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THE ESRI SURVEY OF THE ATTITUDES OF POST-PRIMARY TEACHERS AND PUPILS

Volume II: TEACHERS' VIEWS ON EXAMINATIONS

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Important Notes on Publication Policy

Although it would, in some ways, be desirable to delay publication of all the results from the ESRI survey of the attitudes of teachers and pupils until a comprehensive and integrated picture could be presented, this would delay the availability of useful material. We have therefore decided to release reports on sections of the material as the analysis is completed. The final volume in the series will bring the material together and highlight the main issues, offering such interpretations of the results as seem to be justified.

Simultaneously with the publication of this volume a general background volume has been published. It is expected that the next volume in the series will be "Teachers' Perception of Educational Objectives".

When reading the present volume the reader should certainly have at his side a copy of the General Background Volume. It outlines the purpose of the survey, the way it came into being, and the stages through which it developed. It gives details of the way the samples were drawn and the topics covered in the survey. In addition it gives a brief description of the schools, the teachers and the pupils surveyed. This material could well suggest important re-interpretations of the data presented in this report. There is also a discussion of statistical significance which may be found helpful when examining the tables.

For each volume there exists a "Special Appendix" containing additional tables and other material. These Special Appendices may be obtained from the ESRI. When these tables are referred to the number of the table is prefixed "SA" in the text. When ordering any of the special appendices it is essential to state the volume it is intended to accompany.

The entire questionnaires used in the survey are available in the special appendix to volume I.

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General Introduction

The material discussed in this report was collected from 1,246 teachers who formed a statistically representative sample of the total population of post-primary teachers in the 26 counties. It was collected as part of a wider ESRI survey of the attitudes of post-primary teachers and pupils in October - December 1970.

The background to, and design of, the enquiry, the construction of the sample, and the characteristics of the schools, the teachers and the pupils who were surveyed, are discussed in the special volume dealing with the background to the survey. Only a few of these particulars need be summarised here. One thing which must be explained is that, in order to obtain large enough numbers of teachers in comprehensive and Protestant schools to allow reasonably sound conclusions concerning the views of teachers in these schools to be drawn, extra teachers were interviewed in such schools. However, so that the views of such teachers would not carry undue weight in the overall picture, their responses were given less weight than others in the final calculations. Thus the 53 teachers interviewed in comprehensive schools were treated as if they were only 11, and the 73 teachers in Protestant schools were weighted down to 44. The "weighted" figures reported in the text are the figures obtained after this correction has been applied.

It is also necessary to explain, firstly, that data was collected from the teachers on two occasions, once by means of a personal interview, and once by means of a self-completion questionnaire. Head teachers were not asked to complete the latter; 893 (weighted) teachers did so. Secondly, in order to minimise the length of the interviews, there were three different versions of the interview. The most important questions were included in all versions and were therefore asked of all teachers. However some questions were only asked of a random sub-sample of one-third of the total sample of teachers. Our report on examination begins with a discussion of the answers to one such question.

Table reference prefixed with an 'A' will be found in the appendix, and those prefixed by 'SA' will be found in a Special Appendix available from the Institute.

Introduction

As every schoolboy and schoolteacher knows, examinations loom large in the psychological space of those concerned with education. Strangely enough the purpose of examinations has only relatively recently come up as a major topic for discussion (Bloom et. al. , 1971, Agazzi, 1967, the Intermediate Certificate Committee Report 1973).

What are teachers' views on this subject?

In this report we will look at teachers' views on the importance of having compulsory subjects on the curriculum and for examinations, at the subjects they think should be compulsory, at their views on the suitability of the subjects, standard, and format of the Intermediate Certificate Examination for all those who embark on post-primary courses, at their views on the adequacy of the current examinations in each school subject, at their views on the examination syllabi, and at their general views on the objectives of examinations and the extent to which the current examination system fulfills those functions.

We begin by examining their attitudes toward compulsory subjects.

Section I. Teachers Views on Compulsory Subjects

393 teachers were asked how necessary they thought it was to have core subjects on the curriculum which every pupil would have to take but not necessarily for examination purposes. 51% said that it was very necessary to have such subjects, a further 30% said that it was necessary, and only 19% said either that it was not very necessary or not at all necessary. Those who thought that it was necessary to have some compulsory core subjects were not asked what those subjects should be since we knew from the pilot work that the answers to this question were very similar to teachers' answers to the next question in the interview. This asked whether there should be some subjects or combinations of subjects which pupils should have to pass in order to obtain an examination certificate. 55% said "yes". It would seem that a clear majority of teachers favour having basic core subjects on the curriculum, but only half think that the obtaining of an examination certificate should be contingent on gaining examination passes in those subjects.

Teachers in Protestant schools seemed slightly less likely than others to think that some subjects should be compulsory in order to obtain an examination certificate: only 38% of them thought it should be compulsory to pass some specific subjects or combinations of subjects. Otherwise there were no important differences between school types or between head teachers and other teachers in their answers to either question.

Teachers who thought that there should be some minimum requirements were asked, separately for the Intermediate Certificate and Leaving Certificate, what that minimum should be.

Most of them specified this minimum in terms of a list of subjects. A small number specified combinations of subjects of the form "A language plus a science plus a practical subject", 18 teachers gave answers of the type "Six, which must include Irish", and 8 teachers gave answers of the form "Five out of the following list".

The lists of subjects specified in answer to the question were therefore analysed in terms of (a) the subjects specified, and (b) the number felt to be necessary to obtain a certificate. If no such number was specified it was assumed that the teacher meant that pupils should have to pass all subjects he had listed. The distribution of this stated or inferred

minimum number of subjects thought necessary to obtain a certificate is given below. It would seem that there was not a great deal of agreement about how many subjects should be compulsory even amongst those who felt that some subjects should be compulsory.

TABLE 1

Number of subjects thought necessary to obtain a certificate

Intermediate			Leaving	
Number of Subjects	% of those saying some subjects should be compulsory	% of all teachers	% of those saying some subjects should be compulsory	% of all teachers
1	7	4	11	6
2	12	7	16	9
3	15	8	12	7
4	18	10	12	7
5	32	18	33	18
6	9	5	7	4
7	3	2	4	2
8	1	1	2	1
9	0	0	1	1
NA	2		2	
Weighted base (=100%) (Those teachers who thought some subjects should be compulsory in order to obtain a certificate)		215	215	
All teachers interviewed with form X		393		393

This distribution varied little with school type or with whether or not the informant was a head teacher.

The subjects the teachers listed are given in Table 2. It is of interest that while most of the teachers who felt that some subjects should be compulsory mentioned English, and more than half mentioned mathematics, less than half of these teachers mentioned Irish. Since only 55% of teachers thought any subjects should be compulsory this means that while 24% of all teachers thought Irish should be compulsory to obtain the Intermediate certificate and 21% to obtain the Leaving certificate, nearly half the total sample of teachers (45 - 47%) thought English should be compulsory to obtain either certificate.

Table 2: Subjects teachers thought it was necessary for pupils to pass in order to obtain a certificate

Subject	Intermediate		Leaving	
	% of those saying some subjects ought to be compulsory	% of all teachers	% of those saying some subjects ought to be compulsory	% of all teachers
English	86	47	83	45
Mathematics	65	36	54	30
Irish	44	24	39	21
A foreign language and Irish and/or English	25	14	37	20
Geography	22	12	18	10
History	21	12	20	11
General science	19	10	18	10
Weighted base (teachers saying some subjects should be compulsory) (=100%)	215		215	
Weighted base (all teachers) (=100%)		393		393

At intermediate level teachers in girls' schools were more likely than others to list English: in such schools 93% of the teachers who thought some subjects should be compulsory listed it.

Mathematics was much more likely to be listed by vocational school teachers and by men: 81% of vocational school teachers who thought some subjects should be compulsory listed mathematics compared with 60% of teachers in other schools. 73% of men who thought some subjects should be compulsory listed it compared with 57% of women. Science behaved in a rather similar fashion, but the trends are less marked. 35% of the vocational school teachers who thought that some subjects should be compulsory thought a practical subject should be required.

At Leaving Certificate level, English seemed to be listed rather less frequently by head teachers than others. The trend for vocational school teachers to list mathematics was even more marked than at Intermediate level : 83% of vocational school teachers who thought there should be compulsory subjects to obtain a certificate listed it, compared with 43% of teachers in other schools. Similar, less marked, trends were again visible in the data concerning science. 49% of teachers in girls only schools who wanted to have some compulsory subjects would insist on a modern language and Irish &/or English.

Reasons for not wanting Compulsory Subjects

Teachers who thought that it should not be necessary to pass some subjects or combinations of subjects in order to obtain a certificate (i. e. 44% of the total) were asked why they did not think it should be necessary for pupils to pass some particular subjects or combinations of subjects.

Their answers fell into four main categories :

1. All pupils do not have the same aptitudes and interests. They may not like a particular subject, e. g. Irish, and they therefore cannot be expected to do well at it. Insisting on particular subjects inhibits the development of individual talents and strengths. Students should be able to choose the subjects they study in order to be able to develop their aptitudes and interests.
2. A pass in any subject shows intelligence and the pupil should get credit for it ; it is unfair to penalise a student for failing to pass in a particular subject. All subjects - including practical ones - should get equal weight.
3. The idea of compulsion is repugnant to both student and teacher and this generates lack of interest in the subject or, worse,

hatred, antipathy, or nervousness toward it.

4. Compulsion to obtain particular subjects leads to over concentration on these to the neglect of other subjects. Alternatively, it may lead to cramming.

The percentages of those opposed to the idea of compulsory subjects who reasoned in these ways is given below.

Table 3.

Reasons for not wanting to have compulsory subjects.

	%
Inhibits provision for diversity of talents	46
Pupils should get credit for their achievements; all subjects should get equal weight	39
Compulsion stifles interest in the compulsory subjects	5
Compulsion leads to over concentration of efforts	12
Other answers	6
Weighted Base (=100%) All who thought that it should not be compulsory to pass certain subjects or combinations of subjects to get a certificate.	171

It would seem that the main reasons for wanting not to have compulsory subjects stem from a feeling that different pupils have different strengths and abilities and that these have somehow to be built upon, developed, and recognized.

While heads did not differ from other teachers in the reasons they gave, those teachers in boys only schools who thought there should not be compulsory subjects were more likely than teachers in others schools to give as their reasons the fact that it inhibited provision of courses suited to the diversity of talents and that they felt that pupils should get credit for their achievements.

Summary of Section 1

More than three quarters of the teachers who were asked whether there should be compulsory core subjects on the curriculum thought that there should be, but only half felt that there should be compulsory examination subjects.

Whereas about one teacher in five thought Irish should be a compulsory examination subject half thought English should be. If the teacher did not think there should be compulsory examination subjects the reason was likely to be that he felt it inhibited provision of courses suited to the diversity of talents that find their way into post primary schools.

Section II. Suitability of the Subjects, Standard, and Format of the Intermediate Examination.

The whole sample of 1,248 teachers was asked whether they thought the subjects, standard, and format of the Intermediate examination was suited to the needs of all pupils who embark on post primary education. 59% were completely satisfied with the subjects, 65% with the standard, and 54% with the format.

As can be seen from tables* SA1 and SA2 (in the special appendix/available from the ESRI) teachers in vocational schools were the most likely to be satisfied with the standard, teachers in comprehensive schools were the most happy with the subjects, but they were the least happy with the standard and, particularly, the format. Teachers in Protestant schools were the least likely to be happy with the subjects. Men were somewhat more satisfied with the standard than women, and religious teachers somewhat less than lay teachers.

As can be seen from table A1 (at the end of this volume) teachers whose main subject was science to Intermediate level were the most likely to be critical of the subjects available, only 44% of them being completely satisfied on this score compared with 72% of those teaching French to Intermediate Level, 74% of those teaching commerce and 72% of those teaching home economics. Less than half of those mainly teaching Irish, whether to Intermediate or Leaving Certificate level, were completely satisfied with the subjects available.

Teachers teaching mainly to Leaving Certificate level at the time the survey was carried out were on the whole more critical of the standard than those teaching mainly Intermediate level. Those most satisfied with the standard were the Intermediate commerce and home economics teachers.

* For a discussion of statistical significance see the introductory volume.

Leaving certificate history teachers were most likely to be critical of the format, closely followed by those teaching French to Leaving Certificate standard.

Changes wanted in the Subjects

The general changes that teachers would like to see in the subjects of the Intermediate examination fell into 7 main categories. These are given in detail below. Their relative importance will be discussed next.

