The determination of certainties within 14-19 educational reform policy in England during the period 2001-2005 in order to explore the possibility of reform in the future.

Paul Graham Lally

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Acknowledgements

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A   Abstract

This research provokes a different set of perspectives on education policy. It observes that in England education is so connected to ideas of knowledge and identity that it operates at two levels. The first level is rational and concentrates upon institutional and organisational behaviour. The second level is linked to a system of beliefs which enable us to demonstrate knowing and understanding. The categorical mistake often made in educational policy analysis is to try to apply first level thinking to second level problems. This research applies a conceptual framework which looks at policy formulation of 14-19 education reform in the period 2001-2005 based around the Tomlinson report. It also subjects this analysis to questions derived from the thinking of Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein on such second level thinking.

Readings of educational purpose by governments as a tool for economic and social purposes are exposed as elements of Bourdieu's misrecognition. Indeed the purpose of education that emerges is about raising standards and operating a system based on choice and institutional autonomy. The danger in such a system is that means have become ends and there is no connection between the actions taken by government and their stated aims. Government policy can be reduced to a series of self-evident statements which rely upon belief rather than rationality.

The research concludes that although education reformers in England can envisage transformational reform they are impeded by doxastic beliefs from articulating the means to implement such reform. As a result education in England is likely to continue its cycle of misremembered reform through further attempts. The proposal made here is that fundamental reform can only be made by working through such beliefs on an individual basis. The specific solution advanced here is taken from the Tomlinson and involves introducing a transformed vocational education system for those aged 16 and over.

This research offers four new understandings. It presents a new approach to the research of educational policy based upon philosophical assumptions about knowledge and identity. It services that approach through a new analysis based upon a conceptual framework drawn from Williams' tensions around purpose, change and democracy. Secondly it deploys such assumptions and analysis in a specific historical period which demonstrates the conceptual limits upon change within 14-19 reform. In doing this it also draws out new understandings about the ability to identify change propositions and the profound difficulty in translating them into change processes. The final claim of this research is that it seeks to tackle how transformational change in education might occur within the limits that are identified here.

Chapter 1   **Overview of Research**

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this introduction is to provide an overview of the research that is to be presented within this thesis. This chapter will explore the ambition, the assumptions, the argument and the aims of the research. Two sets of underlying themes will feature through outlining the problems, method and outcome of this research. The first theme relates to how the content of change is presented and the second theme considers the process of change. Both themes require an examination of the articulation of change and the proposals for how change is taken forward.

The research originates from experience and reflection upon the systemic failure of 14-19 reform in England. I had the benefit of starting my teaching career in Maurice Holt's school in Hertfordshire in the late 1970s. This gave me the view that not only was curriculum planning central to education but it should be organised in a way that served the needs of all young people. In the 1980s as a lecturer in a college of further education I became involved with Technical Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). After an initial scepticism of the motives behind the initiative I learned to welcome TVEI as an attempt to secure breadth in the curriculum and was disappointed to see its termination in the 1990s. From 1999 as a local government manager I was involved with the 14-19 partnership in Knowsley and in 2008-2012 was the Head of the Partnership in the Borough. In this period I experienced the sustained attempt to access breadth in the curriculum and then observed its subsequent failure.

In the next section there will be a historical consideration of the problems facing secondary education. McCulloch (1998) identified the longstanding problem facing the education of the ordinary child. According to his analysis this problem was not going to change in the future. The two themes emerge as a summary of these problems: there are difficulties in both articulating the content as well as the process of change. The work of Carr and Hartnett (1996) is examined for the characteristics they indicate that are dominant within education in England.

My research is occasioned by the long-standing resistance to change in education but change is also a continuing feature of English education. School managers and school teachers feel that they are exposed to continual waves of such change. Raffe and Spours (2007, p.2) refer to this 'policy busyness' as a feature of 14-19 education for over the past quarter of a century. This yields a paradox: there is significant and persistent change within education but the conditions McCulloch and others describe seem above such change. Lumby and Foskett (2005) have a useful perspective on this when they describe it as turbulence masquerading as change. They see the essential continuities of 14-19 education surviving each successive wave of policy initiatives.

In my early research in this area I responded to these two problems by searching out a rational set of alternatives to the present curriculum. Encouraged by the writings of Michael Young (2008) as well as Hager and Hyland (2003) I looked to develop such alternatives based on Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. They pointed to the potential of Wittgenstein in developing a different curriculum. Hager and Hyland (2003, p.285) particularly signalled the interpretation of Wittgenstein by Meredith Williams (1999) as a way of possibly going beyond the traditional dichotomy of education and training. My reading of her work pointed to a socially based theory of knowledge which in its essence was demotic and in principle at least potentially democratic.

However I increasingly grew dissatisfied with the attempt to mount a more sophisticated attack on the knowledge values of the traditional curriculum. The barriers to 14-19 reform appeared to lie in something different than a failure to recognise a superior policy argument. This led to a fundamental break away from the traditional approach deployed in the examination of educational policy. This break represents a significant conceptual challenge because it involves establishing a different set of perspectives for the consideration of change within education.

The challenge of this research is to identify the aspects of knowledge that operate within educational policy. The assumption is made that knowledge itself provides the framing of educational policy. Reform such as the vocational assumptions aligned to 14-19 proposals cannot succeed because they do not operate at the

same level as the knowledge assumptions they seek to displace. The ambition of this research is to expose how such knowledge assumptions operate and the conceptual barriers they present to radical change.

This led to a series of choices being made about the research and the third section of this chapter seeks to explain them. The move away from seeking a rational alternative to the current curriculum led me to think about the philosophical basis of education. I began to look at different aspects of Wittgenstein's work: his first work, *The Tractatus* and his final work, *On Certainty*. It struck me there was a message here about the unsayable- or at least difficult to say- aspects of our knowing and a correspondence with what Williams (1965) described as a disinclination in England to talk about educational purpose.

As a result I adopted a particular approach to the research which I will describe here as the philosophical assumption. The reasons for this choice will be developed in the third section. However it is important to note that it demands a different perspective from the usual political sociological interpretation of educational policy. It also had profound implications on the way in which the research would be conducted.

The second choice listed was actually the first choice I made. It was the assumption that 14-19 reform- and the changes needed to bring it about- could not be understood until the barriers were understood. This was an intuitive feeling that had grown from observing the failure of 14-19 reform. I was motivated by a desire to gain a better understanding of such failures and then to test the possibility of success for further attempts at reform in the future.

From what has been said about my personal experience of 14-19 reform it might seem like this work is going to be a piece of reflection. However its motivation and method are quite separate. The experiences I had do not bear the burden of the research. My involvement in 14-19 reform in the period 2001-2005 was indirect and my readings of the Government White papers and the other documents would have been cursory, if that. For example, I had not read the 2004 Tomlinson report itself until doing this research in 2014. The third choice I made was to

concentrate the empirical work on the Tomlinson report and the policy context it sat within. The reasons for this choice will be advanced in this chapter.

The philosophical assumption leads to several methodological challenges. I seek to tackle such challenges by the organisation of the research into three phases. The first phase establishes the conceptual framework and the ideas about the philosophy to be drawn upon in this research. The second phase is the empirical analysis of 5 documents on 14-19 reform published between 2001 and 2005. The third phase applies what has been learnt from the first phase to the second and develops the arguments of the research.

There are different methodological challenges presented by the two arguments. The first argument is seeking to understand the epistemic place of assertions about the purpose and policy of education through statements that are made about policy implementation in Government documents. It seeks to make tacit assumptions explicit. It also seeks to establish that such assumptions are beliefs rather than rational policy statements. This presents two methodological problems. The first is about how to capture in words what is unsaid. The second problem is how to approach the non-rational through rational analysis. Such challenges also mean that great care has to be taken on the evidential basis for what is concluded about such statements in Chapters 8 and 9.

The second argument uses these techniques to explore elements of change within these assumptions but then based on a rational analysis projects a case for change - at the level of education purpose and policy framing. This is the most speculative part of the research.

The ambition of this research seeks to establish ideas about educational policy and change that have not been identified before. The fourth section in this chapter seeks to outline what outcomes will be developed within this research in terms of improved understandings on educational policy and the potential for change to occur. It will also develop new tools for the analysis of educational and curriculum policy.

The summary of this chapter will consider the two themes in light of the ambition, assumptions and the arguments advanced and will form the two aims of the

research from this discussion. This introductory chapter will present the basis for the evaluation and assessment of the research that will be made in Chapter 10.

1.2 The problems of secondary education in England

The identification of the problem facing secondary education made here focuses on two pieces of analysis. The first is indicated by Gary McCulloch (1998) who identifies the importance of class differentiation through the history of mass secondary education in England. Carr and Hartnett (1996) outline a second source of issues when they complain that the introduction of markets and managerialism within education from 1988 onwards provides a decisive break between education and the democratic values which advance greater equality. Both of these accounts use the history of English education to derive characteristics which help to describe the problems.

The aim of this section is to identify the longstanding problems of secondary education in England. These problems are set within the continuities of curriculum practice from the late Victorian period, as well as the prestige afforded to hierarchies of learning and institutions within the English education system. Such hierarchies have proven resilient to reforms such as the introduction of mass comprehensive education as well as in more recent times the extension of mass education (first secondary and then higher). This resilience results in the maintenance of priorities between curriculum areas as well as the role and relationships of elite schools and universities within education. Both accounts examined here help to explain how this happens. McCulloch does this by identifying the failure of mass secondary education to develop a curriculum in contrast to the maintenance of the public school/grammar school tradition. Carr and Hartnett contribute to our understanding by identifying the underlying historical characteristics of secondary education in England.

An overview of the history of English education since 1880s shows a struggle around the meaning and intent of secondary education and its relationship with preparation for adult life. According to Williams this struggle can be understood through three readings of the curriculum put forward by different protagonists. The first reading is the traditional one which Williams describes as the old

humanist. This sees secondary education as both academic and hierarchical, based on a view of knowledge and learning which owes its origins to medieval scholasticism and its power to the continuing status of old universities and the public schools. This reading sets out a particular path for secondary education as the preparation of elites to attend prestigious universities, armed with the standard subjects that are the staple academic diet of traditional grammar and public schools.

The other two readings are formed from the industrial and social challenges to old humanism. The first of these seeks an explicit linkage between education and the world of work. The industrial trainers, as described by Williams, eschew the humanist reading for an education system that provides a closer connection to the challenges of UK capitalism within an increasingly global economy. As Wolf (2002, p. 65) indicates this reading (and the concerns associated with it) has a long pedigree which goes back to the mid-Victorian period and has a propensity to resurface on a regular basis. The curriculum content advanced in this reading relates to the skills and competences, required in working life and proposes that the curriculum offers proper preparation for the world of work. Often this reading is presented alongside a humanist one as part of a curriculum solution to the idea that there are different types of minds among young people: some are more suited to academic studies; others more suited to technical and vocational studies.

The second reading seems to offer a far more fundamental challenge: public educators believe in education for the masses but in expostulating this they offer a broader view of both the content of education and also how that education should be organised. For example, they seek to develop a common curriculum through common schools. This view is often associated with the educational ideas of Dewey and in the more recent times with the educational thinking of Raymond Williams.

In the first half of the twentieth century the policy debate about the three readings resulted in a longstanding educational policy consensus which preceded the introduction of mass secondary education. This was made evident in a public form in the Hadow report (1926). The consensus continued with the publication

of the Spens report (1938) and the Norwood report (1943). Such reports recommended secondary education for all but advocated tripartite education to cater for what was seen as the different types of minds and interests of young people. Even the opposition to the tripartite schools that was advanced in the 1930s advocated multilateral schools. Such schools would make the three types of education available on one site. This thinking was to be influential in the later establishment of comprehensive schools.

This consensus represented an uneven accommodation between the three readings. Old humanists secured the maintenance of traditional grammar schools by the public purse; the industrial trainers took away the new secondary technical schools from the settlement and the public educators were given secondary moderns as the new form of mass education under the declared aspiration that all three types of schools would enjoy parity of esteem.

Gary McCulloch (1998) identified the secondary modern school as the great experiment to develop a tradition of knowledge values and practices which embraced working class young people. However such an experiment lacked national direction and co-ordination and developed according to local practice and views. Unsurprisingly the schools approached their new freedoms in varying ways. McCulloch uses Dent's contemporary analysis of five categories of secondary modern schools. The first category involved a continuance of their pre-1944 existence as a senior elementary school. The second type was to provide good quality provision within poor areas and/or serving those rejected by grammar schools. The third type offered a diluted version of the grammar schools' curriculum. Dent (1958, p. 35) also identified that some of these schools had tried to move away from subjects completely and concentrated on project and themed work. The fourth category made one particular activity such as music or art the central aspect of school life. The final type offered vocational education like a technical school. These different approaches represent an uncertain view of secondary modern education.

The failure to resolve the position of the secondary moderns in the new system created instability from the beginning. The technical schools were small in number and never served more than 4% of the secondary school population. Secondary

moderns catered for the majority of children, around 70%. The continuing prestige of grammar schools undermined parity of esteem as secondary moderns were seen as inferior. The increasing number of adolescents in the 1950s arising from the post war baby boom also put pressure upon the system. The political mathematics in a democracy could not sustain a system of elite education that only served a minority of the population (Weeks 1986). Such mathematics would also impact on the provision of higher education from the 1990s.

The collapse of the tripartite system in the 1960s and early 1970s led to the establishment of comprehensive secondary schools in the majority of areas. However this new set of arrangements did not resolve the curriculum issues within English education. Despite the massive upheaval involved in their establishment the curriculum arrangements of the new schools favoured continuity over change.

A contemporary description of the typical comprehensive curriculum indicated that:

> in the absence of any educational directive comprehensives have simply tried to assimilate two existing traditions derived from grammar schools and modern schools. They make uneasy bedfellows since one as has been pointed out, suffers from a rigid view of objectives in terms of O-level and A-level courses, and the other from a vagueness about objectives and loose thinking about children's want and needs

> (Holt, 1978, p.12).

Holt was a good witness on the nature of a typical comprehensive in the 1970s. As a head teacher in a comprehensive school he observed that most comprehensives tended to band children according to ability in the first three years. Banding was a loose form of streaming where the children were placed within two or three broad ability bands. However Holt also pointed out that setting within bands was common in specialist subjects such as mathematics and French. In years 4 and 5 the practice was to run a small core of English, PE and RE alongside a series of options. He noted that because entry into some options was subject to teachers recommendations:

> somehow it turns out that abler pupils will take their usual diet of 8-9 O level subjects while the less able find themselves spending part of the time at nearby colleges of further education pursuing courses aimed at introducing them to the world of work
>
> (Holt, 1978, p.13).

Holt offered evidence that the pragmatic determination of comprehensive curriculum made in 1970s established the basic pattern of secondary curriculum organisation that has existed ever since: academic qualifications as the norm to aspire towards and an ad hoc vocational programme for those who cannot do this.

Overlaying the overall historical curriculum disposition there are also the reforms of the 1980s. Carr and Hartnett sought to understand the changes introduced by the 1988 Education Reform Act and their analysis set them within the wider culture and traditions of English education. They combined a historical analysis of education with a political analysis of how such education sought to meet the varying interpretations of democracy.

They acknowledged Williams' integrated approach of an analysis of cultural, democratic and industrial impacts upon education. In the modern context they saw educational change as inseparable from democratic change. Their historical analysis of English education recognised the tensions between market based and democratic approaches to education. They also recognised the deep and multi-faceted basis of English education tradition drawing from cultural, intellectual, economic and political changes in the 19th century.

Their historical analysis suggested that education had sought to maintain deep social division and because England had not experienced a political revolution like France or USA it had 'never needed to reflect seriously on the type of education system which would be appropriate to a democratic system' (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 107). By linking education to democracy so closely they aligned their analysis with socio-cultural and political concerns. This had the effect of focusing their identification of the nature of the characteristics of English education upon organisational practices rather than the nature of education itself. They identified eight important characteristics of English education.

The lack of system coherence resulted in its piecemeal, voluntarist and uncoordinated development. Carr and Hartnett observed as part of the first characteristic that status afforded schools was inversely linked to how close schools were to the state; state schools were at the bottom of the status pile; voluntary schools occupied a middle space and private schools leading to the elite public schools were at the top.

Such incoherence was replicated within the curriculum. They pointed to a series of opposites: 'useful versus the academic; education versus training; liberal versus vocational; art versus science; pure versus applied science; classic texts versus modern studies; old history versus new history; creative writing versus literary criticism; fine art versus craft; and theory versus practice' (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 109).

The second characteristic saw alongside this laissez faire approach to school organisation a clear emphasis on centrally organised surveillance of the 'standards' that schools achieved. The emphasis placed on standards 'encourages the view that highly complex judgements about educational processes can be translated into simplistic scores, tests and examination results' (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 110).

The third characteristic was the central role given to the hidden curriculum of religious, moral and "political" values particularly within elite secondary schools. Carr and Hartnett explained the importance of the social and moral rules of public and grammar schools. They identified the role of the sixth form in generating ideals about Christianity, loyalty, devotion to duty, solidarity and consensus. However the sixth form had a wider role to play. They described it as a 'Trojan horse' to maintain and extend pre-democratic traditions (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 96).

The fourth characteristic was the leading role of elite institutions within education as part of an effective device in maintaining pre-industrial aristocratic values. Although educating only 7% of secondary school children Carr and Hartnett indicated that they sent 50% of the students who attended Oxford and

Cambridge. Their dominance was therefore demonstrated in their impact on elite formation as well as curriculum, teaching practices and pedagogy.

The fifth characteristic referred to the obsession with grading, sorting and testing young people from an early age. This was a key characteristic for Carr and Hartnett which acted as a shock absorber in the system:

> the English educational system is, therefore, a very subtle and complex social mechanism which can modernize and reform while at the same time preserving and conserving traditional values and processes. It finds new improved and politically correct ways to differentiate, classify, sort, grade and test which can replace what have become morally unjustifiable and politically dubious mechanisms

> (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 114).

Students from disadvantaged and working class backgrounds could only advance if they accepted the terms of engagement and were co-opted into the rules and ethos of education for the elite. Since the Victorian era the metaphor of an educational ladder had been used which was extended to the intelligent poor to enable them access to the education of their social superiors. Carr and Hartnett deployed the term sponsored mobility to describe this system of limited mobility. Sponsored mobility was the sixth characteristic.

The almost mythical role of the Great Head and the power invested in that person was the seventh characteristic identified by Carr and Hartnett. This myth originated in Victorian public schools particularly around Thomas Arnold. It supported significant centralisation of power within a single individual. The final characteristic was the historical concomitant of the seventh characteristic: the low status and significance accorded to teachers and their training. This characteristic goes back to the monitorial system of education introduced by the Voluntary societies which supported a teacher student ratio of up to 1:1000.

Carr and Hartnett indicated the success of Thatcher's settlement was to overlay a market and managerialist approach on top of these characteristics and thus enabled a radical transformation of education practice and outlook to find deep echoes in the traditions of English education. Accordingly they argued that the

traditional characteristics of English curriculum were aligned to the post 1988 market settlement of English education.

McCulloch began his book *Failing the Ordinary Child*:

> secondary education in England and Wales has systematically failed the ordinary child over the past hundred years, in the obvious sense that most children have emerged into adult life branded as failures from its processes of classification and grading. (McCulloch, 1998, p.1)

The final comments in the book are also worth noting:

> finally what of the 'ordinary child'? They have indeed been failed, not so much as by neglect as by the contradictions of class based provision and the illusions to which it gave rise. The experiment of the secondary modern schools symbolized this failure, most graphically in the case of the Stonehill Street schools. Thirty years on secondary education has still not fully revered from the effects of this failed experiment and continues to be influenced by the theories that underlay it. It will be little surprise if in the twenty first century there will be new ways for failing the ordinary child (McCulloch, 1998, p. 159).

McCulloch located the problem in the class based distinctions within English education. The reason for his pessimism was that no policy alternative has been identified to rectify the impact of such distinctions and there appeared no appetite for any amelioration to the position. I have put his analysis alongside Carr and Hartnett's analysis because it is important to understand the relationship between the longstanding curriculum problem of disadvantageous treatment of the majority of the young and the paradigmatic changes that appear to have occurred in 1988. Indeed I hope that my research might shed some light on the relationship between these two sets of paradigms and help to get a better understanding on what happened in 1988 and its effect upon current educational policy. By considering the specific time period of 2001 and 2005 this research will seek to examine how the two sets of problems identified by McCulloch and Carr and Hartnett operate through the focus of 14-19 reform.

McCulloch's description was of a longstanding failure to address the educational needs of all children. From this two problems need to be treated separately. The first problem was the long standing experience of English education in failing the

ordinary child. The second problem was that for the foreseeable future there was no likelihood of this problem being addressed. As we have seen Carr and Hartnett gave additional reasons why such change was unlikely.

From McCulloch's work it is possible to identify the two themes that will be addressed in this research: the first theme is the lack of discussion and visioning about the nature of change and the second theme relates to the change process required. This research seeks to distinguish between two different types of terrain for such changes in order to get a better perspective on how policy relates to the long term patterns of education. This research will seek to discover the second sphere of discussion about education and consider the potential for change.

1.3 Rationale, organisation and methodology

This section sets out the reasons for the choices made in this research and the challenges to organisation and method that arise from such choices. The philosophical assumption of the basis of educational purpose and policy framing leads onto a firm demarcation between theory and empirical parts of the research. It also raises the need for great clarity over the evidential basis of the claims that will be made as a result of the research.

1.3.1   Rationale for the methods chosen

There are three sets of choices that are made here: the overall assumption upon which this research is based; the specific assumption about the relationship between the two themes; and the specific focus of the research –the Tomlinson report and its immediate context and aftermath.

The underlying assumption of this research is that the two themes need to be examined through analysis based upon a philosophical exploration of the framing of knowledge. This assumption enables a differentiation to be made between different levels of policy making. It arises from the perspective that education and knowledge have such an integral relationship that it is necessary to approach our understanding of the purpose of education through how we approach knowledge. This also extends to how educational policy is framed because such framing is part of the understanding of educational purpose. In other words educational policy

framing is part of the general way in which knowing and understanding are framed.

