the employers, as Roberts et al (1986) report from their work on the changing structure of youth labour markets. In 1982/3 many of the firms who took part in their research failed to see YTS as a "radical departure" or a training initiative. They report that some employers regarded YTS as "the latest palliative or a further attempt to manipulate unemployment figures". The work of Roberts et al (1986) draws attention to the confusion which existed among employers as to the objectives of the different schemes, how they worked, who operated them and to whom they should direct complaints, queries and requests for information.

In general, there was an air of suspicion and confusion which surrounded YTS in 1983, amongst school leavers and employers in particular, and to some extent among teachers and careers officers. Many of the teachers spoken to in the course of my research expressed doubts about the scheme and the motivation for it. Some articulated these doubts to their pupils, encouraging them to look critically at any scheme they might embark upon. Nevertheless, in spite of the suspicion and confusion, and largely due to an absence of any realistic alternatives, many of the 1983/4 school leavers were absorbed by the government schemes.

Whilst transition studies of the 1950's and 1960's emphasised the difficulties which may accompany the transfer from school to work
(e.g. Jahoda 1949, Veness 1962), a different kind of difficulty, one of how to get into the labour market in the first place, beset many of the school leavers in 1983/4. Despite this, there appeared to be considerable optimism among pupils who intended to leave full-time education at the earliest age. In the areas of Windsor and Stevenage, and to a lesser extent Leicester, this optimism was not unreasonable. In the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle, however, it was difficult to see what this optimism could be based upon. The pupils in the areas of high unemployment were clearly aware of the difficulties which they were sure to face, yet many believed that when the time came things would turn out alright, that a job would turn up for them. Many careers teachers and careers officers who were interviewed were concerned about the optimism of their pupils. They had endeavoured, through individual interviews, to help pupils reach what they considered to be a more realistic assessment of the situation they faced, and of their chances of finding a job. The difficulty they found was in striking the balance between warning against false optimism and encouraging undue pessimism. This was a problem common to much of the careers officers' work in areas of high unemployment.

Pupils in each school were asked to outline their plans for after the end of the fifth year. The 48% of pupils whose intentions it was to leave education and to enter the labour market were asked to complete a questionnaire about their immediate plans, how they had come to their decision, the kinds of support they had received from teachers, parents, friends, etc. Pupils were also questioned about the influence of the local labour market on their decision and how this may have been affected by the availability of jobs. Those pupils who were interviewed
were questioned further about their intentions in relation to local labour market conditions, the way in which they were being prepared for leaving school by teachers and the careers service, and how they had arrived at their decisions.

**Reasons for leaving school**

In the first instance those pupils who were interviewed were asked why they intended to leave school at the end of their fifth year. Given the opportunities open to them with the vocational further education programmes and courses discussed earlier, none of the pupils were forced to end their fulltime education at the age of sixteen. All pupils interviewed were aware of the possibility of continuing in education for at least another year and most had at some time considered this option with varying degrees of seriousness. For some it remained a possibility if they were unable to secure a job of their choice or, particularly in Middlesbrough and Newcastle, if they were unable to find any kind of job.

Pupils gave a variety of reasons for their intention to leave school. In each of the five schools there were pupils whose decision to leave was based largely on their experience of school so far. These pupils claimed typically to have "had enough" of school in general, or of particular teachers, subjects, etc., and therefore wanted to try the adult world. For most of them, further education had never really been a serious consideration. Even where unemployment seemed likely, these pupils felt this would be preferable to remaining in education. Others had clear ideas of the jobs they wanted to do and were anxious to leave school and start them. Usually in areas where the local labour market was buoyant, these pupils had identified the organisations to which they
would apply for their chosen jobs. In the areas of high unemployment, however, many pupils felt their chances of securing work would not be significantly enhanced by further education and could see no point, therefore, in continuing. In each of the five schools there were pupils for whom leaving school at the age of sixteen was clearly the normal thing to do. Pressures, both overt and covert, exerted by family and peer groups encouraged the pupil to leave school at the earliest age. To stay on in education would probably be to court disapproval of these important groups.

From the reasons which pupils gave for their intention to leave school, it is clear that they were often reflections of the local labour market and the opportunity structure into which they sought to enter. Socio-economic influences were clearly important in the decision making process, as were experiences of school up to the time decisions were taken.

**Intended first destinations**

Pupils were asked to state what they considered would be their most likely first destination after leaving school.

The majority of pupils (Table 10.1) thought they would be most likely to find a job\(^1\) after leaving school (55%). Another 24% of the pupils expected to take part in a YTS scheme, 2% expected to do

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1. At this stage, pupils were not required to state if this would be a job of their choice. The concern was with the percentage of pupils who expected to be in some kind of employment soon after the end of their fifth year.
something other than was specified in the list, whilst 16% could not say what their first destination was likely to be. Overall, only 3% of those pupils intending to leave school at the earliest opportunity expected to be unemployed. Given the general state of the youth labour market in 1983/4, these figures demonstrate a general optimism among the surveyed pupils with regard to their most likely first destinations. However, these general data conceal substantial variations between the expected first destinations of fifth years from the five different schools.

The most dramatic differences (Table 10.2) can be seen in the percentage of pupils expecting to enter employment. As was anticipated, a very high percentage of the Windsor and Stevenage pupils (86% and 74% respectively) expected to enter work soon after leaving school. Similarly, a substantial majority of Leicester pupils (61%) held the same expectation. However, in Middlesbrough only 26% and in Newcastle 32% of pupils had this expectation. In these schools, almost half the leavers expected to join a YTS scheme (43% and 42% respectively), whilst in Windsor only 7%, Stevenage 11% and Leicester 13% of pupils expected to do this.

Whilst the majority of Middlesbrough and Newcastle leavers expected not to find work, only very few from each school expected to be unemployed and signing on the dole. In spite of the many reservations expressed about the youth training scheme, it would appear that many of

1. In particular, joining H.M. Forces was put forward as a likely destination by these pupils.
the school leavers for whom unemployment was a real threat would opt for the scheme in preference to signing on the dole. The data collected from interviews with pupils confirmed this, and show very clearly that YTS was seen primarily as something that pupils could fall back on. For very few pupils in 1983, despite attempts to stress the positive aspects of YTS as a form of vocational preparation and training, was the scheme a first choice. Evidence of this is further demonstrated from the Windsor, Stevenage and Leicester schools, all of which had a low percentage of pupils whose intention it was to join a YTS scheme. Clearly, where jobs were available, almost invariably these were regarded as preferable to YTS.

Occupational choice

From all schools, pupils identified a wide variety of jobs from many different industrial and commercial sectors, and no clear occupational choice patterns emerged. However, approximately 45% of pupils intending to leave school after the fifth year hoped to get some kind of skilled manual job. Within this category engineering, carpentry, electrical and building work were particularly attractive to the male respondents. Many females, meanwhile, had hopes of secretarial and office work or, in Leicester in particular, of factory work in manufacturing industries. Shop work was also popular with girls across the four schools. Working with computers and new technology proved a popular idea with male and female fifth years in all schools. In Middlesbrough and Newcastle, however, the pupil interviews revealed a belief that new technology industries would be the likely areas of growth and would, therefore, be able to offer jobs to school leavers.
The questionnaire data revealed very little difference between schools with regard to particular job aspirations and intentions. Interviews, however, revealed a greater uncertainty among the pupils from areas of high unemployment. Many of these pupils had clear ideas about the jobs they would ideally like to do but, due to the level of unemployment, these were often considered to be unrealistic. As a consequence, pupils were reluctant to express these ideals as intentions, and this is likely to have accounted for the high percentage of respondents (21%) who stated that they did not know what kind of work they wished to enter.

For many of the pupils in Middlesbrough and Newcastle, questions about career intentions and aspirations were seen as a waste of time. The pupils realised that their aspirations were determined, to a large extent, by the opportunity structure of their area. As Roberts (1977, 1984) asserted, the nature of the opportunity structure is a key determinant in the level of occupational choice open to the school leaver. Many of the Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils considered that they had very little scope for occupational choice. This was made explicit by the large numbers of pupils from these schools who stated that they were prepared to accept any kind of job that became available. To talk of occupational choice for Middlesbrough and Newcastle school leavers was, therefore, largely erroneous.

The necessity for pupils from the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools to accept any job which may have been available invalidates many of the theories of developmental occupational choice. In Ginzberg's (1951) terms, by the age of sixteen pupils should have been progressing within the 'realistic phase' of the occupational choice process: having
tested out various ideas, coming to focus on one in particular, developing this and taking action to secure the job of their choice from a position of knowledge about that job. In reality, most of the pupils in the areas of high unemployment had never reached the realistic phase in the process. The opportunity structure in these areas was such that most occupational choices were in fact fantasy choices. The general lack of jobs for school leavers prevented the process of occupational choice progressing further than this. For those pupils fortunate enough to secure jobs in these areas, the question of whether this was a job of their choice was largely irrelevant.

A small number of pupils expressed a desire to enter semi-professional or professional positions. For example, a boy from the Leicester school stated his intention was to become a lawyer, whilst a girl from the same school hoped to be a veterinary surgeon. Similarly, two male respondents, one from the Newcastle school and one from Windsor, stated that they wished to become airline pilots. Given that all of these occupations require success in further and higher education, and that the respondents had opted to leave fulltime education at the earliest opportunity, it is unlikely that they would aspire to these positions. It would seem, therefore, that in a small number of cases, pupils had not been given sufficient information about entry requirements for particular occupations in which they were interested.

Guidance and support received
Pupils were asked to identify who they had spoken to about their decision to leave school. The previous chapter discussed how those choosing to stay in education had consulted parents and friends about their decision more frequently than teachers or careers officers. A
similar pattern of consultation is evident amongst those pupils intending to leave school at the end of their fifth year. The most salient data from the questionnaire responses reveal that parents and friends were again the most frequently consulted parties, 70% and 55% of respondents respectively having spoken to such people about their decision to leave school. Only 37% of respondents had spoken to a careers officer about their decision, but considerable differences between the schools existed with regard to this. For example, only 12% of Stevenage pupils had talked about leaving school with a careers officer compared with 53% of Newcastle pupils.

Given that careers officers had frequent and regular access to the Stevenage school, the fact that only 12% of Stevenage pupils had talked with a careers officer about their intentions after leaving school is surprising. Many more of the pupils, however, expected to talk to a careers officer about their specific intentions as the fifth year progressed. Nevertheless, data collected from the individual interviews with Stevenage pupils reflect a sense of non-urgency and an expectation that, when the time came, they would be able to find the kind of job that they wanted without the help of the careers officer. This is not to imply that Stevenage pupils failed to value the assistance of the careers officer, but rather that they identified a buoyant labour market which they expected to accommodate them.

Some of the Stevenage pupils expressed several ideas about careers they would like to follow, and expected to discuss the merits of each of them with a careers officer before making a final decision and taking action. They identified the careers officer's role in terms of the provision of information in order that they could make an informed
career choice. Some of the pupils also expected careers officers to provide addresses and contacts which would lead to jobs. The Stevenage interview data demonstrate quite clearly an expectation on the part of those intending to leave school at the earliest opportunity, that careers education would help them to make informed decisions and would be able to assist them in securing a job of their choice. An interview with a Stevenage careers teacher revealed that he held a similar interpretation of the role of careers education in that school. He was concerned that many school leavers did not appreciate the range of jobs and industries which were open to them. For example, he felt that many of the boys had decided to take engineering apprenticeships with British Aerospace (BAE), one of the biggest employers in the town. Whilst BAE offered very good opportunities for school leavers, the careers teacher was concerned that many boys merely intended to follow the path of their fathers, older brothers or friends and to take the most obvious course. He felt that some of the leavers knew very little about the kind of work environment they were seeking to enter, and doubted their suitability for it. In such cases, he saw his role as one of providing information about the occupation and work environment, in order that the pupil may make an informed choice. Where possible, this would involve a visit to the workplace for the pupil, so that they could experience the environment at firsthand. The careers teacher claimed always to encourage pupils to consider a number of jobs before deciding on one and taking action to secure it.

In the Newcastle school, practices were very different. 53% of respondents had spoken to a careers officer about their post-school intentions. Very few of these pupils expected to find jobs when they
left school, and during interviews they admitted to considerable concern over what they would most likely do after leaving school. For many, consulting the careers officer was seen as a way of getting an 'official' view of the employment situation and their individual chances of getting a job.

The Newcastle careers officer confirmed this and explained that much of his job was concerned with providing pupils with information about alternatives to employment, in particular the YTS scheme. If any of the pupils were offered a job, the careers officer usually advised that they should take it, even if it was something they were not especially interested in or suited to. He explained that experience of real work often acted as an important qualification which could be used to help the young person secure a job more suited to their abilities and interests at a later date.

In terms of theories of careers guidance and occupational choice, the examples of Stevenage and Newcastle present two interesting and very different cases. The Stevenage teacher described a process which took a diagnostic approach, seeking to identify what would be a suitable job for the individual by considering interests and abilities, and comparing these against a variety of likely careers. Through a very positive approach, therefore, the pupils together with the careers teacher/officer, eliminate certain careers before deciding on one which is considered to be suitable. The approach depends on a demand for school leavers from the local labour market. In order for the approach to be successful, pupils need to be able to consider careers which are likely to be open to them, they need to be realistic choices. The approach clearly depends on a buoyant labour market.
In Newcastle, a diagnostic approach could not be taken. As we have seen, the scarcity of jobs meant that pupils were encouraged to accept almost any job which was made available to them. In this situation the approach may best be described as one of opportunism, as pupils were encouraged to capitalise on any job opportunity which occurred. In terms of practice, for the careers teachers and officers, the amount of preparation they were able to engage in with regard to occupational choice was severely limited by the absence of jobs for school leavers in the area. The depressed labour market in Newcastle, and in Middlesbrough, made the implementation of policy for occupational choice very difficult. For most of the pupils in these areas it was unrealistic to speak of occupational choice. The need for careers education to be practical and useful meant that time had to be given to preparing school leavers for unemployment and considering alternatives to employment, rather than to considering the merits of, and pupils' suitability for different careers.