1. There should be a wider range of subjects available. The responses of teachers who said that specific extra subjects, such as, for example archaeology, practical subjects, and typewriting should be included were grouped into this category, as were those of teachers who said things like "Pupils with practical ability should be given the opportunity to show it".
2. There should be a narrower range of subjects because the present system leads to overloading, especially for the less academic pupils. Answers such as "Five subjects and no more" were grouped into this category.
3. Irish should not be compulsory.
4. Other subjects should not be compulsory e. g. "Maths for girls", "History and geography in secondary schools".
5. History and geography should be separate subjects.
6. Specific comments on the syllabuses for particular subjects.

Examples of such comments were : "Make history more topical", "Less emphasis on fundamentals of Mathematics", "Syllabus in English, history, too wide, leads to cramming", "More emphasis on translation from Latin to English", "Emphasis on spoken rather than written languages", "More emphasis on literature", "Make Irish more useful for everyday use", "Make Irish more attractive".

7. General comments mainly referring to less emphasis on factual knowledge e.g. "too much a memory test", "move away from regurgitation of mere factual knowledge", "syllabus too restricting", "more emphasis on style of thought and coherence of mind, and less on regurgitation of facts".

The percentage of the 37% of teachers who wanted changes in the subjects of the Intermediate who gave as their reason answers which fell into each of these categories is given below.

TABLE 4.

Changes teachers would like to see in subjects of Intermediate Certificate	%
Comments on specific syllabus	28
Wider range of subjects	24
Less emphasis in factual knowledge	22
Irish not compulsory	19
History and Geography separate	14
Other subjects not compulsory	6
Narrower range	3
Other answers	5
Base (=100%) All teachers who were not completely satisfied with the subjects of the Inter Cert. Teachers could give more than one answer	440

It would seem that those who would like a wider range of subjects predominate over those who would like to limit the examination to core subjects, and that there is a fairly strong feeling that the examination should concentrate less on factual knowledge.

Women were much more likely than men to say that history and geography should be separate. Teachers who had more teaching experience were less likely than those with less experience to think that a wider range of subjects should be available, but there was little difference between head teachers and others.

Change wanted in the Standard

The changes desired in the standard of the Intermediate Certificate fell into 11 categories. Since these were fairly straightforward the details will not be given here.

Table 5 shows the way answers which fell into these categories was distributed among the 31% of teachers who wanted changes in the standard of the Intermediate examination.

Table 5

General Changes desired in the standard of the Intermediate Certificate.

	%
Standard should be lower	28
Standard should be raised	26
Standard should be such as to encompass all abilities	11
Standard in a specified subject other than science is too low	10
Standard in a specified subject other than science is too high	10
Too great a difference between Intermediate and Leaving	8
Syllabus too wide to be studied in depth	5
Too great a difference between Higher and Lower	4
Standard in science is too high	3
Standard in sciences is too low	2
*Not enough difference between Higher and Lower	1
Other Comments	2

Base (=100%) All who would like changes in the standard of the

Intermediate Certificate (Teachers could give

answers which fell into more than one category) 380

* It may be that wanting a greater difference between higher and lower courses was perceived by the coders to have been a special case of wanting the standard to encompass all levels of ability with the result that this category is unduly small.

The fact that approximately the same number wanted to have the standard raised as wanted to have it lowered suggests that both may be right - that there is, in fact, a need for a wider range of papers set at different levels and suited to the needs of different sorts of pupils. This is made explicit by those teachers who gave answers which fell into the next largest category which was made up of those who wanted

changes which would make the Inter-Cert encompass all ranges of ability. This inference would also seem to be in line with the thinking of those teachers who felt that the need to pass compulsory subjects inhibited provision of courses suited to the needs of the diversity of pupils who find their way into post-primary education.

As can be seen from tables SA3 and SA4 (in the special appendix) lay teachers who wanted changes in the standard were more likely to want it raised, while religious teachers were more likely to want it lowered. Those who were not head teachers were more likely than heads to want the standard raised. Teachers in Protestant schools were less likely to want the standard lowered than these in other schools.

Among teachers who wanted the standard changed women were more likely than men to want the standard lowered as were teachers teaching in rural rather than urban schools. Teachers working in co-educational rather than single sex schools appeared to have some tendency to concur with this.

Those who were most likely to want the standard altered so that it would encompass all levels of ability, such as to have the higher course more demanding and the lower course less demanding or to have three levels instead of the present two, were those teaching for between 3 and 10 years rather than for longer or shorter periods of time.

Thus the teacher's background, the standards he brings with him to his task, the opportunities he has to gain a wide perspective on academic standards and the abilities of a complete range of pupils, and the abilities of the pupils with whom he is dealing all seem to influence his views on the adequacy of the present system.

Changes wanted in the Format

The changes teachers suggested in the format fell into the main categories shown in table 6, which also gives the frequencies of endorsement.

Table 6Changes wanted in the format of the Intermediate Examination.

	%
In languages, there should be an oral, or a larger percentage of the marks should be allocated to the oral	30
There should be more emphasis on project and practical work, on creativity, individual expression, and design of own projects	27
A certificate should be issued by the school on the basis of continuous assessment. Alternatively teacher assessments, adequately moderated, should be taken into account	16
The wording of the questions should be simplified to make them less intimidating, and the questions should be made more straightforward.	14
There should be shorter papers/ the choice of questions should be more limited in order to save time reading them.	8
There should be a change to multiple choice papers	6
The Intermediate examination should be abolished or the course should be extended to 4 years like CGE O level	6
There should be a wider choice of questions	6
There should be a certificate for each subject passed/ It should not be necessary to pass 5 subjects.	5
The exam should cater for all abilities and not just for the academic; there should be two types of exam. to cater for all	3
Other answers	13
Base (=100%) All teachers who thought that there should be changes in the format of the Intermediate	480

It would seem that the main change wanted is to have a form of examination which includes the practical and expressive as well as the academic aspects of the subjects.

Religious teachers were much less likely than lay teachers to stress the need for assessments of practical and project work; so were teachers who taught mainly to Leaving Certificate level compared with those teaching to Intermediate Certificate level, and teachers who had been teaching for longer rather than shorter periods of time.

Summary of Section 11

About half the teachers interviewed were satisfied with the Intermediate examination on three counts; its subjects, its standard, and its format. About the same number wanted the standard raised as wanted it lowered. This suggests that the real problem (explicitly noted by one teacher in ten) may be to provide a range of papers suited to all levels of ability.

Section III : General Views on the adequacy of current examinations in each school subject

We have now discussed teachers' views on the subjects, standard, and format of the Intermediate examination. Elsewhere in the interviews all teachers were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about examinations which had been made to the authors in the course of the exploratory work. The material was collected on a 5-point scale on which strength of agreement or disagreement could be recorded. Teachers were asked to answer these questions in relation to the subject they mainly taught and the level at which they taught it. However their feelings about examinations, summed across all subjects and levels, are of interest :

Table 7

Percentage who agreed* with statements about the examinations

	%
The teacher's assessment of the pupil's work over the year should be an essential part of examinations	84
The examination provides a fair assessment of a pupil's progress in my subject	71
Employers and universities should have their own selection procedures, and thus leave the schools free to gear their curriculum to the educational objectives that <u>they</u> consider most important and to award certificates indicating that the pupils have completed a general education course, rather than certificates concentrating only on academic attainments	64
Examination requirements prevent me from presenting my subject in an interesting manner.	47
The examination requires the pupils to think for themselves, to look for flaws in arguments, to formulate hypotheses, and to reason logically	41
I would like to see major changes in the type of examination in my subject	40
The examination pays enough attention to inventive creative work	34
The examination is merely a <u>memory test</u> and does not pay sufficient attention to other aspects of intellectual development	33
Weighted Base (=100%)	1,174

* "Strongly Agree "plus" Agree on the whole".

It would seem that, while teachers feel that the present examinations are fair (in that they correctly grade the pupils in relation to that which is being assessed), they would like to be involved in those assessments and to have other characteristics included - through, for example, continuous assessment. Vocational selection should be separated from educational evaluation. About a third would desire major changes in the examination for their subject. Furthermore about half feel that the present examination system, with its implications for the pupils' future careers, directs attention away from some of the main goals of education and prevents them from presenting their subject in the way they would like.

The comments the teachers made have been related to the subject taught and the level at which it was taught in the charts which follow. Unfortunately the small number of teachers who answered the question in relation to any one subject and level precluded analysis by subject for all but the main subjects. Even for the main subjects the numbers on which the percentages are based are still small, with the result that one could not confidently predict that the results we have obtained would be replicated in a larger study. What we can say is that the results are sufficiently suggestive to indicate that further intensive studies carried out within subjects might yield useful results. As a rough guide to the significance of differences between percentages we may say that, given two groups each of 35 teachers, a percentage difference of 25% and 15% would be required for significance at the .05 level respectively at the centre and tail of the distribution. Such tests, of course, make no use of the high degree of internal consistency in the results. Further comments on statistical significance will be found in Appendix A to Volume 1.

The results in the charts largely speak for themselves. Nevertheless a few comments may be made.

At Intermediate level, history teachers were the least likely to think that the examination provided a fair test of the pupils' progress; the most likely to say that the examination was merely a memory test; the most likely to say that the examination prevented them from presenting the subject in the most interesting way ; the least likely to say that the examination paid enough attention to inventive, creative work ; among the least likely to say that the examination requires pupils to think for themselves; and the second most likely to say that employers should have their own evaluations.

The pattern is similar, but not identical, at Leaving Certificate level.

Mathematics teachers at Intermediate level were among the least likely to say that the examination paid enough attention to inventive, creative, work and the most likely to say that the examination required pupils to think for themselves. At Leaving Certificate level mathematics teachers were also the most likely to claim that the examination assessed the pupils' ability to think for themselves.

At Intermediate level science teachers, like home economics, history and Irish and French teachers, were likely to want

Percentage of Teachers of Each Subject who Strongly Agreed or Agreed with Various Comments about the Intermediate Certificate.

Commerce	87
Mathematics (Higher)	84
French	76
Irish (Higher)	75
English (Higher)	73
Mathematics (Lower)	73
Geography	73
Science A	71
Home Economics	68
History	64

History	59
Irish (Higher)	44
Home Economics	43
Commerce	40
Geography	39
Science A	30
Maths (L)	30
English (H)	27
French	24
Maths (H)	18

1. The examination provides a fair assessment of a pupil's progress in my subject.

2. The examination is merely a memory test and does not pay sufficient attention to other aspects of intellectual development.

History	74
Science A	65
Irish (Higher)	55
French	52
Geography	49
English (Higher)	44
Commerce	40
Mathematics (H)	38
Home Econ.	35
Maths (L)	25

Home Economics	57
History	52
French	52
Irish (Higher)	52
Science A	49
Geography	43
English (Higher)	40
Maths (L)	24
Commerce	23
Maths (H)	18

3. Examination requirements prevent me from presenting my subject in an interesting manner.

4. I would like to see major changes in the type of examination in my subject.

Home Economics	46
Irish (Higher)	40
Geography	39
English (Higher)	38
Maths (L)	35
French	32
Maths (H)	28
Commerce	26
Science A	24
History	22

Mathematics (Lower)	70
Mathematics (Higher)	60
Commerce	50
English (Higher)	46
Geography	43
Home Economics	36
French	34
History	26
Irish (H)	25
Science A	24

5. The examination pays enough attention to inventive creative work.

6. The examination requires the pupils to think for themselves, to look for flaws in arguments, to formulate hypothesis and to reason logically.

Geography	81
History	76
English (Higher)	70
French	66
Irish (Higher)	59
Science A	59
Mathematics (Higher)	56
Mathematics (Lower)	52
Commerce	50
Home Economics	50

Home Economics	96
Geography	93
French	88
Irish (Higher)	86
English (Higher)	84
Mathematics (Higher)	84
Mathematics (Lower)	82
Science A	81
History	81
Commerce	67

7. Employers and universities should have their own selection procedures, and thus leave the schools free to gear their curriculum to the educational objectives that they should most important to award certificates indicating that they have completed a general education course rather than certificates concentrating only on academic attainments.

8. The teacher's assessment of the pupil's work over the year should be an essential part of examination.

The weighted bases on which the above figures are based are: Commerce 30, English 37, French 25, Geography 13, History 27, Home Economics 28, Irish 37, Mathematics (Lower) 17, Mathematics (Higher) 44 and Science A 37.

CHART II

Percentage of Teachers of Each Subject who Strongly Agreed or Agreed with Various Comments about the Leaving Certificate.

Latin (Higher)	95
Mathematics (Ordinary)	91
Chemistry	79
Mathematics (Higher)	76
Irish (Higher)	74
Bus. Org. & Accounting	73
Geography	71
French (Higher)	64
English (Higher)	63
History	56

1. The examination provides a fair assessment of a pupil's progress in my subject.

Bus. Org. and Accounting	59
History	50
Geography	44
Irish (Higher)	40
English (Higher)	30
Chemistry	29
Maths. (H)	29
Latin (H)	18
Fr. (H)	14
M. (O)	12

2. The examination is merely a memory test and does not pay sufficient attention to other aspects of intellectual development.