What flows from this is that it is not possible to view the framing of education policy as a rational process because rationality is part of what is contained within the framing. This means it is not appropriate to adopt what I would describe as a political sociological perspective upon curriculum policy at this level. There is a great deal of insight to be derived about education from such a perspective. However such insight is gained at a price. This price is the acceptance of two assumptions: first of all that education policy is framed as a rational process which can be explained and secondly a hidden assumption of explanatory regress because policy making is explained as a result of another set of self-evident circumstances. I see the offering of such explanations which are not themselves explained as an example of a belief being portrayed as rational analysis. The philosophical assumption does not see the need to generate such explanatory beliefs. The assumption of this research is to seek out the beliefs that operate at the highest level of education. At this level of examination political sociology only has value as metaphor and such metaphors contain the danger of being read as fact in a conceptual area where facts cannot be read at all.

The philosophical nature of the overall approach will be advanced in Chapter 3 and applied in Chapters 8 and 9. The assumption will yield the central observations of this research and seeks to avoid the problem of regress because Wittgenstein pointed out that beliefs do not have be justified or grounded in explanation. They are held as convictions rather than empirical propositions.

The second set of assumptions is around the relationship between the two themes. McCulloch implicates both problems in his study of education of the ordinary child. He advances the problem of lack of debate (and indeed the low examination of the question of working class education especially the failed experiment of secondary modern schools) alongside the low likelihood of change. I am postulating a causal relationship between the two problems and the reason for that is based partly on what Williams says about the lack of debate on education. He indicates an assumption of education which denies the need for discussion and in its stead a focus upon the organisation of and access to

education. This suggests that the problem is associated with issues of understanding as well as articulation. In other words there are some cognitive barriers preventing the consideration of the purpose of education and the curriculum.

Such problems appear in the analysis of both McCulloch and Carr and Hartnett. McCulloch describes the failure to establish knowledge values within education for ordinary young people but he is not able to give a reason why this occurred. Accordingly he appears resigned to the continuing capacity of education to fail the ordinary child. Similarly Carr and Hartnett list eight characteristics of the English system of education but these characteristics are drawn around organisational matters rather than the point of education or even the rationale underpinning the organisation of the curriculum. Elsewhere in the book they assume that the purpose of education is to advance democracy in society. This is a purpose which is not argued but assumed.

In the next chapter there will be an analysis of four advocates of curriculum reform in England. The analysis of what they say will be put against the two problems: articulation of the content of change and the change process advanced. This analysis will indicate well-formed ideas for change but a weakness of the change process. It is tempting when facing such a discrepancy to focus on the weakness. However what this research seeks to show is that they intimately combine: that the weakness of the change process is a direct result of the strength of the change content. This arises because as the change process seeks to challenge fundamental and assumed understandings of the purpose and policy of education it cannot go beyond those assumptions to draw out corresponding change processes. Therefore in order to make sense of the change process the prior question is to seek to understand those assumptions.

The final set of choices is around the determination of the focus of the research on the Tomlinson report of 2004. It will become clear in the analysis in Chapter 5 that the Tomlinson report represents the most coherent and visionary distillation of the ideas developed by the four advocates of curriculum reform. This distillation is both comprehensive and transformational but despite its favourable circumstances the report failed and from that failure emerges the opportunity for

the analysis of the assumptions that lie beneath education policy making in England.

Tomlinson offers a good example of the problem of change content not being reflected by change practice. In Chapter 6 there will be an analysis of what the report contained in terms of a transformational strategy and how it compares to the powerful change proposals that will be identified in Chapter 5. There are two other reasons for choosing Tomlinson.

Young, a major advocate of 14-19 reform, changes his position and reviews the reasons for why Tomlinson failed. This review will be analysed in Chapter 8 not only because it lends support to philosophical basis of this research but also because it adds insights into the nature and extent of the assumptions that support education policy making in England.

The final reason for choosing Tomlinson is that the report remains despite some of its technical flaws as a basis for how reform might be developed in England. It will be of service in directing how potential change might take place in the analysis at the end of Chapter 9.

1.3.2 The overall organisation of research

The research is organised to take forward these assumptions and themes. The themes are interwoven into each phase of the research. It will be easier to observe their separate impact on each phase. The construction of each phase deals with how the policy assumptions are identified.

The problem of change content

Phase 1 Chapters 2 and 3	Phase 2 Chapters 4, 5, and 7	Phase 3 Chapter 8
Establishing the conceptual framework for analysis Exploring the nature of reform through the 4 advocates of reform Exploration of Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein for theoretical questions to probe the Phase 2 analysis	Exploring the 5 documents through the conceptual framework. Identifying in Chapter 5 the theoretical background to Tomlinson through the 4 advocates of reform	Using the conceptual framework in Chapter 8 Examination of material from Phase 2 through the theoretical questions established in Phase 1 to derive the policy assumptions

The philosophical assumption of the research means that the first phase considers both the conceptual framework as well as developing a better understanding of the nature of the implicit assumptions of policy making. The conceptual framework is derived from a reading of Williams which will be deployed in Chapter 2. This indicates an emphasis of the analysis upon three key features of policy: purpose/vision; policy framing/ problem identification and strategic implementation. This conceptual framework will be applied to the five documents in Phase 2 as well as the examination of the second sphere made from these in Chapter 8. Accordingly the conceptual framework is the primary organisational tool for analysis in this research.

In Chapter 3 a series of theoretical questions will emerge from the works of Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein. From the term 'doxa' used by Bourdieu and the certainties of Wittgenstein I derive the term 'doxastic certainties' to describe the assumptions which operate at a higher order of policy analysis. The identification of them within the 14-19 education policy documentation of the period 2001-2005 is the first aim of this research. To assist in such identification I draw certain aspects of what these certainties look like. Both Bourdieu and

Wittgenstein point to their unspoken nature. This means that the analysis will need to consider not only what is said but also what is implied. Bourdieu introduces the useful concept of misrecognition. It is possible to apply this term to the stated purposes and vision within the documentation.

The second phase is organised around five documents published between 2001 and 2005 which represent the 14-19 reform policy journey. In 2001 the Government published its White Paper on secondary education which was followed in 2002 by a 14-19 Green Paper. This set off a consultation process and in 2003 the government published its response which established the Working Group chaired by Mike Tomlinson. This presented its final report in October 2004 and the Government published its 14-19 White Paper early in the following year. They represent the 14-19 reform policy journey of the period of 2001-2005 which is the period chosen for the research. Taken together they offer insight and understanding of the underlying beliefs of education that operated at that time. The four government documents offer significant variance from the Tomlinson report. In summary the second phase of the research explores both the nature of governmental thinking in 14-19 policy and the challenges made to it by the reformers.

The research concludes with the testing of the practical experience against the theoretical questions derived in Chapter 3. Chapter 8 begin with Young's insights into the nature of the relationship between education, knowledge and identity. This sets the context for the examination of the purpose/vision of education which is explicit in the two White Papers. From the policy framing and the problem identification across the four government documents emerges the implicit understandings of the purpose and framing of education. This chapter finishes with the identification of the doxastic certainties exposed by this analysis.

The second problem of change process is also analysed across the three phases:

Phase 1 Chapters 2 and 3	Phase 2 Chapters 5 and 6	Phase 3 Chapter 9
Identification of change process within four reform ideas. Identification of change possibilities within doxastic certainties indicated by Bourdieu, Gramsci and Wittgenstein	Examination of tension between Tomlinson's transformational changes and the change process proposed	Analysis of 'policy busyness' in 2001-2005 Examination of the relationship between doxa and heterodoxy in 14-19 reform Examination theoretical aspects of change of doxastic certainties and the actual experience of change of doxastic certainties in 1988. Identification of specific change possibilities within the 14-19 reform agenda

The problem of change process identified in this chapter is the most significant barrier to the implementation of reform. The analysis of the next chapter will show that not only do the major advocates of reform find great difficulty in articulating change processes that are convincing but that Williams himself avoided the issue of why continuity in English curricular policy is so overwhelming. As already indicated the same problematic is replicated within the Tomlinson report in Phase 2.

As a result of this analysis in the final phase there will be an examination of the highly influential Marxist or neo-Marxist view of systemic change and a comparison to Wittgenstein's more idiosyncratic view of incidental change at the highest level. From this analysis in the third phase it will become possible to draw out potential ways of identifying reform within the 14-19 age range. Such

proposals are indicated in the work of Gramsci as well as Williams and follow some of the recommendations in the Tomlinson report.

1.3.3. The methodological approach in the research

From the discussion thus far two arguments emerge to be explored in this research:

a) that some of the doxastic certainties of education policy making in England can be observed from the 14-19 reform policy journey of 2001-2005;

b) based on an understanding of such doxastic certainties lessons can be drawn about the future possibilities of reform.

There will be a need to vary slightly the methods of research adopted. Both arguments seek through a rational analysis to identify doxastic certainties: the first on the content of education purpose and policy and the second on the potential for change within doxastic certainties. However the first theme seeks to use the evidence to demonstrate the operation of doxastic certainties and applies the conceptual framework consistently across the whole of Phase 2. The analysis in Chapter 8 will consider carefully what has been written in the 2001-5 government documentation through the focus of the conceptual framework. This enables the doxastic certainties to emerge through a process of observation and deduction.

The second theme on change process is slightly different because it seeks to build upon the analysis in Chapter 8 to identify the potential of change for doxastic certainties and accordingly does not use the conceptual framework itself. Its task is to identify change potential and it does this through three separate sets of analyses. First of all it observes the nature of change within education. It does this in two ways: it considers the relationship of 'policy busyness' to beliefs within education and secondly it examines the continuities and divergences between Tomlinson and the Government documents. This observation yields further insight into the nature of 14-19 reform. Secondly it considers how doxastic certainties might change. This is both a theoretical and empirical consideration because it is

backed up by the support given in Phase 2 for understanding the new reality brought in by the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Finally it considers how change might take place. This final piece of analysis is not an examination of doxastic certainties as such and contains an empirical set of propositions which are testable- admittedly in the future. Such an analysis is made in line with the two themes. It first of all considers the content of such change proposals. According to the results of my research the articulation of such content is unproblematic. However what is difficult methodologically in this section of the research is to identify a policy change process because one of the key observations of the research is the consistent failure of transformational reformers to articulate change processes equal to the change they propose. Accordingly attention needs to be given to how I deal with the problem of the change process that I will have earlier indicated is impossible to articulate.

In Chapter 3 there will be a brief analysis of doxastic certainties as a type. From this it will become clear that there are several methodological challenges in developing this argument. First of all there is an issue of perspective: an inability to frame an understanding which stands outside its own frame of understanding. This is an issue which will be addressed by the actual examination of what people have expressed in terms of reform. This examination will indicate the limits of thought and perspective that operate within the identification of change processes.

This challenge is an important one and has had significant impact upon the organisation of the research. The analysis is specifically historical. The period under analysis is over ten years old and even the post Tomlinson analysis is itself historical. The decision was taken early on in the research not to interview any of the people concerned with Tomlinson because they would project a contemporary understanding onto the past.

The second challenge is the ability of this research to capture what are the unspoken assumptions about educational purpose/vision and policy framing/problem identification. By its nature a textual analysis will have difficulty

in determining what is unspoken. There are three strategies adopted to overcome such a difficulty.

First of all the research is empirical. The first phase has three purposes. It continues the discussion about the nature of the problem of reform and the change process through the examination of the four reformers. It analyses Williams to help with the direction of the research as well as deriving the conceptual framework. This framework offers a theoretical basis for an organisational task. It provides the means of organising the material but offers no theoretical development. The final purpose of the first phase is to derive the theoretical questions about doxastic certainties. However these theoretical constructs will only be used after the empirical analysis has been completed.

The second phase puts the empirical aspect of the research at its centre. It does this to avoid the situation whereby an over-reliance on theory runs the risk of a description of the world in the image of that theory. In any research theory without the discipline of practice can lead to speculation and practice without an organising framework can become disconnected detail. In this research the only elements of Phase 1 that will be applied to the practical element of the research in Phase 2 will be the conceptual framework derived from Raymond Williams and the three tensions upon which it is based. This will enable the comparisons to be made across the five documents. However the theoretical concerns will only be drawn after the evidence has been reviewed. This is an important part of the research method and its intent is to avoid the possibility of an internal circle developing whereby the theories are reflected by the research method and appear verified by them when all that is happening is that a circular argument has developed posing as research. Theoretical concerns must be tentative and exploratory. Practice must if anything have precedence over such theory and be in the business of testing such tentative questions.

This approach is necessary because the philosophical assumption is a questioning of how we construct the world: in other words it is theory itself and we cannot in logic examine theory with another theory.

The targets of this research are not in themselves rational: they exist within the core of epistemic practices rather than being the elements that are provable within it and as such they are not articulated. The research seeks out a different set of attributes formed around beliefs, instinct and unspoken acceptance. As a result of this it is even more important to separate theoretical concerns from the observation of practice. In this type of research the danger is not just theoretical contamination but categorical mistakes being made whereby this different set of attributes is viewed in the same way as knowledge and rationality.

However the tactics for such research are rational. It does seek to make empirical statements that can be tested and is presented through language. The ability to do this is drawn from the philosophers examined in Chapter 3. Bourdieu deploys the term misrecognition in the context of doxic beliefs. This will be used to consider the potential for misleading statements to be made around purpose. Wittgenstein deploys observation as his main method of analysis.

The search for doxastic certainties is not a typical research project and this raises the question about the evidential basis of what is being done to support the claims that are being made. In the final chapter there will be consideration given to how robust are these claims and the basis upon which they are made.

The historical nature of the focus is important to the consistency of the arguments being placed here. It is difficult and perhaps impossible to identify the doxastic certainties in a contemporary situation. As a logical and empirical problem this will be examined in Chapter 3. However by limiting the enquiry to a time that is passed and by restricting the analysis to documents and comments made in the past the research seeks to avoid this problem. The conclusion will have the burden of measuring the success of the intent to adopt consistency and rigour in the different epistemic challenges offered by both themes.

1.4 What will be achieved in this research?

This section will outline the intended outcomes of this research within the two themes. In the first theme there will be three types of outcome: improved tools of analysis; increased understanding of education and the development of specific insights into 14-19 education. In the second theme there will be two sets of

outcome: improved understanding of change processes within education and a specific understanding of the potential for change within the 14-19 age range.

Tools of Analysis	Understanding about education	Specific insights about 14-19 education
The philosophical approach to research of educational policy	Deep-seated linkages between knowledge, education and identity	The breadth of transformational change advanced in the Tomlinson report
Williams' 3 tensions as a means of reviewing educational policy	The non-rational nature of doxastic certainties	Why strengthening vocational education post 14 is always the main reform agenda within 14-19
The conceptual framework as a tool of analysis	The specific doxastic certainties of educational purpose and policy in 2001-5	

The philosophical approach yields a different set of understandings about education purpose and policy framing. These understandings do not ascribe any motivation towards how education is organised beyond historical and cultural practices. The approach vindicates itself through the series of insights into change content and processes that it reveals. In terms of the first set of analyses Williams' three tensions offer a way of setting up a theoretical consideration of the content of change: for example, Williams' tensions offers a way of understanding the differences (and continuities) introduced by the 1988 Education Reform Act. Williams' tensions will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

The third contribution in terms of tools of analysis is the conceptual framework. It sets out to distinguish between statements of vision and purpose; policy framing and problem identification; and policy content and implementation strategy. This

framework enables the content of the documents to be organised in a way that enables the essential features to come forward. It also enables the comparison between the various documents.

These innovations in analysis enable general understandings about education purpose and policy to emerge. Such unspoken and resolute assumptions support the idea that the only type of education that is possible is the one we are accustomed to and such assumptions form part of the construction of the understandings of knowledge as well as identities. Such a depiction provides a powerful barrier across any attempt at fundamental reform.

The second aspect of the understanding revealed is that these assumptions are not based upon rational argument. They are part of a system of beliefs which are beyond the interplay of reason. In Wittgenstein's terms they are not true or false, they are certain. Such certainty puts them out of the reach of ideas such as rationality, knowledge and even language. This has a great bearing on why 14-19 reform has failed.

The final aspect of the general understanding revealed about education is that this research will enable an understanding of the educational purposes and policy framing of secondary education in England to emerge. Such an understanding is specific to the time period under study. What is revealed supports the assertion that the 1988 Education Reform Act made a new reality within education. However the extent of the superficiality in this new reality is also revealed.

There are other insights generated about 14-19 reform. The analysis of the Tomlinson report in Chapter 5 demonstrates a comprehensive and transformational re-visioning of education. Such a prospectus of reform should be revisited in order to help future attempts at reform. The second insight is the observation that strengthening vocational education is always the central platform of 14-19 reform. This research explores why this is the case and also why such reform has always failed to date.

Such failure brings the discussion to the second theme about the processes of change. It is important that the research does not end just at identifying the certainties because that would run the danger of reifying the doxastic certainties

as an impenetrable barrier to change. The second argument is needed to afford a more optimistic conclusion to this analysis. Under the second argument the following observations on change will be made:

Improved understanding of change processes within education	Specific understanding of the potential of change within the 14-19 age range
Identification of the way doxastic certainties might change in education	Framing reform across the 14-19 age range is itself a barrier to reform
Identification of epistemic frailty of doxastic certainties: for example the questioning of educational purpose can open them up to challenge	The reform of 16+ vocational education presents no substantive challenge to most of the doxastic certainties described here but if implemented in a transformative way could change all of 14-19
Identification of the similarities and differences between traditional education assumptions and the reformers	The conceptual gap that exists between the articulation of transformative ideas and the change processes identified to implement them

The understanding of how change occurs within the doxastic certainties in education begins with the theoretical discussion in Chapter 3 and differences between Bourdieu/Gramsci and Wittgenstein. This theoretical discussion will be considered alongside the analysis of change proposals that emerges in Chapter 2 as well as the actual history and impact of the 1988 Education Reform Act which is subject to analysis in Chapters 4-7 and Chapter 9. This analysis will indicate how doxastic certainties change. This raises the second aspect of the general understanding. The doxastic certainties are unspoken assumptions. They expose an epistemic weakness: all that needs to be done is to question them.

The final general understanding that will emerge is the relationship that exists between the doxastic certainties and the advocates of reform. These similarities

will help illustrate why there is a continuing cycle of reform as well as a failure to learn from previous attempts. They also help to explain why reformers can imagine transformational change but cannot devise transformational change processes to accompany it. This conceptual gap is part of the doxastic certainties that exist in all who think about education. The challenge in Chapter 9 is the attempt to transcend this.

However it is not just a failure of understanding that prevents 14-19 reform. It will be observed that framing such reform as 14-19 serves to present real barriers towards the achievement of reform. To address this issue the final discovery of this research seeks to advance vocational reform which can only begin at 16. Such a proposal builds on ideas of Gramsci about common schooling and Williams about the area of the curriculum that offers most opportunity for change. As indicated already it also enables proposals from the Tomlinson report to be taken forward.

Such a set of understandings would have a profound effect upon our understanding of the nature and practice of 14-19 reform as well the understanding of general education policy formulation. In the final chapter I intend to demonstrate that these new understandings have been found and outline what are the implications of them.

1.5 Conclusion

The research described in this chapter is historical. It looks at a period of policy change and seeks to use the analysis to gain an understanding of what happened. The policy discussions that were covered then remain active today. Evidence of their contemporary nature came forward in the General Election campaign of 2015 when references were made by the CBI (2015) and Tristam Hunt (2015), the Labour Shadow Education Spokesperson, to the need for 14-19 reform.

The two themes around change in terms of content and process emerged from an analysis of the problems facing secondary education in England. These themes offer the central tasks of the research. Its ambition is to develop an understanding of the deep-seated issues around change in education policy making.

There are two assumptions that are made in advance of this research and they flow from these themes. The first assumption is that such deep-seated issues represent a fundamental connection between education and philosophy. The second assumption is that only by exploring that connection can there be progress on developing a real understanding of what prevents 14-19 reform.

Two arguments are advanced to take this forward. The research seeks to enable a better understanding of the determinants of educational policy making and through that better understanding to formulate a way which education reform might be advanced.

From the ambition, the assumptions and the argument it is possible to identify the exact aims of the research:

- to identify the *doxastic certainties* in the period of 2001 to 2005; and

- to identify the change processes that operate for doxastic certainties and outline proposals for change within 14-19 education.

In the concluding chapter there will be a return to an analysis of the problem-method-outcome presentation made in this chapter. It will revisit what has been learnt from this research about the problems facing 14-19 education. It will review the method of research and in particular its claim to consistency, rigour and the credibility of its assertions. The final part of the conclusion will consider the claims the research can make to originality and new understandings. It will also consider what the implications of such discoveries are.

This introduction sets out the problems that the research seeks to address, the method by which it will operate and the intended outcomes. To do this the research is organised through three phases. The next chapter begins the first phase and it sets out to that process by developing the conceptual framework that will be used in the analysis as well as examine the four advocates of reform for the content of their change proposals as well as the change processes they identify.

Phase 1   Constructing the conceptual framework and the theoretical questions

Chapter 2   Developing a conceptual framework

2. 1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to establish the conceptual basis for this research. It will do this in two ways: it will establish a conceptual framework which will be used in organising the research. It will also explore the key theories of education reform that have been put forward. The analysis of such reform will help provide the theoretical background for the proposals made in the Tomlinson report: it will also begin the navigation of how change processes are advanced by the educational theorists. In doing these tasks this chapter will develop the discussion on two themes of change content and change processes.

However it will become clear from the analysis here that change processes remain problematic within the propositions for education reform. Two solutions are proposed to such problems. The first is one of analysis. By the end of this chapter there will be a conceptual framework for the analysis of the Government policy documents and Tomlinson. This conceptual framework will be derived from situating the two themes of change content and process within a consideration of three tensions within educational policy identified by Raymond Williams. This analysis will enable a consistent examination of the policy documents to determine the policy context of 14-19 reform.

The second solution will emerge in the next chapter. Williams' three tensions are not only a conceptual tool for analysis but also point towards gaps in the understanding of how education is envisioned and how policy is framed. The discussion in Chapter 3 will build some theoretical questions which will assist in bridging such gaps.

Given McCulloch's analysis of the long standing problems in secondary education, it is not surprising that there has been a long standing critique of the status quo in education in England. Four of such critiques will be explored here to identify both change proposals and change processes where possible. These are the ideas of Young, White and Reiss, Fielding and Moss, and Hodgson and Spours. Respectively

they put forward a knowledge based interpretation of the curriculum; an aims based reform; a redrawing of education along radical and democratic lines and 14-19 reform.

