

# ***Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Year 12 Examinations in South Australia***

South Australia. Education Department, 1978 (Chair: A. W. Jones)

## **Overview of the document**

111 page report of the Committee of Enquiry into Year 12 Examinations in South Australia. The Report provides 19 recommendations on the suitability and adequacy of the present form and standards of assessment and certification at Year 12.

## **Keywords**

Year 12 assessment; school-based assessment; examinations; moderated assessment; comparability; certification; post-secondary study; employment; grading and scaling; tertiary entrance.

## **Terms of Reference:**

1. To investigate and report on the suitability and adequacy of present form and standards of assessment and certification at Year 12 as a preparation for:
  - a. the various forms of post-secondary study;
  - b. post-secondary employment.The Committee should consider the influence that Year 12 certificates have on selection procedures for students to enter Year 12.
2. To examine and report on the future needs of:
  - a. certification by the Public Examination Board and the Education Department at the Year 12 level;
  - b. external assessment for entry to universities and other post-secondary institutions.
3. To examine:
  - a. the future of the Public Examinations Board and the Secondary School Certificate administrative structure;
  - b. the advisability of establishing a single authority to administer all Year 12 certification.
4. To recommend any necessary legislative changes.

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### **Summary of Contents**

#### **CHAPTER 1: FUTURE NEEDS FOR YEAR 12 ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION**

##### **Introduction**

- Notes that this chapter summarises the reasoning that led to the recommendations and that more detailed information and discussion is given in Chapters 2-5.

### **Underlying considerations**

- Notes that the deliberations of the Committee were made with a number of factors in mind including the changing nature of employment, retention rates and population trends. Notes that the following summarises the Committee's investigations and conclusions under the terms of reference.

### **The suitability and adequacy of present forms and standards of assessment and certification at Year 12 as a preparation for: (a) the various forms of post-secondary study**

- Notes the following:
  - The great majority of submissions indicated that: the Matriculation examination and its courses were satisfactory as a preparation and selection instrument for university entry; its external nature and the reputation of the Public Examinations Board (PEB) give it objectivity and impartiality; research shows it to be reliable, valid and predictive; and it is transportable interstate and overseas.
  - Suggested changes include: widening the range of subjects available; increasing the proportion of school assessment; the elimination of supposed anomalies in grading in various subjects; and the addition of an assessment of the candidate's ability to use the English language.
  - The Matriculation examination was considered less satisfactory for admission to other forms of post-secondary education, due to its narrowness, lack of technical and commercial subjects, and testing of intellectual ability only.
  - The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) was considered very suitable as a basis for entry into non-university post-secondary institutions, but its lack of uniformity militated against its use for this purpose.

### **The suitability and adequacy of present forms and standards of assessment and certification at Year 12 as a preparation for: (b) post-secondary employment**

- Notes the following:
  - The use of Matriculation results by employers was roundly criticised; the attitudes of employers to Matriculation and Year 12 study varied; and many, especially small employers, see Matriculation as the only qualification with assured standards and community support.
  - Schools contend that the SSC gives the student a better background in the world of work, however others consider its courses as dumping grounds for the less able, offering watered down Matriculation courses and employers tend to lack confidence in it.
  - As neither the SSC nor the Matriculation examination performs the dual task of tertiary admission and employment certification and the existence of both seems to cause confusion and places unnecessary pressure on students, the Committee recommends one Year 12 Certificate, based on a wide range of subjects, to be issued by an independent, single authority.

### **The Committee should consider the influence Year 12 certificates have on selection procedures for students to enter Year 12**

- Notes the following:
  - The influence of the Matriculation examination is profound.

- This is due to the values it places on certain aspects of education and its high status. The influence comes into sharp focus at the end of Year 10.
- The restraining influences can be avoided, as can be seen in the submissions from the newer high schools and independent schools with alternative courses.
- The influence of the Matriculation examination is most evident in cumulative subjects such as mathematics and foreign languages, but minimal in other types.
- Because Year 12 courses and assessment should be a culmination of Years 8 to 11 curriculum, and not a determinant of it, it is recommended that the proposed new authority not be responsible for the issuing of advisory syllabuses for Year 11 as the present PEB does.
- With a single Year 12 certificate, the pressure on students to choose the more prestigious subjects of the past even if unsuitable will be reduced or eliminated.
- Schools will need to ensure that all entrants to Year 12 have an adequate level of competence in English, and that some form of English may need to be a compulsory part of the curriculum to Year 11.

