Education in Scotland

Policy and practice
from pre-school to secondary

Edited by
Margaret M. Clark
and Pamela Munn

ROUTLEDGE

EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

Education in Scotland is markedly different from that in the rest of the United Kingdom—with a different curriculum, school boards to oversee school management and a General Teaching Council which has been in existence since 1965.

Whilst there are many examples of successful and innovative practice in Scotland, the system is quite often not recognised as different by writers who talk about the United Kingdom education system as if it were one smooth whole. This book describes recent developments in both legislation and practice in Scotland, drawing comparisons with the English system. Chapters cover administration and management, early years education provision, the curriculum in Scotland, secondary education and special educational needs.

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London and New York

First published 1997
by Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data
Education in Scotland: policy and practice from pre-school to secondary/edited by Margaret M.Clark and Pamela Munn.
p. cm.
Includes index.
ISBN 0-415-15835-4 (Print Edition)
ISBN0-415-15836-2 (pbk.)
1. Education-Scotland-Evaluation. 2. Education and state--Scotland. 3. School management and organization-Scotland.
I.Clark, Margaret MacDonald. II. Munn, Pamela.
LA652.E25 1997
370′.9411–dc21 97–14247
CIP
ISBN 0-203-97484-0 Master e-book ISBN

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PREFACE

People use the term ‘British education’ when what they really mean is English education. The Scots have a long and proud tradition of a distinctive education system. This book describes the key features of Scottish education and highlights the main differences from the English system. It is a must for those interested in the different ways in which schools are organised, the curriculum is arranged and teachers are trained. It is especially pertinent at a time when many countries are reviewing their curricula and standards.

The book covers the stages of education in Scotland from pre-school to secondary. It contains chapters written by acknowledged experts in their fields. It reviews provision at pre-five, the 5–14 programme, Scotland’s rather different version of a national curriculum, the 14–16 curriculum and the distinctive approach taken to upper-secondary education called Higher Still. It raises questions about how Scottish the curriculum is and speculates about whether such distinctions as there are will continue. There are also chapters on special education and on the education of teachers, with particular reference to the role and function of the General Teaching Council. The book considers the policy context in which education operates and discusses the devolved management of schools, Scottish style, as well as the scope for a separate education policy.

This is the first major book for over twenty years giving a comprehensive overview of Scottish education. It will help readers answer the question of whether education in Scotland really is superior to that elsewhere in the United Kingdom and, if it is, suggest the possible reasons for this. This book is a must for anyone interested in standards and quality and in attempts to ensure parity of esteem between vocational and academic courses, and for students of public policy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors wish to express their thanks to all the many colleagues and friends who have read and commented on the proposal for the book and drafts of the various chapters. We are also grateful to all those individuals and departments in central and local government who have supplied us with information. We hope they will understand that we are no less grateful for not mentioning them by name. We are particularly grateful to Lesley Scullion, who coped with successive drafts and last-minute alterations efficiently and with good humour.

ABBREVIATIONS

COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
CRDU	Children's Rights Development Unit
CSE	Certificate in Secondary Education
CSYS	Certificate of Sixth Form Studies
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
EIS	Educational Institute of Scotland
GTC	General Teaching Council for Scotland
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
QNCA	Qualifications and National Curriculum Authority (replaces SCAA and NCVQ)
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SCCC	Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum
SCE	Scottish Certificate of Education
SCET	Scottish Council for Educational Technology
SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Council
SCRE	Scottish Council for Research in Education
SEB	Scottish Examination Board
SED	Scottish Education Department
SHEFC	Scottish Higher Education Funding Council
SOED	Scottish Office Education Department
SOEID	Scottish Office Education and Industry Department
SPPA	Scottish Pre-School Playgroups Association
SPTC	Scottish Parent Teacher Council

SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority (replaces SEB and SCOTVEC)
SRC	Strathclyde Regional Council
SSBA	Scottish School Board Association
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative

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EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND
Setting the scene

Margaret M.Clark

In recent years there have been major changes in education in the United Kingdom, in the curriculum and in the assessment of achievement, in management and inspection of schools and in the education of teachers. The impression is often given that developments in Scotland differ little from those elsewhere in the United Kingdom; that is an erroneous impression which this book should dispel. The book is aimed at a wide readership overseas as well as in the United Kingdom. As will be seen, many of the issues being confronted in Scotland today, and the proposed solutions, have relevance to educationists in many countries.