Irish (Higher)	67
Geography	59
Chemistry	56
Mathematics (H)	50
History	49
Bus. Org. & Acc.	49
French (H)	45
English (H)	42
Maths (O)	40
Latin (H)	26

3. Examination requirements prevent me from presenting my subject in an interesting manner.

Irish (Higher)	57
History	51
French (Higher)	46
Chemistry	45
Geography	41
Bus. Org. & Acc.	39
English (H)	37
Maths. (H)	33
Latin (H)	28
M. (O)	16

4. I would like to see major changes in the type of examination in my subject.

French (H)	51
Latin (Higher)	47
Mathematics (O)	42
English (H)	41
Chemistry	36
Maths. (H)	33
Bus. Org. & A.	31
Geography	31
Irish (H)	26
History	21

5. The examination pays enough attention to inventive creative work.

Mathematics (O)	70
Mathematics (H)	56
Latin (H)	54
English (H)	52
Chemistry	47
Geography	39
French (H)	34
Irish (H)	29
History	29
B. O. & A.	23

6. The examination requires the pupils to think for themselves, to look for flaws in arguments, to formulate hypothesis and to reason logically.

Bus. Org. & Acc.	78
French (H)	75
English (H)	70
Mathematics (O)	67
Irish (H)	66
History	64
Geography	63
Latin (H)	62
Mathematics (H)	60
Chemistry	43

7. Employers and universities should have their own selection procedures, and thus leave the schools free to gear their curriculum to the educational objectives that they consider most important and to award certificates indicating that the pupils have completed a general education course rather than certificates concentrating only on academic attainments.

History	93
English (H)	89
French (H)	89
Mathematics (H)	84
Mathematics (O)	84
Geography	81
Bus. Org. & Acc.	80
Latin (H)	79
Irish (H)	78
Chemistry	77

8. The teacher's assessment of the pupil's work over the year should be an essential part of examinations.

The weighted bases on which the above percentages are based are: Bus. Org. & Acc. 26, Chemistry 17, English (Higher) 72, French (Higher) 41, Geography 46, History 41, Irish (H) 62, Latin (H) 36, Maths. (O) 29 and Maths. (H) 48.

major changes in the examination, and were the least likely to think that the examination required pupils to think for themselves.

Ratings of Examinations by Factor Scores

Teachers feelings about the examinations did not vary much with their concerns as assessed from their factor scores*. However those who were concerned to introduce their pupils to a wide range of academic topics were more likely to want major changes in the type of examination, those who got high scores on the factor which measured concern with Irish nationalism were more likely than those with low scores to say that the examination required pupils to think for themselves, reason logically, etc. and those with high levels of concern with developing basic academic skills were more likely than those less concerned about this to think the examination required the pupils to think for themselves.

TABLE 8.

Percent of those with High Medium and Low scores on three factors who agreed with selected statements about the examination.

		% who agree that they would like to see major changes in the examination.
Score on factor measuring effort put into introducing pupils to a wide range of Cultures	High	48
	Medium	38
	Low	32
		% who agree that the examination requires pupils to think for themselves, reason logically etc.
Score on factor measuring effort put into developing Irish Nationalism	High	49
	Medium	37
	Low	35
		% who agree that the examination requires pupils to think for themselves, reason logically, etc.
Score on factor measuring effort put into developing basic academic skills	High	50
	Medium	41
	Low	35

* The make-up of the factor scores will be discussed in another section of the report. Suffice it to say here that the factors summarise the variance in teachers educational concerns as assessed from the effort the teachers put into achieving 39 educational objectives.

Summary of Section 111

Teachers felt that the examinations provided a fair assessment of their pupils' work, but they would like to be involved to a greater extent than they are at present in the assessment of that work - perhaps because they felt that it would then be possible to introduce assessments of other characteristics (such as practical work) in to the examinations. Vocational selection should be separated from educational evaluation. About half found the examination syllabus cramping, and rather more than a third would like to see major changes in the examination of their subject.

Feelings about the examination vary a great deal with the subject taught, but, since the numbers teaching any one subject are small this work would have to be replicated before firm conclusions could be drawn. Nevertheless, as we shall see later, these comments tend to be consistent with the comments on the syllabus and they should therefore not be dismissed out of hand. They are potentially extremely important and the present data provides an invaluable context within which to fit more detailed surveys of teachers' feelings about specific subjects.

Section IV. Teachers views on the Functions of Examinations

Methods

On forms A and B all teachers, but not head teachers, were asked to indicate whether they felt it was "Very Important", "Important", "Of some Importance," or of "Little or no Importance" for examinations to perform each of twenty possible functions of examinations, or whether it was important that examinations should not function in this way. They were also asked whether the present examination system performed each function "Very Well", "Well", "Not very well", "Badly" or "Very badly". Each teacher answered the question in relation to both the more and the less academic pupils at the end of both the junior and senior cycle.

Results

The percentage of teachers who thought each function "very important" for each category of pupil is given in chart III. By implication the remainder of the teachers in each case gave an answer varying from "Important" through to "Important that examinations should not do this".

The rank order of importance of the functions does not vary much from one category of pupil to another. (Chart IV) The exceptions to this statement are that feedback seems to be thought of a more important function of examinations for more academic pupils (Items 5, 11, and 15 in this list), senior cycle pupils are thought to be less in need of help from the teacher, and clarity of expression seems to be thought more important among more academic pupils.

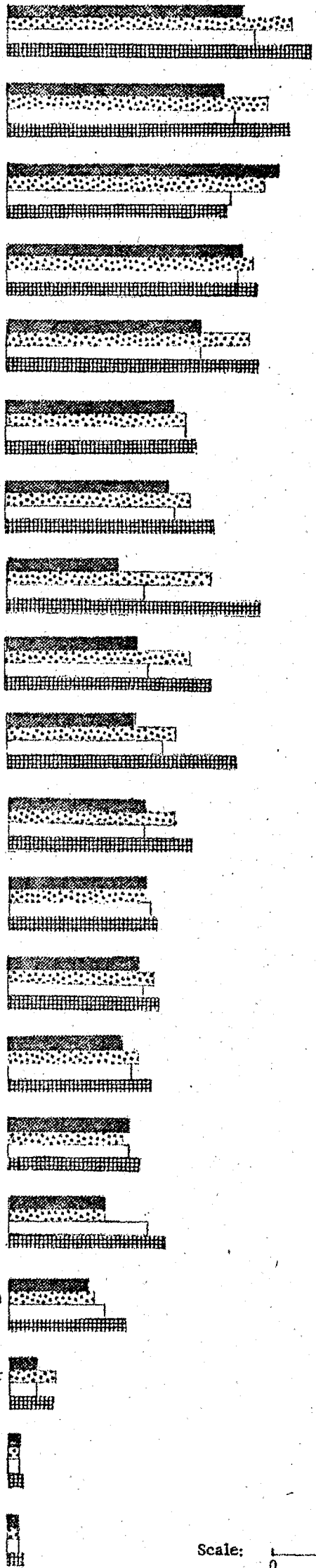
It is, perhaps, surprising that less than half of the teachers thought that any of these objectives of examinations were very important. It would be interesting to know what, if anything, they considered very important functions of examinations to be. The numbers thinking each objective important would, of course, be considerably increased if we included the "important" as well as the "very important" category. Nevertheless, this material is strikingly different from the material we have collected elsewhere in the survey. In our next report we show that the vast majority of the teachers did rate many educational objectives "Very Important". In the context of this other data it is quite clear that there is indeed a major unanswered problem relating to the question we have raised. This is, perhaps, partly answered by the fact that the teachers do not, on the whole, place examination performance among the educational objectives they consider most important. If examinations are not very important, how can any of their functions be very important? Which then raises a question about why more teachers did not say that the Intermediate examination should be abolished. All we can really say from this data is that there does indeed seem to be a strong case for more public discussion of the basic question "Why examinations"?

In spite of this problem Chart III leaves one with the clear impression that teachers think the function of examinations is

Chart III. Percentage of teachers saying each topic is a very important function of examinations, averaged across ratings for 'More' and 'Less' academic pupils at the end of the Junior and Senior Cycles.

1.	Assess the pupil's ability to express himself clearly.	50
2.	Assess the pupil's reasoning ability.	47
3.	Provide the teacher with information so that he can think how to help them.	46
4.	Provide educationalists with the information they need to guide and place their pupils within the educational system.	45
5.	Provide feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	42
6.	To teach the pupils that you don't get anything without working for it.	34
7.	To motivate the pupils by providing them with clearly defined goals.	34
8.	To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's academic performance.	34
9.	To provide feedback to the school concerning how effectively they are achieving academic objectives.	32
10.	To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's academic strengths and weaknesses.	32
11.	To assess the pupil's knowledge.	30
12.	To provide feedback to the pupil about his character strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	27
13.	To motivate the staff by providing them with clearly defined goals.	27
14.	To provide an assessment of the pupil which is completely uninfluenced by the teachers other knowledge of the pupil.	24
15.	To provide feedback to the school concerning how effectively they are achieving their objectives in the realm of character and personality.	23
16.	To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality: its strengths and weaknesses.	23
17.	To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidates character strengths and weaknesses.	18
18.	To motivate the pupils by letting them know who is better than they are so that they can compete with them.	7
19.	To enable schools to be compared.	2
20.	To enable teachers to be compared.	2

1. Assess the pupil's ability to express himself clearly.
2. Assess the pupil's reasoning ability.
3. Provide the teacher with information so that he can think how to help them.
4. Provide educationalists with the information they need to guide and place their pupils within the educational system.
5. Provide feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.
6. To teach the pupils that you don't get anything without working for it.
7. To motivate the pupils by providing them with clearly defined goals.
8. To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's academic performance.
9. To provide feedback to the school concerning how effectively they are achieving academic objectives.
10. To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's academic strengths and weaknesses.
11. To assess the pupil's knowledge.
12. To provide feedback to the pupil about his character strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.
13. To motivate the staff by providing them with clearly defined goals.
14. To provide an assessment of the pupil which is completely uninfluenced by the teacher's other knowledge of the pupil.
15. To provide feedback to the school concerning how effectively they are achieving their objectives in their realm of character and personality.
16. To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality - its strengths and weaknesses.
17. To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidates character strengths and weaknesses.
18. To motivate the pupil's by letting them know who is better than they are so that they can compete with them.
19. To enable schools to be compared.
20. To enable teachers to be compared.



Scale: 0 10 20%

much more to assist in guidance and feedback than to provide a service to those outside the school. Feedback seems to be thought of as primarily for the pupils' use; less teachers seem to regard it as a means of comparing the effectiveness of different teaching strategies.

In view of the fact that, as we have shown in our report on "Teachers' Perception of Educational Objectives", teachers consider the development of the pupils' character and personality to be the most important objective of education, it is remarkable that so few thought that a very important function of examinations should be to help their pupils and themselves track on the attainment of this goal (items 12, 15 and 16 in this list). The most likely explanation would seem to be that they have no experience of assessments which could help them in this way.

Attention should, perhaps, also be drawn to the low percentage of teachers who attached great importance to motivation of pupils by public recognition and competition.

Achievement of Examination Objectives

The proportion of teachers who thought the present examination system achieved each of these objectives "Very Well" or "Well" is shown in charts V and VI. Chart V (and, for that matter Chart III) would clearly be more informative if it showed the percentage of teachers who chose each of the alternatives they were offered. It would, however, have been prohibitively expensive to have carried out the analysis in this amount of detail. Since only the "Very-well-plus well"* tail of the distribution was analysed the "Not-very-well-plus-badly-plus-very-badly" tail had to be obtained by subtraction and therefore also includes those who did not answer the question.

* The cutting points in these analyses were arrived at on the basis of inspection of the unweighted straight counts. They were such as to yield the most useful analysis. In this case if only the "Very well" category had been used the numbers would have been too small to yield a useful picture.

Chart V. Percentage of teachers who think the present examination system achieves each objective 'Very Well' or 'Well' and 'Not Very Well', 'Badly' or 'Very Badly', averaged across ratings for 'More' and 'Less' academic pupils at the end of the Junior and Senior Cycles.