In terms of overall policy for careers education and guidance, the examples of Stevenage and Newcastle emphasise the impact of the level of unemployment on the school leaving process. Many of the theories of careers education, occupational choice and guidance, discussed earlier in this thesis, which have had considerable influence on the practices of careers and guidance teachers/officers (e.g. Ginzberg, 1951; Super, 1953, 1957; Vaughn, 1970, 1975) have paid little attention to the nature of the labour market. To a great extent, this is a reflection of the times in which these theories were developed, when opportunity structures were such that school leavers had a real choice of occupation. These diagnostic and trait approaches relied on
the existence of a supply of suitable jobs against which school leavers could be matched. High levels of youth unemployment render such approaches largely futile. Although in 1983/4 it was still possible to match pupils against particular jobs and careers, the fact that they were not available to school leavers in many areas made a successful completion to the process impossible.

This research has shown that different labour market conditions have great impact on pupils' needs of careers education. It has shown that, in order to meet these needs and be responsive to the local labour market, careers education and guidance practice has to be flexible. There is a need, therefore, for the policy and strategy which underpin the practice also to be flexible, responding to the different needs and demands of the different labour markets.

**Job seeking**

Ashton and Maguire (1977) found that pupils in Sunderland tended to enter the labour market at the earliest opportunity in order to maximise their chances of finding work. One might expect, therefore, that pupils in the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle would not only enter the labour market at the earliest opportunity, but would also start the process of trying to find a job in good time before the end of the fifth year. To examine job seeking patterns in the different areas, pupils were asked to specify when they considered to be the best time to begin looking for a job.

The data show (Table 10.3) that the great majority of pupils (95%) believed it best to begin looking for work up to a year before they left school. Although only 5% of pupils overall thought it best to wait until after leaving school, a considerable minority (23%) of
Middlesbrough pupils felt the best time to begin their job search was after leaving. Information collected from interviews with the Middlesbrough pupils suggests two principal reasons for their decision to wait until after leaving school before beginning their search for work. The two reasons are not unconnected. In the first instance, a number of pupils, in recognition of the considerable time and effort involved in looking for a job, had decided to postpone their search until they had completed their examinations, had received the results and were able to demonstrate to employers what they had achieved and what they were capable of. This would enable them to devote all their efforts during the fifth year to their examinations. The second group of pupils explained their intentions in terms of the shortage of jobs for school leavers. They believed their chances of finding work whilst still at school to be very limited. Consequently they felt it would be better to wait until after leaving when they could devote all their time to finding work. In this research, the Middlesbrough pupils are clearly different from their peers in Sunderland with whom Ashton and Maguire (1977) worked.

What became clear in all five schools was that, although only a minority of pupils claimed to have begun their job search in earnest by the time this survey was carried out, most did admit to keeping a cursory eye on the labour market. For example, pupils frequently looked through job advertisements in local newspapers, some had already visited the local authority careers office and the Job Centre. From these activities it was obvious that the search for work did not suddenly begin at a given date, but gradually evolved and took on greater importance as the time to leave school got closer. Most pupils
recognised that, even in areas of low unemployment, job seeking could be
time consuming, and were aware of the need to begin the process well
before the end of their fifth year if their transition from school to
work was to be a smooth one. It also became clear that a minority of
pupils in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools were sceptical of
investing a great deal of time in job seeking. These pupils did not
expect to find jobs but, if one 'turned up', then they would take it.
They considered themselves unable to influence their chances of finding
work by actively seeking it. This situation provides stark contrast
with that of Windsor, where many of those interviewed stressed the need
to begin the search early in order that the widest range of jobs
possible would be open to them. There was an expectation that the
'best' jobs would be likely to be filled quickly. The view was not held
by all Windsor pupils, however, and a number of those interviewed
expected jobs to be available at any time they chose to start looking.
As one pupil stated, "there is no need to panic and accept the first job
you are offered". He was typical of many in the school who were
considering a variety of different career paths and were prepared to
delay looking for a job while they decided which one to follow. They
considered there was nothing to be gained from seeking to enter the
market early.

Overall, the great majority of pupils choosing to leave school
at the end of their fifth year wished to begin work as soon as possible
after leaving. In order to facilitate a smooth transfer, pupils
recognised the need to allow plenty of time to find a job. Time was
considered necessary in the areas of lower youth unemployment in order
for a wide choice to be available. In areas of high unemployment,
meanwhile, it was considered necessary in order for the school leaver to maximise access to what few jobs were likely to be available.

Methods of finding work

On the questionnaire, pupils were asked to give their opinion of various methods of finding a job (Table 10.4). It was not assumed that they would necessarily have had first-hand experience of any of the methods. They were merely asked to indicate the degree to which they expected the various methods to be successful. Implicitly, the opinions of the methods suggested may provide an indication of the methods pupils themselves would expect to employ when job seeking.

Personal approaches to employers was the method expected to prove most successful. In all schools the great majority of respondents expected this method to be either 'very good' or 'quite good'. In interviews, pupils explained that they expected employers to be impressed by school leavers who took the initiative to approach them directly either in reply to specific job advertisements, or in the form of unsolicited enquiries. Pupils expected this direct approach to enable the employer to see them as an individual and, as such, it would give them an opportunity to impress. Pupils in the areas of high unemployment felt this was particularly important, giving them the opportunity to show how they were different from other school leavers.

Job centres were also regarded as likely to prove fruitful, as were careers offices. Pupils from Middlesbrough and Newcastle, however, expressed doubts about these organisations. Experiences of family and friends had shown that few vacancies were notified to these offices, those that were, being taken very quickly.
A high percentage of respondents expected contacts and approaches made by members of their family on their behalf to be a useful means of securing work. A number of pupils explained that parents intended to 'put a word in' for them when the time to leave approached. Pupils in Windsor and Stevenage in particular expected to use informal methods to approach employers in the first instance. Overall, interview data have shown that pupils expected to use a variety of methods in order to find a job, and few expected to use only one method. In the areas of high unemployment, pupils were prepared to employ whatever methods were suitable. Generally, they recognised a need to be quick with applications when vacancies occurred and to apply for more than one job at a time. A number of pupils expressed concern, however, that whatever method was employed, their chances of securing work could not be significantly improved unless the supply of jobs to the youth labour market improved.

Applying for jobs

Having considered the best time to begin applying for jobs and the most appropriate methods to use, pupils were asked to estimate the number of jobs they expected to apply for before being successful. Overall, the data show that the majority of respondents (70%) expected to apply for no more than ten jobs before being successful. Differences between the schools on this point were not great although, unsurprisingly, there was a tendency for pupils from the more buoyant labour markets to expect to apply for fewer jobs than pupils from the areas of high unemployment. For example, over half of Windsor pupils (52%) expected to apply for less than six jobs before being successful, whilst only one third of Newcastle pupils had the same expectation. Similarly, at the other end
of the scale, 16% of Newcastle pupils expected to apply for twenty to thirty jobs before having any success, compared with only 2% of Windsor pupils.

In relation to the number of jobs pupils expected to apply for, interviews revealed further differences between the schools. For example, Windsor and Stevenage pupils expressed intentions of applying only for those kinds of jobs in which they had a particular interest. There was an expectation that sufficient jobs of that nature would be available, and their job search could be limited accordingly. The Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils, on the other hand, could hold no such expectations. Even where pupils had firm ideas about the kinds of jobs they would like to secure, the intention was usually to apply for a much wider variety of jobs, and these would not necessarily be allied to the particular career interests of the pupil. However, questionnaire data showed there were limits to the kind of jobs pupils considered suitable and would apply for. Very few respondents, from any of the five schools, said they would be prepared to accept absolutely any kind of job. In particular, limits were drawn around jobs which were dirty, for example, street cleaning and refuse collection, or in some cases were seen as dangerous or anti-social. Work on North Sea oil rigs or on fishing trawlers were seen in these terms by some pupils in Middlesbrough and Newcastle. Furthermore, many pupils identified particular jobs which they would find unacceptable for personal reasons. Experiences of family or friends in such jobs may have been the reason for this, or a belief that they had the ability to aspire to a position of greater social standing. In Windsor, for example, any kind of manual
work was regarded as undesirable and unsuitable by many respondents with intentions to enter high status positions.

These data have shown, therefore, that even where there were restrictions on the availability of jobs for school leavers, pupils still identified certain levels and standards of jobs below which they refused to drop. For some of the pupils in Middlesbrough and Newcastle, however, identification of jobs they would not accept was indeed hypothetical, as even these undesirable jobs were in short supply.

**Alternatives to employment**

Although the respondents with whom we are concerned in this chapter had expressed an intention to leave fulltime education at the end of their fifth year, and the majority to find a job, those in Middlesbrough and Newcastle were in no doubt of the difficulty in entering the labour market. Many of these pupils would be forced to consider alternatives to employment if they were unable to find work soon after leaving school. However, interview data revealed a reluctance from many of these pupils to consider anything other than employment. As was discussed earlier, the YTS scheme was newly introduced and its association with the YOP meant pupils were reluctant to see this as an acceptable alternative to employment. Nevertheless, the interviews were also able to reveal that very few pupils, in the absence of a 'proper job', were prepared to remain idle and, as such, many stated that they would accept a place on a YTS scheme, but only as a last resort.

Considerable differences are evident in the percentage of pupils from each of the schools (Table 10.5) who stated they would be prepared to accept a place on a government training scheme if work was unavailable. Particular differences can be seen between the
Middlesbrough and Windsor schools. Interview data from the Windsor school revealed that very few respondents had ever considered a YTS scheme, and some went further to suggest that the general availability of jobs in that area made the provision of such a scheme unnecessary. It is not surprising, therefore, that only one fifth of respondents from the Windsor school would ever consider joining a government scheme. Furthermore, information from the Windsor careers office shows that in 1984, 40% of YTS places were withdrawn because of low take up. YTS is provided jointly between the towns of Slough, Maidenhead and Windsor, and in July 1984, 1000 places were available. Approximately 600 of these places were filled. The remaining 400 places were progressively withdrawn between November and January. Despite this, there still remained 30 - 40 places available throughout the year.

Similar data from the Middlesbrough careers office confirmed the central importance of YTS to the school to non-school transfer process in that area in 1983/4. Of the 2730 fifth years eligible to leave school, only 242 (9%) were successful in securing work. The youth training scheme accounted for 1104 (41%). The remainder either continued in fulltime education (31%), were unemployed (12%) or were unaccounted for (7%). Despite the high participation in YTS by the Middlesbrough pupils, the scheme was not popular and would be considered only as a last resort.

The main reasons which pupils offered as explanations for their reluctance to join a government training scheme reflected a strongly held view that such schemes were a means for employers to secure cheap labour. Others would refuse to join a scheme, believing that it would reduce their availability for any 'proper' jobs which may become vacant.
Pupils in the more vibrant labour markets (apart from Leicester, where 59% of pupils were prepared to accept a YTS place) were not only sceptical of the need for such schemes, but were also concerned about the way in which the schemes were perceived by society. One Windsor pupil summed up the beliefs of many in that school and the Stevenage school. He said:

"Schemes are probably alright for people in areas where there are no jobs, like Scotland. But in this area, people would think you had not really tried if you went on a YTS."

Clearly there was a social stigma attached to government schemes in areas where jobs for school leaves were readily available. Rarely, in any of the five areas, were government schemes seen in a positive light. In all schools, however, careers officers had attempted to stress the benefits which could be gained, particularly from YTS, emphasising the training and experience which it afforded. At this early stage of the scheme, however, it appeared that careers officers had failed to convince pupils of its benefits, the great majority of whom regarded participation in a YTS scheme as indicative of failure to find a job.

Apart from a government scheme, the only other route open to the majority of the respondents was to remain in fulltime education. Given that the pupils with whom this chapter is concerned had already expressed a firm intention to leave education at the earliest opportunity, it was unlikely that further education would be regarded as an acceptable alternative to work. Nevertheless, the previous chapter showed that many of those pupils intending to stay in education were doing so purely because of a shortage of jobs. It is likely, therefore, that if they were unable to secure jobs, some of those who intended to leave education would ultimately choose to stay on.
However, the majority of pupils who expressed an intention to leave education after their fifth year stated, during interviews, that they intended to see this intention through, whether they were able to find a job or not. A respondent from Leicester explained that individual pride was important in this situation, and to go back to education would be seen as an admission not only of failure in the labour market, but also in the adult world. For this reason alone he felt it was better to pursue original intentions and accept the consequences of unemployment, if necessary.

Moving to a different area

The capacity for school leavers to move independently to new areas in order to find work is severely limited. Roberts et al (1986) point out that the lack of a system of support for young people which would enable them to move between areas means that they must normally seek employment locally. Consequently, the school leavers' lack of financial and emotional independence mean the chances of finding work, and the kind of work available, are restricted by the local opportunity structure. To speak of a national youth labour market is, therefore, meaningless. Furthermore, this research has demonstrated quite clearly that very different kinds of labour markets exist in different parts of the country, and has shown how pupils from these different areas have different experiences of entering the labour market.