This chapter provides readers with a brief outline of education in Scotland. Where the organisation and developments differ fundamentally from those in England, this is indicated in italics. Brief reference is made to issues considered in the following chapters; there full reference lists are to be found. Where developments are relevant to more than one chapter, the context is set out here.

SCOTLAND: THE BACKGROUND TO EDUCATION

In 1997, Scotland, with a population of about 5 million, is part of the United Kingdom (which also includes England, Wales and Northern Ireland), with a total population of about 58 million. The political structures in the United Kingdom in the twentieth century may be a puzzle to readers from other countries —particularly the claim that there is a distinctive system of governing Scotland, since there has been no separate legislature in modern times. The United Kingdom Parliament is in London, and only a minority of Members of Parliament from Scotland belonged to the government which was in power for eighteen years to 1997 (at the General Election in 1992 only 11 of 72 seats in Scotland were won by Conservatives, and at the General Election in 1997 there were no Conservative MPs returned from Scotland). Yet, even under a Conservative government that has been described as hostile to Scottish distinctiveness many distinctive features survived, particularly with regard to education and the legal system. There have, however, been increasing strains since the late 1970s (see Brown, McCrone and Paterson 1996). Lindsay Paterson

discusses policy-making in Scottish education in Chapter 10. The 'Scottishness' of the curriculum in Scotland is considered by Cameron Harrison in Chapter 11.

Although for some aspects there are separate Acts of Parliament for Scotland, they must be passed by the Parliament in Westminster. Prior to the General Election which took place in May 1997, there was debate as to whether and to what extent Scottish affairs should become independent of England. With the advent of a Labour government, this debate is now heightened. Autonomy could entail complete state independence, probably inside the European Union, thus putting Scotland in a position analogous to that of Denmark and Sweden; or it could involve the devolution of some legislative powers and responsibilities from Westminster to a directly elected Scottish Parliament. Whatever the outcome, the issues discussed in this book will still be pertinent, and the distinctiveness of Scottish education is likely to remain. In Chapter 12 Pamela Munn considers this and other issues concerning the future of Scottish education.

Two important background features are of relevance to education in Scotland. First, Scotland is the most sparsely populated part of the United Kingdom, and second, there are high levels of poverty in some areas. In 1995 about 20 per cent of the school population were entitled to free school meals; this varied from about 6 per cent in the Borders Region to about 40 per cent in the City of Glasgow. In Glasgow in 1993, one in three children lived in households dependent on income support and one in two of all primary-school children received clothing grants. The focus for many of the early interventions into educational disadvantage was the densely populated urban areas, which is not surprising when one considers the level of deprivation in some urban areas. However, since the early 1990s a range of national research and development projects have been initiated in rural areas. In many cases these have been linked with economic regeneration (Nisbet and Watt 1993).

THE ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND

Education in Scotland has been organised separately from that in England and Wales since the Union of 1707, and there are separate Acts of Parliament governing most aspects of Scottish education. The school system was initially developed by the churches and formally came under the Scotch (later Scottish) Education Department from 1872. For more than a decade after that, resources were directed towards the provision of an efficient system of elementary education; very few children went to secondary school. Between 1872 and 1885 one education department covered the whole of the United Kingdom. At that time, the governing bodies which had the greatest impact on schooling, however, were the HMI (which have always been based in Scotland) and the school boards (or their predecessors). In 1885, Parliament established an independent Scotch Education Department, initially in London. The Scottish Education Department (SED), subsequently based in Edinburgh, has been renamed several times, first

as the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED); currently it is the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID). The Scottish Office, which is in Edinburgh, has a ministerial team headed by the Secretary of State for Scotland, who is a member of the Cabinet. In the Scottish Office there is an Education and Industry Department headed by its own minister.