**To examine and report on the future needs for: (a) certification by the Public Examination Board and the Education Department at the Year 12 level**

➤ Notes the following:

- There are now social pressures on the schools to accept responsibility, in addition to intellectual development, for vocational training, work experience, community service and training for leisure time and for healthy living in a modern technological world.
- Parents are concerned with the more immediate goal of education as “a passport to suitable employment”, and employers are demanding higher standards of achievement. (p. 9)
- The external examination conducted by the PEB has continued as though the composition of the Year 12 group has not changed.
- The introduction of the SSC was meant to provide for the new clientele, but the prestige of the PEB examination and university-backed courses has relegated SSC courses to inferior status.
- There is hence a need for a revised certification at Year 12, meeting the following needs: tertiary institutions need an instrument that is seen to be impartial and objective, pitched at an academic level and having a reasonably broad background of knowledge in the arts and sciences; schools require a certificate attesting the completion of a sound secondary education which contains some input based on the professional judgement of teachers, that does not distort the basic developmental task of schools, that places the more practical skills on an equal footing with the more intellectual abilities and that is acceptable for tertiary selection and to employers; and employers want a certificate they can understand, that is comparable across schools and throughout the state and that has the hallmark of an independent body on it.
- A large majority of submissions favoured one Year 12 certificate to serve the purposes of certifying: achievements at the end of secondary education; general suitability for employment; and suitability for entry to tertiary education.

- The Committee agrees that one Year 12 certificate issued by an independent authority best meet the diverse demands.

**To examine and report on the future needs for: (b) external assessment for entry to universities and other post-secondary institutions**

- Notes the following:
  - The universities maintain that they require an independent assessment at least similar to the present Matriculation examination for course selection, while not wishing to dictate the structure of Year 12 examinations for all students.
  - The University of Adelaide shares with the Committee the opinions that: the Matriculation examination should not be taken for reasons of social prestige by students for whom it is unsuitable; the Matriculation examination should not be automatically ranked above alternative Year 12 examinations by employers, although there should be an authority responsible for accrediting the various examinations; and all secondary students should have basic education to maintain minimum standards of literacy, numeracy and social awareness, and this general education should continue up to the end of secondary schooling.
  - The University of Adelaide also maintains its view of what matriculated students should be as expressed in 1960-61 but the Committee agrees with other submissions that the universities' means of preparing an "educated person" to enter university are too narrow.
  - The argument of the University of Adelaide that it was necessary to avoid "a proliferation of composite or vocational subjects at the expense of traditional academic disciplines" (p. 12) is unconvincing.
  - The struggles to have accepted as Matriculation subjects such as Art or 'Natural Resources Management', and technical, commercial, legal and inter-disciplinary subjects were deplored by many.
  - The South Australian Institute of Technology and other Colleges of Advanced Education are prepared to make use of a broader range of subjects than universities, and methods of selection beyond the Matriculation examination.
- Discusses the evidence for the value of the Matriculation examination in predicting success in tertiary studies. Argues that although the predictive value is not high, it is superior to most other instruments considered and that "the proposed much broadened, external examination (with increased school assessment component) will assist the tertiary institutions in their selection process". (p. 13)
- The Committee recommends (R18) that the new authority be resourced to conduct studies on the predictive value of the selection instruments it devises, not only for tertiary success but for employment.
- The Committee recommends (R16) that the new authority conducts research in these areas "in the interests of fairness to students and of honest reporting to those who wish to act on the information conveyed on the certificates." (p. 14)
- Notes that while some stress for Year 12 students is inevitable, the new arrangements proposed in this report will reduce the pressures that contribute to it.
- Notes that there are common misconceptions about prerequisites, for example that Year 12 courses are not designed as prerequisites for tertiary study and matriculation is not (yet) the effective requirement for entry into a number of occupations, such as

nursing and the police force, and that these misconceptions point to the need for further career counselling in schools.

- Notes that the Committee desires a Year 12 certificate that: shows all approved subjects taken during one year; gives a grade or scaled mark for each subject; will not distinguish between subjects acceptable for tertiary entrance and those not; and hence not give an aggregate mark or statement of 'matriculation' or 'registration'.
- Makes the following recommendations:
  - There shall be one statutory body, named the Public Examinations Board of South Australia (PEBSA) to administer all Year 12 certification.
  - There shall be one certificate, called the 'Year 12 Certificate', which shall be issued by the Board.
  - Subjects to be certified by the Board shall be: (a) subjects submitted to the Education Department of South Australia, schools, subject associations, the Department of Further Education, tertiary educational institutions, and other bodies; (b) subjects included in the Matriculation Statutes of the universities from time to time; and (c) subjects assessed by other bodies for which Board certification is sought.
  - The Certificate shall show the subject(s) taken in any one year and the scaled marks or grades in each subject in a simple and useful manner determined by the Board.
  - There shall be no indication of whether the student has matriculated or met the entrance requirements of tertiary institutions on the certificate.