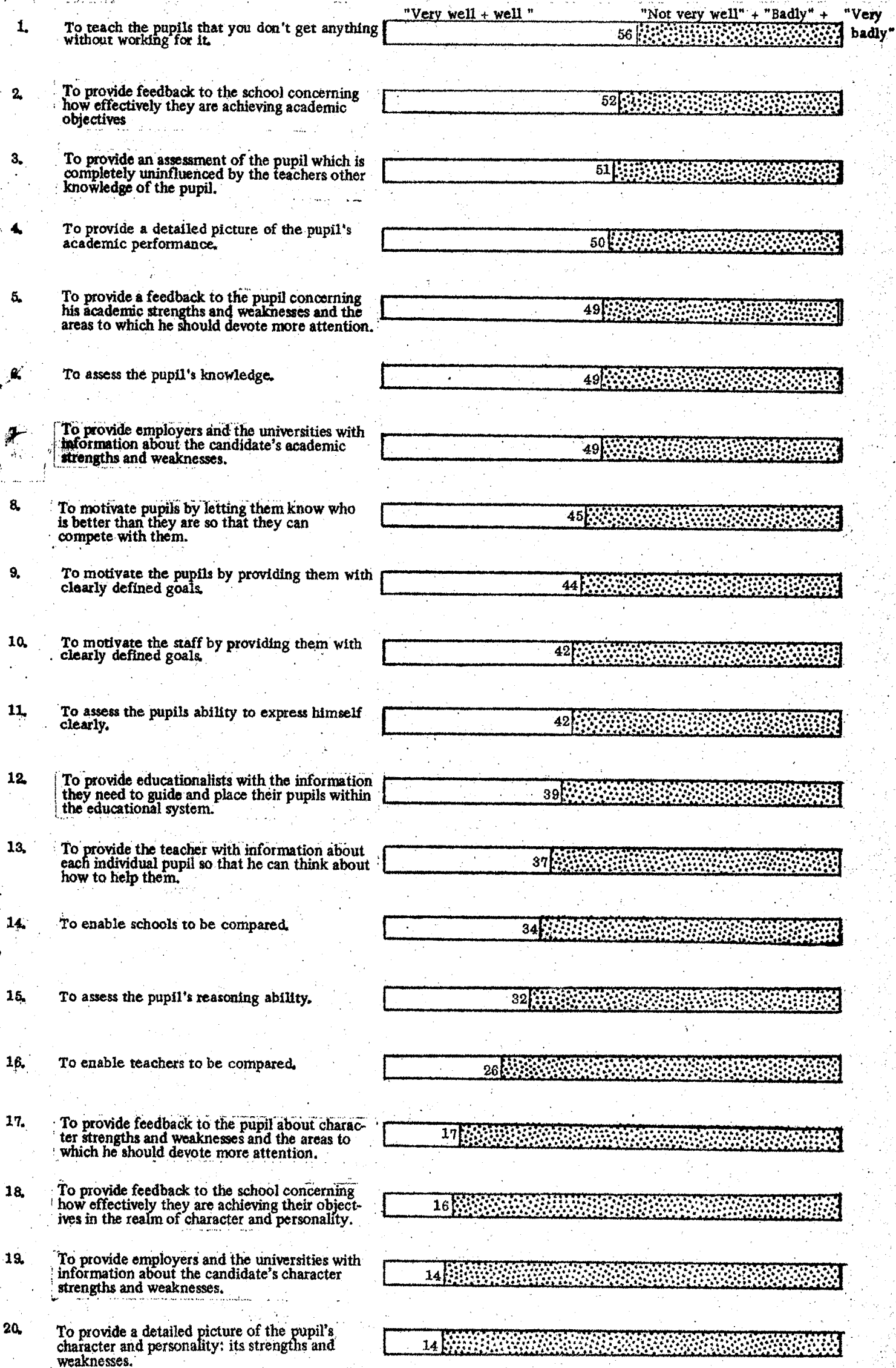
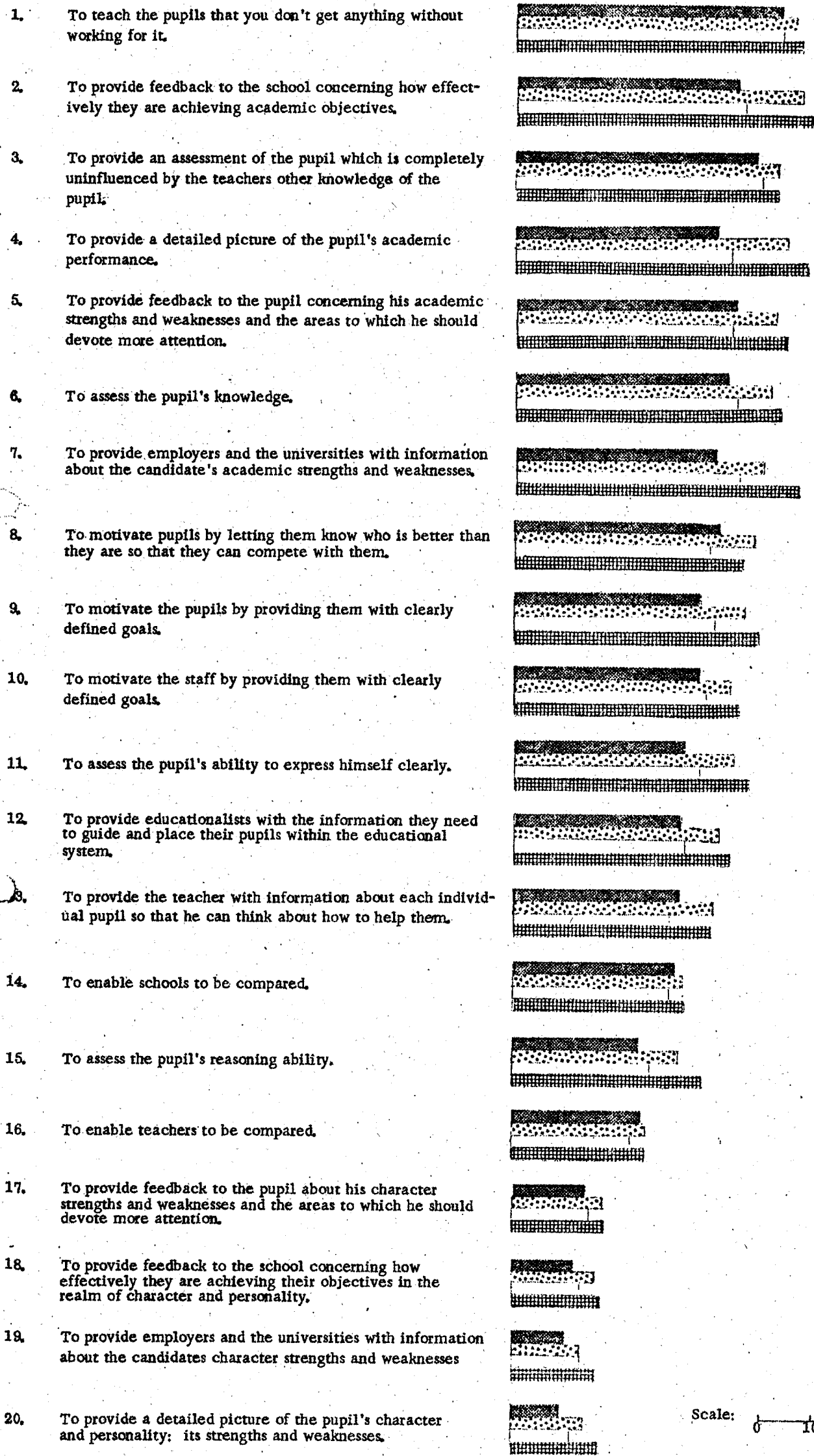


CHART VI



Scale: 0 — 10 — 20%

It would seem from Chart VI that the present examinations are thought to achieve all their objectives much better for the more than for the less academic pupils. This would seem to be particularly the case for the picture of the pupil's academic performance painted by the examination, the feedback to the school concerning its attainment of its academic objectives, the adequacy of the information available to employers and the universities, and the extent to which the examinations assess reasoning ability and ability to express oneself. Nevertheless, in spite of the higher level of success of the examinations in performing their functions for the more academic pupils, the rank order is much the same for the four groups, with the possible exception of the adequacy of the picture of the pupil's academic strengths and weaknesses and the quality of the information available to universities.

Priorities for Action

The teachers' level of satisfaction with the performance of the examinations was analysed in relation to the importance attached to each objective. Chart VII gives the proportion of all teachers who thought each objective both very important and not very well, badly or very badly attained. Chart VIII gives the proportion of the teachers thinking the objective very important who thought it was not very well, badly or very badly attained. In other words Chart VII indicates the teachers' overall priorities for action. It indicates the things that are generally seen as both very important and lacking. Chart VIII, on the other hand, gives the level of dissatisfaction amongst those that think that particular objective very important. Note that the figures in Chart VII could be markedly increased by extending the categories to include all teachers who thought the examination objective "important" as well as those who thought it very "important". We give these figures for less academic pupils, junior cycle, in Table A2.

CHART VII

Percentage of All Teachers who thought each objective both very Important and not very well,
Badly, or very Badly Achieved.

1.	To assess the pupils reasoning ability.	1	31
2.	To provide educationalists with the information they need to guide and place their pupils within the educational system.	2	26
3.	To provide the <u>teacher</u> with information about each individual pupil so that he can think about how to help them.	3	25
4.	To assess the pupils ability to express himself clearly.	4	25
5.	To provide feedback to the <u>pupil</u> about his character strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	5	21
6.	To provide feedback to the <u>school</u> concerning how effectively they are achieving their objectives in the realm of character and personality.	6	20
7.	To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality; its strengths and weaknesses.	7	19
8.	To provide feedback to the <u>pupil</u> concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	8	17
9.	To motivate the pupils by providing them with clearly defined goals.	9	17
10.	To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's character strengths and weaknesses.	10	15
11.	To assess the pupils knowledge.	11	13
12.	To motivate the staff by providing them with clearly defined goals.	12	13
13.	To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's academic strengths and weaknesses.	13	12
14.	To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's academic performance.	14	12
15.	To provide feedback to the <u>school</u> concerning how effectively they are achieving academic objectives.	15	10
16.	To teach the pupils that you don't get anything without working for it.	16	8
17.	To provide an assessment of the pupil which is completely uninfluenced by the teachers other knowledge of the pupil.	17	8
18.	To motivate the pupils by letting them know who is better than they are so that they can compete with them.	18	2
19.	To enable schools to be compared.	19	2
20.	To enable teachers to be compared.	20	1

Chart VII : Percentage of those Teachers thinking each Objective very Important who were Dissatisfied with its Achievements. (Nos in brackets give the proportion of the teachers who thought the objective very Important)

1.	To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality; its strengths and weaknesses.	1	77
2.	To provide feedback to the school concerning how effectively they are achieving their objectives in the realm of character and personality.	2	77
3.	To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's character strengths and weaknesses.	3	72
4.	To provide feedback to the pupil about his character strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	4	72
5.	To assess the pupils reasoning ability.	5	60
6.	To provide the teacher with information about each individual pupil so that he can think about how to help them.	6.	52
7.	To provide educationalists with the information they need to guide and place their pupils within the educational system.	7	51
8.	To assess the pupil's ability to express himself clearly.	8	47
9.	To motivate the pupils by providing them with clearly defined goals.	9	45
10.	To motivate the staff by providing them with clearly defined goals.	10	45
11.	To assess the pupils knowledge.	11	40
12.	To provide feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	12	37
13.	To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's academic strengths and weaknesses.	13	35
14.	To enable schools to be compared.	14	35
15.	To enable teachers to be compared.	15	33
16.	To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's academic performances.	16	32
17.	To provide feedback to the school concerning how effectively they are achieving academic objectives.	17	30
18.	To provide an assessment of the pupil which is completely uninfluenced by the teachers other knowledge of the pupil.	18	29
19.	To motivate the pupils by letting them know who is better than they are so that they can compete with them.	19	24
20.	To teach the pupils that you don't get anything without working for it.	20	23

As, once again, there is very little difference between the ratings for the junior cycle more-and less-academic pupils and senior cycle more-and less-academic pupils, only the mean percentages and rank orders are reported. The only interesting difference that emerged from the analysis of the four groups was that when replying in terms of the less academic pupils, whether junior or senior cycle, a higher percentage of teachers appeared to be dissatisfied with the attainment of what they considered to be very important functions of examinations, although the rank order remained about the same.

Examination of Chart VII, the one showing the objectives perceived to be most in need of attention, indicates that the assessment of the pupils' ability to reason and to express themselves clearly appear to be important objectives of examinations which are not very well attained at present. Teachers' other major area of concern appears to be in relation to having adequate feedback, for educationalists for guidance and placement purposes, for themselves so that they can best help individual pupils, for the pupils, particularly in the area of character strengths and weaknesses, and for the school in relation to its achievement of non-cognitive objectives. In other words, many teachers appeared to perceive the present examination system as failing to assess very important types of intellectual activity, and failing to report back adequately on what it does find, both in the academic and non-cognitive areas.