> *The Secretary of State for Education is the Cabinet minister responsible for education in England, and the relevant department is currently the Department for Education and Employment. Parallel changes in the name of the responsible department have taken place in England, with the Department of Education and Science (DES) changing to DfE and now DfEE.*

Between 1975 and 1996 there were two tiers of local government in Scotland, Regions and districts, except for three island all-purpose authorities. Education was the responsibility of the 9 Regions and 3 island authorities. Strathclyde Region both covered a very large and diverse area geographically and included about half the population. In 1996, 29 single-tier councils replaced the 9 former Regions and 53 districts. The 3 small all-purpose island councils (Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles) have remained in place. Some of the fears with regard to education which dominated the parliamentary passage of the legislation have not been realised, since all the councils have appointed directors of education and education committees although they were not statutorily obliged to do so. Some of the committees have other responsibilities, and one has subsumed education within a children's committee. More varied approaches and structures are likely to emerge with 32 smaller education authorities; it is too early to assess the impact of the change. However, virtually all councils have given high priority to pre-fives and special needs. Stress is also being placed on quality measures and on projects to improve literacy. The major problem for the new councils is the budgetary restrictions under which they are operating. (See TES Scotland 1996 for a leaflet setting out the details of the new councils, their education officials and a summary of their plans.)

The structure described above applied to most sections of Scottish education, with two exceptions, the universities which were answerable ultimately to government departments in London, and certain types of colleges run directly by the Scottish Education Department. These exceptions have now ended: all institutions of higher education have been directly overseen since 1993 by the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, and the control of the vocational colleges of further education was transferred from local government to the Scottish Office.

SCOTTISH EDUCATION STATISTICS

The publication of official statistics on Scottish education dates back well over a hundred years. The information for this section has been taken from the most recent information on numbers of schools, teachers and pupils in the first of a new series of publications, *Scottish Education Statistics* (SOEID 1996). Similar documents are published for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. As the statistics cover the years 1990–1 to 1994–5 the breakdown of information is in terms of the former education authorities.

Schools in Scotland fall into four main groups:

1 Education authority schools are financed partly by central government and partly by local taxation. These are under the management of local authorities, responsible for the allocation of funding. School boards, consisting of parents and teachers co-opted from the local community, with parents in the majority, have been established in about three-quarters of education authority schools.
2 Two schools (at June 1996) had self-governing status, that is, were funded direct from central government.
3 Independent schools are run by the proprietors without any aid from public funds. Some of these schools participate in the assisted places scheme which provides financial assistance for secondary pupils who would otherwise not be able to attend an independent school (these places the Labour government plans to phase out).
4 A small number of grant-aided schools, mainly in the special sector, are run by boards of managers who receive grants from central government.

Nursery schools provide education on a full-or part-time basis for children below compulsory school age. Children enter primary school at the beginning of the school year in August if they will be five years of age by the end of February of that school year. Primary schools have children aged from 5 to 12 years of age (P1 to P7); secondary schools are for pupils from 12 to 16–18 depending on when the individual pupils choose to leave school (S1 to S6).

Scotland has no equivalent of the Sixth Form College or Tertiary College.

The following is the information on schools/departments in Scotland in 1994–5, with the numbers of pupils in each type of school in brackets:

Schools/Departments		*Pupils*
Education authority schools		
Nursery	784	(49,760)

Primary	2,336	(438,010)
Secondary	405	(314,907)
Special*	318	(8,712)
Other		
Grant-aided schools†	9	(1,472)
Independent schools	116	(32,579)

* The figure for special schools in SOEID 1996 refers to both schools and departments based in schools outside the special sector. I understand that the information on special education will in future not be presented in that form as pupils who attend special departments are otherwise integrated into the school curriculum. As stated in Chapter 6, there were 201 special schools in 1994–5 (see that chapter for further information on special education).

† The majority of the grant-aided schools joined the independent sector in 1985.

The total school population in Scotland in 1994–5 was 845,440, of whom about 96 per cent were in local authority schools; most of the remaining 4 per cent attended independent schools.

> *In contrast, in England in 1996 according to DfEE 1 in 5 state secondary-school pupils was being educated in a grant-maintained school. There are 1,100 GM schools, primary, secondary and special. Since 1994 the Funding Agency for Schools has been responsible for the calculation and payment of grants to GM schools.*

The numbers of (full-time equivalent) teachers in schools in Scotland were as follows in 1994–5:

Education authority schools	50,014
Grant-aided schools	162
Independent schools	3,207

Pupil-teacher ratios are given in the statistics for different types of school and for each education authority. It would not be helpful to quote these, however, as averages are particularly misleading in a country like Scotland where there are many small rural schools; indeed, in some education authorities most of the primary schools have fewer than 100 pupils on roll and many classes are composite classes. There are over one hundred primary schools with 20 pupils or under. In 1994 more than half the primary schools in Scotland had 200 pupils or fewer on roll, and 64 of 406 secondary schools had 400 or fewer on roll.