**To examine: (a) the future of the Public Examinations Board and Secondary School Certificate administrative structure**

- Notes the following:
  - The strengths of the PEB were considered in submissions to be: its high standing in the community; the acceptance of its certificates as a valid and reliable measure of a student's academic achievements; the comparability of its certificates with those of other examining bodies; and its impartiality and willingness to consider changes.
  - The weaknesses of the PEB were considered to be: its restricted membership and lack of broad representation; the narrowness of the range of subjects examined and of methods of assessing; its scaling and grading methods give undue weight to mathematics and sciences; and its carefully researched recommendations are not always accepted by universities.
  - There was wide criticism of the administration of the SSC but it was considered to have a few strengths including flexibility. The criticisms were mainly made by parents and employers based on its lack of comparability between schools.
  - The Committee has endeavoured to reach a solution by combining the strengths of the two systems and eliminating the weaknesses.

**To examine: (b) the advisability of establishing a single authority to administer all Year 12 certification**

- Notes the following:
  - Support for the establishment of a single authority rests on the concepts of accountability and acceptability.

- The proposed single authority should assess and certify as wide a range of Year 12 activities as possible.
- Given the broad public confidence in the PEB, and the fact that the Board's Act already enables it to operate over a wider area than Matriculation, a new single authority should be developed on similar lines.
- In line with the emphasis that has been placed on public acceptability and accountability, the proposed single authority should be as broadly based as possible, and include representation from groups omitted in the present Board.
- A distinct task is the examining of proposed subjects "to see if they are required by the community and worthy of assessment by the authority". (p. 19)

### **To recommend any necessary legislative changes**

- Provides the following recommendations:
  - "There shall be one independent statutory authority, named the Public Examinations Board of South Australia (PEBSA) to administer all student assessment and certification at Year 12 of secondary education in South Australia." (p. 21)
  - The authority shall be governed by a Board of twenty five members appointed by the Minister of Education for a three year term.
- Notes that the duties of the Board will include the following: to conduct the Year 12 Examination annually; to provide candidates with certificates as soon as possible after the completion of the examination; to provide the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre with the results for transmitting to the tertiary institutions; to encourage bodies to submit syllabuses for consideration by the Board's Committees to become approved subjects; to liaise with such bodies and offer assistance and advice; to conduct, commission and publish research into matters associated with Year 12 assessment and certification; to publicise the work of the Board and provide information about its assessment procedures, its Year 12 syllabuses and the use to which its certificate and results are put; plus a few administrative duties, such as budget preparation.
- Briefly discusses staffing.

### **Arrangements for implementation of the Committee's recommendations**

- Sets out advice concerning such arrangements.

### **CHAPTER 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROCEDURES OF THE COMMITTEE**

- Provides the Committee's terms of reference.
- Notes that there were formerly three public examinations conducted by the PEB: the Intermediate examination (held for the last time in 1968); the Leaving examination (held for the last time in 1974); and the Matriculation examination.
- Notes that the abandonment of the Intermediate and Leaving examinations facilitated the broadening of curriculum activities and forms of reporting students' achievements and progress in secondary schools.
- Notes that the Matriculation examination, now being the only remaining examination, became seen by many to serve purposes beyond that of a means of selection for university studies as: an indication of likely success at a tertiary institution; a mark of completion of a secondary education; and a desirable qualification for employment.

- Notes that the Matriculation certificate, issued by the PEB on the basis of external examination, exists side by side with the SSC, issued on the basis of moderated and equalised school-based assessments.
- Notes that perceived problems of this situation has been: inhibition of development of a more widely based curriculum suited to the abilities and future requirements of students; and exertion of undue influence by universities on curriculum content and assessment methods.
- Notes that the Committee concentrated on two main tasks: clarifying areas in the present system where there appeared to be misunderstanding and misconception; and devising a means “to secure a public validation of achievement in Year 12 irrespective of the students’ intention to continue with higher education, or take up immediate employment.” (p. 28)
- Notes that the need for certification is generally accepted, but ways of reducing its restrictive effects on school curriculum, the autonomy of teachers and the life chances open to students were suggested.