The two objectives appearing at the bottom of the list, that is those relating to the comparison of schools and teachers, are not the objectives whose achievement causes least dissatisfaction but merely objectives which very few (16 and 13 respectively) teachers think very important. In fact the functions which the greatest percentages of teachers think very important and very well or well achieved are: providing feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and

the areas to which he should devote more attention (34%), assessing the pupil's ability to express himself clearly (34%), and providing a detailed picture of the pupil's academic performance (33%) for the more academic pupils, and, in relation to the less academic ones: to teach them that you don't get anything without working for it (27%), providing feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses (24%) and assessing the pupil's ability to express himself (23%). Thus, although Chart VII indicates teachers priorities for action, it is not implied that the objectives at the top of the chart are to be achieved at the expense of these other objectives, which are often thought to be equally important, but attained.

At this point attention may be drawn to the high level of satisfaction expressed in relation to the objective of providing feedback to help pupils and teachers improve academic performance. This high level of satisfaction/^{was} also found among those who regarded this as a very important function of examinations. It may be that teachers are unaware of the detailed and useful feedback that is now available by making use of the techniques developed by Bloom(1971) and his associates. Attention may also be drawn to the level of disagreement concerning the adequacy with which clarity of expression is assessed. Although 34% of all teachers felt that this was a very important objective of examinations that was well achieved, 25% felt it was very important but badly achieved. It would seem that while many teachers think it important to have improvements in this area many others are not merely complacent but well satisfied.

Teachers who thought it very important that examinations provide feedback about their pupil's character and personality development were also extremely likely to think that the examinations at present did not perform this function (Chart VIII). 77% of the 196 teachers who thought it very important for examinations to

provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality, its strengths and weaknesses, said that the Intermediate and Leaving Certificates fulfilled this function not very well, badly or very badly, and the three objectives coming next in this rank order of dissatisfaction are concerned with feedback in the non-cognitive areas.

Although the number of teachers who think examinations should perform these functions is relatively small, our report on "Teachers Perception of Educational Objectives" shows that the teachers in general attached much more importance to these goals than to passing traditional examinations, and felt that they were much less well attained. Should our report lead to this shared feeling of un-ease becoming more articulate, and should teachers come to think that a change in the examinations would provide a means of helping them to achieve these goals more effectively, we would expect many more teachers to join the 153 disgruntled teachers we have encountered in this survey.

At the other end of the scale which shows the proportion of those teachers who thought each objective important who thought the present examination system performed the function badly or, at least, not very well, are the objectives most frequently perceived to be adequately fulfilled by those who think them very important. Only 23% of the 287 teachers who thought it very important to teach pupils that you don't get anything without working for it thought this was inadequately achieved, and only 24% of the 209 thinking it very important thought that motivating the pupils by competition with each other was not being fulfilled; a further 44% of those thinking it unimportant thought it was achieved adequately.

Other objectives regarded as fulfilled well or very well by more than a third of the teachers who considered them unimportant were: providing an assessment of the pupil completely

uninfluenced by the teachers' other knowledge of the pupil, teaching the pupils you don't get anything without working for it, providing feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses, and enabling teachers and schools to be compared.

The general picture that emerges from this data is that quite large proportions (1 in 5 to 1 in 3) of teachers considered many of the examination objectives we studied both important and badly achieved. This applied particularly to nearly all feedback objectives, but it also applied to assessment of high level intellectual skills like reasoning and adequacy of expression. Teachers who thought that examinations should be directed toward assessment and feedback in relation to character development (the educational objective most teachers felt to be very important) were particularly dissatisfied. Changes in the examination system which moved toward provision of more detailed feedback, which took more of the teachers' knowledge of the pupil into account, and which reduced the public nature of examination results would clearly be welcomed by many teachers.

We should, however, stress that, although teachers clearly felt that examinations should take into account teachers' assessments of the pupil's work over the year (see Table 7), the great majority also agreed that examinations as at present organized provided a fair assessment of their pupil's work.

Summary of Section IV

Less than half the teachers thought any of the functions of examinations we enquired about "very important". Although the number thinking the functions important could be increased by adding the "important" to the "very important" category it would seem, in the light of other data, that the material suggests that teachers are at present not entirely clear about why they have examinations.

The main function of examinations is at present perceived to be more to provide guidance and feedback to schools, teachers, and pupils, than to provide a service to those outside the schools. The functions that were felt to be least well attained were the assessment of progress towards character development goals and the provision of feedback to schools, teachers, and pupils to help them do better in this area.

At present the examinations fulfil their functions better for the more than for the less academic pupils.

When importance and adequacy of attainment were taken into account simultaneously it emerged that the objectives which seemed to be most in need of attention were to improve the extent to which the examinations assessed the pupils' ability to reason and to express themselves clearly, and to the degree to which they provide feedback which will be useful in helping teachers and pupils to improve their performance both in the academic and character development area. Those teachers who thought examinations should assess the schools' achievement of character development goals were also extremely likely to think that the present examinations did not perform this function very well.

SECTION V. Covariates of Perception of Examination Objectives and Satisfaction with the Performance of the examination system.

Satisfaction with the examination system did not vary much with the subject area in which the teacher sought. However teachers of practical subjects at all levels were slightly less likely to be satisfied with the information available to employers and the universities concerning the candidates' academic strengths and weaknesses.

When we looked at school type differences the thing which struck us was the divergence of the 73 teachers in Protestant schools from the others. However these differences were rarely consistent from Intermediate to Leaving Certificate level or from more to less academic pupils, and, for this reason they have not been reported although the explanation may in fact be that teachers in Protestant schools discriminated more than other teachers between the needs of the more and the less academic pupils and between junior and senior cycles.

Importance Attached to Examination Objectives and Teachers' Factor Scores

As can be seen from tables SA5 to SA11 (in the special appendix) teachers' factor scores tended to relate positively to the importance they attached to the various examination objectives. Nevertheless there is a much stronger relationship between some of the factor scores and particular variables than there is with others.

Teachers who put most effort into developing the pupils' personality and character, self confidence, independence and initiative were particularly likely to think that examinations should provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality, provide feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention, teach pupils that you don't get anything without working for it, provide information to employers and universities concerning academic strengths and weaknesses, assess the pupil's knowledge and ability to express himself clearly, provide feedback to the pupil concerning his character strengths and weaknesses, and motivate pupils by providing clearly defined goals.

There was little relationship between teachers' level of concern with providing an education dealing with sex and marriage and their views on examinations.

Teachers who paid great attention to providing a wide academic education were more likely than those less concerned with these things to think it important for examinations to: assess the pupil's ability to express himself clearly, provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character strengths and weaknesses, provide feedback to the pupil concerning areas of character which required attention, provide the pupil with detailed feedback concerning academic areas which required attention, and provide employers and universities with information about the pupil's character strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers who were concerned to make education vocationally relevant were more likely than teachers less concerned with these things to think it important for examinations to: provide feedback to the pupil about his character strengths and weaknesses, teach the pupils that you don't get anything without working for it, provide feedback to the pupil concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses, provide educationalists with guidance and placement information, provide employers and universities with information about academic strengths and weaknesses, and motivate the pupils by providing them with clearly defined goals.

Teachers who particularly stressed the importance of the basic skills of writing, speaking, and studying on one's own were more likely to think it important for examinations to: assess the pupil's ability to express himself clearly, to assess his reasoning ability, and to provide an assessment which is completely uninfluenced by the

teachers other knowledge of the pupil.

Teachers who tried harder than others to develop Irish nationalism were concerned that examinations should teach pupils that you don't get anything without working for it, that they should provide feedback to the pupil concerning character strengths and weaknesses and academic abilities, motivate pupils and staff alike, and provide employers and universities with information about the pupil's character strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers who scored high on the factor concerned with developing a scientific attitude on the part of their pupils were more likely than those with low scores on this factor to think that most of the examination objectives were important. However the trend was most marked on the importance of providing an assessment uninfluenced by the teacher's other knowledge of the pupils, an assessment of the pupils' character and personality, providing feedback to the school concerning the efficiency with which they are achieving their academic objectives, providing feedback to the pupil concerning both his character and academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas he should devote most attention toward, and motivating pupils and staff by setting clearly defined goals.

One may summarize this section by saying that the factor scores not merely demonstrate that teachers have different goals in education ; these teachers also tend to want different forms of examination system, a form which is related to the goals they consider most important.

SECTION VI. Satisfaction with Attainment and Teachers' Factor Scores.

Turning to our analysis of co-variates of teachers' satisfaction with the examination system there is little relationship between the teachers' factor scores and their satisfaction with the present examination system. However teachers who put a lot of effort into developing nationalism were more likely than those who paid less attention to these things to think that the present examination system does more things well and, in particular, they were more likely than others to think that it assesses the pupils reasoning ability, provides adequate information to educationalists to guide and place their pupils, provides teachers with the information they need to help their pupils, and provides pupils with information concerning their strengths and weaknesses.

Those more concerned with developing personality and character were more satisfied with the present examinations performance in assessing reasoning ability and teaching pupils that you don't get anything without working for it.

The Examination Syllabi

Teachers' views on examinations need to be considered in relation to their views on the examination syllabi.

In the course of the interviews, teachers were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements concerning the syllabus that had been made to the authors during the exploratory work. They were asked to respond for the subject they mostly taught at the level at which they mostly taught it.

The results, summed across all school subjects, are given below although, as we shall see next, there are big differences between subjects.

TABLE 9.

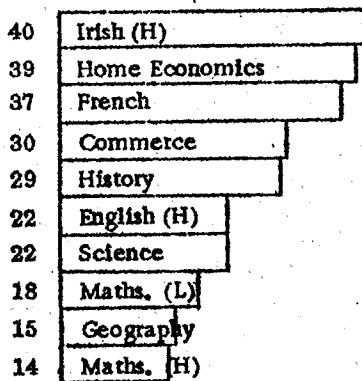
Percentage who "strongly agree" or "agree" with various statements about the syllabus.

The syllabus encourages the development of critical thinking and powers of judgment in pupils	59
The syllabus allows plenty of scope for me to teach my subject in the way I consider best	58
The syllabus is too wide, it is impossible to cover it adequately	41
The syllabus does not take into consideration the full range of ability in my class	38
The amount of factual learning the syllabus requires is excessive	34
The syllabus demands too much of pupils of this age	33
The syllabus allows ample time for pursuing any fruitful ideas and topics which are outside its strict bounds.	31
I would like to see major changes in the syllabus	29
The approach to my subject which the syllabus demands is out of touch with modern methods	28
The syllabus is irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils	26
The syllabus takes insufficient account of contemporary thinking or advances of knowledge in my subject	26
The syllabus demands acquisition by pupils of a lot of useless knowledge	22
There is a lack of a coherent thread running through the syllabus	19
The syllabus for my subject is too narrow in its approach	14
Weighted base (=100%)	1,174

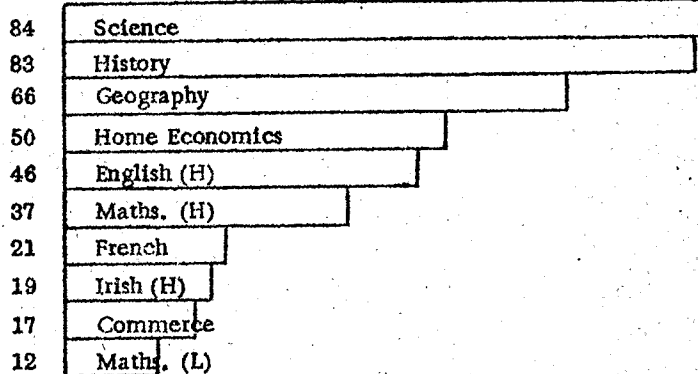
It would seem that, while fairly satisfied with the syllabus they are teaching, teachers are inclined to feel under pressure to cover too much ground, and to feel that the syllabus does not take into consideration the full range of ability they encounter.