Pupils in the study tended to be well aware of the limitations imposed on labour market opportunities by the nature of their area. In Windsor, for example, pupils were very optimistic about the opportunities open to them. One respondent spoke at some length about these:
"The area in which we live is a good area as it has low unemployment which means many jobs are available to us. Our area is expanding which means more jobs will be created, to our benefit. We have a good school which provides many opportunities such as other languages and it has a good exam mark rate which means we can obtain qualifications for our jobs."

By contrast, a Middlesbrough pupil described the situation in her area in one short sentence:

"In this area there are few jobs left, so you cannot pick and choose."

As well as recognising the limitations of their opportunities, the great majority of pupils also realised that to move away from their area would be very difficult. Only a small minority of pupils stated they would be prepared to move to different areas in order to find work. Of those pupils interviewed, very few had ever seriously considered moving to a different area. Pupils from the more vibrant areas could see little to be gained by doing so, and most of those from the areas of high unemployment expressed concern over the practicalities of such a move, given the insecurity of their situation. One Newcastle pupil did, however, intend to move South to stay with relatives in order to find work.

During interviews, pupils suggested that barriers to movement between areas were not just financial. Problems of isolation and loneliness, finding somewhere to live, and coping with the pressures of life in general, in a strange place, in addition to those associated with starting work for the first time, were also identified as important and likely to prevent movement. Furthermore, pupils had only vague ideas of which areas of the country would be able to offer better employment prospects than their own. Pupils from the North frequently
suggested that 'down South' or London were areas where jobs could be found. Very few had specific knowledge of other areas where jobs were available for school leavers. Information about the South and London tended to be gleaned from what other people had told them and from what they had heard through television and radio. None of the pupils claimed to have deliberately sought out information on alternative areas. For the majority of pupils, the capacity to move to a different area was greatly limited, and furthermore was seen as desirable only by a small minority of respondents. Those in areas with buoyant labour markets were usually content to look for work locally, whilst for others, the 'prices' associated with moving to a different area were expected to outweigh the 'prizes' which could be gained.

This lack of mobility, together with the widely differing opportunity structures of the different labour markets, has implications for the introduction and implementation of youth employment and training policy. Roberts et al (1986) point out that, whilst government intervention in this area has been on a national scale (the introduction of various government training and work experience schemes, and earlier the replacement of the youth employment service by the careers education service, are examples of this), the impact of these policies has varied widely from one area to another. My study confirms Roberts' view and has shown, for example, how the availability of jobs for school leavers has affected the appeal and take up of places on the Youth Training Scheme in different areas. It has also emphasised the different roles played by members of the careers service in the light of differential availability of jobs for school leavers. Clearly, policies introduced
at a national level do not stand in isolation, and their impact is mediated by their interaction with local labour market conditions. The effect of national policies on and for the school leaver varies greatly from one area to another, producing quite different results. Given that the great majority of pupils are tied to one locality in which to look for work, their experience of national policy will be based solely on its interaction with that local labour market. As such, it would be unrealistic for national policy makers to assume that implementation throughout the country would produce any kind of uniformity in the effect and results of their policies. It may be argued, therefore, that regional differences preclude any kind of uniformity of effect and, as such, invalidate attempts at national policy implementation. If this argument is accepted, then regional policies tailored to the specific needs of the individual labour markets may perhaps be seen as a more effective way of aiding the process of transfer from school to non-school.

**Assistance from the school in finding a job**

As was discussed in the previous chapter, there was a general feeling among pupils that the careers education provided in all five schools was satisfactory. In making that general statement, many of the different demands and requirements of careers education identified by pupils in the different areas have been glossed over. Much of this research has been concerned with the different kinds of requirements pupils have of careers education, and any assessment of the success or failure of careers education must take account of these different needs. For example, pupils in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools were aware of
the local labour market conditions and their implications for their chances of finding work. Few of these pupils, in the light of the labour market conditions, expected careers education and the general preparation for leaving school to result in their finding a job. Their requirements of careers education were more sophisticated than this. In the other schools, however, and in particular Windsor, it was clearly acceptable for pupils to expect the careers education process to result in their finding a suitable job. In assessing and evaluating the success of the careers education provided, therefore, these different needs and expectations are paramount.

Having stressed the importance of different needs and expectations, it is not unfair to assume that those pupils who intended to leave education after the fifth year expected the careers education provided by their school to at least assist them in finding a job. Even in the areas of high unemployment, where pupils recognised the difficulty inherent in finding work, there was an expectation that a principal objective of careers education was that it would help them to enter the labour market. Pupils were asked to assess, therefore, the extent to which they considered their school was helping them to find a job.

Table 10.6 shows that the most positive views of assistance provided by the school were those of the Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils. 61% and 55% respectively of these respondents felt that they were receiving either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of help in their search for a job. By way of contrast, only 20% of Leicester pupils made the same claim. It would be incorrect to deduce from the statistics, however, that the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools were actually
providing more assistance than the other three schools. The expectations which pupils held of their careers education have to be brought to bear here. It has already been stated that few pupils from Middlesbrough or Newcastle expected their careers education to result in their finding a job. Consequently their expectations of the careers education provided by the school in relation to finding a job were not likely to be high. Interview data confirmed this. Several pupils expressed the belief that the school was doing all that could be expected under the circumstances of high unemployment. In other schools, the converse may have been true, in that the buoyancy of the local labour market encouraged pupils to expect their schools to actually find them jobs. If they failed to do this, or appeared unlikely to do so, pupils may have become disappointed.

Overall, the majority of respondents (56%) felt that their schools were doing either 'not much' (38%) or 'nothing at all' (18%) to help them find a job. Given that, for many pupils, this was one of the key objectives of careers education, these data must be seen as an indication from the pupils that this aspect of careers education had to some extent been neglected.

Conclusion
The research has shown that first destinations and experiences of the respondents are likely to differ widely between the five schools. The different levels of unemployment and the availability of jobs for school leavers in the local labour markets have been shown to be key determinants not only in anticipated first destinations and experiences, but also in pupils' aspirations, the careers education they have received and their reactions to it.
Put in its simplest form, those pupils from the prosperous areas could generally look forward to good employment prospects and a wider career choice. Most of those from the areas of high unemployment, on the other hand, faced a more uncertain future likely to be punctuated by government schemes and periods of unemployment.

In view of the very real differences existing between these different groups of school leavers, it has not been possible to identify a school leaving process which is common to all schools. Unlike the studies of the 1960's/70's (eg. Veness, 1962; Carter, 1962; Maizels, 1970, etc.) which drew broad generalisations about the transfer from school to work, this research has demonstrated the great diversity of experience, opportunity, expectation and aspirations which exist between pupils in school in different parts of the country. It has shown that, in the light of these differences, generalisations and overarching theory relating to occupational choice and the entry to work, can no longer be applied to the majority of school leavers. It has been shown, for example, that where jobs for school leavers are scarce it is unrealistic to speak of occupational choice. In such areas the pupils' capacity for choice is severely limited to the few jobs which may be available. In some cases there may be no choice at all, school leavers being forced to accept whatever is available.

The need for careers education to be relevant to the likely experiences of the pupils has meant that curricular uniformity in careers education between different areas and labour markets has not always been possible or desirable. The different local labour markets have led to the identification of different careers education needs by the pupils. Careers education provided in the five schools has,
therefore, had different objectives and, whilst content has sometimes
been broadly similar, the rationale for it may have been considerably
different.

In spite of these major differences, however, similarities
between the areas have also been observed. In general terms, those
pupils who intended to leave school after their fifth year showed a
commitment to this intention, regardless of the nature of the labour
market. This is not to imply that they were necessarily optimistic
about their chances of finding work, but they were sure that further
education was not what they wanted. In addition to this, the majority
of respondents claimed to be looking forward to leaving fulltime
education, regardless of their likely first destination.

Leaving school remained a socially significant event in the
lives of most fifth years, signalling entry to the adult world. For
many, however, full adult status was likely to be denied as long as they
were unemployed or on a government scheme. Leaving school was likely to
result in entry to a world of limbo and dislocation. Many school
leavers would belong neither to the world of work nor education,
childhood nor adulthood.

Where unemployment was high, careers teachers and officers found
their position difficult and often ambiguous. Whilst they encouraged
pupils to look for jobs and to make tentative plans for the future, they
were also forced to engage in education and preparation for
unemployment. Difficulty arose in striking the correct balance between
these two important aspects of the school leaving programme, without
engendering undue optimism or pessimism among the pupils.
Arguably the most important aim of careers education across all five schools was that of relevance. The content and objectives of the careers education provided had to be directly relevant to the state of the local labour market and to the likely experiences of the school leavers attempting to enter it. In view of this, any form of nationally specified curriculum for careers education which failed to take account of the regional differences would surely fail in the important objective of relevance to the majority of school leavers.
Table 10.1 Pupils' likely first destinations after leaving school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>% of all pupils intending to leave fulltime education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go to work</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTS</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300

n = Total number of pupils intending to leave fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.

Table 10.2 Pupils' likely first destinations after leaving school: By school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Go to work</th>
<th>YTS</th>
<th>Unemployment</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = Total number of pupils in each school intending to leave fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.
Table 10.3  When is the best time to start looking for a job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>1 year before leaving</th>
<th>6 months before leaving</th>
<th>3 months before leaving</th>
<th>After the exams</th>
<th>After leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = Number of respondents in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n. Missing cases = 60.

Table 10.4  Pupils' assessment of methods of finding work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Quite good</th>
<th>Not very good</th>
<th>Useless</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local paper</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers office</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job centre</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers teacher</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal approaches</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300

n = Total number of pupils intending to leave fulltime education after their fifth year. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.

*Percentages total more than 100% as pupils could identify more than one method of finding work.
Table 10.5  If unable to find a job, would pupils accept a place on a YTS scheme?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Perhaps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = Number of respondents in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.

Missing cases = 66

Table 10.6 To what extent is your school helping you to find a job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

n = Number of respondents in each school. Responses are expressed as a percentage of n.

Missing cases = 61
Chapter Eleven

THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Introduction

Approximately three months after the end of the fifth year, in which all the surveyed pupils were eligible to leave fulltime education, those who took part in the individual interviews were contacted again. They were asked to complete a short questionnaire (Appendix 4) which was concerned with their first destinations, the qualifications they had acquired and their overall assessment of the careers education they had received.

Pupils were contacted in October. This was considered to be a suitable length of time after the end of the school year, as examination results would have been received, decisions made and actions taken accordingly. In most cases, pupils would either have returned to fulltime education after the summer vacation, joined a YTS scheme, or they would be in, or seeking to get into, the labour market.

It was considered most appropriate for those pupils who had been interviewed during the main data collection exercises to be contacted for a second time as more was known about those pupils than about any of the others. It would be possible, therefore, to view their actions after the end of compulsory schooling in the light of their intentions and aspirations expressed earlier in the year.

Of the 64 pupils interviewed during their fifth year, 60 were contacted for the follow-up study in October. The remaining four pupils either stated at the time of their interviews that they wished not to be contacted again (3) or, in one case, the school had no contact address.
Of the 60 follow-up questionnaires despatched, 48 were returned. A response rate of 80% (Table 11.1 shows the breakdown of returns from the five schools) was achieved. Although the number of returns made totalled only 48, and accounts for only 8% of the total sample who completed the original questionnaire, there is no reason to assume that responses made by these pupils are atypical. Consequently, they may be seen as a guide to the actions, views and concerns of the total survey population.

First destinations
Twenty-one of the 48 respondents (44%) had returned to fulltime education after the end of the fifth year. At the time of the original questionnaire, 52% of all respondents had expressed an intention to remain in education. The figure of 44% is closer to the national average (45%) for 1984 and is probably representative of the percentage of the total respondents who did actually stay on after the fifth year. Even with the small number of respondents to the follow-up survey, a similar trend was identified to that in the main survey, insofar as the Windsor and Middlesbrough schools had the highest percentage of pupils opting to stay on in fulltime education.

Comparing actual first destinations with intentions identified at the time of the interviews reveals some considerable change. In general it appears that changes occurred most frequently among those pupils who chose to leave fulltime education. There were numerous examples of pupils who were pursuing different kinds of careers from those in which they had expressed an interest during interviews.

1. Source: Leicester Careers Office
conducted in their final school year. There were also several 'follow-up' respondents who had originally intended to remain in fulltime education but had eventually decided to leave. One of these respondents, from the Leicester school, explained that her examination results had been particularly bad. As a consequence she could see little to be gained from remaining in education, preferring to enter the labour market as an unskilled factory assistant. By way of contrast, several respondents from the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools who, during interviews, stated that they would continue in education if they were unable to find a job, had done precisely that. These respondents had applied for numerous jobs and, in one case, for the YTS scheme, but had been unsuccessful.

The early experience of the follow-up respondents would seem to indicate that considerable changes between intentions expressed during interviews and first destinations did occur. In particular, change seemed most common in the areas of high unemployment, where the labour market offered few opportunities for untrained, inexperienced school leavers. For example, a number of respondents from the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools, who had originally intended to leave school, stated that their reason for remaining in fulltime education was to accrue more qualifications and so be more attractive to employers (cf. Bynner, 1989).