### **CHAPTER 3: HISTORY OF EXAMINATIONS AND CERTIFICATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

- Notes that from its inception in 1874, The University of Adelaide conducted entry examinations, the number of which settled to three during the early 1920s.
- Discusses the development of Technical High Schools, early movements towards courses alternative to those of the PEB and the yearly and terminal reporting systems of all schools.
- Sets out the changes that have occurred since 1960 in student numbers by subject in each of Years 10, 11 and 12, describes the constitution of Subject Committees and gradings systems and notes that the first Year 12 Matriculation examination was held in 1966, taking the place of the Leaving Honours examination.
- Discusses the establishment of the new PEB as a statutory authority and notes that the Public Examinations Act 1968 came into force in September 1969, from which time the PEB no longer was a committee of the University of Adelaide council. Sets out the constitution and duties of Subject Committees as at December 1969.
- Describes the new conditions of Matriculation that came into force with the 1969 examination. Discusses the abolition of the Leaving examination as a matriculating examination at the end of 1974, the revised constitution of the Subject Committees as at 1977, moderated school assessment for use in the Matriculation result, as applied in limited fashion in the 1970s, double marking and re-marking of Matriculation examination papers and grading and scaling of Matriculation results.
- Discusses the Education Department Examinations and Certificates from 1960 to 1967 and notes that in 1963 the first full alternative courses at Years 9 and 10 were established at three high schools, with departmental certificates awarded at the end of Year 10. Notes that the movement of Matriculation from Year 11 to 12 in 1966 opened the way for development of alternative courses at Year 11 and that Technical High Schools and Area Schools continued to provide internal courses.
- Notes the changes in 1968 including that the PEB Intermediate examination was held for the last time, a Division of Secondary Education was established; that the ‘Track’ system was introduced to differentiate between PEB courses and the more flexible syllabuses in the junior secondary classes; and that alternative courses in Year 11 were adopted by 20 high schools, providing the basis for the SSC.

- Discusses the continuing development of the SSC and notes that SSC courses continued to develop in the early 1970s but that employers continued to not accept it, many preferring unsatisfactory PEB grades to satisfactory SSC grades. Notes that a sub-committee of the Advisory Curriculum Board was set up in 1973 to investigate ways of improving the SSC's standing.
- Discusses the abandonment of the Leaving Examination in 1974 and notes that when the Year 11 Leaving Certificate and its alternative SSC were dropped, the number of students returning to Year 12 studies increased. Notes that to fill the gap a School Leaver Statement was trialled over 1975 and 1976 and school reports were also widely used.
- Notes that the Year 12 SSC and PEB Matriculation certificate were the only externally validated certificates available to the secondary student and in 1978 the moderating system for the SSC was changed in attempt to give it more public acceptance. Argues that the two systems "were not able to complement each other to meet the needs of the whole community. The present situation is that the PEB is being preferred to the unwarranted detriment of the other." (p. 46)

#### **CHAPTER 4: THE CURRENT SITUATION**

- Provides a brief comparison between South Australia and other states with regard to statutory public authorities in each state; responsibilities of the authorities; certificates and their functions; responsibility for curriculum development; subject classifications; assessment policies and practices: normative vs. competency assessment; external examinations and school assessment; moderation and scaling; tertiary entrance; and information provided to students.
- Provides a history and description of the procedures used by the PEB for grading and scaling. Notes that a scaling system designed to ensure comparability between subjects in the same year and between years in the same subject was introduced in 1959 and details how this operated and the complications involved. Describes the system for scaling and grading as it was to apply in 1978. Argues that "scaling is desirable and sometimes indeed necessary" and that "the moderation process does not change the rank order of a school's assessment of the candidates within that school." (p. 55)
- Reviews current practices in the use of secondary school assessments for selection by tertiary institutions, colleges and employers. Notes that for tertiary entrance, the order of merit among Year 12 students as determined by the Matriculation examination has become the major factor in tertiary selection in South Australia and that current data show that in 1978, 82 percent of applicants to universities and colleges of advanced education used the assessment of their Year 12 studies. Reiterates the use of the Matriculation examination as the only available externally validated certificate and summarises strategies of personnel selection and the selection methods of the Australian Public Service Board, banks, the Defence Forces, some companies and retailers.

#### **CHAPTER 5: AN ANALYSIS OF A NUMBER OF ISSUES RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS TO THE ENQUIRY**

- Notes that this chapter comprises discussion of issues of assessment, certification and selection that were raised in submissions and are considered to be important and within the terms of reference of the Committee.