Charts IX and X and Tables A3 and A4 give this material analysed against the specific syllabus referred to. It should be noted that the charts only permit comparisons with the other main subjects while tables A3 and 4 permit comparison with the overall average for all subjects. Once again we must emphasise that the numbers are often very small so that all we can say is that further work in this area should prove informative. It will be seen that, at Intermediate level, teachers of Irish were: well below average in feeling that the syllabus was too wide, well below average in thinking that it encouraged the

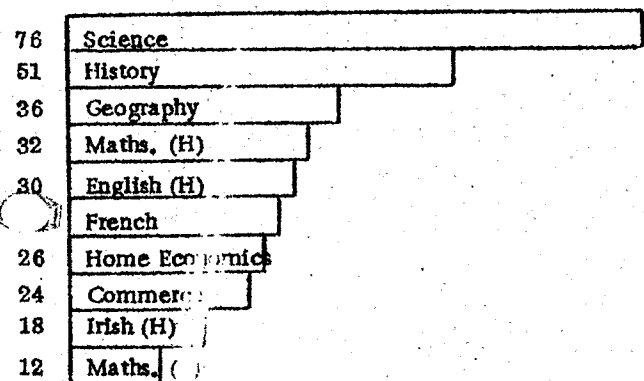
CHART IX. COMMENTS ON THE NEW INTERMEDIATE SYLLABUS BY SUBJECT.



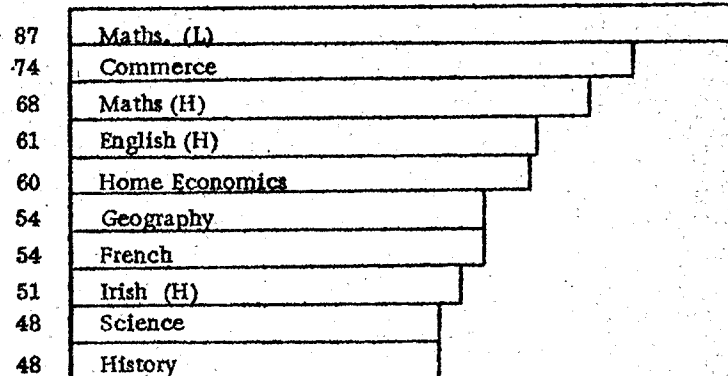
1. The approach to my subject which the syllabus demands is out of touch with modern methods.



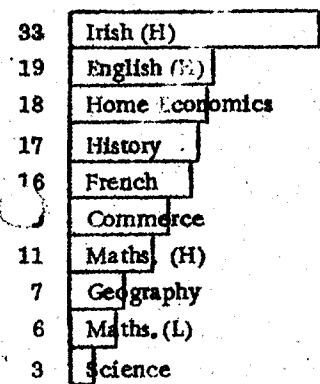
2. The syllabus is too wide, it is impossible to cover it adequately.



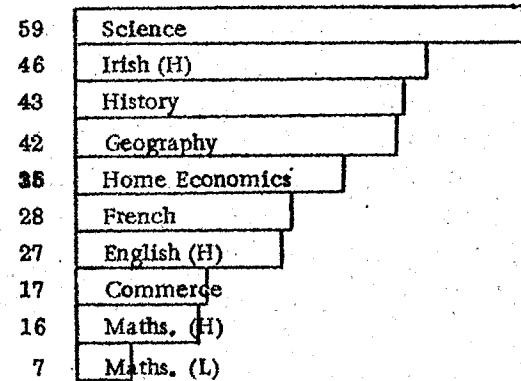
3. The syllabus demands too much of pupils of this age.



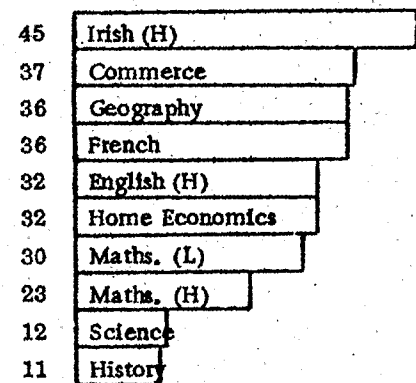
4. The syllabus allows plenty of scope for me to teach my subject in the way I consider best.



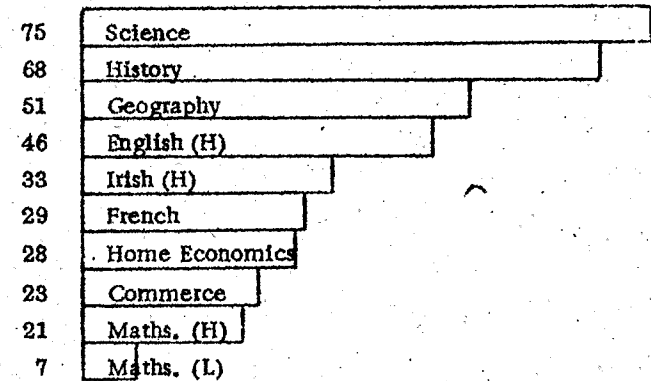
5. The syllabus for my subject is too narrow in its approach.



6. I would like to see major changes in the syllabus.

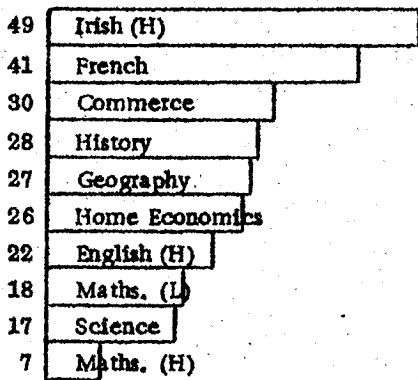


7. The syllabus allows ample time for pursuing any fruitful ideas and topics which are outside its strict bounds.

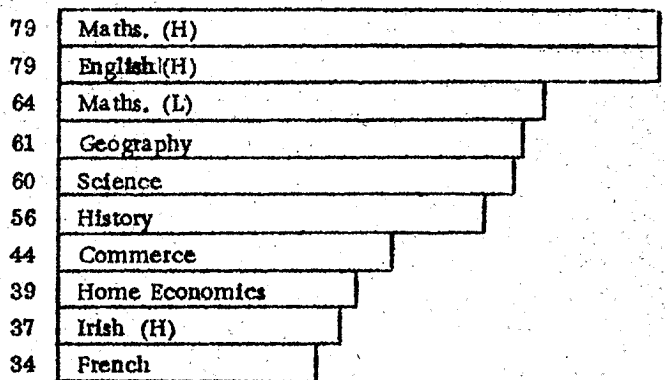


8. The amount of factual learning the syllabus requires is excessive.

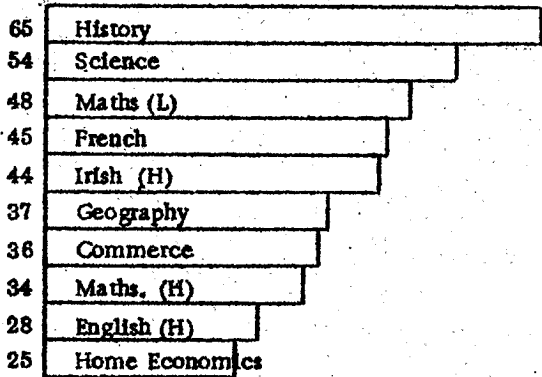
CHART IX. CONTD.



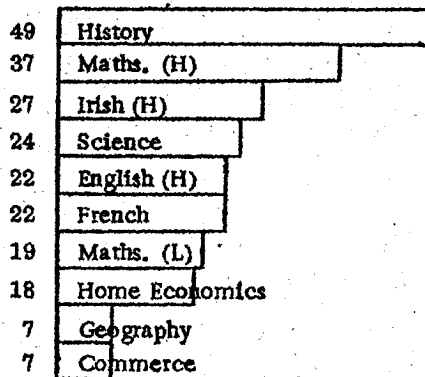
9. The syllabus takes insufficient account of contemporary thinking or advances of knowledge in my subject.



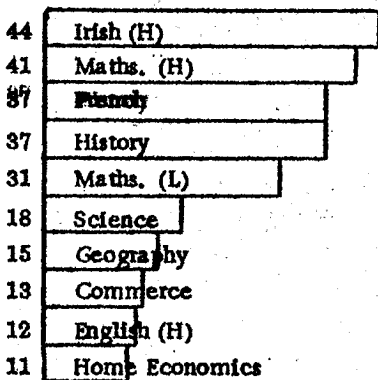
10. The syllabus encourages the development of critical thinking and powers of judgement in pupils.



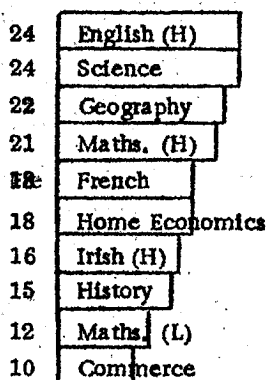
11. The syllabus does not take into consideration the full range of ability in my class.



12. The syllabus demands acquisition by pupils of a lot of useless knowledge.



13. The syllabus is irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils.



14. There is a lack of coherent thread running through the syllabus.

The weighted bases on which the above percentages are based are: Irish (H) 37, Home Economics 28, French 25, Commerce 30, History 27, English (H) 37, Science 37, Maths. (L) 17, Geography 13, and Maths. (H) 44.

development of critical thinking, well above average in thinking that the syllabus was too narrow, well above average in thinking that the syllabus was irrelevant to the occupational needs of their pupils, well above average in wanting major changes, well above average in thinking the syllabus out of touch with modern methods and out of touch with modern developments in the subject, and below average in thinking that the syllabus was too demanding or too wide.

Teachers of English, Higher Course, were fairly average except that they were well above average in thinking that the syllabus encouraged the development of critical thinking.

Teachers of French were very far below average in thinking that the syllabus encouraged the development of critical thinking, below average in thinking that the syllabus was too demanding, and above average in thinking that it was out of date.

The 17 (weighted) teachers of Mathematics (Lower course) were very well below average in thinking that the syllabus was too wide, very well above average in thinking that the syllabus allowed plenty of scope to teach the subject in the way they considered best, very well below average in thinking that there was too much fact learning, below average in thinking the material out of date, well below average in wanting changes and thinking that the syllabus was too demanding.

Higher course Mathematics teachers were well above average in thinking that the syllabus developed critical thinking, well below average in out of date-ness of both content and methods, and above average in feeling that it demanded the acquisition of useless knowledge and that it was irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils. They were not very likely to want major changes in the syllabus or to think that the amount of fact learning was excessive.

Teachers teaching science, syllabus A, were extraordinarily divergent from other teachers in thinking that the syllabus was too wide, too demanding, and that there was too much fact learning. They were also very well above average in wanting major changes and in saying that the syllabus did not cater for the full range of ability in the class. They were below average in thinking that there was ample time to pursue important side issues and that there was sufficient opportunity to present the subject in the way they considered best. They felt the syllabus did not take sufficient account of modern advances in knowledge.

The 13 geography teachers were well above average in thinking that the syllabus was too wide, and below average in thinking that it demanded the acquisition of useless knowledge.

History teachers were exceptionally likely to say that the syllabus was too wide, and well above average in thinking that there was too much fact learning, that the syllabus did not cater for the full range of ability in the class, and that it demanded the acquisition of a lot of useless knowledge. They were also much below average in thinking that there was time to pursue side issues and above average in thinking that the syllabus was too demanding for pupils of this age.

Commerce teachers were well below average in thinking that the syllabus was too wide and above average in thinking that there was enough time to pursue important side issues and present the subject in the way they considered best, below average in thinking that the syllabus encouraged the development of critical thinking, and well below average in thinking that the syllabus demanded the acquisition of a lot of useless knowledge.

In general, then, at Intermediate Certificate level, teachers of Mathematics (both courses) seem least dissatisfied with the existing syllabus, followed by those teaching English and commerce.

At Leaving certificate level the picture is more even than at Intermediate level.

Nevertheless, teachers of Irish (Higher course) are well above average in thinking that the syllabus is too demanding and that it is out of touch with modern methods and content, too wide, allows little scope for the teacher to present the subject in the way he considers best or to pursue important side issues, has too much fact learning, demands the acquisition of a lot of useless knowledge on the part of the pupils, ought to be changed, and lacks a coherent thread.

Teachers of English (Higher course) were well above average in thinking that the syllabus developed critical thinking, and below average in thinking that there was too much fact learning or that it was out of touch with modern methods. They did not think it demanded the acquisition of a lot of useless knowledge or that it was irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils.

Teachers of French (Higher course) were well below average in thinking that there was too much fact learning or that the syllabus was too wide. They were above average in saying that the syllabus was out of touch with modern methods, and well below average in thinking it too demanding. Like teachers of English they did not think there was a lot of useless knowledge on the syllabus.

Teachers of Latin (Higher course) felt that they were well able to teach the subject in the way they considered best and to pursue any fruitful ideas they wished, they were below average in thinking that the syllabus did not cater for the full range of ability in the class, that the syllabus was too wide, and that there was no coherent thread running through the syllabus.

CHART X

COMMENTS ON THE NEW LEAVING SYLLABUS BY SUBJECT.