The size of the school roll is an important factor in the budgeting costs per pupil: in general, the smaller the school, the higher the cost per pupil. The

national average cost for secondary-school pupils in Scotland remains significantly higher than that for primary pupils. In 1995–6 primary schools with rolls above 300 had budgeted running costs per pupil in the range £1,000-£2,000. Most secondary schools with rolls above 800 had budgeted running costs per pupil in the range £2,000-£3,000; however, a school with a roll of 300 might have budgeted running costs per pupil around 50 per cent higher than a school with a roll of 800 (see HMI 1996a).

No education statistics are available from the Scottish Office for pupils whose mother tongue is not English, or who are from ethnic minorities. It is clear from the available census figures, however, that the picture in Scotland is very different from that in England.

According to the 1991 census only 1.4 per cent of the population in Scotland over three years of age speak, read or write Gaelic. The largest concentrations are in the Western Isles, Highland and Strathclyde Regions. However, over the past ten years there has been support from the Scottish Office for the teaching of Gaelic and through the medium of Gaelic (see Chapter 3).

According to the 1991 census, Scotland's population was about five million, 98.7 per cent of whom were white. Thus only 1.3 per cent of the population were from ethnic minorities, of whom the vast majority were of Pakistani or Indian origin; the second largest group was Chinese. The majority of the non-white population are concentrated in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

In England in 1991 6.2 per cent of the population were from ethnic minorities.

THE UNDER-FIVES

While Scotland has its own policy-making procedures for the care and education of its under-fives, the organisational framework is similar to that of the rest of the United Kingdom, and like the rest of the country Scotland is one of the most poorly served parts of the European Union in terms of under-fives provision. The roots of early years education in Scotland lie in poverty and educational disadvantage.

Lack of funding has stemmed partly from the fact that services for under-fives have been outside the statutory education service and therefore frequently subjected to cuts. Furthermore, fragmentation of services has been a consequence of the fact that responsibility for pre-fives services has been divided at both national and local level, between education and social work departments. An exception was the former Strathclyde Region, which made a pioneering attempt to bring the services together under its education department. The recently established Stirling council has taken the radical step of establishing a children's committee which aims to integrate all services in pre-fives education with services in social work, play and family support. Indeed, committee structures and the management of early years services are now under active discussion by all

the new unitary authorities, and new patterns are emerging. Thus, attempts are being made to increase the level of provision for pre-fives; to get rid of the false distinctions between 'education' and 'care'; to increase the partnership between the public, voluntary and private sectors; and to introduce quality assurance procedures as for other public-sector services.

In Scotland, as in England, the Conservative government introduced a pilot voucher scheme to enable parents of four-year-olds to purchase a part-time place in any approved under-fives group. It is unlikely that the proposed extension of this scheme, which has been highly controversial, will survive the recent change of government. Developments in the care and education of under-fives is discussed by Joyce Watt in Chapter 2.

THE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

There have been major developments in the curriculum and in assessment in Scotland, as in England and Wales, over the past ten years; however, the changes have increased rather than reduced the differences between education in Scotland and that in England and Wales.

The Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) is the principal advisory body to the Secretary of State for Scotland on all matters relating to the curriculum for 3–18-year-olds. It keeps the Scottish school curriculum under review; issues guidance on the curriculum to local authorities and to schools; and carries out programmes of curriculum development, consulting with interested groups and individuals. Its recent publication *Teaching for Effective Learning,* which was the subject of widespread consultation, has met with an enthusiastic response (SCCC 1996). SCCC has launched its largest ever consultation, including businesses, unions, cultural agencies, the churches, political parties and the media, on the place of Scottish culture in schools. It has extensive international links, and for the past three years has provided the Secretariat for CIDREE (Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe); this will continue for a further three years.