By contrast, the follow-up survey also showed that respondents from the Windsor school in particular, and the Leicester and Stevenage schools to a lesser extent, were usually able to follow their original intentions. Most respondents from the economically vibrant locations were able to pursue careers of their choice. There was clearly a
greater congruity between expressed intentions and actual destinations amongst Windsor and Stevenage respondents than amongst the others. The nature of the local labour market and its opportunity structure, as expected, appeared to have been the main determinant in the general pattern of first destinations in each of the areas.

At the time of individual interviews, a significant proportion of pupils were unsure of their likely first destinations or of their intentions to leave fulltime education. By the time follow-up questionnaires were administered these pupils had, of course, been required to make a decision and to act upon it. Of those who completed a follow-up questionnaire and were undecided about their intentions at the time of the individual interviews, the majority had actually opted to remain in fulltime education. Although the reasons for their eventual decisions were not always explained in the follow-up questionnaire, it is thought likely that a number of pupils were still unsure about what they should do after the end of their fifth year and chose the course which was familiar to them in order to delay ultimate decisions. A number of pupils during individual interviews explained that this was likely to be their plan if they were still without firm intentions by the end of the fifth year. They were, in effect, buying extra time in which to make their decisions.

Remaining in education
Those respondents who had opted for further education had chosen to pursue their studies in a variety of different kinds of institutions. These included the sixth form of their current school, sixth form colleges, further education colleges and private training organisations. The most popular choice had been for pupils to move into the sixth form
of their current school. However, in the Middlesbrough school, which did not have its own sixth form, the most popular option had been the sixth form college near to the school, with which it had close links. The sixth form college also proved particularly popular with the Newcastle respondents. However, in Windsor, all follow-up pupils who had chosen to remain in education had done so at their current school. In Stevenage and Leicester, the proportion of pupils choosing this course of action was also high.

The choice of institution in which to continue education was clearly allied to the courses respondents had chosen to follow, and the qualifications they hoped to achieve as a result. 'A' levels, and a combination of 'O' and 'A' levels, were the most commonly pursued qualifications among the follow-up respondents. It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority had chosen either their current school or a sixth form college in which to continue their studies. Furthermore, the popularity of academic courses above those designed to be specifically vocational (cf. Schilling, 1989) bears out the findings of the main survey, which emphasised the importance attributed to academic qualifications by the pupils. Some of the pupils who had chosen to remain in education were repeating 'O' levels which they had failed at the first attempt. Where this was the case, pupils usually combined their re-takes with at least one 'A' level. Only minor interest was shown in BTEC qualifications, although more pupils had opted for City and Guilds courses of one kind or another. Pupils opting for these vocational courses tended to have a clear idea of the career they wished to pursue, and acquisition of the qualifications was usually the means by which entry to a particular career could be secured. Good examples
of this can be taken from two Leicester pupils, one of whom wished to follow a career in hairdressing, the other in motor vehicle mechanics. Both pupils had chosen to follow appropriate City and Guilds courses, and expected to get the kind of job they wanted on completion of their courses.

**Entering the labour market**

The 27 follow-up respondents who had chosen to leave fulltime education and enter the labour market had a variety of different experiences in their efforts to find a job. The actual experiences of the pupils, for the most part, seemed to be very similar to those anticipated during the individual interviews conducted earlier in the research. In broad terms, those pupils from the more affluent areas, particularly Windsor and Stevenage, appeared to experience little difficulty in finding work. Furthermore, the responses to the follow-up questionnaire show that these pupils were usually successful in securing the kind of job that they really wanted to do. For example, of the four Windsor pupils who had chosen to enter the labour market, three were engaged in jobs that they really wanted to do. The jobs were in each case apprenticeships (one as a chef, one as an electrician and the other as a motor mechanic), leading to qualifications which would be recognised within their chosen trade. The fourth respondent had not secured a job. Of his own choice he had decided to take casual jobs through the summer before looking for a more permanent position in the autumn. He had not experienced any difficulty in finding casual jobs, nor did he anticipate any in attempting to find a permanent post. None of the Windsor pupils had applied for more than two jobs before securing their current position.
In contrast, the Middlesbrough respondents had very different experiences of entering the labour market. Of the five 'follow-up' pupils who had left fulltime education, three were without any kind of occupation, though one expected to be offered a YTS place very shortly. The two pupils who had secured jobs stated clearly that they had been helped in this by members of their family. In short, one had joined his father's joinery firm and the other was working as an au pair for a friend of her father in Vienna (a position by no means typical of the Middlesbrough school leavers). Those who were not fortunate enough to have such family connections continued to apply for jobs and YTS places but had been unsuccessful. One girl had applied for thirty different positions. Not surprisingly, the Middlesbrough respondents did not regard their chances of finding a job of any kind, let alone one that they particularly wanted, as very high. The questionnaire responses indicate a general degree of pessimism among the respondents. Their expectations expressed at the time of their interviews, however, would suggest that the situation in which they found themselves was not a great surprise. As was shown in an earlier chapter, very few Middlesbrough or Newcastle pupils anticipated that entry to the labour market would be easy. The experiences of those who were included in the follow-up survey confirm these expectations.

The Youth Training Scheme

Earlier chapters have discussed the negative attitude shown towards YTS amongst respondents from all five schools. Despite this, a high percentage of follow-up respondents, particularly from Newcastle and Middlesbrough, were taking part in the scheme. Respondents from these two schools had not found access to the YTS scheme easy. Some pupils
had to apply for several places before being successful. Even though YTS was identified as a 'second best' option, the absence of 'real' jobs in these areas meant that demand for places was always greater than the supply.

From each of the Windsor and Stevenage schools one follow-up respondent had actually chosen to take a YTS place. In both cases, the YTS was allied to the first year of a more traditional apprenticeship, consequently any stigma attached to the scheme was reduced. In these two areas, where employment prospects for school leavers were good, there was some small evidence to suggest that YTS was beginning to be looked upon as a training scheme and a route into employment, rather than merely an alternative to unemployment. From such a small number of respondents, however, it is not possible to state with any great validity if this was the case generally among the school leavers from these two schools. What is clear, however, is that YTS had a different role in the school to non-school transfer process, according to the nature of the local labour market. In the areas of high unemployment, YTS was an alternative to the dole. Although the scheme held only low status among school leavers and the general public, places were not available for all young people and competition, particularly for places on the best schemes, was common. Where YTS was viewed as an alternative to unemployment, it was seen in terms of a qualification, an opportunity to gain experience which could be used as currency when attempting to enter the labour market proper, after the end of the scheme. YTS did not automatically lead to a job and many school leavers looked on it merely in terms of 'stop-gap'.

In the more buoyant areas of Windsor and Stevenage and, to a
lesser extent, Leicester, YTS was seen as an alternative to work. In Windsor most of those taking part in a YTS scheme were doing so by choice. Usually the scheme would be allied to a training period, and the trainee would be assured of a job at the end of it. In those areas where school leavers were able to find jobs, therefore, the YTS scheme seemed most likely to achieve its official aims of training and work preparation. In the areas of high unemployment, it was clearly difficult for the scheme to gain credibility by offering training for jobs which did not exist. The nature of the local labour market within which YTS was offered was, therefore, fundamental to the purpose it served, the way in which school leavers viewed it, and the eventual outcome of the scheme. (Cf. Sawden et al., 1977, for experiences of YOP in different labour markets.) To see the YTS scheme as a national initiative which served the same kind of purpose for school leavers in all parts of the country, would be to ignore the different economic contexts within which it was offered. This study has shown, for example, that to be a YTS trainee in Newcastle is very different from being a trainee in Windsor. The nature of the difference being a function of the local labour market and its capacity to recruit young workers.

Opportunity structures
The experiences of the respondents after the end of the fifth year have confirmed many of their expectations expressed at the time of the individual interviews. They have also brought an air of reality to many of the issues discussed throughout this thesis and raised questions about the content of the school leaving programmes in the different schools. For example, although of only limited scope, the follow-up
survey has emphasised the influence of the different opportunity structures operating between the different areas. The different experiences of pupils from the different schools have shown clearly how expectations and aspirations have been influenced by the availability of jobs in the locality. They have also shown how post-school experiences are to a large extent determined by access to the labour market.

The 'follow-up' responses have highlighted the difficulty experienced by most Middlesbrough and Newcastle school leavers in finding a job. At the same time they have shown the relative ease with which their peers from Windsor and Stevenage, and to a lesser extent Leicester, found work.

The respective labour market experiences of the Windsor, Stevenage, Leicester, Middlesbrough and Newcastle respondents raise questions about the concept of occupational choice and the emphasis placed on it in careers education. In particular, they raise questions about the validity of engaging in occupational choice exercises, about the application of theories of career choice, and the concept of choice which underpins the practice of many careers teachers and officers. For example, previous chapters have shown that, despite the existence of high unemployment in the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle, much of the content of careers education in the two schools in those areas remains geared towards occupational choice and the acquisition of jobs. The fact that many school leavers were unable to find jobs brings into question the relevance of the content, and the assumption made both implicitly and explicitly that it is the norm for school leavers to find jobs and enter the labour market. For a high proportion of Middlesbrough and Newcastle school leavers, this was not the norm.
Whilst entering the labour market may have been the most desirable course of action after the fifth year, the follow-up data have shown that it was not a course of action open to all. Regardless of positive approaches by Middlesbrough and Newcastle careers education programmes, the opportunity structure acted against any real occupational choice for most of the school leavers in those areas.

Careers education received

One of the objectives of the follow-up survey was to obtain an assessment from the pupils, of the careers education they had actually received. Pupils were asked to make judgements about particular aspects of their careers education programme in the light of their post-fifth year experiences. For example, they were asked a question about the degree to which interviews with careers officers had been helpful, and about the acquisition of qualifications in relation to the job finding process. Pupils were, therefore, making judgements about their careers education three months after the end of the fifth year, during which time they were able to put into practice what had been learnt from careers lessons.

The great majority of respondents to the follow-up questionnaire had received an individual interview with a careers officer at some stage during their fifth year. Only in the Leicester and Windsor schools were there significant numbers of respondents who had not received such an interview. In the case of Windsor, all pupils not receiving an interview had opted to remain in full-time education beyond the end of their fifth year. At the time of the individual interviews for this research, these pupils explained that they were unlikely to seek an interview with a careers officer as they had clearly defined
intentions and felt there was no need for any further guidance. Most of the Leicester pupils, however, who had not received a careers interview, had chosen to leave school. Apart from their own reluctance to engage in such an interview or the lack of opportunity for one, there seems to be no particular reason why these pupils failed to see a careers officer during their fifth year.

Respondents' assessment of their careers interviews were generally positive. Among those who had chosen to leave full-time education, and those who had opted to stay on, there was a general feeling that the interviews had been 'quite helpful'. In the Middlesbrough school there was a particularly positive response, with over three quarters of pupils finding their interviews 'very helpful'. In each school there was a small minority of pupils who considered their interview to have been 'not very helpful' or 'of no help at all'. Where respondents had offered comments to support these claims, they implied that careers officers had been unable to provide specific information about a job or a course, or had suggested courses of action which were not considered to be suitable. One Stevenage pupil complained that the careers officer had advised against entering a particular occupation, even though he could be sure of finding a job. He had since entered that occupation, regardless of the careers officer's advice, and was doing very well.

A few respondents made comments which stressed how helpful their careers officers had been. For example, two pupils, one from Stevenage, the other from Leicester, were provided with initial contacts by their careers officers which had led to offers of employment being made. One pupil from the Newcastle school praised the amount of help given by the
careers officer in preparing her for leaving school, recognising that, in the light of high unemployment in that area, there was little he could do to improve her chances of finding work.

Contact with careers officers after leaving school

Contact with careers officers after leaving school was rare. Only in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools had a substantial proportion (more than 50%) of the school leavers been contacted by the careers service during the three months before the follow-up questionnaire was completed. In most cases, these respondents had been contacted about YTS schemes, either to encourage them to apply for places or enquiring about progress made once on the scheme. In both Windsor and Stevenage schools, only one follow-up respondent had been contacted by the careers service after leaving. In each case this was a general enquiry to collect first destination information rather than to offer any assistance or advice. None of the respondents from the Leicester school had been contacted since leaving school by the careers service.

Contact between school leavers and the careers service was most common among the Middlesbrough and Newcastle respondents. In these areas there was a concern amongst careers officers and teachers that pupils could easily leave school without a true sense of direction, with poor employment prospects. There was a danger that these young people might drift aimlessly. As one careers officer pointed out, his responsibility did not end when pupils left school. One of the principal roles of the careers service in his area was to support the young person through the initial post-school months, which may be constituted by unemployment, government schemes and confusion. The absence of employment opportunities for school leavers in Middlesbrough
and Newcastle had removed much of the structure of the school to non-school transfer process. It was part of the career officers' job, therefore, to try to replace some of that structure by following pupils' progress after leaving school, and to offer support to those who required it. This would account for the high degree of contact reported by Middlesbrough and Newcastle follow-up respondents.

The lack of contact from the careers service in the Windsor and Stevenage areas may also be explained in terms of labour market conditions leading to a situation, the converse of which has been described above. In short, the opportunity structure in these two areas was such that pupils were expected to find jobs on leaving school. The responsibilities of the careers service, in most cases, ended when the pupil left school and entered work. Maintaining contact after the end of schooling was not considered necessary, in the light of the various opportunities open to school leavers. As a result, very few of the Windsor and Stevenage respondents had received any post-fifth year contact with the careers service. In the case of the Leicester school, it is difficult to know why none of the respondents had been contacted by the careers service. Although the labour market in this area was relatively buoyant, not all school leavers could be sure of finding work and openings for school leavers were not as plentiful as they were in Windsor and Stevenage. Some of the Leicester respondents who had remained unemployed for some time after leaving school may, therefore, have welcomed some support from the careers service.