There are four reasons for choosing the work of these thinkers in this chapter. First of all the positions they advocate are contemporary. The work cited is written within the last five years. This research is by design a historical piece of analysis but its relevance to contemporary debate is also central to its purpose.

Secondly each work is set within a long tradition of reform. Young has been writing on the relationship between knowledge, society and the curriculum since 1971. Of the four set of reformers he has changed his position on the need for reform. However such a change in itself is a valuable source of insight on what prevents 14-19 reform and his thinking on this will be examined later.

Young's work comes out of the discussion associated with educational philosophers about the philosophical connection between forms of knowledge and the curriculum (e.g. Hirst 1974). John White's work also emerged from such debates: his view is that the curriculum should flow logically from the aims we have decided for education. He has been pressing for an aims based curriculum for over 40 years. His recent collaboration with Michael Reiss will be considered in this chapter.

Fielding and Moss are among the latest exponents of democracy as the purpose for education and continue the ideas developed by Carr and Hartnett (1996). The idea of democracy in education is central to the advocacy of the public educators and has a history that predates the introduction of mass secondary education.

Finally Hodgson and Spours are working in the long tradition of education reform of what they call upper secondary education. This has had several names over the years: 14-19 reform is the most common but the idea of upper secondary reform goes back to the early part of the 20th Century.

A third reason for choosing these thinkers is their scholarship and their importance in education theory. All of the authors are Professors of Education. They have developed serious and significant positions on curriculum reform and

most of them have considered the issue of how does reform happen. The selection of the particular work is to some extent arbitrary because there are other excellent examples of the reform traditions they represent. However what is examined offers rich exemplification of the reform they propose.

The final reason for their choice is that despite their efforts over many years the problems they have identified remain and the full burden of the reforms they propose are undelivered. This is of particular relevance to the research as it presents both the content of reform as well as the change processes needed to deliver the change. Accordingly they offer insights in the two themes and the two aims of this research.

The longstanding nature of the reform means that all four ideas on reform predate the 1988 Education Reform act. This is of particular relevance to the question about the nature of the relationship between the educational settlement introduced and the overall disposition of English education to fail the ordinary child which according to McCulloch goes back at least a hundred years. It will be necessary to consider how each thinker considers this question.

This chapter will conclude with the construction of the conceptual framework from the analysis made in this chapter set alongside the three tensions identified by Raymond Williams. It will also examine what remains problematic within the notion of reform proposals. Such an analysis will leave certain issues unresolved around the understanding of change in education and the place of knowledge and rationality within the analysis of such change. Accordingly the research strategy remains incomplete and the purpose of the following chapter is to expand the conceptual landscape to capture what appears to be the central aspect of policy making within education in England.

2.2 Williams' contribution to a conceptual framework

The starting point for the conceptual framework is Raymond Williams (1965) who in one of the most commanding chapters on English education identified many of the key aspects for consideration on English education. First of all he advocated a method of analysis which involved a blending of historical and cultural understanding. For Williams curriculum organisation represented earlier cultural

assumptions about what is deemed important enough to be involved in the transfer of knowledge and behaviours between generations. The majority of his chapter was a historical survey of British education which identified the roots of the curriculum in the middle ages and the formation of the present curriculum as the outcome of a debate about education that took place in the late Victorian era.

It is possible to derive from Williams the conceptual tools for analysis. He discussed three themes/tensions within wider educational analysis: in terms of curriculum content and disposition there was the tension between change and continuity; in terms of the educational debate and focus there was the tension between discussion of vision/purpose against organisation and institutional arrangements; and finally in terms of the inter-generational transfer of privilege there was a tension between democracy and the market. These tensions point to a difference in analysis between the everyday matters of education and the higher purposes of it.

Williams described the longevity of the curriculum continuity and the dominance of earlier thinking upon the contemporary curriculum. However he did not do this in a deterministic way: he was quite clear that the curriculum is a cultural construct in part determined by contemporary debate. Williams outlined the cultural roots of the current curriculum which went back as far as the Middle Ages:

> an educational curriculum, as we have seen again and again in past periods, expresses a compromise between an inherited selection of interests and the emphasis of new interests. At varying points in history, even this compromise may be long delayed and it will often be muddled. The fact about the present curriculum is that it was essentially created by the nineteenth century, following some eighteenth century models and retaining elements of the medieval curriculum. A case can be made for every item in it, yet its omissions are startling (Williams, 1965, p. 172).

As a result of this long continuity there is a tendency to ascribe a centrality to the subjects as a method of organising the curriculum and within the set of subjects available to be taught there is a hierarchy. Williams believed choices were made about what could be taught and what should be prioritised. In a telling phrase he described attempts to give young people critical skills and awareness of the world

they live in through social studies as 'outside business' (Williams, 1965, p.172). Such thinking seems to be maintained in contemporary curriculum debates where subjects such as citizenship though introduced as statutory seemed to have been marginalised within the curriculum. This raises the possibility that any attempts to reform the curriculum will be parked as 'outside business' while the emphasis and kudos remains with the traditional subjects.

Williams did not see this continuity as evidence of a long term consensus. For Williams it was the task of each generation to challenge the traditions of the curriculum and to see whether they fit with contemporary needs. He set the educational debate in terms of a contest for supremacy between advocates of three different readings of education: the industrial trainers, the old humanists and the public educators. Williams indicated that though these are descriptors of Victorian arguments in education they were still influential in contemporary education debates. In 1960s the public educators were at the forefront of the comprehensive movement which was beginning its campaign to change education. However for him the crucial questions in any such reorganisation revolved around the curriculum and teaching methods to be pursued and he gave a warning about the persistence of grammar school traditions.

Williams (1965, p.145) reflected on policy discussion within education and the tendency within such discussion to treat education as if it were a settled state and that the only questions that remained at issue involved its distribution and its organisation. The over-emphasis of discussion on institutions and examinations within English education and the corresponding absence of discussion about the purpose and nature of education was the second tension that Williams described within English education. The effect of this deep continuity and the emphasis on the practicalities of education is to create a climate that is inherently hostile towards fundamental change in the curriculum.

In the third tension Williams set the development of education within the overall conflict between market and democracy. He suggested that a new mechanism was required to replace the role of inheritance in transferring privilege within society. Williams (1965, p.176) identified the underlying dynamic of education by indicating that:

> privileges and barriers of an inherited kind will in any case go down.
> It is only a question of whether we replace them by the free play of
> the market or by a public education designed to express and create
> the values of an educated democracy and common culture.

This analysis presents the three aspects of change, vision and democracy. In his account these aspects were challenged respectively by continuity, organisation and the market. These are the tensions through which the education policy and the curriculum can be analysed. Such an analysis is useful in its own right but in terms of the aims of this research it can also be used to determine the conceptual framework that will be applied. This framework will be constructed in the concluding part of this chapter.

Williams depicted a culturally contested revising of education in each generation and gave us the three readings for understanding the framing of such contests which was examined in the first chapter. However he cautioned on the underlying set of traditional understandings that support the curriculum and the improbability of change. Accordingly what emerged from his analysis was a remarkable insight into curriculum continuity taken from the picture of a traditional set of understandings which are themselves challenged by each succeeding generation. The likely success of any contemporary or future challenge to this set of understandings is limited by the strength of the traditions in part afforded by their long historical roots.

2.3 Young and the power of knowledge within the curriculum

Michael Young is an important commentator upon English education for two reasons. First of all he reminds us of the important relationship between knowledge and the curriculum and that insight provides the connecting theme across his life's work. The second aspect is that despite his intimate connection with 14-19 reform he has changed his mind significantly on the potential and advisability of such reform. His ideas about the relationship of knowledge and the curriculum will be examined here and in Chapter 8 his critique of 14-19 reform in general and Tomlinson in particular will provide a useful perspective on how to consider educational reform and the relationship such reform has with knowledge and identity.

He has taken three main positions over the period of 40 years in terms of the curriculum. In *Knowledge and Control* (1971) he drew out the privileged position of academic knowledge as an example of socially constructed knowledge which justified a set of societal power relations. Such knowledge reinforced the transfer of privilege between generations and justified what was seen as important knowledge.

In his more recent work he has often restated the position he outlined in 1971. This is not to say his thinking has not moved on since 1971 but it seems more appropriate to describe his later work as seeking to build a more nuanced explanation of the relationship between knowledge and curriculum while accepting his earlier position as a valid contribution to the debate.

In the 1990s he saw the pressing need for change in the curriculum. He challenged the traditional knowledge assumptions of the curriculum and championed 14-19 reform. He was a co-author of the important work advocating the British Baccalaureate (Finegold et al, 1990) and he worked with Hodgson and Spours (1997). Heavily influenced by the profound changes that took place in the description of knowledge in the 1990s, particularly post-Fordism, and conscious of the conservatism in English education he was anxious to formulate what he described as a curriculum of the future (Young, 1998).

Bringing Knowledge Back In (2008) involved a substantial rethinking of his position. He sought to solve what he described as the educational dilemma: how to chart a middle course between traditional knowledge values and post-modern relativism. His answer was to lodge the curriculum within social realism. He tried to discover within society a view of knowledge which transcended both the traditional subject fixed view of knowledge in education and a post- modernism that supported all knowledge assertions as equally valid.

Young also distinguished between the knowledge assumptions of the traditional education and the modern concerns of markets and managerialism. He revisited Williams' readings of curriculum advocates and described the modern industrial trainer as a technical-instrumentalist. He described his role as rescuing what he saw as the traditional place of knowledge values at the centre of discussion about

education from the modern policy concerns of access, targets and qualifications. He began his book:

> This book is about the importance of knowledge in education….However the argument of the book is that questions such as 'what is worthwhile knowledge? And 'what should we teach?' are important questions for all those involved in education. With the increased focus by government on access to and participation in education on one hand, and on targets defined by qualifications on the other the question of knowledge, or what is that is important that students learn, has, as a result, been neglected both by educational policy makers and by those working in educational studies. This book aims to be a contribution to overcoming that neglect   (Young, 2008, p. xv).

There is an echo of Williams in his complaints about matters of organisation overcoming discussion of purpose. For Young questions about such purpose are knowledge questions and from 2008 he has sought to identify worthwhile knowledge as differentiated knowledge based on an examination of societal activity through the works of Bernstein, Vygotsky and Durkheim. From their work he identified two types of knowledge: every day and specialised. This led him to see the knowledge assumptions of education as separate from the everyday and from that it was not a short leap to identify the current knowledge assumptions of the curriculum as self-validating. In his more recent writings Young distinguishes between the structural context of knowledge and its usefulness. He talks of the former as 'knowledge of the powerful' and the latter as 'powerful knowledge' (Young, 2011, p.13).

What is surprising about his current position is that he has come to recognise the potency of the curriculum knowledge values because of their longevity as well as their alleged similarity with the curriculum in other countries. This latter view he takes from Baker and LeTendre (2005) when he writes that 'the contemporary curriculum in the UK is remarkably similar to that found in most developed countries despite their very different histories' (Young, 2011, p.12).

Young's position now recognises the centrality of differentiation within knowledge and he rejects attempts at reform as de-differentiation. The differences he acknowledges are the distinction between everyday knowledge and school knowledge and between context dependent knowledge (practical

knowledge) and context independent knowledge (theoretical knowledge). He associates the latter with his powerful knowledge.

A consistent feature of Young's intellectual journey has been the important questions he has raised about knowledge within the curriculum and the interests that such knowledge has represented. Although the implication of the different positions he has taken have led to different perspectives upon educational policy the core principle to his work has always remained the same: that the nature of knowledge is the central determinant of the curriculum.

2.4 White and Reiss towards an aim based Curriculum

John White has been remarkably consistent over the past 40+ years. In *Towards a Compulsory Curriculum* (White, 1973, p.1) he asked of educators the following question about a young person completing their education: 'what kinds of achievement in knowledge, skills, attitudes, understanding and so on-do the educators through whose system he will pass expect of him by this age?' He located this question within a rational approach to curriculum determination: 'in any rational educational system, therefore it is of paramount importance to determine the basic minimum. It is a reflection on the British educational system that it does not attempt to do this' (White, 1973, p.1). White is convinced that educationalists can only plan activities, courses and syllabuses if they know what the expected outcome of learning is.

White's awareness of the history of education creates a frustration with the almost accidental nature of the curriculum which informs his advocacy of an aims based curriculum. He is constant in his criticism of the introduction of the National Curriculum because it adopted the traditional curriculum without any discussion about its purpose (White, 1988).

In a recent collaboration with Michael Reiss he reaffirms his support for an aims based curriculum. Their argument is in two parts. First of all they identify and explain the aims upon which the curriculum should be based. The second part looks at the issue of how to get an aims based education system established.

The two educational aims they identify are placed on both home and school and lead them to:

> equip each child
> 1   to lead a life that is personally flourishing
> 2   to help others to do so
> (Reiss and White,2013, p.1).

They recognise that there are many accounts of a flourishing life. They suggest 'the central aim of a school should be to prepare students for a life of autonomous, wholehearted relationships, activities and experiences' (Reiss and White, 2013, p.6). One of the roles they assign to a school is that of assisting young people to prepare for independence of adulthood. Encouraging them to live healthily and manage their finances are examples they give of ways this might be done. The school also needs to support the development of personal qualities of confidence and self-esteem, independence of thought, determination, resilience, moral courage, judgement and self-restraint.

What they propose is a variety of learning contexts which encourage young people to think about relationships (literature and creative work is cited as an example) as well as activities within and beyond school which will promote and engage young people in a wide variety of experiences. The development of the ability to exercise choice is a key feature of a flourishing life as is the ability to recognise and distinguish valuable experiences.

They identify three aspects which support the second aim of helping others to live a flourishing life within a school context: moral education; education for citizenship and education for work. Moral education is implicit in developing the personal qualities but their second educational aim presents the personal qualities within an altruistic framework; in other words the intention for young people is they will want other people to lead similar fulfilling lives. There is also a desire for them to take part in decision making processes and recognise their own responsibilities as members of a community as well as an understanding of the rights and procedures within a democratic society. Finally schools should prepare them as future citizens to make a contribution through work (paid or voluntary). They identify such preparation as raising awareness of the breadth of vocational

opportunities and the means by which to assess their advantages and disadvantages.

Reiss and White are anxious to make these general aims more determinate in the school curriculum and they add a further background aim for schools to assist this. This aim involves, 'helping every student to form a broad background of understanding' (Reiss and White, 2013, p.11).

Such understanding is achieved through scientific and cultural awareness. The former will include a biological aspect , some astronomical awareness of the solar system as well as some basic physics and chemistry. The latter would include language, culture, identity, social and self-awareness including some ideas about ethnicity, religion, gender and class. They exemplify in some detail what might be covered within these background aims.

It is the very clarity that Reiss and White have about the vision and purpose of education that reduces the need for the identification of the problems they seek to ease. There is a large element of self-evidence in the justification for the changes. They point out that the national curriculum does not represent an aims based approach:

> when the national curriculum was first created in 1988, it had next to no aims to guide it. More recent versions have, it is true, included lists of overall aims but these have been tacked onto a structure already in place. Critically they do not generate that structure (Reiss and White, 2013, p. 1).

They believe that such an approach does not put the needs and wants of young people at the centre of curriculum planning and that is the underlying rationale of their approach. But they do not analyse how the national curriculum fails young people. Their approach on implementing their policy also reflects this self-evidence:

> there can be an aims-based curriculum of many sorts but an appropriate one for a country like England and similar places is one tailored to the values of a liberal democracy. This is the kind we have developed here. We put it forward as a more acceptable way of framing a national curriculum than the subject based one we have at present (Reiss and White, 2013, p. 38).

Their vision is of a national framing of an aims based curriculum in which the government issues guidance as to what should be included. Much of the current subjects would move towards an aims based approach and as a result there would be a softening of subject boundaries and the development of inter-disciplinary learning.

In terms of a change process the authors identify the need to be realistic and to build from things as they are now rather than from how we want them to be and they offer a series of practical reforms for freeing up the national curriculum which could lead to such an aims based curriculum.

They offer twenty practical suggestions on how to introduce an aims based curriculum which involves a rewriting of current curriculum practices and a redrawing of the curriculum disposition. There would be an ending of SATs, a reduction in the number of assessments at 16 and 18. Records of achievement would be used to assist transfer after 16 to a more enlivened and varied post 16 curriculum offer. School accountability would focus on offering indications on their website of how young people meets the aims they are expected to. Ofsted would monitor this and the inspectorate would be moved from a grading to a supportive role. They also seek to learn from experience in earlier English models of curriculum (around 2007) as well as curriculum developments in the other nations of the UK.

The assumption here is firmly within the rationality of the education system to adopt logical positions. The twenty practical suggestions would enable such changes to occur but they do not really address how to persuade policy makers that it is important to change from the current system to an aims based one in the first place.

Young (2012) is a vociferous critic of this approach. The aim of human flourishing he sees as too broad and one that should apply to all public institutions with the possible exception of prisons. He sees the dilution of current subjects and the move towards a themed basis of learning as counter to his ideas of powerful knowledge and he believes that an aims based curriculum represents an attempt at the de-differentiation of knowledge. In other words for Young an aims-based

curriculum seeks to ignore the important and powerful distinctions between different types of knowledge and instead offers learning based on a wider and diluted version of knowledge assumptions.

When many of the areas (e.g. financial awareness or work related learning) that Reiss and White advocate have been incorporated into the curriculum, they have been treated as Williams indicated like 'outside business'. They were seen as not important within the main business of education which involved the traditional subjects. In other words their introduction was treated in a way that supports Young's notion that such matters were not critical to the central knowledge concerns of education.

2.5 Towards democracy and common schooling

There is a similar concentration on education's role in developing human flourishing in the work of Fielding and Moss (2011). They speak to a long tradition which advocates democracy in education. They follow Carr and Hartnett (1996) in seeking to confront what they describe as the introduction of a managerialist and marketised approach by the 1988 Education Reform Act. The tradition of education as a vital part of a wider democratic settlement goes back through Raymond Williams to the American philosopher John Dewey and to the debates about education in the Victorian era. In its modern context this viewpoint observes the mutual incompatibility of a market approach with democratic values in education.

Fielding and Moss identify significant problems in the current organisation and disposition of education. They are writing in an English context but indicate it has some wider application. They share many of the learning ideals of Reiss and White. They also follow Young's central idea that education must support a vision of knowledge appropriate to the world. They cite Biesta and Osberg who offer a critique of two assumptions of traditional knowledge:

> the first is a representational view of knowledge, understanding knowledge to be an objective stable and accurate representation of a pre-existing reality, a literal reproduction. The second is that because knowledge is representative of a real and relatively stable

world, it can be transferred exactly from one mind (the teacher) to another (the pupil) (Fielding and Moss, 2011, p.25).

In opposition to such assumptions they offer an alternative view of knowledge based upon complexity whereby knowledge is both emergent and dynamic:

> we believe that a complexity inspired epistemology suggests a 'pedagogy of invention' (we borrow the phrase from Ulmer 1985) for it brings into view the idea that knowledge does not bring us closer to what is *already* present but rather moves us into a *new* reality which is incalculable from what came before. Because knowledge enables us to transcend what came before, this means it also allows us to penetrate deeper *into that which does not seem possible from the perspective of the present*. Knowledge, in other words, is not conservative, but radically inventionalistic

(Biesta and Osberg 2007 p. 46, italics in original).

For curriculum content they embrace the long tradition of progressivism within English education and highlight within that tradition a rejection of a narrow subject based approach to knowledge and education in favour of developing understanding over the acquisition of facts. From this more active idea of knowledge they forge a democratic alternative of radical education through the common school. They advocate values of democracy, equity and social justice.

They look to develop ethics and relationships, citizenship and based on the philosophy of John Macmurray what they describe as a personalist approach to education. They appeal to a more community and socially relational basis to how the curriculum is envisaged (Fielding and Moss, 2011, pp.49-52).

For Fielding and Moss current education fails several tests. It does not support equity and justice in society. It fails to support the development of thinking and analytical skills within young people to prepare them for the political and economic challenges of global warming. They want to transcend the sterile framing of education through neo-liberal discourse which they see as part of a wider problem of the hollowed out nature of politics. 'Politics and ethics are drained, leaving economics: education as an economic commodity, education as a source of private profit, economic performance as education's primary goal' (Fielding and Moss, 2011, p. 23).

However there is another problem for Fielding and Moss. They are writing over 20 years into the political settlement introduced by the 1988 Education Reform Act. After the experience of 13 years of Labour administrations which have in essence worked within that settlement, they recognise the problem of implementing the policy changes they advocate. They identify the political environment on both the left and the right in British politics as inimical to such change. Accordingly identifying the methods of introducing successful transformational change is the most important problem they register in their critique.

Fielding and Moss are fully aware of the problematic nature of the change they are proposing. Accordingly they proclaim the need for analysis into the operation of change and a transformational change strategy. They set their account firmly within transformational change mechanisms that would help their vision to become an actuality. They cite the emancipatory social science of Wright (2010) which identifies critique, alternative and transformation as the three processes that determine transformational change. In trying to implement the alternative they place emphasis upon Wright's ideas of the envisioning of real utopias which are desirable, viable and achievable. They also seek to use the rejection of a false necessity of neo-liberalism by Unger (1998) and his advocacy of transformative politics through pre-emptive practice. One of the important aspects of the change they offer is radical incrementalism which seeks to develop what they describe as 'anticipatory enactments of different ways of being in the world' (Fielding and Moss, 2011, p. 167). They are searching for the doable which is also transformative.

2.6 The reform of upper secondary schooling

There is an implicit linkage between advocates of democracy and common schooling in education and those who advocate 14-19 reform. Such advocates would indicate that their curriculum policy is seeking to realise a central aspect of common schooling through the articulation of a reformed universal curriculum and assessment system to replace the narrow hierarchical system that currently exists. Hodgson and Spours have been advocating 14-19 reform for over twenty years and work within a tradition that has sought to breach the academic/vocational divide in English education which goes back at least as far as

the final report of the Bryce commission in 1895. Ken Spours was a member of the

Working Group on 14-19 reform chaired by Mike Tomlinson and Ann Hodgson

served on one its sub groups. As indicated in their inaugural professorial address

in 2012 they continue their commitment to reform. In that address they propose

the exploration of their vision for upper secondary schooling through two

concepts which capture the content of change and its implementation:

> first, a more 'unified' 14-19 phase that addresses head-on the
> academic vocational divide and, second, an 'ecosystem' approach
> to reform that links changes in the curriculum and qualifications to
> a range of other factors-organisational, social, political and
> economic-at national, regional and local levels
> (Hodgson and Spours, 2012,p. 1).