### **The projected population needing certification**

- Presents two tables showing projections of the South Australian Year 12 population up until 1990, based respectively on total population and retention rates within the secondary school. Provides the total number entering the Matriculation examination and the success rate and notes that in 1975, 41.9 percent of Year 12 students proceeded immediately to full-time tertiary study.

### **University dominance of secondary curricula and examinations**

- Expresses concern over the universities' control of the Matriculation examination, which consequently means control over the secondary school curricula at Year 12.
- Discusses this issue with reference to the ongoing central position on the PEB occupied by the universities' the roles of Chief Examiners, Subject Committees and the Advisory Curriculum Boards; university opposition to certain subjects (general science, commercial and technical studies) reducing the options available in earlier years; the desirability of universities maintaining their leadership role in public examinations and curriculum development; and the falsity of the notion that syllabuses for Matriculation subjects are determined as prerequisite knowledge for university subjects or courses.

### **The influence of the Matriculation examination on the lower school curriculum**

- Makes the following general points:
  - The Matriculation examination strongly influences student choice of subject below that level, with the effect felt as low as Year 9.
  - "Assessment methods at Year 10 begin to replicate the Matriculation examinations." (p. 71)
  - Greater stress is placed on the traditional disciplines, with the integrated subject approach fading.
  - Student-centred learning tends to be replaced by a teacher-centred approach.
  - The selection and sorting process for Year 12 begin during Year 10.
  - Students are under considerable pressure to "keep their options open", most acutely at Year 11 where students are advised to stick to all academic subjects irrespective of ability, interest or likely need.
  - The initiatives of schools to introduce a wider range of courses, particularly at Year 11, are thwarted by "pressures from a society that holds paper credentials in high esteem." (pp. 71-72)
  - Teachers of Matriculation subjects when teaching in the junior school were more likely to stress knowledge and skills felt to be prerequisite for study in Years 11 and 12.
  - Moreover, Matriculation teachers are more likely to be promoted, whereupon they exert strong influence on curricula and tend "to maintain their strong affiliations with discipline-oriented studies of the Matriculation type." (p. 72)
  - The influence of the Year 12 examination is strongest in the subjects with a hierarchical structure, notably science subjects, and in languages.

### **Selection procedures for students entering into Year 12**

- Summarises typical selection procedures including assessment procedures used in Year 11, advice and counselling provided to students during Year 11 and the reluctance of students to choose SSC courses. Recommends against continuing

publishing Year 11 curriculum advisory statements, a matter which should be left to individual schools in an era of school-determined curricula.

### **Assessment at Year 12 – internal or external?**

- Notes that between the two extremes of (1) assessment by external examination set on a syllabus set by an external authority and (2) assessment within schools where the curriculum is designed and evaluated, “lie the varying combinations of external assessment and school-based assessment.” (p. 75)
- Notes that in the past the community generally has accepted external examination because it is less susceptible to extraneous influences and pressures, ensures maintenance of ‘standards’ and allows comparability between schools.
- Argues that “any shift away from total external assessment towards school-based assessment is a reflection of the trust and confidence that the public has in teachers and their ability to assess students.” (pp. 75-76)
- Analyses the viewpoints expressed in submissions. Notes that employers argued strongly for the retention of external examinations in Year 12 as they add “public accountability to educational programmes in the schools and ensure comparability of standards between schools”. Notes that the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of South Australia Inc. expressed the view that “completely objective assessments are essential”, and “assessment and certification of Years 10, 11 and 12 [should] be conducted by an authority, independent of the educational establishment attended by the student.” (p. 76)
- Notes that in terms of parents and parent organisations, the High School Councils’ Association reported that its members strongly recommended external examinations at Year 12 level, and favoured the re-introduction of external examinations from Year 10 onwards, because of the PEB’s uniformity of reporting and comparability but that there was support for “some proportion of school-based assessment contributing to the final assessment.” (p. 76)
- Notes that teachers’ opinions varied, although there was overwhelming teacher support for retaining external examinations with a component of school-based assessment at Year 12 level and there was no teacher support for external examinations in Years 10 and 11. A minority of teachers favoured total school-based assessment, based on the arguments that: teachers are best placed to make judgements about their students; a greater range of assessment techniques can be used; internal assessment can be continuous throughout the year; attitude to study and personal development can be taken into account; and external examinations limit the school’s freedom to determine its curriculum.
- Notes that both universities were strongly in favour of retaining an external examination at Year 12, focusing their arguments on impartiality, comparability and validity of both the predictive and content kind, but supported the inclusion of a component of school assessment in the final assessment.
- Notes that the CAEs expressed varying opinion regarding the usefulness of the Matriculation examination, depending on the focus of their own courses.
- Notes that students who were asked tended to favour the type of assessment they had been subject to.
- Argues that the Matriculation examination has served the dual purpose of selection, mainly of those most likely to profit from University education, and certification of

the levels of a student's achievement both relative to peers and to some kinds of absolute standards.