51	Irish (H)
44	French (H)
27	Business Organisation and Accounting
21	Latin (H)
17	Maths. (H)
17	Geography
17	History
14	Maths. (O)
13	English (H)
6	Chemistry

1. The approach to my subject which the syllabus demands is out of touch with modern methods.

67	Geography
65	Maths. (H)
62	Irish (H)
49	Business Organisation and Accounting
45	Chemistry
42	History
40	English (H)
34	Maths. (O)
25	Latin (H)
16	French (H)

2. The syllabus is too wide, it is impossible to cover it adequately.

61	Irish (H)
51	Maths. (H)
45	Chemistry
39	Geography
39	English (H)
31	History
31	Business Organisation and Accounting
23	Maths. (O)
22	Latin (H)
16	French (H)

3. The syllabus demands too much of pupils of this age.

72	Latin (H)
66	Geography
65	Maths. (O)
63	English (H)
61	History
57	Business Organisation and Accounting
52	Maths. (H)
52	French (H)
40	Irish (H)
38	Chemistry

4. The syllabus allows plenty of scope for me to teach my subject in the way I consider best.

23	Business Organisation and Accounting
18	French (H)
16	Irish (H)
14	Latin (H)
10	English (H)
7	Maths. (O)
7	History
6	Chemistry
2	Maths. (H)
0	Geography

5. The syllabus for my subject is too narrow in its approach.

47	Irish (H)
31	Business Organisation and Accounting
31	Latin (H)
27	English (H)
25	French (H)
22	Maths. (H)
22	Chemistry
19	Maths. (O)
15	Geography
11	History

6. I would like to see major changes in the syllabus.

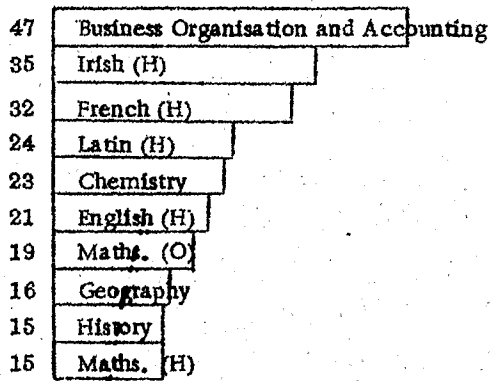
48	Latin (H)
44	French (H)
35	English (H)
34	Chemistry
32	History
29	Geography
27	Maths. (O)
20	Irish (H)
18	Business Organisation and Accounting
16	Maths. (H)

7. The syllabus allows ample time for pursuing any fruitful ideas and topics which are outside its strict bounds.

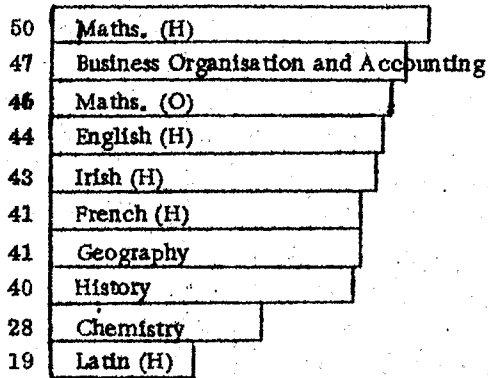
62	Geography
50	Irish (H)
46	Maths. (H)
40	History
39	Business Organisation and Accounting
39	Chemistry
32	Maths. (O)
26	Latin (H)
18	English (H)
9	French (H)

8. The amount of factual learning the syllabus requires is excessive.

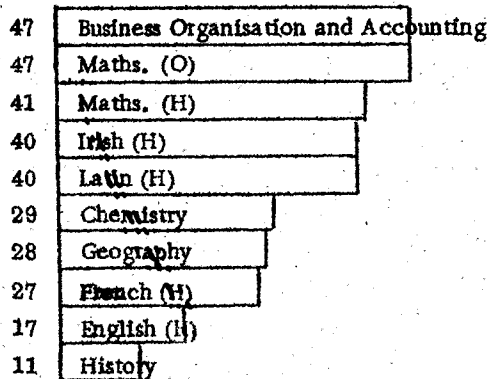
CHART X CONTD.



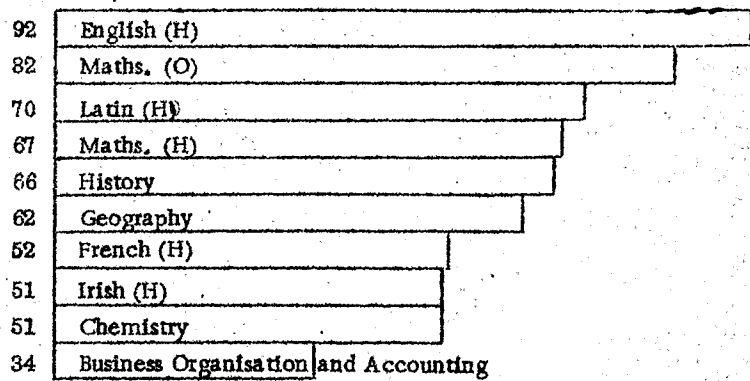
9. The syllabus takes insufficient account of contemporary thinking or advances of knowledge in my subject.



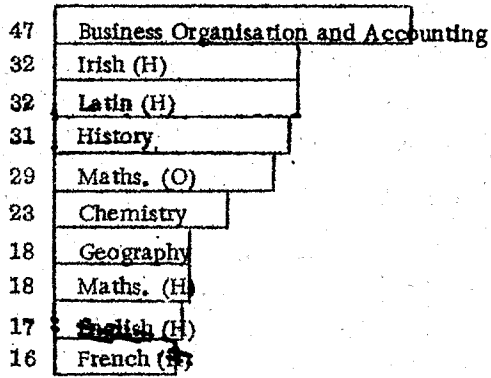
11. The syllabus does not take into consideration the full range of ability in my class.



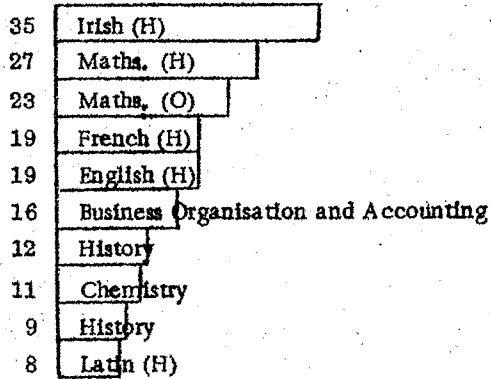
13. The syllabus is irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils.



10. The syllabus encourages the development of critical thinking and powers of judgement in pupils.



12. The syllabus demands acquisition by pupils of a lot of useless knowledge.



14. There is a lack of a coherent thread running through the syllabus.

The weighted bases on which the above percentages are based are: Irish (H) 68, French (H) 41, Business Organisation and Accounting 26, Latin (H) 36, Maths. (H) 48, Geography 46, History 41, Maths. (O) 29, English (H) 72 and Chemistry 17.

Teachers of Mathematics (Ordinary course) were more likely than others to think that the syllabus encouraged the development of critical thinking and that the syllabus was irrelevant to the occupational need of the pupils.

Mathematics (Higher course) teachers were well above average in thinking the syllabus too wide, and that it did not take into account the full range of ability in the class. They were above average in thinking it too demanding and irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils, and below average in thinking that it allowed scope to pursue side issues. However, they thought its content was well up to date.

The 17 Chemistry teachers were below average in thinking the syllabus out of touch with modern methods but they felt that they lacked scope to teach the syllabus in the way they considered best.

Geography teachers were well above average in thinking that the syllabus demanded too much fact learning and that the syllabus was too wide. They felt, however, that there was scope to teach the subject in the way they considered best and were unlikely to want major changes in the syllabus.

History teachers were below average in wanting changes, in thinking the subject matter out of date, and thinking that the material was irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils.

Business organisation, economics and accounting teachers were well above average in thinking that the course demands acquisition of a lot of useless knowledge, well below average in relation to critical thinking, well above average in thinking the material irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils, and above average in thinking the material out of date.

It does not seem to be possible to pinpoint the teachers who are most content at Leaving certificate level: teachers of Irish seem to be least content.

Consistency of Comments on Syllabi and Examinations

There is sufficient consistency between these answers and the answers to the questions concerned with examinations to make us confident that these teachers were not responding at random, whether or not they are representative of the views of teachers who were not included in the sample is a question which cannot be satisfactorily answered from this data.

At Intermediate level:

Teachers of Irish wanted changes both in the syllabus and in the examination; they perceived neither as being concerned with logical critical thinking and both prevented them from presenting the subject in the way they would consider best.

Teachers of English felt that the syllabus was concerned with developing critical thinking and that the examination assessed its development.

Teachers of French did not think that the syllabus was concerned with the development of critical thinking, and they concurred that the exam did not assess such development. However they felt that the syllabus was out of date and that the examination ought to be changed.

Mathematics teachers did not feel that there was too much fact learning in the syllabus and they did not think the exam was only a memory test; they wanted changes in neither the syllabus nor the examination.

Science teachers felt that the syllabus was too wide and demanding and that examination requirements prevented them presenting the material in an interesting manner. The syllabus required too much fact learning and the examination did not require pupils to think for themselves. They wanted major changes in the syllabus, but they were not much above average in their concern to have the examination changed.

Geography teachers felt that the syllabus required too much fact learning, but they were not particularly likely to perceive the examination as a memory test.

History teachers felt that the syllabus was too wide and that examination requirements prevented an interesting presentation; they felt that the syllabus demanded too much fact learning and said that the examination was a memory test.

More generally, just as Mathematics, Commerce and English teachers turned out to be in general well satisfied with their syllabi, so they were also the most satisfied with their examination.

At Leaving Certificate Level :

Teachers of Irish felt that the syllabus was out of touch with modern methods, that both the syllabus and the examination ought to be changed; the examination prevented them from presenting their subject in an interesting manner, the syllabus required too much fact learning, the examination was an only memory test and did not pay enough attention to the evaluation of inventive, creative work or to the ability to reason logically.

Teachers of English more often than other teachers felt both that the syllabus encouraged the development of critical thinking and that the examination assessed the development of these skills.

Mathematics teachers felt that the syllabus encouraged development of critical thinking, and that the examination assessed these attainments. However the Higher syllabus was felt to be too demanding and to prevent adequate exploration of side issues; likewise the examination was felt to preclude an interesting treatment of the subject.

Geography teachers felt that the syllabus was too wide and that there was too much fact learning; the examination was a memory test and it prevented them from presenting the subject in an interesting manner. History teachers were relatively unlikely to want the syllabus changed, but they did want the type of examination changed.

Summary of Section VI

Relatively few teachers would like to see major changes in the syllabus. The main criticisms they made of the subject syllabi were that they were too wide and that they did not take into account the full range of ability. However these feelings vary greatly with subject taught. Unfortunately the numbers teaching any one subject were inadequate to permit confident generalizations to be drawn, and it will be necessary for additional surveys to be undertaken to replicate this work. On the other hand the differences are sufficiently large and consistent to suggest that they are indeed important and that further work should in fact be put in hand. The present survey provides important overall results which would provide a context for surveys in particular subject areas, perhaps conducted by the individual subject committees.

SECTION VII. SUMMARY

Although the majority of the teachers agreed that the current examination in their subject provided a fair assessment of the pupils' progress (table 7), and although rather more than half were satisfied with the Intermediate examination on each of three counts (its subjects, its standard, and its format) (table SA1) the majority also thought that the present examination system performed most of the functions listed in our questionnaires badly or, at least, not very well (Chart V)

By way of qualifying what has just been said it should, of course, be added that less than half of the teachers agreed that any of the functions listed should be very important functions of examinations. Indeed perhaps one of the main conclusions should be that, at present, whereas teachers are mostly in agreement concerning the main goals of education, they are not at all in agreement concerning what the main functions of examinations should be.

Although no group of teachers was in agreement concerning the main functions of examinations their perception of these things varied with their educational concerns and the subjects they taught, and, overall, it is clear that teachers think that the function of examinations should be much more to assist in pupil guidance and to feedback to teachers and pupils than to provide a service to those outside the school.

In spite of this variety of opinion concerning the goals the examination system should seek to attain, a clear majority of teachers were very concerned to have an examination system which included assessment of the pupil's work over the year (table 7), (perhaps in order to include in those assessments, characteristics not currently assessed) to make the assessment less public than at present (charts III and V),

to separate educational evaluation from vocational selection (table 7), and to have a form of examination which pays more attention to the assessment of creative work and the ability to think for oneself and reason logically (table 7 and charts III and V). The most common reasons for wanting changes in the format of the Intermediate Certificate (table 6) were to include assessments of oral, practical, and project work. This adds further weight to the case for saying that the reason for wanting to include assessment of pupils work throughout the year in the evaluation was that teachers wished the attainment by their pupils of important skills not assessed in the current examinations to be taken into account.