As with all aspects of the school to non-school transfer process so far discussed, contact with the careers service after the end of the fifth year has varied between the five areas. The pattern of the
variation again suggests that the nature of the labour market which
school leavers were seeking to enter was instrumental in the variations
observed. In the areas of high unemployment there was clearly an
extension of the responsibilities of the careers service beyond the
initial school leaving period. In these areas, support was made
available to pupils by way of information about and contacts for
alternatives to paid employment. As was discussed in an earlier
chapter, the process of school to non-school transfer continued for a
longer period in these areas, as school leavers were often forced to
seek out government schemes, social security and other benefits, and to
continue the search for jobs. The careers officer was often an
important source of information and support for pupils who were engaged
in this process. Where school leavers could more easily find jobs, the
careers officers' role was minimal after the end of the fifth year. One
careers officer from Stevenage explained that, after the end of the
fifth year, the emphasis was placed on the individual to seek more
support from the careers service when it was required. When requests
for assistance were made, the careers service would do all it could to
meet them.

The different approaches to the provision of support after the
period of compulsory schooling are illustrative of many of the
differences in the school leaving process between the different areas.
Where employment prospects were poor, there was a requirement for
greater intervention from the careers service, from the schools and from
government by means of special schemes. The infrastructure of the
school to non-school transfer process had disintegrated with the rise in
unemployment. Traditionally, as the transfer studies of the 1960's and
early 1970's showed, school leavers would have been supported in their move from school to work by the workplace itself. Young people moved from one kind of institution to another. Although the nature of these institutions may have been very different, the young person remained part of an organisation, having a role to play and a particular status which had relevance beyond the workplace, providing the young person with money and access to the adult world. In the areas of Stevenage and Windsor and, to a lesser extent, Leicester, this was still the case, with the school leaver finding support from various sources. As a consequence, the role required of the careers service, the school and other 'official' support agencies was reduced. In the areas of Middlesbrough and Newcastle, where support from the workplace was not always available, where pupils often transferred from a situation of relative security in the school to one of confusion and ambiguity in the labour market, the need for external support was often great. In those areas, the careers service tended to maintain a relevance long after the end of the fifth year.

Qualifications

Data collected from the main questionnaire and interviews showed that pupils regarded the acquisition of qualifications as the single most important aspect of the school leaving programme. However, these data were collected before most respondents had taken any public examinations and consequently, very few held any qualifications. The follow-up questionnaire sought respondents' views on qualifications after results had been received and they had been able to 'test out' their qualifications in the labour market. The school leavers were asked how many C.S.E. and 'O' level examinations they had passed, and to what
extent they expected these qualifications to assist them either in finding a job or in the job they had already secured.

Table 11.2 shows the average number of C.S.E. and G.C.E. 'O' level qualifications obtained by the follow-up respondents. As simple averages, they convey only limited information. They do not, for example, give any information about the number of examinations passed in relation to the number entered for, or any kind of policies schools had about double entries (C.S.E. and 'O' level in the same subject) or the maximum number of examinations for which schools would allow pupils to enter. The figures do, nevertheless, give a general indication of the approximate number of qualifications obtained by pupils in each school.

The Windsor school appears to be the most successful in terms of the number of 'O' levels achieved by pupils. The questionnaire data indicate, however, that in all schools the number of pupils achieving more than three 'O' levels is low. In each school it is likely that some pupils obtained a large number of 'O' levels, seven or eight, but the follow-up data suggest that this is by no means the norm.

Regardless of the number or type of qualifications held, there was a general expectation amongst the follow-up respondents that the qualifications they had acquired would prove helpful to them, either in finding a job if they were looking for work, or in making progress in any job which they had already secured. It would appear, therefore, that the high expectations of qualifications expressed during the main survey and individual interviews had been maintained throughout the fifth year and beyond. Furthermore, the expectation that qualifications would prove to be useful was expressed by a majority of respondents in all areas. Those respondents who had failed to find work in the first
three months after leaving school had not lost faith in their qualifications and there was a clear expectation that they would prove to be valuable as the search for employment continued.

The influence of unemployment

The individual interviews revealed a considerable number of pupils in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools whose decision of whether to stay on in education would ultimately depend on the state of the labour market at the end of their fifth year. If it seemed unlikely that they would be able to find a job, then these pupils were prepared to continue in fulltime education. The follow-up data have shown that several respondents had continued in education after expressing an initial desire to enter the labour market. The follow-up questionnaire asked those respondents who had chosen to remain in education to indicate the extent to which the unemployment situation in their area had influenced their decision. From the limited number of responses it is clear that unemployment had certainly influenced the decisions of pupils in the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools. Respondents from these schools stated that their decisions had been influenced either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' by the level of unemployment in their area. None of the Windsor pupils made these statements, whilst the majority of Leicester and Stevenage respondents felt the local employment situation had exerted 'very little' or 'no influence at all' on their decision to remain in education.

The follow-up data, though from a very small sample, suggest, therefore, that the unemployment level is likely to have had a significant impact on the proportion of Middlesbrough and Newcastle pupils opting for post-compulsory education. Whilst many of the
respondents from the North East schools would claim to be continuing in fulltime education in order to accrue more or better qualifications, and so improve their chances of finding work, it is clear that some pupils had chosen further education as a means of avoiding unemployment or unpopular government schemes. One careers teacher from the Middlesbrough school expressed concern over the increasing numbers of pupils choosing to continue in fulltime education. He believed that some pupils were staying in education for the wrong reasons. Whilst he understood and sympathised with their reasons, he was concerned that school sixth forms and F.E. colleges might become "a dumping ground" for young people who had been unable to find a job (cf. Bynner, 1989). He questioned what they expected to get from further education and why some pupils of lower than average ability expected to be better prepared for the labour market as a result of further education. In short, he failed to see why "more of the same" should improve the employment prospects of these pupils.

The follow-up data would seem to indicate, therefore, that the absence of employment opportunities for school leavers in areas of high unemployment was swelling the size of school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and other further education institutions. Whilst the desire for more education might generally be applauded, it raises important questions about the nature and function of further education. For example, what kind of further education should be made available? Should the emphasis be placed on vocational or traditional academic courses? (cf. Schilling, 1989). Should the general purpose and content of further education be allied more closely to the needs of the labour market? Should some pupils be refused further education?
Many of the above questions are, of course, relevant not only to further education but also to education per se. The answers to the questions will depend on whether one sees education merely as the servant of industry and commerce or in much wider social terms. Similarly, the answers to the questions may be different in areas of high and low unemployment. What is clear, however, is that high levels of unemployment provide the impetus for a re-examination of many questions fundamental to the role and the perceived purpose of education. Many educational reforms, for example the 11-plus, raising the school leaving age, TVEI, have arisen, either directly or indirectly, from the posing of questions similar to those above.

Summary and Conclusion
The follow-up survey has been important in corroborating many of the findings of the main survey and the individual pupil interviews. The follow-up sample, although small, has given an indication of the first destinations of pupils from the different schools, and of their assessment of the careers education received. The data are important as they represent what actually happened to the pupils after the end of the fifth year and allow comparisons to be drawn with their aspirations and intentions expressed during the main questionnaire and interviews.

The follow-up data have shown that fewer respondents are likely to have stayed on in education after the fifth year than originally intended at the time of the main survey. In the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools in particular, it seems likely that a significant proportion of pupils chose to stay on in order to avoid the dole or government schemes. It also appears that those pupils without clear intentions at the time of the main survey tended to stay in education.
The most popular destination for pupils to continue their studies was the sixth form of their school and, despite the availability of more courses which were specifically vocational, most pupils chose to stay on to attempt academic qualifications. Pupils chose to follow such courses in the belief that the ability to demonstrate academic success would make them more attractive to employers.

The experiences of those respondents who chose to leave school after the fifth year highlight the effect of the opportunity structure in the different areas on employment prospects. The ease with which school leavers from the affluent areas were able to find jobs of their choice, and the difficulty experienced by pupils from the other areas in finding any kind of work, indicate that their respective optimism and pessimism expressed during individual interviews was well placed.

Negative views of YTS were borne out in respondents' reluctance to join schemes. Follow-up data also revealed the emergence of two types of YTS: one in areas where good employment prospects for school leavers existed, where YTS was becoming allied to traditional apprenticeships; the other where, in areas of high unemployment, YTS was purely an escape from the dole.

Most of the follow-up respondents had been interviewed by a careers officer during their fifth year. Assessments of these interviews were generally positive. From pupils in areas of high unemployment there was a feeling that careers officers had done all they could under the circumstances. Contact with the careers service after leaving school was rare. Only in Middlesbrough and Newcastle had there been a concerted attempt by careers officers to contact all leavers. In doing so, the careers service was acting as a 'safety net' for those
unable to find work or to enter further education and, as a consequence, were likely to drift. In effect they were replacing, in some small way, the structure of the school to non-school transfer process which was removed with the rise in unemployment.

In general terms, the follow-up survey has confirmed the existence of the 'two nations' of school leavers: those from the buoyant areas of the country who enjoyed a wide choice of first destinations, both in terms of employment and further education, and those from areas of high unemployment where real occupational choice did not exist. The follow-up data have given tangible examples of the effect of the local labour market on opportunity structures and, accordingly, the capacity for school leavers to find work. Moreover, the follow-up data give rise to questions about the emphasis which schools place on occupational choice in their careers education programmes and the assumptions, which are constantly made, that it is the norm for school leavers to enter jobs immediately after their fifth year. In many areas in 1984, the opportunity structure was such that employment was not the norm.

Overall, the follow-up survey has provided some useful data which support those arising from the main survey. From a methodological point of view, it also provided a conclusion to the fieldwork, allowing an opportunity to compare the aspirations, expectations and the rhetoric of the fifth year pupils with their actual experiences as school leavers and young adults.
Table 11.1  Responses to follow-up survey: By school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Questionnaires despatched</th>
<th>Questionnaires returned</th>
<th>Response rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Stevenage</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesbrough</td>
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<td>Windsor</td>
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<td>Newcastle</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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Table 11.2  Average number of C.S.E. and 'O' Level qualifications achieved by respondents to follow-up survey: By school

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<th>School</th>
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<th>'O' Level</th>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Twelve

CONCLUSIONS

The Aims
The findings of this research have been wide ranging. From the outset the intention was not to prove or disprove a particular hypothesis, but to conduct an investigation into the way in which young people are prepared for leaving school and for their transfer to work, further education, a government scheme or unemployment. For the purposes of the research the term non-school has been used to represent the complete range of post-school destinations followed by the young people in the study. The research has, therefore, been concerned with the process of leaving school, with vocational preparation and with careers education programmes. The main intention has not been to study first destinations per se, but to consider the assistance and support given to pupils in deciding on their post-school intentions, within the context of different local labour markets and opportunity structures.

Many studies in the general area of school to non-school transfer have been conducted since the 1950's. Many of these studies concentrated largely on entry to the workplace and problems of adjustment for the school leaver. However, the 1980's brought a new set of social circumstances which challenged traditional school leaving patterns. The high incidence of unemployment in many areas of England brought great difficulties for some young people in finding work. The findings and contemporary relevance of the early studies were, therefore, challenged by the changed circumstances of the early 1980's.
The objective of this study has been to compare and contrast the experiences of school leavers in areas of high unemployment with those of their peers in areas of much lower unemployment. The study has taken a comparative approach which has enabled school leaving processes to be analysed in terms of different social and economic contexts. Of central importance to the research has been the way in which schools and local authority careers services have responded to changes in their local labour market through the kind of careers education they offer.

To facilitate a comparative approach, the local labour market has been taken as the key variable. The local labour market has proved to be a useful basis for comparison for a variety of reasons. First, it has enabled the identification of the differential impact of unemployment in different areas of the country and, accordingly, the different opportunity structures which exist for school leavers. The local labour market also added an important socio-geographic perspective to the study. Clearly, many school leavers intended to enter the labour market immediately after the end of their fifth year of secondary school. Lacking finance, support and maturity, the great majority of the pupils seeking work were restricted to the opportunities afforded by their local labour market (cf. Roberts, 1984, 1986). Very few young people were able to look beyond their immediate geographical area for work and, as a result, the research has become a study of five different geographical locations. The local labour market has proved to be a useful tool not only in terms of different levels of unemployment and the according opportunity structures (cf. Roberts 1977, 1981; Daws 1977, 1981), but also in providing a context within which careers education has been provided and the school to non-school transfer process has taken place.
The local labour market offered a set of social circumstances against which the school to non-school transfer process could be viewed and the careers education provided could be evaluated.

The Methods

A variety of methods has been employed throughout the research. The use of questionnaires, structured and unstructured interviews, and observation have facilitated the collection of different types of data. Although the research has taken school leavers as its principal focus, data have also been collected from teachers and members of the local authority careers service. Whilst the study has been broadly quantitative in approach, the questionnaire data have, wherever possible, been supported by qualitative data. The effect of employing a variety of methods has been to produce a balanced picture (cf. Burgess, 1985) of the school leaving process in each of the five areas. The questionnaire data collected from over 600 fifth year pupils allow the identification of trends within each school and facilitate broad comparisons between the schools. At the same time, the interview and observation data have provided detail and a wider context within which the questionnaire data may be viewed.