There is not a national curriculum in Scotland. The national guidelines in the 5–14 Programme developed between 1987 and 1993 are based on the reports of working parties of professionals closely involved in work in the schools. Unlike the national curriculum in England and Wales, they do not represent a sharp change from previous policy. The guidelines lay emphasis on balance, breadth and continuity in children's learning. Thus they cover the seven years of primary education, and the first two years of secondary education. An outline of the programme is to be found in *The Structure and Balance of the Curriculum 5–14* (SOED 1993), and further details of its implications for primary education are to be found in Chapter 3.

The implementation of the guidelines for English and mathematics in primary schools is well under way. The target is for all the guidelines to be implemented

by 1998–9. Assessment and reporting form an integral part of the programme, with emphasis on teacher assessment, and materials for diagnostic assessment in English, mathematics and science are already available. National tests in English and mathematics which were initially to have been administered in P4 and P7 are now seen as a support for teacher assessment, administered at the teachers' discretion, not at specific points in a child's schooling. The tests are prepared by the 5–14 Assessment Unit in the Scottish Examination Board, which issues a catalogue from which teachers select tests. No league tables are prepared on the basis of the national tests; indeed, it would not be possible to do so in view of the way they are constructed and administered. The results are communicated only to the parents of the individual pupils.

Disappointment has been expressed at the limited influence of the guidelines on the first two years of secondary education, where mixed ability teaching predominates, and at standards in these years, including those revealed in the recently published international survey. Under discussion are the possibility of 'setting' in the early years of secondary schooling and proposals that there should be national testing during that stage of secondary education, which some feel would cut across the aims of the national guidelines for 5–14 with their emphasis on continuity from primary to secondary education. Neither the issue of 'setting' versus mixed ability teaching nor that of national testing in S1 or S2 has so far been resolved.

There was active promotion of comprehensive education in Scotland in the late 1960s and increasing numbers of pupils stayed on in school beyond the statutory leaving age, which in 1972 was raised to sixteen. There are no selective public (maintained) schools in Scotland. In the 1970s two parallel committees were established: the Dunning committee, which considered assessment in upper secondary school, and the Munn committee, which reviewed the structure of the curriculum in the third and fourth years of secondary school. In Chapter 4 Brian Boyd discusses curriculum and assessment for the age range 12–16.

> *In England, in contrast, new committees were established in the Education Reform Act 1988, which also laid down the framework for national testing, named 'Key Stages', and identified the Core and other Foundation Subjects in the national curriculum for 5–16. Subsequently changes have been made to the committee structure and aspects of the national curriculum. A particularly controversial issue has been the publication of league tables based on the results of national tests at the end of each Key Stage, the first when children are 7 years of age (for this there is no parallel in Scotland).*

Post-fourteen-year-olds in Scotland take courses leading to awards in the Scottish Certificate of Education at Standard Grade and Higher Grade, and/or Scottish Vocational Education Council modules. They can also take the Certificate of Sixth Year Studies in the final year. Examinations for the Scottish Education

Certificate have until now been the responsibility of the Scottish Examination Board; the other examinations have been the responsibility of the Scottish Vocational Educational Council. The two bodies are now amalgamated under the newly established Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA). In 1988 the Scottish 'Higher' examination for school leavers was one hundred years old. In 1965 responsibility for the examinations was handed over to an examination board consisting of representatives of the Department, the teaching profession, the universities and other interested parties.

In 1990 the Secretary of State established a committee, the Howie committee, to review the aims and purposes of the courses and assessment in S5–S6. It had been felt that the Higher Grade syllabus was too academically orientated for the increasing numbers of pupils staying on at school beyond the statutory leaving age and that there was insufficient time between the Standard Grade examinations and the Higher Grade. Although some aspects of the Howie Report were favourably received, there was concern at the proposed twin-track courses. In 1994 the Scottish Office produced a less radical plan which it proposes to introduce in 1999. The reform, set out in *Higher Still: Opportunity for All* (Scottish Office 1994), will offer a wide range of courses, and pupils will be able to take a mix of vocational and academic subjects leading to qualifications which will have equal status and recognition. Higher Still is the first curricular development which has offered 'opportunity for all' from its inception by its creation of a special educational advisory group to guide developments and a team of development officers to work in all subject areas. Many young people with special educational needs now progress to college. Upper-secondary education for 15–18-year-olds is discussed by David Raffe in Chapter 5.