- Argues that the estimate provided by the Year 12 examination of the student's level of competence related to the objectives of a course of study is its most important aspect and that this estimate depends on the validity and reliability of the assessment procedures. Notes that it is assumed that: the curricula in question are based on a set of 'public' objectives; the assessment is based on that set of objectives; and tasks which form the basis of the assessment are well constructed.
- Discusses the importance of having specified and accepted objectives that are adequately sampled in the assessment instruments and the reliability of the assessment procedure.
- Acknowledging the complexity of the relative merits of school-based and external assessments, notes that: a majority favour the retention of external examinations at Year 12 level; internal assessment procedures have both theoretical and 'commonsense' value; and the general move in the direction of school-based curriculum development renders insistence on totally external assessment procedures unrealistic. Argues that hence, "all curricula should provide for both external and internal evaluation of student performance." (p. 82)

### **The Secondary School Certificate**

- Provides an overview of the SSC issued by the Education Department as an alternative to the PEB-issued certificate and notes that the SSC is not based on an external examination and uses syllabuses prescribed by the Education Department or developed within a particular school and approved.
- Discusses issues arising from its nature, particularly as pertaining to assessment and notes that "What the Committee is trying to do is to enlarge areas of study open to students at Year 12 and to ensure there is a public statement about the relative levels of achievement of students who attempt this range of courses." (p. 85)
- Predicts that the need for the SSC will disappear as the processes of school-based assessment are absorbed and influence the more conservative forms of assessment.

### **Examination Stress**

- Examines the issue of examination stress.

### **English as a compulsory Year 12 subject**

- Notes that English ceased to be a compulsory subject at the Matriculation level in 1969 and that the Committee does not recommend a compulsory test of candidates' English expression, considering it to be a decision to be made within the schools.

### **The "Standards" myth**

- Notes that the definition of the word 'standards' is elusive: it is used to refer to the intellectual difficulty of a task, or the levels of achievement or performance in a task and discusses issues related to standards.

### **Year 12 and selection for tertiary entrance**

- Notes the paucity of data pertaining to the usefulness of the Matriculation examination for tertiary selection regarding its predictive validity and reliability and summarises the existing research and studies.

- Argues that the Committee's "proposed scheme of external examinations combined with a greater proportion of school assessment seems to provide as fair and effective a basis for tertiary selection as can be provided at this point." (p. 95)

### **Year 12 and selection for future employment**

- Notes the common use of the of the Year 12 Matriculation examination in preference over the School Leaver Statement or SSC by employers and the use of other selection techniques, such as employers' own tests.

### **Interviewing as a selection device**

- Discusses interviewing and notes that the efficacy of interviews is not supported by research studies, and it is concluded that they are a "slow, expensive and notoriously unreliable method of assessing most students." (p. 98)

### **Counselling for courses and further studies**

- Argues "It is clear that, under the proposed Year 12 system, it will be essential that the secondary schools concern themselves, more so than they have in the past, with the future of their students." (p. 98)
- Notes that the provision of a wider variety of courses and subjects itself will add to the need for an enhanced system of providing information and assistance in decision-making and discusses the perceived need for more systematic counselling for students, especially in terms of career counselling and counselling for girls.

### **The timing of examinations**

- Presents some arguments for an earlier examination.

### **The content of a Year 12 certificate**

- Discusses Year 12 certificate content.

### **A single authority for Year 12 assessment and certification**

- Summarises the opinions expressed in submissions regarding the problems arising from the present dual system of assessment and certification and notes that "There was an overwhelming majority opinion in the submissions...that a single, widely representative statutory organisation should be responsible for all Year 12 assessment and certification." (p. 104)
- Sets out six advantages of such an authority.

### **Secondary School Graduation**

- Makes a number of comments on graduation and whether some Year 12 courses should be shorter than one year in length.

### **The problem of the small country school**

- Notes the problems faced by a small country secondary school in providing a Year 12 course suited to its small enrolment of students.