They indicate that policy makers have three options towards reform on academic

and vocational education within 14-19. The first option is to maintain the current

historical compromise; the second option is to move to a more explicitly

demarcated system of academic and vocational education; and the third is to

build a more inclusive and unified system:

> what we see as the major challenges for 14-19 education in England
> -inadequate performance, lack of equity for different groups of
> young people and a weak relationship between education, the
> economy and the democratic process in this country (Hodgson and
> Spours, 2012, pp. 1-2).

They are clear about the problems facing the current 14-19 system in what they

describe a low opportunity–progression equilibrium. This equilibrium results in

many young people leaving education around the age of 17 with few skills and

attributes to enable them to prosper in the labour market and face a working life

of a series of low paid, temporary and insecure jobs interspersed with

unemployment.

They identify a divided curriculum and qualifications system which results in

concerns among employers, sixth form teachers and college lecturers that school

leavers are not adequately prepared for work or further/higher education.

University admission staff complain that they cannot discriminate sufficiently

between students with the same grades at A levels. They also point out that

despite the privileged role that employers have been given within the 14-19 system, they continue to be a reluctant social partner in 14-19 education.

Hodgson and Spours (2012, p.18) are mindful of Young's arguments about powerful knowledge and respond to what they describe as the knowledge challenge by proposing a four-fold reform of general education. They wish to uphold the knowledge basis of current subjects but extend it to include the means to question that knowledge. They want young people to experience different dimensions of such an education through project research to demonstrate an in depth understanding as well as the interdisciplinary implications of such knowledge. Thirdly they want young people to apply general education to contemporary issues and major problems faced. The final aspect of their reform seeks to widen such general knowledge through other types of knowledge such as vocational. They are quite explicit about the breadth of knowledge they expect from a 19 year old and the requirements of the system of education to provide the 'connective specialisation' in order to provide this.

Their reform approach can be summarised in the following way:

- An overarching vision which speaks to all young people, parents, educators and all social partners;

- A unified curriculum, assessment and qualifications framework for enhanced general and vocational education;

- A move towards a social partnership with a more supportive and engaged role for employers and higher education providers;

- A strongly collaborative local learning system of providers combining institutional autonomy with a strong sense of shared purpose to promote 14+ participation, progression and transition in the area;

- A changed role for national government involving moving away from micromanagement towards setting the framework for political and economic action at a local and regional level
  (Hodgson and Spours, 2012 p.16).

In 2008 they had offered 'strategic gradualism' (Hodgson and Spours, 2008, p.124) as their model of change. They maintain such thinking in their approach to reform in 2012.

2.7 Identifying the status quo

There is a different understanding of the status quo exhibited by the reformers. This is reflected in the differing importance they attach to the effects of marketisation and managerialism. Although all four reformers are critical of markets and managerialism upon education, two of them make this critique the central part of the status quo they want to change whereas the other two reformers identify the educational issues as primary (and as a result their main proposals would have been as equally as relevant if they had been made in the 1970s).

Young (2008) depicts policy makers as trying to resolve two conflicting policy directions caused by the tension between what he describes as neo-conservatives and technical–instrumentalists. The first policy direction is defending the traditional curriculum from the instrumentalism and dilution of the second group who have gained influence from the new educational settlement introduced after 1988. His subsequent position can be in part understood as support for the powerful knowledge over attempts by people to dilute that power by aligning it to managerialist practices and targets based on the achievement of qualifications.

Fielding and Moss also focus upon the narrow managerialist agenda of the modern education settlement. They recognise neoliberalism as the enemy and their vision is of an education system which is based instead on democratic values and a different idea of knowledge. The curriculum they espouse is closely linked to Reiss and White. The main difference is the nature of the status quo they envisage as well as the problem they see in initiating reform.

Educational issues are more centrally advanced by the other advocates of reform. They are emphasising the educational nature of the programmes they seek to support. Reiss and White are opposed explicitly to the haphazard nature of the subject based national curriculum. They see its rationale as organised around

issues such as the power of tradition and the availability of staff. They seek a curriculum that is organised instead around the needs and wants of young people.

Their analysis also carries an explicit criticism of the modern managerialism of education policy and their solutions would indicate a redrawing of that settlement. However their twenty proposals to move towards a more aims based system attempt to work with the current settlement.

Hodgson and Spours advocate a uniform upper secondary solution for 14-19 year olds which seeks to overcome the academic-vocational divide. Their view of a status quo highlights the traditional knowledge values which set differing types of learning and young people apart. Their aim is to transcend such division. They are aware of the problems to reform presented by the 1988 educational settlement and realise that it needs to be re-written in order to enable the reforms they intend to work. But like Reiss and White they seek to work within the constraints of these reforms. An example of this is the heavy emphasis in their analysis upon qualifications as a means of securing reform.

2.8 Understanding the nature of change proposed

The conceptual framework for this research is deduced from Williams' tensions. It helps develop an understanding of change within contemporary education. Such understanding is enhanced by the perspective it opens on the different levels of discussion within educational policy and accordingly a means to approach the analysis of change processes.

The themes and tensions offer an explanation of what has occurred. It is tempting to get lost in the pace of policy change but Williams gives us a different perspective. Such policy change in education was described earlier as 'policy busyness' and represents the re-emphasising of organisational matters within educational discourse to the detriment of discussion on educational vision or purpose. As a result of the pace of such developments organisation is very much in the ascendancy over vision/purpose and despite appearances to the contrary continuity is in ascendance over real change. The continuing dominance of organisation and continuity underlie the overall triumph at a system level of market over democracy.

There is a meta-analysis latent in Williams' insights which points to different levels and reference points of educational understanding. There appears to be two levels within education. The demarcation between these levels is between discussions of aims, purpose and the nature of the curriculum and then at the lower level it is about the institutional arrangements of timetabling, organising classes, syllabuses and examinations and the designation of schools. At the higher level there is also a reference to the situation of education within wider political and social issues. For Williams the debate within education prefers the lowest level around organisational and institutional issues: whereas the reformers want to push the debate up to vision and purpose. The curriculum culture defaults to tradition and assumed knowledge claims to underpin the organisation of the curriculum; whereas the reformers want to challenge the assumed order and values of the traditional curriculum to broaden learning and increase its critical engagement with the contemporary world. These debates about the vision and purpose of the education sit within wider social and political arguments about the market and democracy.

This widening context is recognised by three sets of reformers: Reiss and White seek to situate the aims of education within a wider role of home and family. Hodgson and Spours seek to put education reform within a wider context of political and economic reform and Fielding and Moss see education reform as part of a much wider emancipatory programme. The current settlement of education has the market dominant: the reformers, on the other hand, press for education to reflect and encourage democratic values. This layering and contextualising of educational debate and understanding will be reflected in my research.

Finally Williams gives hope of ways of challenging the impediments to significant change. He indicates that only through historical and cultural analysis is it possible to fashion the intellectual tools to understand the choices that lie behind the curriculum. However Williams' account does not extend to a full analysis. He describes the tensions facing English education. He gives a description of the "what" but not the "why". What is missing is an explanation of the lack of discussion of educational vision and purpose and the substitution of that debate around institutions and examinations. Similarly he does not explain the change

dynamic. He locates the three readings which help an analysis of educational policy and he indicates that with each generation the curriculum is exposed to challenge but he does not go into why continuity is so continually favoured over change. Finally he does not explore the relationship between the market and education.

Rationality itself seems to be problematic and worth further investigation. In 1973 White expected any rational education system to move from aims through to organisation. Williams does not use such words but his analysis seems to counter this by suggesting educational organisation often operates without explicit aims and purposes. White's unanswered appeal to rationality for his reform agenda points to a potential problem with the idea of rationality in educational policy making. Spours and Hodgson also expect policy learning to inform policy making and are frustrated when this does not happen. The suggestion that emerges is that perhaps it is not possible to look for rational explanation for policy decisions. This suggestion is supported by the types of debates that Carr and Hartnett and Fielding and Moss pursue about educational reform. The arguments for democracy in education are not in themselves a rational argument but ones that are based upon an assumed view of society.

A different narrative emerges from this analysis of the four sets of reform. This narrative seeks to capture the longstanding failure of the education reform within a different set of policy understandings and policy practices. The alternative idea to be explored in this research is that there are two spheres of epistemic and policy understanding. The first sphere is occupied by ideas of rationality, knowledge, organisation and relevance. The advocates place their reform proposals within this sphere. The suggestion which is being made here is that ideas of educational purpose, the framing of educational policy and how practice flows from that lie within the second sphere which is the higher order thinking that will be developed over the next chapter.

However in order to be able to analyse such higher order thinking it is necessary to develop a conceptual framework for the examination of policy formulation. Such a conceptual framework seeks out three aspects of education. From the first tension it looks to analyse what is said within policy documents about the vision

and purpose of education. This is to inform the understanding of what policy makers and reformers are indicating is their idea of the point of education and perhaps as Williams implies such statements might be implicit.

Such implications might be derived from how policy is framed within the documents. Indeed such policy framing should follow from an understanding of vision and purpose and hence might yield insight into such purposes. The identification of problems is a central part of such framing and will form part of this second analysis.

The final part of the conceptual framework takes the two themes of change content and change process and seeks out from such analysis what is said about what changes are proposed as well as the implementation strategy that is intended. This conceptual framework will organise the analysis of policy in this research. However it cannot be sufficient on its own. Theoretical assistance will need to be given from further analysis of what might lie in the second sphere and that is the role of the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Searching out the second sphere/doxastic certainties

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to capture some understanding of the shape of the second sphere or higher order of policy thinking. It will derive ideas of the nature, breadth and role of the second sphere by analysing aspects of the work of Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein. This analysis will assist in getting some idea of the scale and scope of the second sphere and to understand some of its distinctiveness from the first sphere. Such ideas will be tentative but will enable questions to be developed which can be applied in the analysis of the evidence within the final phase of the research. They will also offer some validation of the focus of the research upon vision/purpose and policy framing/problem identification.

As this research is organised around the two themes of change content and change process it needs to come to some understanding about the nature of change within the second sphere. However such an understanding needs to build from a more general awareness of the second sphere. Accordingly this chapter will be organised in the following way. First of all it will consider the three thinkers in turn to understand what they say about the second sphere. This will be followed by two sections which consider the three writers together to look at the implications on the two themes. The fourth section will consider the implications of what they say upon how ideas in the second sphere might change. The final section will consider the implications of their writing on how the nature of the second sphere might be worked through an analysis.

Writing on the second sphere is scarce and has a danger to transcend into first sphere thinking. This seems a particular danger for writers from a Marxist or neo-Marxist perspective because of the burden of seeking social explanations in these perspectives and both Gramsci and Bourdieu do use their analyses to offer such explanations. For this reason it is not possible to use either hegemony or habitus in this discussion. The analysis of Bourdieu in this chapter will be restricted to the results of his social anthropological investigation of the Kabylie tribe in Algeria. In his analysis of *doxa* in this work Bourdieu describes two universes and this helps

us to capture the breadth of the second sphere as well as some of its characteristics such as its unanimity and its undisputed nature.

Wittgenstein offers the most on the second sphere. The analysis here takes one of the aims of his first work the *Tractatus* to separate the two spheres and link that to his approximate description of the different epistemic realm he describes as certainties in his final notes which were published posthumously as *On Certainty.*

Both Wittgenstein and Bourdieu indicate the ineffability of the second sphere. This might explain why so little has been written about it. It produces a distinct methodological challenge. First of all if the second sphere deals with what cannot be said how can the three writers legitimately write about it? Secondly the same question will apply to this research, especially when it tries to capture what cannot be said. The question relating to Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein will be dealt with in this chapter. As already indicated answering the second question is one of the methodological challenges of this research and will be addressed in the final chapter.

3.2 Capturing the analysis of second sphere thinking: Gramsci

In the *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci was using philosophical, cultural and historical analysis to help him understand the reasons for the failure of social revolution in Italy and across Western Europe in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. The analysis that appeared in the *Notebooks* sought to balance the power of social and economic relations with the power of ideas. His efforts were unusual within the Marxist tradition because at that time Marxism was heavily influenced by a materialist determinism. Gramsci sought to understand both the power of ideas and the reasons why certain political beliefs and institutions could withstand revolutionary social changes sometimes in spite of the economic and material conditions.

In his discussion of the role of intellectuals in modern society he introduced the idea of hegemony as a peaceful maintenance of power in society and indicated it was supported by "spontaneous" consent through the intellectual power of the ruling ideas supported by intellectuals (Gramsci, 1971, p.12). The attempt to gain insights into the second sphere is interested in the spontaneity of what Gramsci

describes but not the consent. The former implies it is automatic and binding, the latter implies some form of volition.

Hegemony is not a useful term in describing second sphere thinking. The term is used to explain how ruling ideas work and in Gramsci it appears as a conscious act of the ruling class in which they manipulate the leading ideas- the hegemony- in order to maintain their power. Hegemony is almost the idea of second sphere thinking but when the term is offered as an explanation of the operation of political and social power it strays too far into first sphere thinking. It is in a few comments that he made about the differing nature of phenomena examined in politics and history that Gramsci approached the second sphere.

As a member of the Communist Party Gramsci was used to operating within a framework of political debate which would describe the nature and implication of objective forces derived from an analysis of the development of social classes within a society. However he was aware that often such descriptions could veer towards economic determinism whereby events occurred automatically in line with economic factors and such thinking involved the corresponding downplaying of the role of human ideas and decision making in historical processes. He was also aware of the opposite dogma of idealism where ideas were given too great a role in political change and appeared as historical agents in themselves.

Gramsci was determined that historical and political analysis should be formed through a balanced approach between the economic base and the ideas that were generated by that base. To do this he introduced the concepts of conjunctural phenomena and organic phenomena. Accounts that had an imbalanced interpretation of such phenomena would be distorted:

> in the first case there is an excess of economism, or doctrinaire pedantry; in the second, an excess of ideologism. In the first case there is an overestimation of mechanical causes and in the second case an exaggeration of the voluntarist and individual element (Gramsci, 1971, p.178).

Gramsci believed that the distinction between the two types of phenomena should be applied to every historical and contemporary political analysis. Like many of his remarks they are skeletal and sketchy but they do give

insight into what happens when organic phenomena change. Gramsci
(1971, p.177) indicated that conjunctural phenomena depend on organic
phenomena but:

> they do not give rise to any very far reaching historical significance;
> they give rise to political criticism of a minor day to day character
> which has its subject top political leaders and personalities with
> direct governmental responsibilities.

Gramsci's idea of organic phenomena appeared as potential for understanding
the second sphere not only because they were distinguished from the everyday
but also because they seemed to be the holding phenomena through which
everything else made sense. Gramsci addressed the particular issue of how
organic phenomena might change. For Gramsci a profound and long crisis might
trigger such a change and then perhaps even only after decades would the
contradictions within organic phenomena surface. Gramsci posed the challenge
arising as a battle between different ideas of organic phenomena fought out as a
political struggle on the terrain of the conjunctural. The opponents to the current
arrangements were seeking to demonstrate a new set of solutions:

> (The demonstration in the last analysis only succeeds and is "true"
> if it becomes a new reality, if the forces of the opposition triumph;
> in the immediate, it is developed in a series of ideological, religious,
> philosophical, political and juridical polemics, whose concreteness
> can be estimated by the extent to which they are convincing and
> shift the previously existing disposition of social forces) (Gramsci,
> 1971, p.178).

Gramsci did not expand upon organic phenomena. His brief comments offered
three insights into organic phenomena relating to breadth, ability to change and
the means of change. For Gramsci organic phenomena covered the widest range
of intellectual activity: law, philosophy, politics and religion. Their success in
becoming a new reality represented the triumph of new, interlocking and
mutually supporting ideas. However the final insight he makes is that it is the
polemics of the challengers that form the ideas of the new reality. This enables
the basis of a test for policy framing whereby we can see if policy polemics
developed immediately pre-1988 are maintained as the new reality within policy
making.

3.3 Identifying doxa in social anthropology: Bourdieu

Bourdieu did not write much on *doxa* and in later work he related doxa to the immediate adherence between *habitus* and the intellectual field (Bourdieu 1992, p 68)*.* However in a few pages in *Outline of a Theory of Practice* he identified aspects of the second sphere which will be important in the analysis within this research. From his social analysis of the Kabylie tribe Bourdieu deduced a mechanism for the reconciliation of subjective demand and objective necessity. In doing this he suggested that every established order naturalises its own arbitrariness through a set of beliefs which identify both the group's sense of limits as well as its sense of reality. Such beliefs frame the systems of classification as well as reinforce societal structures and institutions:

> …..on the extreme case that is to say where there is a quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organization (as in ancient societies) the natural world and the social world appears as self-evident. This experience we shall call *doxa* so as to distinguish it from an orthodox and heterodox belief. Schemes of thought and perception can produce the objectivity that they produce only by producing misrecognition of the limits of cognition that they make possible, thereby founding immediate adherence, in the doxic mode, to the world of tradition experienced as a "natural world" and taken for granted (Bourdieu, 1977, p.164 italics in original).

Here Bourdieu preferred the word 'doxa' to 'orthodoxy' because one was taken for granted and the other was disputed. The doxa was self-evident and held up by tradition. It demonstrated immediate adherence. Bourdieu made several statements about the nature and breadth of doxa. He also noted what conditions might cause change.

In terms of breadth such doxa or doxic experiences are all embracing and support taxonomies or hierarchies which extend to all gender, age, power and class relations. Knowledge is a key part of such relationships:

> the theory of knowledge is a dimension of political theory because the specifically symbolic power to impose principles of the construction of reality-on particular social reality-is a major dimension of political power (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 165).

Doxa is also unspoken. Doxa appears as a set of consensual beliefs that does not require justification:

> because the subjective necessity and self-evidence of common
> sense world are validated by the objective consensus on the sense
> of the world, what is essential *goes without saying because it comes*
> *without saying*: the tradition is silent, not least about itself being a
> tradition: customary law is content to enumerate specific
> applications of principles which remain implicit and unformulated,
> because unquestioned (Bourdieu, 1977, p.167 italics in original).

Bourdieu referred to doxa as a state of innocence. It is legitimacy which is
unrecognised:

> the adherence expressed in the doxic relation to the social world is
> the absolute form of recognition of legitimacy through the
> misrecognition of arbitrariness, since it is unaware of the very
> question of legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 168).

Misrecognition is a term which seems to signal a judgement that stands outside
the doxa itself. At best it could be an element of the unspoken nature of doxa that
points to it being not so much unspoken as misspoken. At worst it points to a
judgement of what people should be thinking if their interests were to be met.

Bourdieu identified two universes. The first was the universe of the
undiscussed/undisputed in which doxa existed and the second was the universe of
discourse which was constituted as a field of opinion in which orthodoxy and
heterodoxy operate. For Bourdieu orthodoxy represented the attempt to
reinstate doxa once it has been opened to challenge. There is a need to test the
relationship between doxic beliefs and heterodoxy because as Ringer, an
interpreter of Bourdieu, indicated there was a complex set of relationships
between doxa, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, 'Orthodoxies and heterodoxies alike
are grounded in a cultural preconscious of tacit assumptions or "doxa" that are
perpetuated by inherited practices and social relations' (Ringer, 2004, p.7).

For Bourdieu only crisis could disturb the doxa and lead away from it to the
universe of discourse. 'Crisis is a necessary condition for questioning of doxa but it
is not of itself a sufficient condition for the production of critical discourse'
(Bourdieu, 1977, p. 169). Bourdieu describes class societies as a struggle between
dominant and dominated classes:

> the dominated classes have an interest in pushing back the limits of *doxa*
> and exposing the arbitrariness of the taken for granted: the dominant
> classes have an interest in defending the integrity of doxa or short of this,

of establishing in its place the necessarily imperfect substitute orthodox (Bourdieu, 1977 p. 169 italics in original).

Bourdieu's deployment of doxa in his description of class societies came very close to Gramsci's analysis of hegemony and exemplified that his idea about doxa did change when he applied it to more contemporary societies. The use of doxa as an explanatory idea moves the concept into the first sphere and changes its nature.

3.4 Picturing Wittgenstein's second sphere

Kant offered us a warning about a rush to speculative philosophy:

> it is, indeed, a common fate of human reason first of all to finish its speculative edifice as soon as possible, and only afterwards to inquire whether the foundations be well laid. Then all sorts of reasons are made in order to assure of its solidity or preferably to reject altogether so late and dangerous an inquiry (Kant, 2007, B9 A5).

While Kant saw the problem of such philosophy as the lack of reason to act as its foundation, Wittgenstein wondered whether the speculative edifice had conceptual planning permission in the first place. He saw the rendering of most philosophy in language as an illegitimate process causing confusion and misunderstanding.

In his introduction to the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein (2014, p.3) said that 'the whole sense of the book might be summed up in the following words: what can be said at all can be said clearly and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence.' However the second sphere was not a conceptual 'no go area' it was just that it could not be captured in language. Wittgenstein wanted to delineate two spheres: what can be talked about and what can only be made manifest or demonstrated. Towards the end of the book he related the second sphere to a discussion of questions and answers:

> when the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the question be put into words.
>
> The *riddle* does not exist
>
> If a question can be framed at all, it is also *possible* to answer it (Wittgenstein,2014, p. 88; italics in original).

Wittgenstein illustrated that the two spheres have different relationships with language and that attempts to interrogate the second sphere through language were misplaced. Accordingly Wittgenstein's criticism of the speculative edifices that Kant referred to lay not in their lack of a rational basis, but because they operated in a sphere which went beyond the question of rationality. Any attempts to capture them within language led to confusion and mistake.

In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein identified ethics and aesthetics, the nature of logical form and most of philosophy as existing in the second sphere but he also recognised that saying that the most interesting things cannot be said leaves us feeling dissatisfied with his answer:

> the correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said i.e. propositions of natural science-i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy-and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give meaning to certain signs in his propositions. Although it would be not satisfying to the other person-he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy-this method would be the only strictly correct one (Wittgenstein, 2014, p. 89).