Although the primary purpose of the Scottish Examination Board has been to set examinations which reflect the school curriculum, the Board has played a formative role in curricular development and in new approaches to learning. There has been a close partnership between the Board and practising teachers. For further information see *A Short History of National School Certificates in Scotland* (Philip 1995).

> *In England there is also consideration of the relationship of academic to vocational courses in upper-secondary with the merger in 1997 of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) and the National Council for Vocational Qualifications to form the Qualifications and National Curriculum Authority. There are, however, major differences in qualifications awarded in upper-secondary education in England, one of which is earlier selection for A levels, with students taking a much narrower range of subjects. Unlike Scotland, in England schools choose from a number of examination boards, each with its own syllabus—and, it is suggested, possibly also with different standards.*

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Special educational provision is subject to Scottish Office control and specifically Scottish legislation; however, much responsibility is devolved to local authorities. Pupils between the ages of 2 and 19 are included, with school attendance mandatory for the 5–16 age group. Local authorities are required to identify children and young persons who have pronounced, specific or complex educational needs which require continuing review, and to open and keep a Record of Needs for them. Appeals about recording and placement are addressed by the Sheriff Court or by HMIs acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Special educational provision may take place in mainstream classes, units within ordinary schools, special schools and other locations. Currently 1.2 per cent of school pupils are educated in special schools, with little change over recent years. There are over 14,000 pupils with Records of Needs, of whom over a third spend all their time in mainstream classes. Curricular support for individual pupils in mainstream classes is generally provided by a learning support teacher working for short periods of time with the class or subject teacher; in some cases practical help is also given by an auxiliary.

The Record of Needs is equivalent to the Statement of Needs in England and Wales, where a special tribunal deals with appeals.

THE TEACHING PROFESSION: ITS ROLE AND STATUS (See Chapter 7)

The General Teaching Council

There has been a General Teaching Council (GTC) in Scotland for over thirty years. It is a statutory body, working closely with SOEID, but independent of it. It is funded by the annual fees paid by registered teachers. In 1996 there were over 77,000 teachers on the register. It is illegal for an education authority to employ a teacher in a nursery, primary, special or secondary school who is not registered with the Council; most private schools also prefer to employ registered teachers. The Council plays a major role in Scottish education: It regulates entry to the profession; has a powerful voice in the vetting of initial training courses for teachers; and is responsible for the assessment of probationary teachers.

Teacher education

The minimum entry requirements to courses are determined by the Secretary of State for Scotland in consultation with GTC. For the teaching qualification in primary education, courses must be designed to teach children in the 3–12 age range. There are two alternative courses: a four-year Bachelor of Education degree and a Postgraduate Certificate of Education, which follows the award of a

university degree. There are three routes to the teaching qualification in secondary education, which must prepare students to teach pupils in the age range 12–18 in one or more named subjects. These are a one-year PGCE following an appropriate degree; a four-year B.Ed. degree in some subjects; and a combined degree.

Assessment of quality of teacher education

During 1994–5 evaluations of all the courses leading to B.Ed., PGCE and combined degrees were undertaken, and the findings published. The quality of the teacher education in all institutions was judged as at least satisfactory, and in most, highly satisfactory.

The professional development of teachers

There have recently been major developments with the establishment of a common framework in Scotland for credit-based learning. During the 1990s, most colleges of education have either become part of universities or have developed closer links, making institutional collaboration easier. The three-tier structure, with flexible modular schemes and credit transfer, provides teachers with the possibility of planning their programme to meet their needs and is an encouragement to continuing professional development.

> *In England the Teacher Training Agency is the body responsible for overseeing the training of teachers, and there is so far in 1997 no General Teaching Council*

STANDARDS AND QUALITY

There are several major sources of evidence; these are considered in Chapter 8 by Pamela Munn. Two important sources are noted here.

The first is HM Inspectorate's programme of independent inspection. HMIs in Scotland have been appointed by Royal Warrant since 1840. Within the Inspectorate there is an Audit Unit which was established in 1992. The Unit, which is concerned with issues such as the relationship between money spent, or resources bought, and the quality of education achieved, has an extensive list of publications, including information on examination results, school costs, leavers' destinations, attendance, truancy and performance, and a series of publications on school development planning (available from SOEID). The results of inspections are analysed centrally by the Audit Unit, making use of performance indicators completed by individual inspectors and inspection teams. *Standards and Quality in Scottish Schools 1992–95* (HMI 1996b) gives an account of how well schools are performing in the seven key areas in HMI performance indicators.