In general, the methods employed proved to be successful and, as the findings have shown, useful, comprehensive and interesting data were collected from each of the five schools.

Analysis of the quantitative data was conducted by use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which, after the laborious hours spent coding questionnaires, proved to be a convenient and effective means of dealing with a large number of cases.
In retrospect, the variety of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, together with the analysis and use of the different kinds of data which they produced, has been particularly useful. As Chapter Five implied, conducting a research study for a Ph.D. thesis may perhaps be viewed as analogous to an apprenticeship for the Social Sciences (cf. Delamont, 1984). From a personal perspective, familiarity with the various data collection techniques has proved particularly useful in establishing my own career.

In general, therefore, the methodology employed throughout the study proved to be successful in providing a rich data base and useful in affording personal experience of different techniques. This is not to imply, however, that the methods were always employed without problems, and the early field work recollections of the now established academics quoted in Chapter Five (Burgess, 1984) were often enlightening and comforting as I reflected on my own fieldwork.

The Findings

The Transfer from School to Non-School

The data have highlighted many issues of importance to the school leaving process and the transfer from school to non-school in the 1980's. In particular, the study has focused on the role of the local labour market in the transfer process and, through the comparative approach, has demonstrated its influence on opportunity structures, career choice, careers education and first destinations (cf. Watts 1983, 1987; Roberts 1984, 1986; Ransom and Ribbins 1988). Whilst it would be incorrect to assert that the nature of the local labour market was deterministic in all aspects of the school leaving process, its influence was such that, for example, the prospects facing school leavers in the Newcastle school
showed little similarity to those facing their peers in the Windsor school. Similarly, we have seen that the way in which these two groups of pupils were prepared for leaving school was often very different.

Whilst all five schools based in the contrasting labour markets of Stevenage, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Windsor and Leicester provided some form of careers education and preparation for leaving school, the way in which they organised careers education differed between the areas of high and low unemployment. In the Middlesbrough and Newcastle schools, the incorporation of careers education with general or social studies meant that a broad approach to careers education was taken. The lack of jobs for school leavers meant that an instrumental approach to careers education, in terms of matching pupils to jobs, was largely precluded. In the other areas, however, such approaches were possible and careers was provided as an individual subject. The buoyancy of the labour markets in Windsor and Stevenage, and to a lesser extent Leicester, allowed a far more positive attitude to be taken to careers education which was reflected, not surprisingly, in the optimism of the fifth year pupils.

Whilst most pupils in each of the five schools expressed a general satisfaction with the careers education they received, there appeared to be a more positive approach shown by Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils towards it. Their recognition of the difficulties they were likely to face on seeking to enter the labour market were reflected in their willingness to accept any kind of provision which would aid the transfer from school to non-school.

Although there are many differences between the five schools in their approach to careers education, the data have also revealed many
similarities. For example, the role of the careers service in each of the schools was in many ways very similar. The main contribution by the careers service in each of the schools was the careers interview. Across all five schools, pupils placed great importance on the interview. However, the different labour market conditions again determined much of the content of the interviews, their purpose and also the pupils' expectations of them. In the buoyant areas careers interviews were seen as a means of getting contacts or introductions which would secure jobs. In the northern schools, whilst attempts at matching pupils to jobs were made, most pupils held no illusions that they would result in job offers.

In many respects the provision of a careers education programme in the Windsor, Stevenage and Leicester schools was more straightforward. Pupils could be fairly sure of finding work of some kind and, therefore, the role of careers education was seen largely in terms of ensuring pupils made the right kind of choices and were well informed about the careers in which they were interested. In these areas there was a clear separation between the worlds of school and work, between childhood and adulthood. Because of the availability of jobs, much of the adult socialisation process could actually occur in the work place. In the areas of high unemployment this was not possible. Part of the role of careers education in the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools, for example, could be seen in terms of providing elements of the adult socialisation process, which would normally be acquired in the work place, whilst the young person was still at school. As a consequence, it seems likely that the broader approaches to careers education of the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools were an attempt at preparation for adulthood and, in effect, a type of compensatory adult socialisation.
In all five schools, pupils demonstrated a generally mature attitude to the approach of the end of compulsory education. Most had given considerable thought to first destinations and many had made enquiries about specific occupations, courses in further education or the Youth Training Scheme. Regardless of the nature of the local labour market, the attitude of the pupils to the school leaving process would seem to suggest that it maintained its importance as a socially significant event in the development of the individual.

The importance with which pupils viewed the school leaving programme is reflected in their view of examinations. Success in public examinations, particularly in academic subjects, was identified as the factor most likely to aid entry to the labour market. In areas of high unemployment, academic qualifications were thought likely to differentiate the individual from the mass of applicants for jobs and, in the other areas, they were expected to bring success in higher status positions, better pay and prospects. Furthermore, in spite of efforts to encourage greater vocationalism in education during the mid-1980's through the introduction of such initiatives as TVEI, CPVE and a greater emphasis on experiential learning, vocational qualifications were rarely expected to prove as useful as academic qualifications (cf. Schilling, 1989).

Allied to the emphasis on the acquisition of qualifications was the large number of pupils in the areas of high unemployment who intended to remain in fulltime education. Although, as the follow-up survey suggested, the actual number staying on was probably lower than the number who expressed an earlier intention to do so, it would seem that more education was often deemed preferable to the uncertainty of the
local labour market. Furthermore, evidence from discussions with pupils suggests that remaining in education was often preferred to the Youth Training Scheme (cf. Bynner, 1989; Corr, Jamieson and Tomes, 1989).

During the early years of its existence the Youth Training Scheme found difficulty in losing the stigma which was associated with its predecessor, the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP). Consequently, few school leavers in 1984 regarded entry to the scheme as a positive step. The data collected from pupils in the different areas suggest, however, the emergence of two types of Youth Training Scheme. In the areas of high unemployment, it was seen largely as a poor substitute for a real job (cf. Finn, 1983, 1984), and as an alternative to the dole. In the buoyant areas, meanwhile, there was evidence to suggest that YTS was becoming allied to some apprenticeship schemes and could, therefore, become a useful means of training. Subsequent developments in the YTS, in particular its extension to a two year scheme, together with changes in the youth labour market nationally during the late 1980's, suggest that it has now become the principal route of entry to many industries (cf. Crisp, 1989) and an important aspect of initial training in many industries.

The uncertainty of the labour market in the areas of high unemployment in 1983/4 was the keystone not only to the approach to careers education by the schools, but also to the aspirations and expectations of the school leavers. The very existence of high unemployment required the Newcastle and Middlesbrough schools in particular to prepare pupils for a variety of first destinations. Whilst it was important to provide traditional forms of careers education, it was also necessary to offer preparation for unemployment. The
traditional role of careers education and the careers service (cf. Ransom and Ribbins, 1988) was challenged and changed. Whilst there seemed little point in preparing pupils for jobs which did not exist, it was also important for careers education and careers teachers to maintain a balance between the realism of the situation which faced school leavers, and an optimism from which they could find motivation.

In the more buoyant areas of Windsor, Stevenage and Leicester, the uncertainty surrounding the school leaving process did not exist. Careers education was able to maintain a more traditional, unambiguous role. Where opportunities for school leavers were plentiful, however, the need for careers education may have been questioned. Where its role was merely to make introductions and place pupils in particular positions, it could be argued that the very buoyancy of the local labour market rendered careers education superfluous. This view may, to some extent, account for the fact that pupils from the areas with buoyant labour markets appeared to attribute less importance to careers education than their peers in areas of high unemployment.

This study has highlighted differences between five schools in five different areas in terms of careers education, the transfer from school to non-school, and in terms of pupil aspirations and expectations. In doing this it has also highlighted the difficulty in devising any kind of a national syllabus or guidelines for careers education. The different labour markets within which the five schools were located necessitated different kinds of careers education. In order to maintain its relevance to school leavers, schools and employers, careers education has to respond to the different demands from employers for young workers. In this respect it is not possible to judge the five different approaches
to careers education with a view to identifying the 'best' programme. Such judgements have not been the concern of this study. However, the comparative approach used has facilitated an examination of careers education employed within different economic contexts. It has highlighted the need for versatility in careers education, and has shown how different approaches to the subject are required to meet different labour market demands.

The study has also highlighted the different expectations which school leavers from the different schools had of careers education. Whilst the approach to and provision of careers education has varied in accordance with local labour market demands, so too have pupil expectations of it, and the way in which they have responded to it. The particularly positive responses of Newcastle and Middlesbrough pupils have already been discussed. However, in view of the difficulties which many of these pupils were likely to face in trying to enter the labour market, and their realisation and acceptance of these difficulties, expectations of careers education in instrumental terms were not high. Few pupils from the Newcastle or Middlesbrough schools expected careers teachers or officers to provide contacts which would result in job offers. What they did expect was information and practical guidance. In most cases their expectations were met. In Windsor and Stevenage, pupils did expect careers education programmes to result in job offers. In Leicester there remained an expectation with many pupils that careers teachers and officers might be able to supply useful contacts for jobs and training schemes. In many cases these expectations were also met. Where they were not met, or where pupils intended to remain in fulltime education, some expressed dissatisfaction with their careers education
and some questioned the need for it. In the vibrant local labour markets, pupils held higher expectations of careers education than their counterparts in the areas of high unemployment. The pupil interviews suggest that these expectations were sometimes difficult to fulfil.

In general, the data collected from each of the five schools have emphasised the complexity of the school to non-school transfer process. They have also shown that the end of compulsory schooling remains an important event in the socialisation of adolescents. Above all, however, the data have drawn attention to the influence of the local labour market in the transfer process.

The Changing Youth Labour Market

The data discussed in this study were collected during the academic year 1983/84, and relate to a particularly difficult time for many school leavers seeking to enter the labour market. In drawing conclusions to this thesis, and looking towards its contemporary significance for today's school leavers, careers teachers, careers officers and employers, one cannot fail to be aware of the changes which have taken place in the youth labour market and in the prospects for school leavers. In 1983/84, great concern was expressed by teachers, parents, political commentators and opposition parties over the large pool of young people likely to be excluded from entry to the labour market, about exploitative government training schemes, and the general failure of the education system to provide industry with a competitive workforce. In 1988/89, however, concern is not with an excess of school leavers for the labour market, but with a shortage. At the same time, the Youth Training Scheme now forms the major route of entry to many occupations, its two year programme in some instances being viewed in similar terms to a
traditional apprenticeship (cf. Main and Shelly, 1988). In terms of providing industry with the kinds of young people it requires, the extension of this Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, the wide scale use of work experience by schools and the development of Records of Achievement, seem to have made considerable progress in bringing the worlds of education and employment closer together. In 1988/89 prospects for school leavers over the next five years seem likely to show a substantial improvement on those of the previous five years (cf. Metcalf, 1988).

In 1988 two influential reports were published by the National Economic Development Office (NEDO, 1988) and the Institute of Manpower Studies (Metcalf, 1988). The reports drew attention to the dramatic decline in the number of school leavers and the implications for employers' recruitment practices. The publicity which the reports received, along with subsequent newspaper articles, suggested that employers were beginning to panic about the availability of school leavers. Taken at face value, the demographic changes imply chronic shortages of school leavers and a reversal of the situation which faced many school leavers in the early 1980's and with which this thesis has been concerned. In the introduction to her report, Metcalf (1988) spells out the likely impact of the demographic decline. She states:

Demographic data show that between 1988 and 1993 the number of school leavers will fall by about 25 percent, with the bulk of the reduction occurring in the first three years of the next decade. This may have grave implications for employers of youths who will see their recruitment source decline substantially.

A reduction by 25% of the number of school leavers will clearly have implications for the labour market which go beyond the recruitment
of 18 year olds. For example, the number of 18 year olds continuing to higher education is likely to decrease, resulting in increased competition between Higher Education Institutions for students, and ultimately in fewer graduates becoming available to employers.

Commenting on the implications of the shortage of school leavers for young people, Metcalf (1988) believes that employment opportunities are likely to improve:

Organisations will be competing for the supply [of school leavers] and downgrading their standards and qualification requirements so that lower quality or less qualified school leavers will be able to gain better jobs.

If Metcalf's predictions are correct it would seem likely that the qualification inflation of the early 1980's will, to some extent, be set in reverse, as employers are forced to fill vacancies with young people holding fewer qualifications than they would like. Interestingly, one of the public sector organisations taking part in the Metcalf's study which anticipated serious problems in recruiting school leavers, felt that the introduction of the new General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) might enable them to reduce the level of qualifications required by recruits without it being noticed. As a result they would allow themselves access to a wider pool of school leavers and consequently maintain their recruitment levels.

If this one example cited by Metcalf proves to be common amongst employers of school leavers in general, then improved prospects of employment and occupational choice seem likely not only for school

1. The government did, however, in September 1989, indicate that they wish to expand Higher Education, but without extra resources for increased student numbers.
leavers with qualifications, but also for those without. Employers may be forced to reduce their high qualification requirements for jobs, imposed during the early 1980's as little more than tools for reducing the large numbers of job applications they received, and look more closely at the individual applicant. If this proves to be the case, does it mean that the situation which faced most of the school leavers with which this thesis is concerned was merely a temporary blemish in the history of prospects for school leavers since the end of the Second World War? Clearly, the demographic downturn cannot be disputed, but to answer this question it is necessary to look beyond a simple model of supply and demand, towards the wider composition of the labour market in general.