Wittgenstein returned to philosophy in 1929 and tried to populate the area of what can be said through the idea of language games and a view of philosophy as a therapeutical practice which sought to remove the temptation to say something 'metaphysical'. In other words the later Wittgenstein sought to locate the limits of language, knowledge and meaning in the first sphere and warn against the confusion and misunderstanding caused by trying to deploy language in the second sphere.

In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein appeared to address the issue of the second sphere through a pictorial process of image and metaphor. He was never precise or systematic about the certainties. This lack of precision or system yields an impression of how these certainties operate, how they are formed and relate to each other and how they might change. These insights will help to build a picture of the doxastic certainties within the second sphere.

Wittgenstein was motivated in *On Certainty* by a desire to accept Moore's statements of obvious truths. Such statements referred to things like 'I have two

hands'. Moore claimed such statements were knowledge, a claim that Wittgenstein rejected in part because of their effortlessness. For Wittgenstein knowledge had to do some work to be treated as knowledge. 'That he knows takes some shewing' (Wittgenstein, 1972, p. 4). In other words there has to be proper grounds to make a knowledge claim. The problem with Moore's statements was that they were statements of the obvious. As a result of his reflection upon Moore Wittgenstein wanted to create separate epistemic categories for such statements and they were given a range of names within his notes: axioms, judgements, beliefs and assumptions. The certainties operate in a different epistemic sphere to knowledge but the relationship between them is central to understanding how our knowing can work.

However Wittgenstein implied this relationship in different ways. He used several images to describe their potential role. He described the certainties as fixed points, an axis around which the rest of knowing was able to move. A similar image was used to describe them as hinges in a door. They were sometimes referred to in a foundational way as the grounding of knowing. But then he also literally turned this image on its head: 'I have arrived at the rock bottom of my convictions. And one might almost say that these foundation walls are carried by the whole house' (Wittgenstein, 1972, p.33).

Wittgenstein was presenting a relationship in a way that was not clear but as a totality yielded the impression of two sets of epistemic spheres: one which dealt with knowledge based on reason, rules and language games and the other made up of a system of beliefs. They were linked together: our beliefs enable us to practice as knowing beings and in some very unclear way our knowing feeds our beliefs.

What was also clear was that the certainties worked as a collective for Wittgenstein. 'What I hold fast to is not *one* proposition but a nest of propositions' (Wittgenstein,1972, p.30 italics in original). This system is important in two ways. It enables both the practice of knowing and insight into their origin. The certainties are not learned directly. Their origins are not clear. They might appear as tradition or the outcome of regular experience and learning but it is their totality which brings them to us. Wittgenstein put great emphasis on the

impact of the totality of the certainties as a means of our becoming aware of them:

> We do not learn the practice of making empirical judgement by learning rules: we are taught *judgements* and their connexion with other judgements. A *totality* of judgements is made plausible to us.
>
> When we first begin to *believe* anything, what we believe is not a single proposition; it is a whole system of propositions. (Light dawns gradually over the whole.)
>
> It is not single axioms that strike me as obvious, it is a system in which consequences and premises give one another *mutual* support   (Wittgenstein, 1972, p.21 italics in original).

Wittgenstein used different ways of describing this system. Sometimes it was described as Weltbild (world picture). Other descriptions included 'a totality of judgements', 'a bedrock' in which the other epistemic system was the river and even 'a mythology'. The collective nature of their adoption and the imprecise and several ways we come upon them are important features of them; they are not legitimated by anything. 'If the truth is what is grounded, the ground is not *true* nor yet false' (Wittgenstein,1972, p.28 italics in original).

This is a very important insight into the nature of the certainties; they exist outside of the first sphere of knowledge and language. They are not susceptible to proof and legitimation. Wittgenstein avoided the problem of infinite regress of the justification of knowledge because he housed the lynchpin of the knowing sphere in an epistemic area that operated under different rules.

It will be noted that these rules mean that such certainties although they appeared like propositions (and sometimes he referred to them as propositions) were not propositions in the sense he used the word in the *Tractatus* (i.e. capable of being either true or false). Instead they were certainties and hence their opposite was not falsehood but something different. At one point Wittgenstein (1972, p.23) described the holder of the counter view of a certainty as demented. The opposite of a certainty went beyond our sense making and appeared mad.

Wittgenstein also introduced a time element into the certainties by saying not yet false. Elsewhere in his notes he considered the lack of fixture in the individual certainties. They were like pieces of the bedrock which could detach into the

river. They were judgements which could become what was judged. This flexible nature of the certainties gives the system its life. They are not fixed for all time and can change.

There are other puzzles. Wittgenstein (1972, p.61) mocked the intensity of two philosophers when disturbed by a third person who might be alarmed that two grown-ups were discussing whether a tree existed and indicated that he would tell the person, 'this fellow isn't insane. We are only doing philosophy'. Elsewhere he commented upon how strange it would be to raise some of the certainties within conversation. These certainties linger in the shadows and they seem odd when articulated. They are almost ineffable.

Wittgenstein was also mysterious about the specifics of the certainties. He did not list them or exemplify them. He used Moore's examples and they appear trite. It was almost like he didn't have to illustrate the certainties because they went without saying. The examples he gave related to assumptions of continuity of identity (including statements like 'I have two hands'), time and space ('the earth has existed for a long time').

In *On Certainty* there is the outline of a collection of certainties which support our way of knowing, made up of assumptions which are not in themselves clear beyond the need to indicate identity, time and place as a context for knowing. Such a context is vital for us to act as knowing beings. It is made up of a set of certain propositions which go beyond justification because they are neither true nor false but their opposites go beyond what we deem sensible. Individual statements can be subjected to challenge and become normal empirical propositions. The collection of certainties itself is not stuck in stone but changes within our overall understanding. The certainties support a total system of knowing: however it is not clear how this occurs.

What Wittgenstein had done was to describe the form of a system of certainties without describing its content. By doing this he had overcome the limitations of what was possible to say. Instead of specifying the certainties, he outlined some of their characteristics but deployed language to paint elements of the system and

its components in an approximate and unclear way. The unsystematic nature of his means of expression is central to understanding *On Certainty.*

3.5 How do we account for change in the second sphere?

There are different ideas between the thinkers considered in this chapter and their idea of change within the second sphere. Wittgenstein indicated that individual certainties can change almost on a random basis whereas Gramsci and Bourdieu talked in terms of systemic crisis. It is important to tease out how change might occur because this will be useful when we look at the possibilities of change later on.

The term 'crisis' has been used already in reference to doxa and it has been linked to the possibility of change. However the term needs to be approached with some care as in the Marxist tradition it has two uses: epistemic and empirical. In the first use it describes a solution to changing knowledge within a closed system and in the second use it describes events.

One reading of Marxist thinking is that there is a complete correlation between the ruling ideas of a society and the material conditions that generate class domination. Karl Marx sought to expose the internal wiring of capitalist societies. 'The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas' (Marx and Engels, 1974, p.64).

If this is a total explanation about ideas then it leaves no logical space for Marx's own alternative ideas and if it is not a total explanation then it loses its power because all he is saying is that a ruling elite has its own ideas. It is this attempt by Marxism to capture the ruling ideas as holding sway over everyone that raises the problem of ideas changing. How can change be even imagined if the ruling ideas are totally dominant? In his analysis Marx accounts for the possibility of change from a dynamic view of both history and politics. The basis of this is that ideas can change because of material changes in society. Such changes result in a conflict of different material forces. A crisis of ideas can emerge from the changing material disposition of economic forces which offers a way out of the dilemma of how do things change.

Many of the attempts at capturing second order political framing rely upon a Marxist or Marxist influenced point of view. Gramsci and Bourdieu share such a view point. This has an impact on how they view such higher order thinking and its nature. They place second order thinking within the dynamic of economic crisis leading to social and epistemic crisis. Such thinking has an echo within Habermas' idea of a legitimation crisis. Habermas (1988) is also influenced by Marxist thinking.

There is a secondary problem in all writing informed by a Marxist perspective. It seeks to explain away false ideas whereby the classes acquiesce in supporting social groups which the mechanics of class struggle indicates they should oppose. In Gramsci this leads to the examination of the idea of hegemony and in Bourdieu the idea of misrecognition. We have seen that Bourdieu indicates there is a struggle over the line of doxa. This is an example of the difficulty in keeping analysis of doxa within the second sphere. Bourdieu and Gramsci treat their notions of idea supremacy in part as if it is being manipulated by the ruling class. Such manipulation is not possible for doxastic certainties because they apply to everyone. This confusion is made explicit when we think of doxa as orthodoxy.

If doxa is system wide then it would seem likely that only through a system wide crisis would the possibility of change come forward and this is certainly the view of Gramsci and Bourdieu. However Wittgenstein comes at this from a different perspective and conceptual background. Wittgenstein sees second sphere ideas both as a totality and the means through which we operate as knowing beings. For him the system, qua system, is constant. However the nature of both the system and the individual certainties that make it up are susceptible to change as a result of events. Wittgenstein offers the opportunity of more piecemeal approach to change within second order thinking. He sees events as the means by which ideas change and through such change certainties will alter.

3.6 Implications for the analysis of the second sphere

The assumption, even in an approximate way is to consider Gramsci's organic phenomena, Bourdieu's doxa and Wittgenstein's system of certainties as referring to the same idea which I have called the second sphere and for ease will refer to

as doxastic certainties. This includes higher order policy framing. From the analysis in this chapter there are five ideas to emerge which will be of use in the research that is to follow. The first idea is the difference between the two spheres and the requirement for a differing approach. The breadth of what is included in the second sphere forms the second idea. The third idea considers the relationship between doxa and heterodoxy. The fourth idea looks at methodological issues that flow from this and how the analysis should be structured as a result. The final idea looks at the concept of change. This idea will need to be considered again in light of the examination of the documents.

The first implication from this analysis is the nebulous nature of the second sphere and the ever present temptation to try to insert first sphere practices into a consideration of it. The thinkers considered here have tried to indicate that the second sphere represents a different epistemic condition than knowing and reasoning. However they have not always been consistent in this approach; for example, Gramsci and Bourdieu have sought to offer social explanations for power relationships in categories similar to second sphere understandings but because they involve rational explanation are not second sphere. Accordingly there is a continuing need to be on guard for such categorical mistakes.

From all three there is clarity over the breadth of matters involved in the second sphere. Gramsci is the most explicit: he gives a list of what is covered in the organic phenomena he describes. These cover the range of juridical, political, social and economic matters as well as the framing of philosophy. Bourdieu refers to social typologies and social hierarchies as well as political power and the theory of knowledge. Wittgenstein also refers to a single totality of certainties.

From this it seems appropriate to suggest that in educational vision and purpose as well as its policy framing /problem identification it should be possible to determine at least some of the doxastic certainties. This gives support to the conceptual framework developed in the last chapter as a useful analytical tool to be applied in this research. The third aspect of the framework on implementation is not within the second sphere but it helps to understand what follows from the framing to gain a better understanding of the doxastic certainties.

The relationship between doxa and heterodoxy is also important to understand. Ringer (2004) is quite clear that heterodoxy shares many of the pre-suppositions of doxa. Accordingly heterodoxy itself is a source for understanding what doxastic certainties are. In the research it will be possible to consider the different perspectives on vision/purpose and policy framing/problem identification to tease out the ways doxa and heterodoxy are related.

The fourth issue that arises from this chapter is methodological. The doxa is described as unstated. The analysis that will follow will try to identify what is not said about educational vision and purpose. Early Wittgenstein says that it is illegitimate to put second sphere thinking into language. In his last work Wittgenstein appears to soften this stance to indicate it might be just otiose and unnecessary to put such thinking into words. However if the challenge is not logical it remains as a methodological one. There is a need to find a way of discovering what is not discussed or at best is only done partially.

If Gramsci is correct about polemics becoming the new reality we can use examples of pre 1988 polemics as a test for this. Sheila Lawlor complained that:

> as long as LEAs continue to control the life of individual schools through extensive bureaucracy and support services, the aims of reforms will be frustrated. Higher standards for children, greater responsibility for schools and more choice for parents, will remain illusory (Lawlor, 1988, p.5).

What can be tested in the documents to follow is whether Lawlor's polemic about the aims of reform being increasing standards, greater autonomy for schools and more parental choice is mirrored in the policy framing that is identified there.

In the analysis of strategic implementation ideas about how new polices will be implemented, what is the basis of their appeal for implementation and how success will be measured will be analysed. From Wittgenstein's analysis appeal to rational approaches to doxic changes is not appropriate. Such certainties are beyond rationality and change results from a different almost random set of circumstances.

How change occurs in the second sphere remains unresolved and as change is central to this research there will be a need to return to this issue after the

investigation. None of the ideas developed here are concrete and it is appropriate to approach the analysis with questions framed from this analysis to reflect the possibilities they point towards. The tentative nature of the enquiry reflects the nature of the discussion of Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein which has given an outline of the doxastic certainties and the questions drawn from them to help to make more sense of the 14-19 education reform policy journey and what happened to the Tomlinson report.

3.7 Conclusion

The second sphere seems to be about the nature of our knowledge framing and a system of beliefs across epistemology, the remainder of philosophy including ethics and aesthetics, religion, morality, the meaning of life and the framing of social, political, economic and juridical knowledge, including how policy is framed. This research seeks to explore the idea that the purpose and vision of education is within this sphere.

It is necessary to address the issue of legitimacy about how Gramsci, Bourdieu and Wittgenstein could put their ideas of the second sphere into words. This issue rests upon two inter-related problems. The first is about gaining the perspective to see the second sphere. The second problem is the ability of language to express doxastic certainties. Simply put the first problem is how a person immersed in the world of thinking and epistemic practice can actually emerge from that world to take notice of the two spheres. The interesting thing about Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* is that he was not concerned about the illogicality of perspective. In fact he demonstrated the opposite: he thought we could be aware of second sphere thinking: what was illegitimate was the attempt to communicate that awareness in language. We can see from his Notebooks 1914-16 (Wittgenstein, 1998) that the ideas behind the *Tractatus* had a long germination. For Wittgenstein it was obvious that you could reflect upon religion, morality and thoughts about philosophy and knowledge and come to an understanding about them. The difficulty was the logical one of being able to express such reflection meaningfully in language.

That said I think it is not so easy to differentiate between perspective and language. There remains a logical problem in identifying the second sphere if we are immersed within it. That logical problem emerges in the description given in this chapter. It is necessary that Gramsci's short account of organic phenomena is based within a historical reflection of education, culture, politics and philosophy. By being in prison Gramsci was physically removed from the society he was seeking to analyse. However his consideration of second sphere thinking was only fragmentary and it often returned to first sphere analysis. Similarly when Bourdieu was offering insights based on his analysis of the Kabylie tribe in North Africa, he was able to stand back from that society and to see its beliefs in the round. He got into conceptual danger when he tried to apply the same insights into explaining how class societies operate.

It was the force of intellect and persistence that enabled Wittgenstein to get to a position where he could reflect upon second sphere thinking in an extended and relaxed way. However it is also important to note that even in *On Certainty* he did not attempt to write clearly a coherent explanation of the second sphere. He appeared to be trying to draw a picture with words, through a display of different images that gives us an impression of what is happening. He described a system in the most unsystematic way. In doing this he transcends his own Tractarian embargo on what cannot be said.

In the two chapters in this phase of the research the importance of knowledge, an aims based curriculum, democratic values and a unified 14-19 education curriculum have been identified as the intellectual context for reform within the 14-19 age range. Williams' three tensions over change, purpose and democracy have provided perspectives and the conceptual framework to bring to the analysis that can be made about educational policy.

In this chapter there has been an examination of the nature and extent of second sphere thinking. This investigation has led to some theoretical questions that might be applied to policy making in practice. The next phase surveys the purpose, policy framing and strategic implementation of 14-19 reform in the period 2001-2005. It will also do this in the next chapter for the documents that led to Tomlinson. In Chapter 5 and 6 it will analyse change content and the change

programme offered in the Tomlinson report. In Chapter 7 it will apply the conceptual framework to the Government's response to Tomlinson. Such surveys will provide the examples of policy making to enable the analysis to apply the theoretical questions.

Phase 2   Investigating the 14-19 Education Reform policy journey 2001-2005

Chapter 4   Continuities and divergences in 14-19 reform 2001-2003

4.1 Introduction

This chapter begins the analysis of the 2001-2005 policy journey. It is concerned with three government documents published between 2001 and 2003 that dealt with 14-19 reform. There are two aims within this chapter. The first aim is to provide the context for the establishment of the Working Group on 14-19 reform which authored the Tomlinson report. The second aim is to identify continuities and divergences on education purpose, policy framing, problem identification, change proposals and implementation. In doing this it will set the basis of how the two themes of change content and change process are understood.

The central analysis of this chapter is formed around the policy journey 2001-2003. Labour had been in office from 1997 to 2001 when it secured a successive general election victory. Estelle Morris became Secretary of State for Education and Skills. A White Paper was published, **Schools** *achieving success* (DFES 2001), which marked out the progress of the first Labour government (1997-2001) and set out the educational journey for the second (2001-2005). The policy intent of this document was to replicate the success of the primary school strategy within the secondary sector. In doing so it also included 14-19 reform as part of this process. The specifics of such reform were identified in the Green Paper, 14-19: *extending opportunities, raising standards* (DFES 2002), which followed early in 2002. The final document to be reviewed, *14-19 Opportunity and Excellence* (DFES 2003a) was published in the following year after some delay and was the Government's response to the consultation process it had commissioned.

The emphasis on 14-19 raises the question of why choose 14-19 as the phase of reform, when the White Paper was called **Schools** *achieving success*. A simpler and more focused approach would have been to concentrate upon key stage 4 reforms. Such a choice would have kept reforms within the statutory sector and accordingly would have been easier to achieve. There was no discussion in the White Paper about the reasons for the choice. There were implicit references. The document referred to the need for every young person to have an education

which equipped them for work and prepared them to 'succeed in the wider economy and in society' (DFES, 2001, p.5). Accordingly the chapter on 14-19 reform began: 'a well-balanced 14–19 phase of learning is crucial if we are to achieve our objective of well-motivated young people playing their full part in society and in the economy' (DFES, 2001, p.30). But there was no examination of the assumptions that lay behind the choice of 14-19 as the vehicle for reform.

The 14-19 reform reviewed in this chapter can be divided into the two themes of the research. In these documents the government was introducing both a set of change proposals but also a change dynamic to ensure the proposals would be implemented. This chapter will explore both sets of ideas.

In order to understand the policy ambitions and constraints of the 14-19 policy journey it is necessary to offer the policy context. The next section will outline the policy ideas and concerns that had existed in the previous decade. Such concerns are set within the new policy direction introduced by the 1988 Education Act and this analysis helps to begin the research's response to how large was the impact of that Act on education purpose and policy framing.

The main concern of this chapter is the examination of the three documents against the conceptual framework. The third section will examine what they say about educational vision and purpose. The White Paper is explicit about purpose whereas the other documents are focused more on the change process and offer a vision of change for the new 14-19 system.

The fourth section seeks to extract from the three documents statements about both policy framing and problem identification. The White Paper lists five aspects of the change it seeks within secondary education. The first two relate to the process of change and the remaining three are specifically about the content of change they seek. These five aspects give a framework for reviewing the policy framing across the three documents both in terms of change process and elements of change proposals that are important

The fifth section examines the document for what they indicate in terms of policy proposals and implementation strategy. The documents themselves reflect a

changing context in which 14-19 policy is being formed and this section seeks to capture the changing ambition for 14-19 reform that occurs in 2002 and 2003.

The 2002 Green Paper was followed by the biggest consultation ever conducted by the DFES (Chitty, 2009, p.187) which included regional road shows. Employers and young people were especially targeted for what they thought about the proposals. In the summer of 2002 however a major scandal developed involving concerns about the marking of the new A levels introduced in 2000. The Secretary of State, Estelle Morris, resigned and Bill Stubbs, the Chair of the QCA, was also forced to resign. Mike Tomlinson was then asked to conduct a review of what had gone wrong. These events contributed to a different atmosphere within 14-19 policy making and delayed the publication of the response to the consultation. The new ministerial team under Charles Clarke included David Miliband, one of the authors of the British Baccalaureate (Finegold, et al 1990). This work advocated significant reform to A levels in imitation of the French Baccalaureate.

In January 2003 the Government published its response to the consultation through a new document *14-19 Opportunity and Excellence*. Charles Clarke made clear in his introduction that many people in the consultation had referred to the historic weakness in English education-'a weak offer for those who want a vocational orientation to their studies, and an insufficiently broad and demanding offer on the A Level track' (DFES, 2003a, p. 3). This twin tracked failure was a major theme of the document.

Such policy re-framing in 2003 led to the establishment of the Working Group on 14-19 Reform, chaired by Mike Tomlinson. The analysis in the fifth section will indicate there was ambiguity and contradiction in the tasks that the Working Group were set to do.

The concluding section of this chapter will identify the continuities and divergences across purpose and policy framing both in terms of change content and change processes. In doing so it begins the collection of information that will be used in Chapter 8 to identify the doxastic certainties that operated in this period. The conclusion will also inform an understanding of the challenges that

faced Tomlinson in terms of expectations as well as constraints within policy framing.

4.2 The background to 14-19 reform in 2001

The Labour Government from 1997 had been concerned with a wide range of policy reform in education. Its main focus in schools was the primary strategy and as a result when it came to its second term in 2001 it was a natural development to consider secondary education. However there had been reforms which had affected secondary education in the first term of office: the introduction of a school reform programme through *Excellence in Cities*, A level reform and the Learning and Skills Act 2000 which had established the Learning and Skills Council as the body responsible for all post 16 education outside of Higher Education. There was also the announcement of the 50% target for HE participation which had significant implications for 14-19 education.

A level reform itself was part of an on-going policy discussion within the Labour party. This discussion went back to the Higginson Report (1988) which was summarily rejected by Mrs Thatcher on the day of its publication (Gow 1988). However it was later supported by Labour and put to the country in its 1992 election manifesto. This report advocated the replacement of A levels by a broader set of examinations. Hodgson and Spours (1999) charted the evolution of Labour Party policy in the 1990s which substituted the elimination of A levels with plans to broaden them. In Government the Labour Party introduced Curriculum 2000. As a result of this AS levels were established: the first students would complete the reformed A levels in the summer of 2002. As part of this reform Advanced GNVQs became Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education or a Vocational A level.