A 'quality culture' initiative has resulted in publication, after piloting, of performance indicators which are used in inspection. Schools are themselves encouraged to use these for their self-evaluation and in forming development plans (see McGlynn and Stalker 1995). A Scottish Schools Ethos Network has recently been established, jointly sponsored by HM Audit Unit and Moray House Institute of Education, to which individual schools, education authorities and organisations can belong. This is to support schools engaged in self-evaluation of their ethos through sharing of expertise and experience.

A second source of evidence about standards is the Assessment of Achievement Programme, established in 1981, directed by the Research and Intelligence Unit in SOEID. This involves surveys of performance on samples of pupils throughout Scotland in mathematics, English language and science. Concern has been expressed recently at the proposal that SOEID might no longer commission independent researchers to undertake the surveys.

OFSTED (the Office for Standards in Education), established in 1992, is responsible for inspection of schools in England, but has no jurisdiction in Scotland. In England, since the closing of the Assessment of Performance Unit, there have not been regular surveys of attainment in the main curricular areas which enable national comparisons over time to be made in levels of performance.

DEVOLVED MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS (See Chapter 9)

Parental choice and involvement in schools have been an important aspect of developments in educational policy in recent years in the United Kingdom. Three main aspects of policy are distinctively different from the situation in England. Parental choice legislation, which was introduced in Scotland in 1981, gave stronger rights of choice of school. School boards, which were not established until 1988, have more limited powers than those of governing bodies in England and Wales, in the area of school finance, for example. There are important differences in the ways in which budgetary control is devolved from the local authority to schools; one difference is that in Scotland it is devolved directly to the headteacher, not to the school board. Introduced later than in England, this aspect will not be fully operational until 1998. Government pronouncements about the aims and purposes of boards stress three main functions: the greater involvement of parents in school affairs, closer community involvement and freeing education authorities progressively from the business of routine school administration.

In England and Wales extensive powers are now devolved to governing bodies.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Scotland has a long and distinguished record of educational research, much of it involving practising teachers, local authorities and colleges as well as university education departments. It is not possible to give details of the extensive network of educational research which is currently underway or the major national and international studies. The contributors to this book, who are active researchers, make reference to a number of important studies in the following chapters. Here two centres from which further information on policy-related research can be obtained are noted.

The Research and Intelligence Unit in SOEID is responsible for planning a wide range of research in education; providing research-based advice for ministers and others; disseminating research; and encouraging and maintaining interest and expertise in educational research in schools, colleges, universities and research institutes.

The Scottish Council for Research in Education, founded in 1928, conducts research and disseminates research findings—including research done by other institutions. It is also the home-base for the Scottish Teacher-Researcher Support Network, which assists teachers to carry out their own research studies. It is funded by contracts from organisations which include government departments, local authorities, charitable foundations and international bodies. It has a major contract with SOEID which covers a range of activities.

> *The equivalent body in England is the National Foundation for Educational Research.*

LEARNING TO SUCCEED IN SCOTLAND

A Commission on Scottish Education was set up in 1994 following the publication of the report of the National Commission on Education, *Learning to Succeed,* which had a United Kingdom-wide remit and whose comments on Scottish education were generally favourable (National Commission on Education 1993). The Scottish Commission had a limited remit: to consider the gaps in the report, in Scottish terms. The focus is on those issues in Scottish education and training which require strategic decisions over the medium and long term (Commission on Scottish Education 1996).

The Commission considered Scotland better placed than other parts of the United Kingdom to achieve a number of the goals it set. Among the advantages it sets out on p. 14 are:

- greater public confidence in the changing education system
- a General Teaching Council to help ensure quality in teaching
- a greater link between academic and vocational qualifications
- the existence of a Scottish Assessment of Achievement Programme

- national testing confined to language and mathematics
- the development of 'ethos indicators' by the Scottish Inspectorate.

The gaps it perceived include the following:

- the early years
- school effectiveness
- courses and qualifications for 16–18-year-olds
- further education, training and community education
- higher education
- governance and accountability.

In the following chapters the strengths and weaknesses of aspects of Scottish education will be considered. Higher and further education, training and community education are not covered.

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