Metcalf (1988) describes the preparations already being made by a building society for the reduction in the number of available school leavers. The building society had begun to employ part-time married women to fill vacancies and to reduce turnover rates. Furthermore, it was in the process of stopping all direct school leaver recruitment. At the same time, a technically-based organisation included in Metcalf's study was reducing employment levels due to technical change. In particular, technical change had shifted the need towards a more widely skilled workforce, and they expected recruitment to move towards adults. Similarly, the continued introduction of robotics and computer systems in an organisation which had traditionally recruited school leavers as laboratory technicians, meant that recruitment was moving away from inexperienced school leavers towards those with higher qualifications.

The examples of recruitment patterns represented by Metcalf (1988) suggest that employing organisations may be forced to adopt a variety of strategies to combat the shortage of school leavers. As a result the
decline in the sheer number of sixteen to eighteen year olds may not necessarily result in more job opportunities for school leavers in all employment sectors, nor in enhanced career prospects.

Evidence from the employers in Metcalf's (1988) study suggests that dramatic improvements in prospects for school leavers are unlikely. Furthermore, the existence of other groups of workers, in particular married women, seeking to return to the labour market may mean that competition for traditional school leaver positions actually increases. As employers become aware of the likely impact of the demographic changes, plans for changes in recruitment practices may be made which no longer see school leavers as the only or prime source of new labour.

However, whilst the demographic changes are undisputable, and changes in recruitment patterns seem likely, the issue of regional differences will also be relevant to any impact on prospects for school leavers. This thesis has taken as its focus the different demands of different local labour markets. It has discussed in detail the existence of different opportunity structures in these labour markets. Whilst all areas of the country may have seen some improvement in general employment prospects, wide differences in unemployment rates between areas remain. Consequently, in areas such as Middlesbrough and Newcastle, where school leaver unemployment remains high, the impact of demographic change in terms of improved school leaver prospects is likely to be quite different from that in the areas of Windsor, Stevenage and Leicester. Whilst the slack in the areas of high unemployment may to some extent be taken up, it seems unlikely that real shortages of school leavers will occur. Although the Metcalf (1988) and NEDO (1988) reports received wide press coverage and may have been the catalyst for many employing organisations
beginning to plan for the downturn in the number of school leavers, neither report tackled the question of regional differences in any detail. Both were concerned with a relatively small number of employing organisations (20) from the retail, financial services, manufacturing and public service sectors, based mainly in the South East of England. The extent to which the findings of the reports may be generalised across all areas of the country, given the particularly buoyant nature of the labour market in the South East may, therefore, be open to question. In recognising likely regional differences in the import of declining school leaver availability, Metcalf (1988) suggests a regional approach to public policy designed to aid the economy adjust to the decline. She states:

Public policy might be able to assist the economy adjust to the decline by: ... encouraging industries to locate in the slacker labour markets, as the already tight South East labour market appeared likely to encounter the worst shortage; ...

In terms of policy for careers education, it may be appropriate if this also recognised regional variations in the impact of declining numbers of school leavers. For schools and careers services to assume that problems of school leaver unemployment will disappear over the next few years would clearly be shortsighted. In some areas prospects for young people, which are already good, may improve. In such areas the main function of careers education programmes may continue to be fitting the right school leaver to the right kind of job. In areas where employment prospects are unlikely to show marked improvement, careers education will need to continue to emphasise alternatives to employment, whilst raising young people's awareness of any improvement in career prospects which may occur.
The differences between geographical regions in the availability of jobs for school leavers can be seen very clearly from the number of vacancies notified to careers offices (Table 12.1). Whilst differences in the size of the regions cited may account for some of the large differences between regions, the extent to which the number of vacancies has increased between 1984 and 1988 in each region locates an expansion of opportunities for school leavers principally in the South East of the country. Table 12.1 shows that between November 1984 (the year in which the pupils involved in this study left school) and 1988, the number of vacancies notified to careers officers in the South East increased by more than four times. In the East Midlands they increased three times, whilst in the North East they increased slightly more than one and a half times.

It would seem, therefore, that the four years between the recession of 1984 to the relative buoyancy of the economy in 1988 have done little to enhance the opportunities for school leavers in the North East of England compared with their peers in the South East and East Midlands. Distinct differences in rates of unemployment remain between the different areas (Table 12.2), which have declined to a greater extent in the more buoyant areas.

It would seem, therefore, that the divisions between the different areas in terms of unemployment and opportunities for school leavers, with which this study has been concerned, have changed only moderately between

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1. In making comparison between unemployment levels in 1984 and 1988, attention should be given to the many changes in the way in which unemployment is calculated which have occurred during this period. Table 12.2 should be seen, therefore, as representing general trends in changes to the levels of unemployment.
1984 and 1988. Whilst employment prospects for school leavers have improved in all areas it is clear that large regional differences remain which seem unlikely to disappear with the impact of the demographic decline.

The National Curriculum

Also of relevance to this study and to the future status of careers education in English education is the National Curriculum. Early in this thesis the place of careers education in the school curriculum was discussed. Its generally low status was commented on and its competition for a place on the timetable with subjects such as religious education and music was noted. The introduction of a National Curriculum with core and foundation subjects (cf. DES, 1989) may be seen to have the potential to improve the status of careers education, by attributing to it similar importance to that of the academic subjects on the school timetable.

Furthermore, the consultation document on the National Curriculum, issued by the Department of Education and Science in July 1987 (DES, 1987) explains the need for the National Curriculum in terms of equipping young people for their adult lives and for employment. The document states:

The Government now wishes to move ahead ... to secure for all pupils in maintained schools a curriculum which equips them with the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need for adult life and employment.

It would seem, therefore, that one of the aims of the National Curriculum is to make general education more relevant to employment. As a result employers will have a better understanding of what school leavers can contribute to the work situation. The document continues:

Employers too will have a better idea of what a school leaver will have studied and learnt at school, irrespective of where he or she went to school.
Insipite of its emphasis on preparation for adult life and, in particular, employment, the consultation document (DES, 1987) makes no reference to careers education. The document identifies the three core subjects of English, Maths and Science, which are to be supported by a modern foreign language, technology, history, geography, art, music and physical education. No consideration is given explicitly to careers education or to general or social studies, of which careers may form a part. It would seem, therefore, that the opportunity to enhance the status of careers education in the curriculum has been largely passed over. However, in their document, 'From Policy to Practice' (DES, 1989), some attention is given to careers education. In discussing cross-curricular issues and other subjects the DES state:

The whole curriculum for all pupils will certainly need to include at appropriate (and in some cases all) stages
- careers education and guidance
- health education
- other aspects of Personal and Social education.

In addition, the DES state that these areas of the curriculum are not part of the Statutory National Curriculum. Their explanation for this being that:

A great deal of learning related to these themes can and should be covered for all pupils in the context of the foundation subjects ...

It would seem, therefore, that under the National Curriculum a cross-curricular approach is to be taken to careers education. Furthermore, although the amount of time to be spent on particular subjects is not specified by the 1988 Education Reform Act, the great majority of the timetable is clearly to be given to the core and
foundation subjects. It must be assumed, therefore, that the time remaining will be taken up by subjects like careers together with home economics, social studies, computer studies, business studies and various other subjects which currently form an important part of the curriculum in many schools. In addition, time will also be required for tutorial and registration periods, and for one to one teacher-pupil negotiation sessions for Records of Achievement, which all secondary schools may be required to implement from 1990.

Clearly, there will be great pressure on schools and teachers to fit everything into the curriculum and onto the timetable. It has been suggested that, as a result of this pressure, some subjects and activities may have to be dropped. Given the low status which careers education holds in many schools, it is not inconceivable that, rather than enhancing its status, the National Curriculum may force careers education further down the list of priorities and off the timetable completely. Whilst such a situation is at present merely speculative, what is clear is that the National Curriculum has by-passed careers education in its attempt to achieve higher academic standards in schools. The irony of the situation is surely that part of the rationale for the introduction of the National Curriculum was that it should provide pupils with better preparation for the world of work.

In drawing attention to the changing demographic trends and the National Curriculum, it is clear that, although six years have elapsed since data for this study were collected, many of the issues relevant to the transfer from school to non-school, the youth labour market and careers education remain unchanged. Inspite of a shortage of school leavers in some areas, competition for jobs in the youth labour market
and unemployment in others remain. Young people continue to constitute
one of the groups most vulnerable to fluctuations in the demand for
labour. Furthermore, recent changes in social security arrangements for
school leavers, which deny unemployed sixteen year olds financial
benefits, now effectively make the Youth Training Scheme compulsory for
school leavers without jobs.

Whilst discussions about standards in education and its relevance
to the needs of industry continue, pressure on schools to meet the
requirements of the National Curriculum make it unlikely that time for
careers education will increase. The contentions made at the beginning
of this thesis about the importance of adequate preparation for the
transfer from school to non-school clearly remain. The experience of
chronic shortages of jobs for school leavers in some areas and increased
emphasis on the importance of vocational education, seem to have done
little to enhance the perceived importance of effective preparation for
the transfer from school to non-school, or of the place and status of
careers education in the school curriculum.
Table 12.1  Vacancies notified to Careers Offices (Thousands): By Region

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Region</th>
<th>5/10/84</th>
<th>7/10/88</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
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<td>East Midlands</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>North</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


N.B. South East Region includes Stevenage and Windsor
East Midlands includes Leicester
North includes Middlesbrough and Newcastle

Table 12.2  Unemployment Area Statistics. Local Authority Districts and Counties (All unemployed. Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
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<th>13/10/88</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berkshire</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicestershire</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyne and Wear</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


N.B. Berkshire includes Windsor
Cleveland includes Middlesbrough
Hertfordshire includes Stevenage
Leicestershire includes Leicester
Tyne and Wear includes Newcastle-upon-Tyne
APPENDIX 1
QUESTIONNAIRES USED IN THE FIVE SCHOOLS
SECTION 1 - To be answered by everyone

Questionnaire Number

Sex
- Male
- Female (tick one box)

School Form

Age
- Years
- Months

When did you first come to this school?
- Year
- Month

Have you always been in the same stream/band?
- Yes
- No

If not, have you previously been in a higher or lower stream/band? (tick one box only)
- Higher
- Lower

If you have already passed some examinations please write down what they are, with the grades

<table>
<thead>
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<th>C.S.E.</th>
<th>G.C.E.</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How many C.S.E. Exams are you taking this year? 
How many G.C.E. Exams are you taking this year? 
If you are taking any other kind of exams this year, please write down what they are:

1
2
3

Please write down which exams you think you will pass this year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G.C.E.</th>
<th>C.S.E.</th>
<th>Other (specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When do you intend to leave full-time education? 
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next Easter</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At the end of the fifth year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After one extra year</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After two extra years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are most of your friends leaving school at the end of this year or continuing in full-time education? 
(tick one box)

| Most leaving | 1 |
| Most staying on | 2 |
| About equal numbers | 3 |
How often do you have careers lessons at school?  
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times each term</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you find these careers lessons  
(tick one box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpfulness</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite helpful</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very helpful</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A waste of time</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who usually takes these lessons?  
(tick appropriate boxes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Careers teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers officer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head/Deputy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you ever had an individual interview with a Careers Officer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, was this  
(tick one box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpfulness</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite helpful</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very helpful</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A waste of time</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you spend any other time on careers, say at lunch or break time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, approximately how often is this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice a week</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is the amount of time spent on careers at school each week (tick one box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About right</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too much</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you ever been on any careers visits to local firms, shops, banks, hospitals, etc.?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If you have, please list the places you have been to

1. 5
2. 6
3. 7
4. 8

Did you find these visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very useful</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quite useful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very useful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A waste of time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By ticking one box on each line, please show how important you think the following things are in preparing you for leaving school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular careers lessons</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers interview with officer</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to employers' premises</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks, films, etc. from employers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some kind of work experience</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A careers room/library for your use</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success in examinations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please write down anything else which you feel would be useful in preparing you for leaving school.

By ticking one box on each line, please show how important you think the following subjects will be in the job which you eventually get.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>A waste of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E./Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Please list any subjects which you think will be important in your job, which the school doesn't offer.

1. 4
2. 5
3. 6

4. How much do you think the following types of qualifications help in getting jobs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.S.E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'O' Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'A' Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What job did you think you would most like to do when you were a child?

6. If you could choose any job now whatsoever, which would it be? (give a brief description of the job)
7. Please show how important you think the following things are in a job
(tick one box in each line)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A chance of promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good work mates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long holidays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. How long approximately would you expect to stay in your first job?
(tick one box only)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than six months</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months to 1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Do you expect to have any periods of unemployment during your working life?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. If yes, how long do you think these are likely to be?
(tick one box only)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 6 months</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 12 months</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+ years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you are ever unemployed, at what age or ages do you think this is most likely to occur? (tick one or more boxes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 35</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 45</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do you think you will be doing in terms of your job or education when you are 18 years old?