It is impossible to remove any period from the influences of earlier policy making. The decade of the 1990s was heavily influenced by the Thatcher-Baker reforms of the 1980s. I have argued elsewhere that the 1988 Education Reform Act 'introduced a politically strong paradigm but an educationally weak framing of policy' (Lally, 2013, p.2). Kenneth Baker's intent to link a traditional curriculum to

a marketised operation of education secured a politically robust educational settlement but it left many of the educational problems unresolved.

These problems arose from the requirement of a narrow traditional curriculum to be imposed upon all young people as a result of the national curriculum. This problem was particularly acute at key stage 4 (Chitty, 2009, p.177). As we have seen from Holt the tradition within comprehensive schools was to provide off site vocational programmes for less able 14 and 15 year olds. When introduced, the national curriculum required them to undertake the full range of academic courses. As a result the 'National Curriculum for 14-16-year-olds in England and Wales has been unstable since its scheduled introduction in 1992/93 and has remained controversial to the present' (Richardson, 2007, p.150). As Richardson pointed out, Dearing was brought into resolve this problem while key stage 4 was still being introduced.

The range of the national curriculum was the outcome of a successful battle waged by Baker to secure the full breadth of the traditional curriculum within the statutory curriculum. Thatcher favoured the statutory aspects to be more limited around core skills. However the struggle over the national curriculum resurfaced within the New Labour Government. In their first term of office they focused on literacy and numeracy in primary schools and emphasised the performance of schools in these subjects at key stage 2. The documents reviewed here will examine whether New Labour was seeking to transfer this focus into the secondary phase.

There were other concerns arising from the curriculum settlement introduced from 1988. These pointed to what was excluded from the national curriculum. Many of these concerns were shared by the reformers identified in Chapter 2. Young had concerns about the narrowing of emphasis on qualifications rather than on the wider knowledge aspects of learning. Both Reiss/White and Fielding/Moss were concerned about the lack of development of creativity and citizenship within the curriculum. Hodgson and Spours picked up on the failure of the post 1988 arrangements to deal effectively with the vocational curriculum and develop a unified approach which embraced all types of learning and learners.

What was interesting was that the Government itself appeared to recognise some of these failings and there were several attempts made within the first Labour Government to address them. First of all it was felt that young people were not getting sufficient preparation for their role as citizens within society. As a result David Blunkett established the *Advisory Group on the Teaching of Citizenship and Democracy*. Its report in September 1998, usually known as the Crick report, recommended that citizenship became a statutory part of the curriculum. This was to be implemented from September 2002.

However there were also concerns that creativity and the participation in creative and cultural activity had also been reduced by the new educational settlement. In February 1988 the Government established *The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education*, chaired by Ken Robinson. This published its report *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (1999).

The final aspect of this concern about wider learning was that young people were not receiving an education which enabled them to act as independent learners with appropriate thinking and problem solving skills. The three problems of citizenship, creativity and thinking skills coalesced in government thinking in 2001 under the phrase 'education with character'. This was to be an active issue throughout the period under review.

Another educational problem arising from the 1988 Act and one which was a long term feature of English secondary education was the failure of vocational education to be treated as equal with academic education. Kenneth Baker introduced a national curriculum at key stage 4 that was an academic curriculum for all. In his first report Dearing reduced the time burden on key stage 4 students which enabled other options to be pursued but the pressure of league tables maintained a focus on GCSEs. There was also the facility of dis-applying the national curriculum for individual students which enabled some students to focus on key skills and/or more vocational activities. However by its nature disapplication supported the impression that such vocational options were out of the norm and inferior. The lower status of vocational qualification was clearly a concern for the Government as it had already announced vocational A levels. Vocational GCSEs were also to be introduced from September 2002. The intent

behind 14-19 reform was in part to make such reforms more systematic and secure greater confidence and esteem associated with vocational qualifications.

The re-election of the Labour Government in 2001 meant that a renewed look at such issues would be made to occupy the policy making intent of the Government in the next four to five years. It began with the publishing of the White Paper in 2001.

4.3 Educational vision and purpose

The 2001 White Paper carried a clear restatement of what the Government saw as its vision for education (and behind that vision a clear view of what the purpose of education was). This vision was set within a set of overall assumptions about the adult world and in particular the continuing increasing flexibility of the labour market. In her introduction Estelle Morris, the Secretary of State, set out that:

> education has always had a dual purpose, offering personal fulfilment together with the skills and attitudes we need to make a success of our lives. At almost every point in our lives what happens in schools matters to us. As learners or teachers, parents or employers and as citizens, we all have a vested interest in their success.
>
> Now more than ever, education is the key to most of life's opportunities. We've come to realise that for most of us the 'job for life' is a thing of the past and the opportunities afforded by unskilled jobs are dwindling rapidly. That has changed our need to learn. And the speed and the different means of communicating facts and knowledge will change how we learn.
>
> An education that teaches us the joy of learning and gives us the qualifications for employment that builds confidence and self-esteem and gives us the skills and values to meet the demands of a fast changing world: that is the education we are seeking for all of our children (DFES, 2001, p. 3).

The link between education and employment was strong in this introduction. The purpose of education was defined as economic and social (and even the role of social inclusion supported an economic purpose in maximising the skills resource of the nation). Such purposes reflected the imperatives of an increasingly globalised world economy. They were made even more explicit in the first two paragraphs of the main document:

> 1.1 Education remains the Government's top priority. The success of our children at school is crucial to the economic health and social cohesion of the country as well as to their own life chances and personal fulfilment. A generation ago Britain tolerated an education system with a long tail of poor achievement because there was a plentiful supply of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. This is no longer the case. By breaking the cycle of underachievement in education we can extend opportunity across society.

> 1.2 To prosper in the 21st century competitive global economy, Britain must transform the knowledge and skills of its population. Every child, whatever their circumstances, requires an education that equips them for work and prepares them to succeed in the wider economy and in society. We must harness to the full the commitment of teachers, parents, employers, the voluntary sector, and government –national and local –for our educational mission (DFES, 2001, p.5).

The two remaining documents focused more on problems and solutions rather than dwell on vision or overall purpose. The 2002 Green Paper started with a vision for education with 14-19 reform as central to that vision:

> our aim is nothing less than a world-class education service with standards that match the best in the world, and where all our young people develop the confidence, skills and knowledge that they will need as adults. Our proposal for a new 14-19 phase is an important step towards achieving that goal for our country (DFES, 2002, p.3).

The introductory chapter of the document talked about aims and objectives for 14-19 in terms of activities that were to be adopted rather than an overall vision of the purposes of education for 14-19 year olds. The vision for reform was coherence and it was to be developed through new vocational pathways to be set alongside the current academic ones.

The same approach to coherence was adopted in the 2003 Document which identified a greater need for change and is unique within the government documents examined here for voicing criticism of A levels:

> all young people are entitled to expect excellent provision that responds to their needs, enables them to progress in their learning and prepares them for the modern workplace. Yet our system does not currently offer those opportunities effectively to those who wish to follow vocational learning programmes and to low attainers. At the same time, it is often too narrow for A Level students. This is the case for change (DFES, 2003a, p.9).

When considering the educational experience in other countries the document did indicate its own aims for 14-19 education:

> each country shares the aims we seek to address in this paper: to provide a good level of general education, to support efficient entry to higher education and to prepare students for the workplace (DFES, 2003a, p.12).

4.4 Policy framing and problem identification 2001-2003

4.4.1 Policy framing

As already indicated the 2001 White Paper was entitled **Schools** *achieving success*. Accordingly the first part of this analysis seeks out how the document defined such success. However it will become clear that such a definition rested upon several inter-related assumptions. In its introduction there was reference to the priorities of the government when it is was first elected in 1997 being basic skills in primary school: such skills were defined as reading, writing and mathematics.

The 2001 document intended to build upon declared success in the primary stage and extend it to the secondary sector. However the approach needed to be widened, 'the basics are not enough. The talents of each individual child must be developed to the full at secondary level' (DFES, 2001, p.5).

There was a close connection between wider ideas of choice and diversity linked to how success could be built in secondary schools:

> to achieve this, teachers must be properly supported and rewarded; the curriculum must be modernised; and secondary schools must be given the freedom, capability and incentives to achieve success for as many of their pupils as possible. Our best schools achieve excellent results: our task is to spread this excellence nationwide (DFES, 2001, p. 5).

> Ours is a vision of a school system which values opportunity for all, and embraces diversity and autonomy as the means to achieve it. Autonomy so that well led schools take full responsibility for their mission. Diversity so that schools – individually and as a broader family locally and nationally – cater significantly better for the diverse requirements and aspirations of today's young people (DFES, 2001, p.6).

The White Paper was explicit in its constant demonstration of success through the term standards. In the Primary sector it suggested that 'we have a clear picture of a good primary school. It has high expectations of its pupils and delivers high

standards in the basics' (DfES 2001, p.9) and 'all schools must deliver high minimum standards and constantly push up the ceiling on aspiration, ambition and achievement' (DfES, 2001, p.16).

The White Paper was also explicit about the interconnectedness between education reform and the wider reform of public services. The White Paper indicated that those in education were at the vanguard of such reform. In paragraph 1.8 there was a summary of its key priorities:

> In his speech on public service reform on 16th July 2001, the Prime Minister highlighted four key objectives for each service:
>
> 1. clearly identified national priorities underpinned by systems of accountability and the ability to intervene to maintain basic standards;
> 2. devolution to front line professionals freeing them up to innovate and be more responsive to the needs of the individual citizen;
> 3. greater choice for the consumer;
> 4. reform of the public service professions (DFES, 2001, p.6).

This alignment with wider policy imperatives was emphasised in the introduction where the words, autonomy and diversity, were highlighted. These were the only words highlighted within the text in the whole document.

The emphasis on diversity and autonomy could be seen in Chapter 5 which was titled, *Excellence, innovation and diversity.* The burden of this chapter was to encourage higher standards in schools through the increasing opportunity for schools to diversify (specialist colleges, beacon schools, academies and faith schools). The White Paper outlined a vision of more schools following such routes. Evidence was quoted that specialist colleges achieved more than other schools. The diversity that was sought was system wide and was built into assumptions about raising standards:

> the diverse system we want to build will be one where schools differ markedly from each other in the particular contribution they choose to make but where all are equally excellent in giving their students a broad curriculum and the opportunity to achieve high standards (DFES, 2001, p.38).

The intention was also announced for high performing schools to be offered more autonomy. The document was quite clear that accountability and performance monitoring arrangements such as Ofsted and league tables would remain in place but it offered some scope for the best performing schools to be given greater flexibility in their curriculum planning and conditions for staff:

> we believe that there is potential for greater flexibility in allowing successful schools to opt out of elements of the National Curriculum, for example to lead the development of thinking about greater flexibility in Key Stage 4. We will allow schools flexibility over some elements of teachers pay and conditions, for example to provide even greater recruitment and retention incentives, or to allow schools to agree with their staff a more flexible working day or year in return for some reward. But important elements of teachers' pay and conditions will remain common to all teachers: this will not lead to individual contracts (DFES, 2001, p.42).

The 2003 document retained the importance attached to performance targets though there was some recognition of the need to consider some targets around successful collaboration (DFES, 2003a, p.36). There were attempts to loosen central control. Schools might benefit from 'earned autonomy' which will enable greater flexibility with the national curriculum (DFES, 2003a, p.23) and the Secretary of State might give local areas and institutions 'powers to innovate' (DFES, 2003a, p.32) to overcome statutory limitations on their ability to take forward the 14-19 agenda.

Chapter 3 of the 2001 White Paper was entitled 'Achieving high standards for all – supporting teaching and learning' and outlined how it would seek to do this:

> in order to support teaching and learning, we will:
>
> ■ Introduce a strategy for improving standards in the first years of secondary school, developed in partnership with expert teachers, based on ambitious standards and a high quality programme of professional development for teachers.
>
> ■ Publish school results for 14-year-olds to reinforce the strategy; and improve information to parents further by publishing information about the value each school adds to its pupils' results.
>
> ■ Help schools to meet the talents and aspirations of all their pupils by developing an Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth, a new strategy for supporting children with special educational needs, continuing our

> investment in ICT, and raising standards for children from ethnic minorities.
>
> ■ We will support teachers' efforts to address poor behaviour by expanding the number of Learning Support Units, providing training for teachers, extending the use of Parenting Orders and making sure that heads can exclude violent or persistently disruptive pupils. We will make sure that by 2002 all LEAs provide full-time education for all pupils.
>
> ■ We will encourage schools to help to develop rounded individuals, by supporting young people's participation in decisions affecting them, introducing citizenship into the curriculum and extending opportunities to participate in out-of-school activities (DFES, 2001, p. 17)

This is an important list because it captures the particular foci of the DFES policy framing in 2001 and can be used to assist in understanding how such framing is re-emphasised within the other two documents. The first two related primarily to the change process and the remaining three looked to the nature of the changes. The Government was anxious to direct a strategy of change which would secure the aspects of change they described. Performance reporting (and the increased accountability that goes with it) was part of such a strategy of change.

Through the following analysis of problem identification it is possible to gain a better idea of how such policy framing operated. However it will also require an examination of the actual policy proposals to form the understanding of what the framing meant in practice.

4.4.2 Problem identification

There were two main areas of problems identified in the documents. The first related to the problems of differential performance among young people and the low levels of participation particularly after 17 years of age. The second problem identified was the historic policy failure to reform vocational education.

The White Paper identified three differential performance rates at 5 A*-C GCSE: boys and girls; young people from non-manual and manual backgrounds and those from groups of different ethnic minorities. The overall pattern described a rise in performance across all groups but within such increases certain groups maintained a differential gap.

The White Paper also recorded the poor international performance of participation at 17 and linked this to the nature of the final years of schooling:

> in addition, we are well down the OECD international league table for pupils staying on in education beyond the age of 16. 73% of UK 17-year-olds are enrolled in education, compared with an OECD average of 82%, and participation rates of 90% or higher in countries such as France, Germany and Japan;
>
> our rate is scarcely rising. The secondary curriculum, particularly post-14, can seem crowded and to some pupils lacking in interest and relevance. It is arguable that there is too little flexibility in the curriculum to meet and bring out individual aptitudes, abilities and preferences. Even the traditional shape of the school day can seem inappropriate to more flexible and individualised patterns of learning (DFES, 2001, p.14)

The 2002 paper went into some depth about the nature of the problems that 14-19 reform sought to resolve. It made the same reference as the 2001 document to the lower than OECD averages of young people in education between 16 and 18 and the outcome of a recent report which showed lower levels of achievement by young adults (aged 19-21 and 25-28 years) compared to their contemporaries in France and Germany. This report focused on Levels 2 and 3. The Paper indicated these poor comparisons reflected a weak vocational track:

> across the OECD successful completion of post-16 education and training programmes is becoming the norm. What is common to other OECD countries is the esteem in which both vocational and general studies are held and the ability of students to progress to higher education from either of them. The lack of high-quality vocational pathways in the UK explains in part why far too many young people do not reach or move beyond Level 2, or fall out of education and training before they are 19. The case for improving skills, and especially intermediate and technical skills, is irrefutable (DFES, 2002, p.10).

The 2003 document built on the concerns of both documents and outlined more significant problems identified for 14-19 learning:

- despite steady progress over recent years, only 51% of pupils achieve 5 good GCSEs (at A*-C) or equivalent by age 16, and just over 5% achieve no GCSEs at all;

- in a league table of participation rates for 17 year-olds we are equal 25th out of 29 OECD countries, ahead of just Greece, Mexico and Turkey;
- one in four 16-18 year-olds had dropped out of education and training at the end of 2000, significantly above the OECD and European Union averages;
- fewer 25-34 year-olds in the UK hold Level 2 (GCSE A*-C standard) qualifications than in France and Germany; and
- socio-economic background remains a barrier to educational success. While half of those in the higher socio-economic groups attain Level 3 qualifications (A Level standard), only one in three of those from the lower socio-economic groups does so, a gap which widens in higher education.   (DFES, 2003a, pp.9-10).

The 2003 document took a wider analysis than the other documents by pointing to experience in other countries. It identified the common approaches of successful education system in the world:

- a common curriculum for all pupils in the lower secondary phase;
- an expectation that students will continue with a broad range of subjects through the upper secondary phase;
- vocational routes that provide access to higher education as well as employment;
- measures to persuade disadvantaged and disaffected students to participate in learning; and
- grouped awards, like the French Baccalauréat and the German Abitur, to mark the end of the phase (DFES, 2003a, p.12).

A second problem identified in each document was the failure of vocational reform in the past and a declared intention to overcome this in the future. The 2001 White Paper sought to secure reform which had not happened before:

> there have been many serious attempts in the past to reform this phase of education, but the problems have never been adequately resolved. For too many young people, it has been a period of falling engagement in education and rising disaffection (DFES, 2001, p.30).

The Green Paper had identified past failures to create appropriate vocational routes and announced its intention to rectify this anomaly:

> half a century ago, at the time of the 1944 Education Act, it was clear that the nation needed to develop better vocational and technical education to meet the needs of a rapidly changing post-war society. It did not happen. During the last sixty years, the pace

of social and economic change has increased dramatically and successive attempts have been made to improve vocational education and raise its standing in society. In practice most of these changes were piecemeal and enjoyed limited or no more than short-term success, while a long tradition of apprenticeship training was allowed to go into decline. There is no economic basis for undervaluing vocational education and qualifications. Yet this is precisely England's post-war legacy. We need now to rectify the traditional neglect of vocational education as a route to success and encourage far more young people to stay on in learning after age 16. We must also continue to break down the divide between education and training and emphasise that all pathways contribute to employability and responsible citizenship   (DFES, 2002, p.7).

The 2003 document also contained a similar demand on vocational education:

there are still too many vocational programmes and qualifications that lack coherence and opportunities for progression. Unsurprisingly, they are not respected by employers or universities. And they fail to motivate students, who then abandon their studies before completion. All too often these are the students who feel they have already failed at school and who most need well-structured and imaginatively taught options to achieve their potential. We must improve the quality of vocational programmes if all young people are to have access to high-quality, motivating options   (DFES, 2003a, p.42).

4.5 Policy proposals and implementation

This section considers the policy details that were made in the three documents. It divides such details into the specific change proposals that were announced as well as the proposals for change processes and implementation that appeared in the documents.

The five foci indicated earlier from the 2001 document provide two of the change proposals that were consistently discussed throughout the three documents: wider learning and stretch (or gifted and talented). There were references to activities to support young people from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with special educational needs but such activities related to general proposals of increased monitoring of LEAs. There was no specific 14-19 reference made to pupil behaviour in the documents. The change proposals section will begin with

the proposals made for 14-19 provision itself which is the central set of proposals for reform.

On change processes the 2001 document identified overall strategy and performance measurement as its two foci for analysing change. The analysis will be of what the government chose to do in terms of change implementation and how that process was based upon a view of a particular role for performance management within change processes. However it will also examine how the change process itself changed in 2003 and will examine change and continuity within the process itself at the time.

4.5.1 Change proposals 2001-2003

The 2001 White Paper sought to establish a well-balanced 14-19 phase through strengthening vocational qualifications and giving more flexibility within key stage 4 for young people to take a range of options. These options would be secured through additional vocational GCSEs to be introduced from September 2002 and more work related learning opportunities to be made available within key stage 4. There was also the intention to develop an overarching matriculation diploma for 19 year olds. This would cover both academic and vocational routes.

The Green Paper that followed fleshed out these ideas about 14-19 reform. This represented the formation of a single phase of education organised along different pathways of vocational and academic education. These pathways started from 14 and sought to have equal status and value and gave individuals a greater choice about their learning. The vision included better information, advice and guidance for young people and improved outcomes of increased staying on after 16 as well as better performance at level 2 and 3 by the age of 19 years.

The Green Paper indicated that the phase would begin with a review of progress between the young person, the parent or carer and the school. This review would determine long term goals for the young person and a discussion of the options available. If the person was in danger of disaffection, the Careers service, the newly instituted Connexions service, might be involved in this review.

The 14-19 phase would be based around the acquisition of a series of qualifications. GCSEs would remain but increasingly become a stock-check in the middle of the phase. The Paper also announced that languages and technology would no longer be statutory subjects at key stage 4. The phase would culminate with the introduction of the over-arching Matriculation diploma which had been outlined in the White Paper. This would contain three elements: main qualification; common strand and wider learning. The main qualification would consist of current A/GCSE and their vocational equivalents:

> we suggest that the Diploma be available at three levels:
> Intermediate; Advanced; and Higher. The Intermediate award
> would be at Level 2 (five or more good GCSEs or equivalent); the
> Advanced at Level 3 (two A Levels or equivalent); and the Higher
> would recognise greater achievement (very good and contrasting A
> Levels, or NVQ level 4). Each level would be attainable through
> general or vocational qualifications, and from school-, college- or
> work-based pathways (DFES, 2002, p.43).

The common strand would be linked to all three levels and would be made up of core skills at intermediate level of literacy, numeracy and IT:

> the purpose of the common strand of the award is to highlight the
> particular importance of attainment in literacy, numeracy and ICT.
> We propose that the threshold should be at Level 2 for all young
> people, through the GSCE qualifications of English, mathematics
> and ICT (or equivalents) or through key skills qualifications in
> communication, application of number or IT (DFES, 2002, p.43).

As indicated above there was a discussion about including wider learning within the diploma. There would also be a complete overhaul of vocational and hybrid qualifications:

> we intend to develop more vocational qualifications and new
> hybrid qualifications that combine traditional general subjects with
> their vocational applications. We will ensure that new qualifications
> are robust and high-quality. We intend to call all GCSEs and A levels
> by a subject title, without any vocational label. We propose to
> enable the most able students to demonstrate a greater depth of
> understanding at advanced level through introducing more
> demanding questions into A2 papers, leading to a new distinction
> grade for the higher achievers. The new generation of Modern
> Apprenticeships will form an important part of a 14–19 vocational
> pathway   (DFES, 2002, p.20).

The 2003 document contained a combination of short term reforms and the intention for longer term reform to be devised by the Tomlinson Working Group. The short term reforms continued the discussion from the 2002 document about what should be taught at key stage 4:

- English, mathematics and science remain compulsory. All students will also continue to learn to be responsible and healthy adults;
- Information and Communications Technology will remain compulsory for now, although such skills will increasingly be taught through other subjects;
- all students will learn about work and enterprise;
- all students will be entitled to study another language, a humanities subject (such as history), an arts subject, and design and technology (DFES, 2003a, p.6).