About half wanted the examination system to provide more assistance in the guidance and placement of their pupils (charts III and V) and wanted to have a form of certificate which does not make it compulsory to obtain passes in certain subjects (page 1). It should be stressed that this last finding is more important than it appears since, in general, people tend to prefer whatever arrangements they may have to any change: a 50% dissatisfaction vote is in fact a heavy vote in favour of change. Furthermore it is in stark relief against the fact that the great majority wanted to retain compulsory core subjects on the curriculum. The main reason teachers gave for wanting to have a certificate freed from compulsory subjects was to facilitate provision of a wide range of courses suited to the diversity of talents currently finding their way into the post primary school system (table 3).

At Intermediate level rather more than a third of the teachers wanted changes in the format, the subjects, or the standard of the examination in order to cater for the needs of all the pupils who took the examination (Table SA2). Many of the reasons given for

wanting these changes were concerned with different facets of the need to cater more adequately for diversity; there was much stress on the need to recognize a wider range of subjects and to assess qualities not assessed at present. Another fact which would also seem to indicate that what is really needed is a wider range of papers suited to different levels of ability was that as many teachers said they would like the standard raised as said they would like it lowered. Although this is an inference from the data it was echoed explicitly by many teachers in answer to the question concerned with the standard of the examination. (table 5, line 3). The case for saying that the main implication of the teachers' views is that there is a need to cater more adequately for the diversity of skills, abilities, interests and talents which find their way into post-primary schools is further strengthened by the fact, mentioned in the last paragraph, that the most common reason given for not wishing to have compulsory examination subjects was that it inhibited provision of the needed diversity of courses.

As far as the teachers' feelings about the examination syllabi were concerned it is difficult to generalise as their feelings varied so much with the subject they taught and the level at which they taught it. In spite of these reservations it is true to say that on the whole teachers were fairly satisfied with the examination syllabi although they would like more scope to pursue fruitful ideas and topics outside the strict bounds of the syllabus. The desire to be able to do this may partly explain their concern to be more involved in the assessment of their pupils' work.

At Intermediate level science and history teachers seemed to be the most dissatisfied, being particularly likely to say that the syllabus was too wide, that they would like major changes,

that there was too much fact learning, and that the syllabus did not cater for the full range of ability in the class. They also said that examination requirements prevented them from presenting their subjects in an interesting way.

At Leaving Certificate level the picture is more even. Nevertheless the Irish syllabus was perceived by those who taught it as being out of touch with modern methods, too wide, too demanding, permitting little scope to pursue fruitful ideas and topics outside its strict bounds, demanding too much fact learning, and both the syllabuses and the examinations were felt to be in need of major changes. The examination was thought to be only a memory test and felt not to pay enough attention to the assessment of initiative, creative work or the ability to reason logically. It was said, too, that its requirements prevented the teachers presenting the subject in an interesting way. Whereas 47% of all teachers thought that a pass in English should be compulsory to obtain a leaving certificate 21% thought Irish should be.

There is one more general point which should, perhaps, be included in our summary. Teachers who thought that it was important for examinations to provide feedback to help schools, teachers and pupils attain their character-development goals more effectively or to provide a comprehensive picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses which would go outside traditional academic assessments, found that the current examination system did not at all meet their needs (Chart VIII). Our report on teachers' perception of educational objectives will highlight the fact that teachers

generally considered personality and character-development to be a much more important educational objective than getting pupils through examinations, and one which was much less well attained. If our report has the effect of focussing teachers' attention on this shared complaint about the current system of education, and if examinations come to be regarded - as teachers obviously wish that they should - as a means of helping teachers achieve their goals more effectively, then we can expect many more teachers to join those who feel that examinations should attempt to assess attainment of character-development goals and thus become very dissatisfied with the current examinations. Our results suggest that someone would be well advised to prepare for such a change of heart on the part of the teaching profession although, at the present time, this area of development comes third in the teachers' general order of priorities for action (Chart VII), being preceded by the need to make the examinations better from the point of view of assessing reasoning ability and clarity of expression and from the point of view of guidance and placement. Nevertheless, we should, perhaps, at this point, caution that teachers would like these developments to take place without destroying the strong point of the current examination system, which is seen as being the feedback it provides concerning the pupils' academic strengths and weaknesses.

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Table A. 1

Discussion P. TE 7

Percentages of Teachers who were Satisfied with Intermediate Certificate x Main Subject Taught.

		INTER											LEAVING									
ALL		Irish Higher Course	English Higher Course	French	Maths. Lower Course	Maths. Higher Course	Science A	Geog- raphy	History	Com- merce	Home Econ- omics	Irish Higher Course	English Higher Course	French Higher Course	Latin Higher Course	Maths. Ordinary Course	Maths. Higher Course	Chem- istry	Geog- raphy	History	Bus. Org. & Acc- ounting	
Subjects:	Completely satisfied	59	48	54	72	70	55	44	60	69	74	72	49	52	63	65	66	63	62	57	48	66
	Would like some change	37	46	46	28	30	45	53	31	31	26	28	48	45	33	33	34	36	38	39	48	34
Standard:	Completely satisfied	65	73	65	75	70	71	63	68	58	79	79	52	52	54	66	53	57	44	66	64	61
	Would like some change	31	22	35	25	30	29	32	21	36	21	21	45	43	41	32	43	42	56	28	29	39
Format:	Completely satisfied	54	56	54	51	63	59	49	57	50	64	68	54	55	41	76	60	53	44	58	37	61
	Would like some change	41	38	46	49	37	39	46	30	44	33	32	43	41	54	22	37	46	56	37	56	39
Base (= 100%) Weighted																						
	All teachers	1,174	37	37	25	17	44	37	72	27	30	28	62	72	41	36	29	48	17	46	41	26

Teachers Views on the Achievement of Objectives by the Intermediate Certificate in Relation to Their
Importance for Less Academic Pupils.

OBJECTIVE	Very Important or Important and achieved very well or well %	Very Important or Important and achieved not very well, badly or very badly. %	Not very well, badly or very badly achieved as percentage of very important or important
1. To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's character and personality; its strengths and weaknesses.	7	37	85
2. To provide a detailed picture of the pupil's academic performance.	33	26	44
3. To provide feedback to the <u>school</u> concerning how effectively they are achieving their objectives in the realm of character and personality.	10	37	79
4. To provide feedback to the <u>school</u> concerning how effectively they are achieving academic objectives.	38	28	39
5. To provide the <u>teacher</u> with information about each individual pupil so that he can think about how to help them.	32	46	59
6. To provide feedback to the <u>pupil</u> about his character strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	13	39	75
7. To provide feedback to the <u>pupil</u> concerning his academic strengths and weaknesses and the areas to which he should devote more attention.	41	35	46
8. To motivate the pupils by providing them with clearly defined goals.	31	32	51
9. To motivate the staff by providing them with clearly defined goals.	28	24	46
10. To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's character strengths and weaknesses.	8	31	80
11. To provide employers and the universities with information about the candidate's academic strengths and weaknesses.	33	26	44
12. To provide educationalists with the information they need to guide and place their pupils within the educational system.	32	44	58
13. To motivate the pupils by letting them know who is better than they are so that they can compete with them.	13	6	32
14. To enable teachers to be compared.	3	3	49
15. To enable schools to be compared.	4	2	37
16. To assess the pupils knowledge.	38	30	44
17. To assess the pupils reasoning ability.	24	52	69
18. To assess the pupils ability to express himself clearly.	34	45	57
19. To provide an assessment of the pupil which is completely uninfluenced by the teachers other knowledge of the pupil.	35	17	33
20. To teach the pupils that you don't get anything without working for it.	45	16	26
Weighted Base (= 100%) All Teachers	816	816	-

Table A. 3: Discussion P. TE 43

Percentages of Teachers who Agreed with Comments on the New Syllabus x their Teaching Subject, Intermediate Certificate Level.

	ALL	Irish Higher Course		English Higher Course		Maths. Lower Course		Maths. Higher Course		Science A		Geography		History		Commerce		Home Economics				
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%			
		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean		diff. from mean				
1. The approach to my subject which the syllabus demands is out of touch with modern methods.	28		40		22		37		18		14		22		15		29		30		39	
2. The syllabus is too wide, it is impossible to cover it adequately.	41	-22	19		46	-20	21		-29	12		37	+43	84	+25	66	+42	83	-24	17	50	
3. The syllabus demands too much of pupils of this age.	33	-15	18		30		28		-21	12		32	+43	76		36	+17	51		24	26	
4. The syllabus allows plenty of scope for me to teach my subject in the way I consider best.	58		51		61		54		+29	87		68		48		54		48	+16	74	60	
5. The syllabus for my subject is too narrow in its approach.	14	+19	33		19		16			6		11		3		7		17		13	18	
6. I would like to see major changes in the syllabus.	29	+17	46		27		28		-22	7		16	-30	59		42		43		17	35	
7. The syllabus allows ample time for pursuing any fruitful ideas and topics which are outside its strict bounds.	31		45		32		30			30		23	-19	12		36		-20	11	37	32	
8. The amount of factual learning the syllabus requires is excessive.	34		33		46		28		-27	7		21	+41	75	+17	51	+34	68		23	28	
9. The syllabus takes insufficient account of contemporary thinking or advances of knowledge in my subject.	26	+23	49		22	+15	4			18	-19	7		17		27		28		30	26	
10. The syllabus encourages the development of critical thinking and powers of judgement in pupils.	59	-22	37	-20	79	-25	36			64	+20	79		60		61		56	-15	44	-20	39
11. The syllabus does not take into consideration the full range of ability in my class.	38		44		28		45			48		34	+16	54		37	+27	65		36	25	
12. The syllabus demands acquisition by pupils of a lot of useless knowledge.	22		27		22		22			19	+15	37		24	-15	7	+27	49	-15	7	18	
13. The syllabus is irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils.	26	+18	44		12		37			31	+15	41		18		15		37		13	11	
14. There is a lack of coherent thread running through the syllabus.	19		16		24		18			12		21		24		22		15		10	18	
Weighted base (= 100%) All teachers	1,174		37		37		25			17		44		37		13		27		30	28	

(% differences from the mean less than 15 excluded)

Table A. 4. Discussion P TE 43

Percentages of Teachers who Agreed with Comments on the New Syllabus in their 'Main' Teaching Subject, Leaving Certificate Level.

	ALL	Irish Higher Course		English Higher Course		French Higher Course		Latin Higher Course		Maths. Ordinary Course		Maths. Higher Course		Chemistry		Geography		History		Business Organisation and Accounting	
		% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%	% diff. from mean	%
1. The approach to my subject which the syllabus demands is out of touch with modern methods.	28	+23	51	-15	13	+16	44		21		14		17	-22	6		17		17		27
2. The syllabus is too wide, it is impossible to cover it adequately.	41	+21	62		40	-25	16	-16	25		34	+24	65		45	+26	67		42		49
3. The syllabus demands too much of pupils of this age.	33	+28	61		39	-17	16		22		23	+18	51		45		39		31		31
4. The syllabus allows plenty of scope for me to teach my subject in the way I consider best.	58	-18	40		63		52		72		65		52	-20	38		66		61		57
5. The syllabus for my subject is too narrow in its approach.	14		16		10		18		14		7		2		6		0		7		23
6. I would like to see major changes in the syllabus.	29	+18	47		27		35		31		19		22		22		15	-18	11		31
7. The syllabus allows ample time for pursuing any fruitful ideas and topics which are outside its strict bounds.	31		20		35		44	+17	48		27	-15	16		34		29		32		18
8. The amount of factual learning the syllabus requires is excessive.	34	+16	50	-16	18	-25	9		28		32		46		39	+28	62		40		39
9. The syllabus takes insufficient account of contemporary thinking or advances of knowledge in my subject.	26		35		21		32		24		19		15		23		16		15	+21	47
10. The syllabus encourages the development of critical thinking and powers of judgement in pupils.	59		51	+33	92		52		70	+23	82		67		51		62		66	-25	34
11. The syllabus does not take into consideration the full range of ability in my class.	38		43		44		41	-19	19		45		50		28		41		40		47
12. The syllabus demands acquisition by pupils of a lot of useless knowledge.	22		32		17		16		32		29		18		23		18		31	+25	47
13. The syllabus is irrelevant to the occupational needs of the pupils.	26		40		17		27		40	+21	47	+15	41		29		28	-15	11	+21	47
14. There is a lack of a coherent thread running through the syllabus.	19	+16	35		19		19		8		23		27		11		9		12		16
Weighted base (= 100%) All teachers	1,174		62		72		41		36		29		48		17		46		41		26

(% differences from the mean less than 15 excluded).