How much have you enjoyed your time spent at this school? (tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enjoyment Level</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many brothers do you have?  
How many of these go to work?  
Please write down what jobs they do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brothers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many sisters do you have?  
How many of these go to work?  
Please write down what jobs they do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sisters</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 2
If you intend to leave full-time education at the end of this year, please answer this section

Questionnaire Number

What do you think you are most likely to do when you leave school? (tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go to work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some kind of government training scheme</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign on the dole</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who have you talked to about leaving school? (tick however many are appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Officer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (specify)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent are you looking forward to leaving school? (tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't want to leave</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What would your parents like you to do at the end of the fifth year? (tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue in full-time education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find a job with training (e.g., apprenticeship)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find any kind of job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government training scheme</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join the Armed Forces</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't care what you do</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By ticking one box in each line show how much influence you think the following things have on a person's job choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School (teachers)</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other family</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers, TV, etc.</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please write down any ways in which you think the area in which you live will influence your job choice
By ticking one box in each line please indicate how good you think the following methods are for finding jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Quite good</th>
<th>Not much good</th>
<th>Useless</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local paper</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Office</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Centre</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Careers teacher</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own friends</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of your family</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal inquiries to firms</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>12345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the above methods are you most likely to use in order to find a job?

Do you already have a job to go to for when you leave school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If you do please answer questions 8 - 13 only
If you do not please answer questions 14 - 28 only

Please write down what kind of job you have got, and give a brief description of it

Does this job require any kind of training?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If yes, what sort of training is this (e.g., apprenticeship, day release)?

Will you have any sort of qualification at the end of your training?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If yes, what will this be?
How did you find out about this job?
(tick appropriate box)

| Through a member of your family | 1 |
| Through a friend               | 2 |
| Through the school             | 3 |
| Newspaper advertisement        | 4 |
| Your own inquiry to the firm   | 5 |
| Other (specify)                | 6 |

Do you know anyone else who does this kind of work?

Yes                  | 1 |
No                   | 2 |

If yes, who is this person?
(tick whoever these people are)

| Mother               | 1 |
| Father               | 2 |
| Brother              | 3 |
| Sister               | 4 |
| Other family         | 5 |
| Your friend          | 6 |
| Family friend        | 7 |
| Neighbour            | 8 |
| Other (specify)      | 9 |

How do you see this job? Is it:

| A job that you really want to do | 1 |
| Something that will do for now  | 2 |
| Better than being on the dole   | 3 |

What other jobs have you considered? List:
1. 3.
2. 4.

Would you still like to do these?

| Yes | 1 |
| No  | 2 |

If not, why not?
Do not answer these questions if you already have a job to go to when you leave school.

What kind of job are you interested in doing when you leave school? (give a brief description of this)

How long have you been interested in doing this?

Years  or  Months

12

Does anyone else in your family do this kind of work?

Yes  No

1  2

If yes, who is this person? (tick however many are appropriate)

Mother  Father  Brother  Sister  Other family

1  2  3  4

Your friend  Family friend  Neighbour  Other (specify)

5  6  7  8

9  10

What other kinds of jobs have you considered doing? (give a brief description of these)

Why have you changed your mind about these jobs?

Have you applied for any jobs yet?

Yes  No

1  2
If yes, how many have you applied for?

What kinds of jobs are these?
(give brief descriptions)

When do you think is the best time to start seriously looking for a job?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year before leaving school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months before leaving school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months before leaving school</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the examinations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After you have left school</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent is the school helping you to find a job?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpfulness</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do you think your chances are of finding a job before you leave school?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chance</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly good</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No chance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roughly, how many jobs do you think you will have to try for before getting one?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of jobs</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you cannot get a job before you leave school, will you consider staying on in full-time education? (tick one box only)

- Yes
- No
- Perhaps

Would you be prepared to leave home in order to find a job?

- Yes
- No

If yes, where would you be prepared to go? (tick however many are likely)

- Another part of your area
- Another area close by
- A totally different area
- Abroad

If you can't get the kind of job you want, will you be prepared to accept more or less anything rather than be unemployed?

- Yes
- No

If not, briefly describe the kinds of jobs you would refuse to do

If you can't find a job by the time you leave school, would you consider doing a government training scheme?

- Yes
- No
- Perhaps

If not, why not?
If you do find the kind of job that you want, will you be prepared to study and undertake a period of training?

Yes  
No  

If yes, can you give some idea of how long you will be prepared to train for?
(tick one box only)

| 0 - 6 months | 1 |
| 6 - 12 months | 2 |
| 1 - 2 years | 3 |
| 2 - 3 years | 4 |
| 3 - 5 years | 5 |
| 5+ years | 6 |
| Don't know | 7 |

How would you assess the unemployment situation in this area?
(tick one box only)

| Very bad | 1 |
| Quite bad | 2 |
| Not too bad | 3 |
| Fairly good | 4 |
| Very good | 5 |
| Don't know | 6 |

To what extent do you think the current unemployment situation will affect your chances of:

- Getting the kind of job you want?
- Getting any kind of job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Slightly</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting the kind of job you want?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting any kind of job?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(tick one box in each row)

Finally, thank you very much for your co-operation, and please feel free to make any comments about the questionnaire.
SECTION 3

Answer this section only if you intend to remain in full-time education after this school year

Questionnaire Number

How old were you when you decided to stay on in full-time education?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Where do you intend to continue your studies after this school year? (tick whichever is most likely)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Location</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Form College</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.E. College</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What sort of course do you intend to follow next year? (tick whichever are appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Type</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'O' levels</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'A' levels</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OND/ONC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND/HNC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City &amp; Guilds</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who have you talked to about staying on in full-time education? (tick whichever are appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No one</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers officer</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head/Deputy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (specify)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do your parents think about you remaining in full-time education?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are pleased and encourage you to do so</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are not too sure if this is the best thing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don't really mind what you do</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They would prefer you to find a job</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are really against you staying on</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you ever seriously considered leaving school at sixteen and trying to find a job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, why have you changed your mind?

To what extent do you think the present unemployment situation has influenced you in your decision to remain in full-time education?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How much do you think that staying in full-time education will help you when you eventually look for a job?
(tick one box only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite a lot</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you expect to get a better job for staying on in full-time education?

Yes  1
No   2
Perhaps  3

If so, in what ways do you expect it to be better?

If possible, will you continue to Higher Education?

Yes  1
No   2
Perhaps  3

If so, what sort of course do you think you would take?
(tick one box only)

Arts  1
Social Sciences  2
Natural Sciences  3

What sort of job would you eventually like to do?
(give a brief description of this)

Please give some indication of what attracts you to this kind of work
Does anyone you know do this kind of work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, who is this person?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other family</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your friend</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family friend</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbour</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Could you briefly say what the main reasons are for you staying in full-time education?

If you could definitely find a job before the end of the fifth year, would you accept this in preference to staying in full-time education?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please feel free to make any comments about this questionnaire and any of the topics with which it deals.

Finally, thank you for your co-operation with this questionnaire, and good luck for the future.
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE USED WITH
PUPILS IN THE FIVE SCHOOLS
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FIFTH YEAR PUPILS

A. Background Information

Name
Age
Form/Tutor Group
Number of GCE/CSEs to be taken

B. Home Life

Address (area only)
Parent(s) occupation
Number of brothers/sisters (occupations)

C. Intentions after the Fifth Year

Likely first destination
Probe: - Type of job/course to be followed
- Any applications made (outcomes)

Why did they make that choice

Do they expect to be successful in applications
Probe: - If yes, why
- If no, why not

Views on YTS

D. Preparation for leaving school

Views of careers education received
- high points
- low points
Probe: - Role of work experience, careers interviews, careers lessons, role of careers teacher/careers officer

What other kinds of preparation would be useful

Guidance and support from other sources (eg. home, youth organisations, Saturday/part-time work)

General feelings towards the approach of leaving school

E. The future

Longterm aspirations/expectations (realistic and ideal)

Expectations of job changes, moving from the area, unemployment
F. Summing up

Pick up on any other comments made by interviewee

Anything they want to ask me

Will they agree to be contacted after leaving school
APPENDIX 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE USED WITH
CAREERS TEACHERS AND CAREERS OFFICERS
APPENDIX 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR CAREERS TEACHERS/CAREERS OFFICERS

A. Background information

Name
Institution/Office
Duties/responsibilities (teaching subject)

B. Provision of careers education

Their role
Outline the provision/programme
Probe: - lesson content
- interviews
- industry liaison (including work experience, YTS/YOP)
- high points/low points

C. Nature of the local labour market

Opportunities available
Impact of unemployment
Impact of government schemes
Views on/impact of YTS/YOP, etc.

D. Status of Careers in education

Status with staff
Status in the school(s)
Status in the LEA
Probe: - Time allocation, resources, staffing

Status with pupils

E. Further Education

Trends in staying on rate
Probe: - influences on this
- courses followed

Role/importance of qualifications

F. General

Overall assessment of
- opportunities for school leavers
- role/status of careers education

Pick up on any other points raised during discussion.
Include discussion of any significant observations, etc. made in the school.
APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY
Dear

I am writing to you concerning a research project with which you helped last year.

You may remember answering a questionnaire and also being interviewed about careers work in your school. At the time of the interview you kindly agreed to help me with another questionnaire if necessary, and I would now like you to complete the enclosed forms. Everything that you write is confidential.

If you have left school and do not intend returning to full-time education, please answer the blue sheet, then the green sheets. If you intend continuing in full-time education, please answer the blue sheet, then the yellow sheets.

When you have completed the two sheets, I should be grateful if you would please return them to me as soon as possible in the envelope provided.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your help and co-operation - it is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

C J Pole
Part 1: This section refers to your time spent at school and should be answered by everyone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During your fifth year at School did you have an interview with a Careers Officer?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Please tick appropriate box)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Very helpful</th>
<th>Quite helpful</th>
<th>Not very helpful</th>
<th>Not at all helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you did have an interview with a Careers Officer, how helpful was it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tick one box only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much do you think the examinations which you have passed will help you:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) In finding a job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tick one box only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b) In the job that you have already got</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tick one box only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many CSE exams have you passed?

How many 'O' Level exams have you passed at grade A, B or C

How much do you think the examinations which you have passed will help you:

a) In finding a job
   (Tick one box only)

OR

b) In the job that you have already got
   (Tick one box only)
Part 2: Answer this section only if you have left full-time education permanently

1. When did you leave school?
   (Tick appropriate box)
   - Easter
   - Summer

2. Do you have a permanent job yet?
   (Tick appropriate box)
   - Yes
   - NO

   IF NOT GO TO QUESTION 3

   a) If so, what kind of job have you got?
      Please give brief description of this and details of training

   b) How did you find the job that you have?
      (eg Local paper, careers office, personal contact, through member of your family)

   c) How many jobs did you try for before getting your present job?

   d) How would you describe the job that you have got?
      (Tick one box only)
      - A job that you really want to do
      - Something that will do at present
      - You dislike it but it's better that nothing
      - You are indifferent, a job is a job

3. DO NOT ANSWER THIS QUESTION IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A JOB

   What kind of job are you looking for?
Part 2: Continued

3 a) **DO NOT ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IF YOU HAVE A JOB**

For how many jobs have you applied?  

b) What methods of job application have you used?

(Tick appropriate boxes)

- Letters to firms
- Enquiries made in person
- Answered advertisements
- Recommendation of Careers Office
- Other

3 c) How would you assess your chances of finding the kind of job that you want within the next three months?

(Tick one box only)

- Very good
- Fairly good
- Not very good
- Not a chance

3 d) How would you assess your chances of finding any kind of job within the next three months?

(Tick one box only)

- Very good
- Fairly good
- Not very good
- Not a chance

4 **THIS QUESTION SHOULD BE ANSWERED BY EVERYONE**

Have you had any contact with the Careers Service since leaving school?

- YES
- NO

a) If so what was the nature of this contact?
Part 3: Answer this section only if you intend to stay in full-time education

1. Where do you intend to continue your studies?
   (Tick one box only)
   - School VIth Form
   - VI th Form College
   - Technical College
   - Other

2. What kind of qualifications do you intend to take?
   (eg 'O' Level, 'A' Level, City & Guilds, OND, ONC, Vocational prep, B Tec etc)

3. Approximately when did you make your decision to stay in full-time education?

4. Please state briefly the main reason for your decision to continue full-time study.

5. What kind of job/career do you eventually wish to follow?

6. How much would you say the unemployment situation in your area has influenced your decision to stay in full-time education?
   (Tick one box only)
   - A great deal
   - Quite a lot
   - A little
   - Not at all
BIBLIOGRAPHY


EALING CAREERS ASSOCIATION (1968) Memorandum on Careers Work in Schools, ECA, Ealing.


Abstract of a Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Ph.D
by Christopher J Pole

The Transfer From School to Non-School:
A Study in Five Labour Markets

The thesis describes a study of the transfer from school to non-school of pupils from five schools in different areas of England. The study has focused on fifth year pupils in schools located in Leicester, Stevenage, Windsor, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Middlesbrough. Through a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods it has concentrated on many aspects of school leaving processes and careers education programmes.

Within the context of the different local labour markets the study has given particular attention to the kinds of careers education provided by the schools and by the local authority careers services. The study is comparative in its approach, examining the influence of the local labour market on the organisation and content of careers education, the way in which it was received by the school leavers and its influence upon their aspirations and expectations in terms of employment and further education.

The study has shown that in areas of high unemployment such as Middlesbrough and Newcastle, careers education may form part of the wider social education of the pupil. Furthermore, due to the lack of employment opportunities for young people in such areas, it may lose much of the instrumentalism which was apparent in the more prosperous areas of Stevenage, Leicester and in particular, Windsor. Differences between the schools in terms of fifth year perceptions of YTS, reasons for entering further education, the role of qualifications and the importance of occupational choice are also highlighted.

The thesis concludes by giving consideration to the likely role of careers education in the context of the National Curriculum and to changing labour market demands for school leavers, in the light of demographic fluctuations.