There were also three reforms to improve vocational qualifications:

- in addition to the eight vocational GCSE subjects, new "hybrid" GCSEs will allow students to study on either academic or applied tracks, depending on their preference and aptitude;
- Modern Apprenticeships will be improved and expanded, so that at least 28% of young people become apprentices by 2004;
- we shall no longer describe GCSEs or A Levels as 'vocational' or 'academic'. Status matters and engineering should have equal status with mathematics or art and design (DFES, 2003a, p.6).

The document agreed to drop the proposals for the Matriculation Diploma in the anticipation of something more radical coming from the Working Group.

The second set of policy proposals engaged in all three documents was on wider learning or what was described in the 2001 White Paper as education with character. What was meant by this was the capacity of the curriculum to prepare young people for active roles with society. At one level it involved the opportunity for young people to get involved in civic type activities while at school, such as schools councils and the learning associated with the new statutory subject of citizenship to be introduced in 2002 and at another level it related to the offer made for extra-curricular activities such as sport and arts.

There was considerable reflection in the White Paper on whether this problem had been dealt with already. It indicated five areas in which progress was being made. The first was in encouraging schools to establish school councils and

develop students' voice and role within the school: an example of this was that Ofsted inspections were to include the views of students. Secondly citizenship was being introduced as a statutory subject. The third area of progress was on the work being done to increase the relationship between schools and cultural organisations through the creation of Creative Partnerships. There was also an intention to ensure all young people did at least 2 hours of PE and sport activity and by 2004 there would be 1000 school sports co-ordinators based in secondary schools but working with primary schools to encourage greater take up of sport among young people.

The fourth area of progress was the 95% of young people on work experience and the establishment of a review on enterprise and work related learning under Sir Howard Davies. The fifth area was the growing development of mentoring of young people through the National Mentoring Network and the Home Office's Active Community Mentoring Programme.

The 2002 document indicated that the proposed matriculation diploma would include proposals for wider learning. This involved a clear response to pressure from within the education system and there was a genuine question about the extent that such activities could be included within formal qualifications:

> **Wider activities strand**
> 4.13 Many schools and colleges have asked that young people's achievements outside the formal curriculum be recognised. We want to include wider activities within the award in order to promote and recognise the development of skills necessary for employment, such as leadership, team-working and problem-solving, and activities which encourage young people to live richer, fuller lives and play a part in the community. We therefore propose to recognise active citizenship; wider interests; and work-related learning. Young people could be required to show some worthwhile and sustained participation in each strand between the ages of 14 and 19 to get the Diploma.
>
> 4.14 We recognise that there is a tension between, on the one hand, the need for the assessment of young people's participation in these wider activities to be robust and meaningful and, on the other, the potential additional bureaucracy and burden on teachers and others. Those who successfully completed schemes such as Millennium Volunteers, ASDAN, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award could be considered to have met automatically the requirements

for active citizenship and the pursuit of wider interests. But these schemes would not cover every young person's worthwhile activity; nor do they in most cases extend to the recognition of work-related learning. We therefore would welcome views on whether wider activities should be required to achieve the award, and, if so, how they should be recognised (DFES, 2002, pp. 33-4).

Wider learning continued as a policy concern in the 2003 document though the emphasised shifted towards post 16. Annex 2 to the 2003 document recognised significant progress towards wider learning through the introduction of citizenship in the national curriculum, the addition of work related learning for all young people and the two hours of PE. There was also the intention to extend work related learning to include business and enterprise as well as summer initiatives and the millennium volunteers.

This annex also indicated the need to work to develop creativity in school and announced the doubling of funding for Creative Partnerships which worked in areas of disadvantage to promote creative and cultural activities for children and young people.

In the terms of reference there was a difference between 14-16 and post 16 on wider learning. The Working Group was asked to consider how 14-19 programmes:

> can help promote the acquisition of essential, practical skills for life, and how also they might encourage the development of analytical, problem-solving and thinking skills and the confidence and ability to present and argue conclusions   (DFES, 2003b,p. 31).

However the document considered the other aspects of wider learning, such as citizenship, creativity, cultural and sporting activities to be only a concern for post 16 education. Accordingly the Working Group was asked to consider how 'additional breadth and complementary study should be included within the post-16 element of 14–19 programmes, particularly for the most able students' (DFES, 2003b, p.31).

The final policy proposal that arose was also connected to the most able. This was increasingly defined within the documents as the problem of stretch. Although such a problem could manifest itself at any age, in policy terms it concentrated

upon the introduction of new arrangements to help admission tutors for universities differentiate between students, given the large numbers of young people who were achieving the best results at A level. In 2001 the Government announced support for the A level extension awards to do this. In 2002 they indicated they would replace such awards with a more sophisticated marking system within A levels. In 2003 it decided to maintain the advanced extension awards. This is evidence of a continuing area of deep policy concern but an uncertain policy response.

4.5.2 Change processes 2001-2003

In 2001 the Government engaged in a traditional policy development process. For key stage 3 it announced proposals but for 14-19 it indicated that it would be giving more detail in a Green Paper (which by definition would be a consultative document). The Green Paper had a series of consultation questions. These went into a lot of detail about 14-19 issues but were remarkable in that most of them invited the respondent to agree with DFES thinking. The first question asked the respondent to agree with the vision for 14-19 education. This vision was the underlying rationale for reform and the basic principles of how it would be developed. It was not offered as a discussion for the rationale of education itself. That rationale was assumed and reinforced by the statements quoted above.

The rest of the consultation contained some very technical questions: for example, on narrowing the statutory curriculum at 14, on how this would impact on disapplication in key stage 4, the nature of careers advice and the role of the A level extension exam in stretching young people. These questions gave a good indicator of the mind-set of government thinking as well as the openness of such a mind-set to alternatives ideas (Annex 1 contains the full list of questions).

The change process introduced in 2001 was a standard Whitehall practice: the publication of a White Paper outlining policy intent followed by a Green Paper with more detail subject to consultation. The nature of the questions except in a few areas where there was a genuine question indicated the Government had made up its mind on the major direction of reform and was using the consultation to endorse that direction. The intention when the Green Paper was published was

to take the comments and announce the implementation probably later in the year.

There was already an indication of the mechanism that would be adopted to ensure such implementation. A chapter in the Green Paper, entitled *Drivers and support for change*, sought to align performance and inspection arrangements with 14-19 reform. It displayed a reminder of the performance targets that operated within 14-19 (including key stage 3). All ten of these performance targets related to achievement of qualifications, with three of them relating to GCSE results. Such performance would assist the direction of reform.

There was great emphasis placed upon intervention to secure high standards. Secondary schools were to be given floor targets against the percentage of their pupils getting 5 GCSE A*–C (starting at 20% and rising to 25 % by 2006). The implication was clear that though assistance would be made available to support schools failing to reach such targets, if such failure was repeated then measures would be taken to replace the governors with an Interim Executive board. The final sanction was to close the school altogether, perhaps replacing it with a City Academy. However schools were given a way out of such possibilities through vocational equivalence. Certain vocational examinations such as GNVQ counted towards the target. As a result schools with low GCSE results were encouraged through the target approach to introduce more vocational qualifications at key stage 4.

Central government was there to oversee the school system and to create the circumstances for improvement. Targets, inspection, monitoring were part of a visualisation of system improvement based upon the carrot and stick approach that was increasingly adopted by the government. The carrot was increased autonomy. The stick was intervention.

However as the A level crisis caused a change in policy context, the government changed its intended trajectory of 14-19 reform. In the 2003 document it acknowledged a growing consensus in developing a stronger vocational offer, easing the burden of assessment and creating a common framework for qualifications throughout the 14-19 phase. The document explicitly cited the

possibility of a Baccalaureate qualification and in two important paragraphs

indicated the potential policy movement that had occurred in governmental

thinking. These paragraphs also indicated the overall shape of reform that would

be required from Tomlinson:

> 1.11   Baccalaureate-style qualifications of this type work well in other countries, and we believe that this model, designed to suit English circumstances, could tackle long-standing English problems, giving greater emphasis to completing courses of study (and training as appropriate) through to the age of 18 or 19 without a heavier burden of examination and assessment.

> 1.12   A change to this type of model would be a long-term reform but one on which we are ready to embark if further work shows that such a unified system can prepare people for the varied needs of higher education and employment. This sort of reform needs to be carefully planned and built on consensus, as recommended by Mike Tomlinson's second report on last year's A Levels. We are committed to work with all the partners interested in the future of 14–19 education to test whether we can achieve consensus on a workable model that can be developed for implementation (DFES, 2003a, p.13).

The chapter in the document that introduced the longer term reform was titled,

'From *Reform to Transformation'*. This announced the establishment of the

Working Group and indicated three elements to their considerations:

> strengthening the structure and content of full-time vocational programmes, and to offer greater coherence in learning programmes for all young people throughout their 14–19 education;

> developing assessment arrangements for 14–19 year-olds that are appropriate to different types of course and styles of teaching and learning, with the overall amount of assessment manageable for learners and teachers alike; and

> bringing forward a unified framework of qualifications that stretches the performance of learners, motivates progression, and recognises different levels of achievement (DFES, 2003a, p.38).

The annexes for the Discussion Document (DFES, 2003b) contained the terms of

reference for the Working Group (full text in Annex 2). This repeated the three

main elements of the review. It also drew attention to what it described as cross

cutting considerations and issues of implementation. In the final section it gave

guidance as to how they might go about their business: consultation of key stakeholders, review practice in other countries as well as in the 14-19 pathfinders and consideration of the costs of implementation.

The document recognised that although some reforms might be introduced quite quickly the transformational nature of the changes would take years to implement and accordingly the transition would need a plan for its smooth introduction and management.

The document encouraged the Working Group to consider such possibilities but cautioned that any proposals needed the support of employers and higher education and must build upon the strengths of the current system. The document requested from the Working group:

> that their proposals are explicit about the steps and processes that would be involved in implementation, and how the impact on current arrangements of uncertainties caused by the prospect of longer-term changes might be managed without disruption (DFES, 2003a, p.47).

The overall aim of the 2003 document was to establish a 14-19 phase which would draw in all the various institutions to provide a coherent learning experience for all young people. This would enable successful transition, participation and achievement up to the age of 19. However in language similar to the Green Paper, the Government was clear that it did 'not support the abolition of GCSE. It should be a progress check on the road through the 14–19 phase' (DFES, 2003a, p.5).

4.6 Continuities and divergences 2001-2003

The analysis in this chapter was organised around educational vision and purpose, policy framing and problem identification, and policy proposals to illustrate the focus on change content and change processes. The aim in this section is to identify the continuities and divergences that appeared across the three documents in each area of the conceptual framework. This will help inform the context for the consideration of Tomlinson which will be made in the next two chapters. It will also provide a base to compare government policy thinking in the period leading up to Tomlinson with the analysis of government policy thinking

immediately post Tomlinson. Such an analysis will form the conclusion in Chapter 7 as well as the basis of Chapter 8.

In the documents surveyed there was evidence of the strength of Williams' observation about the tendency towards discussion in education favouring institutional arrangements over more theoretical conversation over purpose. It was only in the White Paper that there were clear statements about the purpose of education. Statements referring to vision in the other documents pointed to the institutional arrangements that were to be made. However the 2002 and 2003 documents shared the assumptions of the 2001 statements on the purposes of education being around preparation for the world of work and adult life as well as the important role that education played in generating greater social inclusion.

There were also clear consistencies demonstrated within the policy framing in the three documents. The aim was to raise standards across the education system at 14-19. This would be done through narrowing the achievement gaps between schools and within social and ethnic groups. Success was to be measured through increased rates of attainment and participation. There was some ambivalence around how such success was defined. In the first phase of the New Labour Government (1997-2001) the focus was on raising the basic skills of literacy and numeracy among primary school students. In the documents reviewed in this chapter it seemed that whereas basic skills were important in the secondary sector there had to be recognition that wider learning was important (though how wide such learning should be was a policy concern itself).

Much of 14-19 policy identified in these documents was around choice and diversity. The reforms were intended to deliver such choice by giving more options to young people and opening a re-invigorated vocational track. Autonomy was also raised as an important issue in the 2001 document and clearly through the period there was policy thinking going towards what is described in the 2003 document as earned autonomy whereby high performing schools would be released from many of the burdens placed upon schools. The documents saw both as key means of encouraging higher standards.

The 2001 document identified five foci for activity: a key stage 3 strategy; increased public accountability on published results; targeted work on young people who are gifted and talented, with special educational needs and from certain ethnic groups; pupil behaviour and wider learning. This represented policy framing certainly for key stage 3 and raised the question to what extent was such framing replicated within 14-19. The analysis here described commonality over the search for a 14-19 change strategy as well as the link between performance monitoring and change processes. In terms of policy content it discovered a consistent policy discussion around interventions with the most able around A level extension examinations.

The final focus was about wider learning. This was clearly a policy concern which exercised considerable discussion within the documentation. It was unclear from such discussion the extent the Government had felt that such a policy concern had been resolved. Tomlinson was asked to look at analytical skills at key stage 4 and the citizenship issues post 16 because the statutory citizenship courses introduced in 2002 would end at 16.

14-19 policy content was organised around the specifics of introducing a reinvigorated 14-19 vocational track to add to GCSEs and A levels. This track involved freeing up the statutory restriction at key stage 4 as well as seeking a broader range of qualifications within GCSE and A levels. There was also a proposal for a matriculation diploma which would unite the academic and vocational track at the end of the 14-19 phase.

The problem identification supported the assumption to frame the policy across the 14-19 age range. It identified differential rates of performance between certain social groups and laid the reason for this as lack of choice at 14. The unfavourable international comparisons also strengthened the perceived need for an enhanced vocational 14-19 qualification route. The 2001 and 2002 documents referred to the failure of previous attempts at such reform and the 2003 documents pointed out the problems of vocational education in England.

However what was unclear from the 2001 and 2002 documents was the basic organisation of such a strengthened vocational track. It was clear that the

government hoped to fill in the technical points about creating the vocational programme through the consultation process around the 2002 Green Paper. In some ways this process and the government response represented the search for how to develop a 14-19 reform strategy which would include both content and an implementation process. However the A level crisis of 2002 created a different set of circumstances where the potential stakeholders for 14-19 reform wanted more significant changes and the Government's response was to outsource the responsibility for its reform strategy even if only on a temporary basis..

The 2003 document maintained deep continuities with the earlier documents. Its core messages were about broadening key stage 4 curriculum and strengthening the vocational route post 14. It offered support to GCSEs and A levels. It also maintained the policy assumption around accountability and greater transparency. This was both a policy aim in itself but also a central means of achieving change practices within the system. In all documents such performance reporting and monitoring was seen as a key tool in securing change.

However at the same time it opened up the potential for innovation. It criticised A levels for being too narrow. It sought a universal system of 14-19 education, not a system comprising of different tracks. It also wanted reform of examination and assessment processes to relieve the burden on teachers and students.

The policy outlines in each document were consistent. Even in 2003 the short term policy changes offered maintained the line of direction of the earlier documents. This gave Tomlinson elements of ambiguity in its terms of reference. There were strong assertions made in 2003 about the need for a strengthened vocational system and that GCSEs should remain. However Tomlinson was also tasked with establishing the case for a universal 14-19 system around such assertions. The Working Group was also tasked with reforming the examination system which made such a vital contribution to how the system measured performance.

This chapter has considered the two themes of change content and change processes within the three government documents. It has explored the context immediate to the establishment of the Working group that led to the Tomlinson

report. The next two chapters will explore the extent that Tomlinson was able to translate the government's intentions into a coherent and transformational reform programme for 14-19 education. This is the central focus of the empirical part of the research.

Chapter 5   The Tomlinson report: detailed proposals

5.1 Introduction

The analysis moves on to the final report of the Working Group entitled *14-19 Curriculum and Qualifications Reform* (or the Tomlinson report for ease of reference). It is organised against the two themes of this research. This chapter will consider the theme of change content by examining the extent and the potential benefit of the Tomlinson report. The next chapter will consider the theme of change process as identified in the report. Together the two chapters form an examination of Tomlinson through the conceptual framework. This chapter considers the third aspect of the framework concentrating on policy formulation. The next chapter will consider what the report says about educational vision and purpose; policy framing and problem identification; and the implementation strategy for the proposals.

The intent in these chapters is to record faithfully what was in the Tomlinson report. The government had tasked the Working Group with a significant load of specific questions as well as a very broad range of issues to consider within 14-19 education. The report by the Working Group captured a lot of this detail and the challenge in Chapter 5 and 6 is to reflect accurately the range of what was included and the balance between each part. There were 36 recommendations made in the report and 31 of them relate to proposals that will be covered in this chapter. The full text of the recommendations is contained within Annex 3 below.

The report was 116 pages and contained three parts: the letter from Mike Tomlinson to Charles Clarke, the executive summary/summary of the recommendations and the main report. Annexes were also published alongside the main document as well as executive summaries targeted at various stakeholders. The main focus of this analysis will be the full report. However there will be a need to refer to some of the Annexes. In this chapter they will provide exemplary information about the core and the entry and foundation level diplomas. In the next chapter they assist in exploring the problems the report identified with vocational learning in the current system.

The aim of this chapter is to seek out the major changes identified within the Tomlinson report and assess the extent they are transformational. This chapter is organised against the three main principles identified within the terms of reference and in the order they are given within the report. The first part covers the establishment of a universal framework of learning and qualifications; the second part considers the proposals supporting the strengthening of full time vocational qualifications within that framework and the third part looks to the manageability of assessment procedures for both learners and teachers.

There will be an assessment of how the Tomlinson proposals link to the four areas of reform that were explored in Chapter 2. The knowledge assumptions that underpin policy making will be identified where possible. White/Reiss and Fielding/Moss are concerned about the wider aspects of learning including the idea of human flourishing and that will form part of the analysis. The extent that the documents advocated the extension of autonomy to the learner and the teacher will also be considered and to what extent does education prepare young people for taking part in a democratic society. The final aspect is the extent that the 14-19 reform speaks to the idea of unification of 14-19 curriculum, qualifications and assessment.

The conclusion of the chapter will analyse the extent that the main proposals within Tomlinson are transformational. By this is meant the comprehensive intension of the reforms to remake the nature of education in England. Transformational change goes beyond the established norms of organisational practice. Indeed it seeks to transform such norms. The analysis in this chapter will indicate the logical extent of heterodoxy in being able to stand outside of doxastic certainties. It will be clear that transformational change proposals can be articulated as a direct challenge to such certainties. The analysis in the following chapter will develop an understanding of whether it is possible to visualise and articulate a transformational change process to accompany such proposals.

5.2   Unified framework for 14-19 learning

The executive summary and summary of recommendations went quickly into the details of the report's proposals. There were two overlapping components in them: a common set of learning for all learners and a set of options derived from

a national system of units of accreditation. The design of these units would enable greater understanding of the system, increased motivation and participation post 16. The third paragraph indicated that the proposals centred on two linked developments:

- a common format for all 14-19 learning programmes which combine the knowledge and skills everybody needs for participation in a full adult life with disciplines chosen by the learner to meet her/his own interests, aptitudes and ambitions; and

- a unified framework of diplomas which: provide a ready-made, easy to understand guarantee of the level and breadth of attainment achieved by each young person, whatever the nature of his or her programme; offer clear and transparent pathways through the 14-19 phase and progression into further and higher learning, training and employment; are valued by employers and HE; and motivate young people to stay on in learning after the age of 16 (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.5).

The report suggested that both components help prepare young people for their transition into work and higher education. The fourth paragraph identified the twofold nature both of the elective and the compulsory parts of the learning programme at each level:

All 14-19 year olds should have access to coherent and relevant learning programmes. These should comprise:
• core learning which is about getting the basics right, and developing the generic knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for participation in higher education, working life and the community; and
• main learning– chosen by the learner to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of academic and vocational subjects and disciplines which provide a basis for work-based training, higher education and employment (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.5).

The main section of the report reaffirmed the nature of the 14-19 curriculum being proposed and goes into further detail:

• all 14-19 programmes should be organised within a unified framework of diplomas awarded at one of four levels from entry through to advanced. Possession of a diploma should offer a readily understood guarantee about the overall breadth and level of a young person's achievement against clear national standards;

• within the 14-19 framework there should be up to 20 named diploma lines covering a range of vocational areas and academic disciplines. While most would show that the learner has specialised in areas of learning, an 'open' line would allow a relatively unconstrained choice of subjects, similar to the mixed A level, GCSE and equivalent vocational programmes followed by many learners at the moment; and

• learning programmes and diplomas for 14-16 year olds should be open, though they may incorporate components linked to specialised lines. They should also reflect the requirements of the Key Stage 4 (KS4) National Curriculum, but, as is currently the case, achievement of a diploma should not require specific levels of study or levels of achievement in compulsory KS4 National Curriculum subjects   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.20).

The report then went into greater detail to explain the core, the main learning and the different arrangements between key stage 4 and post 16 learning.

5.2.1 Determining the core

The core delivered the common programme of learning and was made up of five components:

- functional skills encompassing functional Information and Communications Technology (ICT), functional numeracy and functional literacy and communication;

- completion of an extended project;

- development of a range of common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA);

- an entitlement to wider activities including work experience and community activities; and

- support for planning and reviewing learning, and guidance in making choices about further learning and careers.

Functional skills were intended as an essential part of the diploma and a young person could not obtain the diploma unless he/she could demonstrate such skills. The aim of these three areas was to prepare young people 'effectively for later learning, employment and adult life' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 31). They would help raise the current performance of 42% of 16 years getting GCSE grade C or above in

English and Mathematics. As the intention was that these skills would prepare young people for further and higher education as well as employment, the report did not specify what should be involved in the functional skills element but indicated the need for further determination through the assistance of these end users. Recommendation 7 indicated the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) should consult stakeholders on the detail of the core components of the functional skills. The aim was to develop a core which was constituted the 'common requirements for informed citizens, effective learners and a wide range of workplaces' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.32).

There was some element of prescription written into this consultation by the criteria identified in Annex C of the report as well as the recommendations of Professor Adrian Smith for the reform of mathematics education. The intention was that such skills would be a way into further learning in each area. Numeracy would be externally assessed. For functional literacy and communication the speaking and listening elements would be assessed in house but the writing and reading would be external. The functional ICT would also be assessed externally. While the new skills were being developed the report recommended that current programmes such as Key skills should operate.

In paragraph 67 the report foresaw that the size of the functional skills might vary and it was likely to be less than a current GCSE at the intermediate level:

> the content of each component would determine its size, and there is no reason why each of the three subjects should require the same volume. We would expect them to occupy between 50% and 80% of a current typical GCSE. This smaller volume of essential learning would be accompanied by assessment which ensures that in order to 'pass' the core, young people master the full range of skills covered by these components. Learners would not be able to compensate for lower performance in one area by higher performance in another (see chapter 6). Many young people would also undertake extended study of maths, English and ICT as part of their main learning (see paragraphs 91-93) (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 31).

The extended project provided the second component of the core. In paragraphs 67 and 68 it was indicated as one of the major features of the report's proposals. It had four aims:

- ensure that all learners develop and demonstrate a range of generic skills, including research and analysis, problem solving, team-working, independent study, presentation and functional literacy and communication and critical thinking;
- help to reduce the assessment burden by assessing these skills, which are currently tested, in many existing schools and colleges, in numerous pieces of coursework across the curriculum, through a single task;
- encourage cross-boundary and/or in-depth learning and wider application of knowledge developed through main learning. In this way the extend (sic) project would provide a means of synthesising main learning, while integrating it with the core; and
- provide a personalised 'space' within 14-19 programmes for young people to pursue areas of particular interest to them (Tomlinson, 2004a, pp. 32/3).

This would also be formally assessed but not externally. At advanced level it was foreseen that the extended project would take the form of a single piece of work 'which requires a high degree of planning, preparation, research and autonomous working'. Depending on the area chosen it could take 'the form of a written report, a product such as a construction or piece of artwork, or a performance' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.32). At lower levels it could involve some form of personal challenge agreed with the tutor. This could be a series of tasks.

The report indicated that for some learners especially on specialised programmes the extended project could involve an extension of their main learning. The report openly recognised that the idea for the project had originated in the Baccalaureate examination.

The third component of the core also straddled into main learning as well. Common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA) were an important aspect of how the learning offered preparation for adult life. This would build on current Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) programmes and work based learning. The intention was that this would not be assessed but would be incorporated across all learning programmes. QCA were going to provide guidance and exemplars illustrating how institutions could integrate CKSA into teaching, learning and assessment. The report indicated quite some detail to this component. CKSA was proposed to develop an active learner, conscious of their

place in society and groups. It would work across three strands and is worth quoting in full because it engaged with many of the issues about education with character including political and moral matters. It also offered a description of the type of learning envisaged as well as the type of learner:

> **The reflective and effective individual learner** is someone who is personally aware, who has experienced a range of learning and teaching method and is aware of how best they learn, but who is able to apply other methods appropriately and creatively to a variety of contexts, and who shows resilience, perseverance and determination in her/his work. Such learners have the skills and attributes necessary to:
> — organise and regulate their own learning;
> — set and meet challenging, but realistic objectives;
> — manage time effectively;
> — undertake research;
> — identify and solve problems;
> — identify, analyse and evaluate relevant information derived from different sources and contexts; and
> — think and use their skills creatively.
>
> **The social learner** is someone who is able to learn and achieve in groups of different sizes and varying compositions, including:
> — understanding how groups work and the factors that can influence and shape group learning;
> – undertaking different roles within a group, including those of leader and team-member;
> – challenging or defending a position as appropriate;
> – compromising; and mediating and resolving conflict; seeking, understanding and evaluating others' viewpoints and ideas;
> – giving and receiving support and feedback; and
> – empathising and understanding the needs of others around them, including those of employers and colleagues in a workplace.
>
> **The learner in society and the wider world** is aware of the multiple communities to which they belong and is able to participate constructively in them. Such learners would:
> – be aware of their rights and responsibilities;
> – have the skills and attributes necessary for active citizenship and the workplace;
> – be morally and ethically aware; and
> – know about other countries and other cultures, and understand and value ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 34).

The theme of autonomy and the learner in the centre of their learning was continued with the fourth component of the core. Personal review, planning and

guidance were also key parts of these skills and attributes. The report described their purpose:

> supporting coherence across learning programmes, particularly by drawing out and underlining the cross-curricular applicability of the core, and identifying opportunities to access breadth and wider activities;
> • developing and teaching the common knowledge, skills and attributes which young people will need for success in learning and employment – this would include personal awareness, how they seem to others, and encourage them to develop a coherent view of themselves;
> • encouraging and helping young people to have a vision of themselves and their future; and
> • helping learners to identify and choose appropriate learning and career paths   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.35).

The report foresaw the young person accessing different types of guidance. From their teachers they might get help with developing and reviewing their own achievements and capabilities. From the Careers Service, the newly formed Connexions Service, they would get impartial advice on further learning opportunities. Young people needed wider access to information advice and guidance and the report suggested mentoring and one to one coaching as a means of providing this.

The final aspect of the core was the entitlement to wider learning. Such activities would be voluntary but there would be a way of getting recognition for them within the diploma. The idea was that learners would identify such wide activities as part of their review, planning and guidance part of the programme. This was expected to enable young people to access around 120 hours of learning activity. The prospect of building this component into a mandatory part of the programme was left open depending upon further research on access to and availability of wider learning activities. The wider learning would not be assessed but the young person's achievements would be included in the transcript (see below).

5.2.2   Main learning

Main learning was likely to form two thirds of the programme for a young person taking foundation level and above. The balance at entry level would be determined in line with the needs and interests of the young person.

Recommendation 1 made clear the relevance of the main learning programme to progression within learning and preparation for employment. It was designed to provide access to employment, work based training and HE.

The report made the distinction between learning programmes and their qualifications. It indicated that though diplomas were to be the cornerstone of the new system, there would be space beyond the qualification for learning in breadth or depth. The aim was to achieve a better balance and coherence within learning programmes and to avoid a narrow learning experience.

Main learning was the elective part of the programme of learning. Current stand-alone qualifications such as GCSEs and A levels would evolve over the ten year implementation period into new units of the diploma. Given the surrounding controversy about the intentions of Tomlinson regarding A levels and GCSEs it is worth quoting the extract from the second recommendation on the future of these examinations:

> existing qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, and NVQs should cease to be free-standing qualifications in their own right but should evolve to become components of the new diplomas (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 23.)

It was envisaged that academic qualifications would operate within the open lines of the diploma and vocational qualifications would form specialised units. The intention was to increase flexibility between lines of learning through the adoption of a unit framework.

Main learning would enable young people to select coherent programmes to pursue their own interests, strengths, gifts or talents. Up to 16, this would be within the context of a broad programme that covered the statutory curriculum requirements of key stage 4. For this age group all lines of learning including some vocational preparation programmes would be open lines of diploma. From 16 years of age young people would be able to access learning components from specialised diplomas.

5.2.3 Diploma levels

The Report indicated that it was following a recommendation from the 1996
Dearing report that there should be an entry level. This was in part envisaged as a
motivational tool for disengaged learners and in part a qualification aimed at
students with special needs. It focused on preparation for employment and adult
life. The report indicated entry level diplomas would equate to current entry level
certificates and other work that was below level one. In Annex F of the report
there was an estimation of 4-6% of 16-19 year olds undertaking entry level type
qualifications. There was no data on pre-16 year olds but as 5.4% of 16 year olds
were unable to achieve 1 GCSE this seemed the likely proportion of students
eligible for entry level qualifications (Tomlinson, 2004b, p.30).

Diplomas at Level 1 would be called foundation diplomas and would equate to the
lower grades of GCSE, foundation GNVQ and NVQ Level 1. In the report there
were differential arrangements for both of these levels for the 14-16 age group
and for the 16+ and such arrangements will be explored below. Intermediate
diplomas would equate to GCSE graded C and above and Level 2 NVQ
qualifications. Advanced level would equate to A levels and Level 3 qualifications.

5.2.4 Lines of learning

The various component of the diploma would be organised through lines of
learning which would allow specialisation and the inclusion of vocational
elements. Recommendation 3 proposed up to 20 'lines of learning' within the
diploma framework. The main learning would indicate the name of the diploma.
The recommendation also proposed that one line should be open. This open line
would offer an unrestrained choice to the learner. It would include diplomas
comprising academic subjects and a mixture of academic and vocational. This
would enable learner to choose from:

> a wide choice of subjects and areas of learning, including traditional
> academic subjects and specially-designed components distilled
> from the content of specialised diploma lines. In this way, young
> people would be able to elect to take relatively short vocational
> options so that they could sample, and make a start on, the content
> of the more substantial vocational pathways represented in the
> specialist lines   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.25).

The report also indicated that the specialised lines would not normally be available pre-16. Recommendation 4 asked for the QCA to draw up subject aggregations based upon domestic and international practice. The recommendation proposed that in doing this the QCA worked 'with relevant subject and sector bodies, including subject associations, HE, Sector Skills Councils, employers, and providers to develop a framework and design criteria for up to 20 named lines' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 26).

The proposal was that the programme content be designed according to both the needs of the learners and the needs of the respective academic or employment sector. Such diplomas would enable further specialisation. Their design brief would include transparency, flexibility and comprehensibility by end users. They would be kept under review. Examples were given in the report about further specialisation. This could involve additional areas such as further maths or sub specialisms within vocational areas such as aeronautical engineering or motor engineering which would be developed as sub lines within Engineering. The report thought that experience from other countries indicated that up to 100 sub lines might be identified. Accordingly there was the capacity for such specialised diplomas to become very specific pieces of vocational preparation closely linked to vocational and occupational areas.

5.2.5 Differential arrangements for pre and post 16

The report acknowledged that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum would remain for key stage 4 students and accordingly they would study open line of diplomas. It was envisaged that current alternative arrangements in this stage of learning would be replaced by the new levels of entry and foundation:

> **57** Retaining the National Curriculum requirements would in effect mean that diplomas achieved by young people before age 16 would be 'open' in nature. It would still be possible to ensure that 14-16 year olds could opt for vocational and practical learning, in the same way that many currently undertake a substantial element of vocational learning now, for instance through Young Apprenticeships. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

58. Significant numbers of young people are currently exempted from parts of the National Curriculum, through 'disapplication' procedures, in order that they can apply themselves to topics which are more likely to advance their interests. Our view is that the introduction of foundation diplomas, giving a positive alternative to current GCSEs, would considerably lessen the need for such disapplication. For the great majority open diplomas at foundation level would be appropriate and enable full coverage of the National Curriculum, but for a small number of young people, with careful counselling it may be sensible to embark on a more specialised programme (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 28).

There was a marked reluctance in the report to open out specialised units in pre-16 education. Chapter 5 indicated that courses such as young apprenticeships might evolve into specialised units available for young people in the final years of schooling but this would only involve a small minority of young people. The report was clear that the introduction of foundation diplomas would provide an alternative to the current arrangements of disapplication of the national curriculum.

The report envisaged that all statutory requirements of the national curriculum such as Religious Education (RE) and science for key stage 4 would apply. This acceptance meant that different arrangements applied pre and post 16 within the new framework. Young people at the age of 14 would be offered open diplomas at three levels of entry, foundation and intermediate. These three levels would be closely linked together and it was envisaged learners could pick and mix from units. The framework of the entry level components would be nationally determined but the intention was that schools would be able to customise the learning to meet the needs of learners and set the balance of learning between core and main according to the needs of the young person. Schools would have access to a central bank of 'off the shelf 'entry level units to support those learners.

The report identified four aspects to the entry level diploma:

- preparing for employment;

- preparing for independent adult living;

- developing study or learning skills; and

- preparing for supported living

(Tomlinson, 2004a, p.52).

Annex F to the report gave greater detail about the types of activity involved in the four options for post 16 learners. Such areas were likely to be included in the central bank of study units. The annex indicated that each learner would have an entitlement to study from the following:

Preparing for employment
8. Units could include:
- work experience;
- health and safety;
- employability skills;
- vocational skills (as a context);
- employment law/rights and responsibilities; and
- interpersonal skills.

Preparing for independent adult living
9. Units could include:
- citizenship;
- household management;
- budgeting/financial management; and
- negotiation skills.

Developing study or learning skills
10. Units could include:
- sampling different areas of learning to plan route to foundation;
- study skills;
- transfer of knowledge;
- informed decision making;
- wider key skills;
- identifying learning styles; and
- self-confidence.

Preparing for supported living
11 Units could include:
- community awareness;
- leisure activities (identify and access);
- programmes linked to home;
- physical mobility including therapies;
- person-centred planning;
- taster placements in adult services;
- tasters in residential settings;
- personal care; and
- independent skills
(Tomlinson,2004b, pp.31/2).

The report was keen to ensure that young people who took entry level and foundation level qualifications pre-16 were not seen as closing down options or engaged in an inferior programme. The report recognised that current procedures of disapplication stigmatised the 'alternative' programmes offered and it was clear in Recommendation 19 that the new foundation diploma would be developed as a positive programme of learning of benefit in itself but also offering options to enable the young person to take units towards attaining an intermediate qualification post 16. Accordingly it was envisaged that the pre-vocational elements of foundation could be developed where practical at the intermediate level to allow greater choice to young people.

Annex D to the report described open line diplomas at each level. The foundation level example is described as Foundation Diploma (Open) (with specialist options in Food Preparation and Service). It was quite clear from this example that the young person who took this qualification would undertake four main learning units all linked to food preparation and service. The fifth unit option offered in the example was at intermediate level and involved menu planning (Tomlinson, 2004b, p. 25). From this example it was clear that the thinking of the Working Group was to offer a vocational preparation course as an open line at foundation level. The statutory requirements of key stage 4 would be satisfied through the core.

5.3 Improving vocational programmes

The second aspect of the terms of reference asked the Working Group to consider how vocational programmes might be strengthened. They identified five ways to improve vocational programmes:

> • **better vocational programmes** of sufficient volume to combine core learning (including basic and employability skills) with a specialised vocational curriculum and assessment and relevant work placement. Vocational programmes would be designed with the involvement of employers and should be delivered only in institutions which are suitably equipped;

> •**rationalised vocational pathways** capable of providing progression within the diploma framework to advanced level and

beyond, and linked, where appropriate, to National Occupational Standards in order to provide avenues to employment;

• **a series of vocational** options which can be combined with general and academic subjects in mixed programmes;

• **better work-based learning** through the integration of apprenticeships and the proposed diploma framework; and

• **stronger incentives to take vocational programmes** , as the common requirements for content, volume and level of study mean that all diplomas have general currency while also signifying relevant attainment within a particular vocational area (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.8).

5.3.1 Better vocational programmes

The report indicated that its emphasis was upon the creation of full time vocational programmes post 16. These were defined as 'specifically designed to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes directly relevant to an occupation or a field of employment' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 76).

In para 202 the report identified the aims of the design of such programmes:

> In designing a vocational programme for young people our aim is to balance a number of objectives. First, we need to give students a solid grounding in their chosen area, for example that of the hospitality industry, to develop the general skills and knowledge needed in that sector and to give the context in which more precise choice of occupation may be made. Second, it is important to allow specialisation for a particular occupation giving the skills required in depth, recognising that full proficiency is unlikely to be obtained until a person is actually working in that occupation. Third, we need to continue elements of general education which will assist not only in future careers, but also in adult life more generally. And fourth, we need to provide skills and knowledge that will be valuable in a range of occupational destinations, in addition to the specialism of the programme, enabling young people to keep their options open and to thrive in a dynamic labour (sic) in which occupational change is frequent (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.79).

The intention was to build upon current provision but rationalise it within the proposed diploma framework:

> in developing components and programmes for inclusion in the
> diploma framework, awarding bodies should build on the best of
> existing qualifications and include them as components and
> programmes of the new system where it is appropriate to do so.
> New vocational components and programmes should also be
> developed, including at foundation level, for inclusion in both open
> programmes and specialised lines.
>
> In undertaking this work, awarding bodies should work with
> employers, teachers, lecturers, training organisations and HEIs to
> ensure that the structure and content of components and
> programmes meet their needs and those of learners and provide
> access to HE or training and employment. The National
> Occupational Standards developed by Sector Skills Councils should
> provide a useful starting point in determining the nature of
> vocational pathways, particularly those designed to provide
> progression to specific sectors (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.80).

The report identified the need to engage employers meaningfully in the breadth of the reforms. The proposed vocational pathways relied upon employer engagement to acquire genuine value, relevance and authenticity. The report had detected through its own consultation processes a stated willingness by employers to be involved in the design and the delivery of vocational pathways. The report identified this as a key challenge for government in implementing its recommendations.

Employer involvement was seen as critical to the success of the new vocational programmes. Employers would be involved in developing the structure of the diplomas and ensuring they reflected the needs of all sectors of the economy. This would mean they would have a role in the design of the content of each vocational line of learning as well as the curricular content of the core component. Employers would also be active in the design of work experience and work related learning. The report envisaged an active role in delivery of the new programmes through 'acting as mentors to young people completing their extended project or personal challenge and developing CKSA, to providing work experience opportunities, to delivering diploma components' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.80).

The report also identified the need for quality provision in vocational programmes and proposed that only quality facilities should be made available for doing this:

> although we are keen that all young people who wish to should have access to vocational opportunities, we do not believe that all institutions will be able to provide them. Indeed we do not think that all institutions should try to do so. High quality vocational learning is dependent on the availability of appropriate facilities that mirror the workplace as closely as possible. Not all institutions, and particularly schools, will be able to provide this   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.81).

Recommendation 12 picked up the issue of quality in provision and indicated that such concerns would form criteria for consideration by examination boards. 'Centre approval criteria should ensure that vocational learning is only delivered where there are appropriate facilities and teachers, tutors and instructors with relevant expertise' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.41).

5.3.2 Rationalised vocational pathways

The terms of reference had made specific reference to the need to link any emerging proposals with the report about apprenticeships from Cassells. Tomlinson envisaged a coming together of the apprenticeship framework with young people eventually completing the core as any other part of the 14-19 programmes. The report stressed that all other aspects of the apprenticeship programme would be determined by the sector bodies.

Recommendation 27 indicated that all apprenticeships at level 2 and 3 would eventually be incorporated within the Diploma framework. The recommendation encouraged sector bodies to adopt the components of core learning and to align their technical certificates as options within the relevant diploma lines. The report envisaged that once 'the appropriate systems are in place, trainees should receive full credit for all their achievements during the apprenticeship programme and recognition by means of the transcript' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.83).

5.3.3 Series of vocational options

As already indicated the report intended that the open line of learning would house both flexible and academic diplomas. The former would contain a mixture of vocational and academic units. This offer was not just about increased flexibility but was part of an attempt to raise the prestige of vocational subjects. The report

intended that by putting vocational and academic pathways into a single framework it would enable greater flexibility and mixing of programme and in an important phrase 'would give formal equality of standing between, academic, vocational and mixed pathways' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.79). The report felt that such increased flexibility and choice offered to young people by this new framework would enable greater progression and participation post 16.

5.3.4 Better work-based learning

The report indicated that integrated work experience was central to the high regard that vocational training was held in other countries and where practicable all vocational programmes should require structured and relevant work placements. It recognised that many vocational programmes did require such placement but acknowledged it was not yet the norm (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 81). Work experience also had a role to play in other programmes because it could provide young people with real insight into the skills and attributes needed to succeed in the workplace. The report advocated more general work experience as part of the wider learning entitlement within core learning.

5.3.5 Stronger incentives to take vocational programmes

The report described the 'proliferation of vocational qualifications of various sizes and many different types, often without any clear routes of progression between them '(Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 79). This caused confusion among both employers and learners which led to low recognition of many vocational qualifications which resulted in such qualifications having low esteem. It also pointed that often the vocational qualifications offered were so short that many young people left the system at 17. Such confusion and the short length of many courses underlined further the idea that vocational qualifications were inferior. The report felt that the systematic restructuring of vocational qualifications within a single framework in which the academic route was also to be found would encourage more young people to take vocational programmes.

5.4 Manageability of assessment arrangements for 14–19 year-olds

The third aspect of the terms of reference was the consideration of easing the burden of assessment on teachers and students. The report proposed a radical break from current arrangements with assessment and recording achievement. In essence it had responded to the call by the government to look at easing the assessment burden by a fundamental review of how assessment was operating. There were four proposals on reducing such a burden. The first proposal was to look at what were the aims of the assessment and propose a wider range of mechanisms. The extended project would carry a lot of the burden for identifying the learner's ability to organise and present information and as such it was integral to the overall strategy within the report for reducing the assessment burden. The report thought that many of the aims of assessment were repeated through a wide range of coursework and examinations. A simplification was proposed and part of that simplification was to catch many of the wider learning aims within the extended project.

The other three proposals looked towards transformational change within assessment and need to be considered in greater depth. First of all there was the proposal for the wider capture of a young person's learning through a transcript. Secondly the report recommended that each diploma contained the facility for recognising units from the previous level in order to enable learners to bank qualifications at one level and use them to progress onto the next. The final transformational change was the reintroduction of teacher assessment and a significant move away from external assessment.

5.4.1 The transcript

The report gave a lot of detail about how the new diplomas might be assessed while at the same time recognising the difference between a learning programme and a set of qualifications/ assessments. To achieve such a broader capture of achievement and performance it proposed the transcript.

The transcript was a mechanism to record all achievements the young person had made. It would record:

- all components contributing to the diploma, including constituent units;
- credit and (where applicable) grades awarded for each component;
- details of wider activities undertaken and the skills developed; and
- achievement in any additional components beyond the diploma threshold (Tomlinson, 2004a,p.74).

The report also proposed that the transcript would be in two parts. The front end would be available both on line and in hard copy and would cover the above points. However the electronic version would act as a gateway into a more detailed portfolio which would contain:

additional information about the learner's achievements, such as component scores (additional to the grades available at the top level), examples of the young person's work, including their extended project, a personal statement, and contextual data about their school/college/training provider (Tomlinson, 2004a,p.74).

The report recognised the data and security implications of this proposal.

5.4.2 Interlocking diplomas

Interlocking allowed the mixing of levels within qualifications. This meant that a proportion of lower level units could contribute to the next level up. At the first three levels open and specialised diplomas would have the same rules for interlocking. At the intermediate level it proposed:

Main Learning	At least 60 units at Intermediate level
	Up to 60 units at Foundation level
Core learning	20 units extended project at intermediate level
	40 units functional skills at intermediate level
	(Tomlinson, 2004a, p.50).

The same pattern was replicated at foundation level with the possibility of up to half the main learning units being at entry level (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 50). Entry level qualifications would also be 180 units but would be based on a personalised programme of learning. There would be units which though at entry level would

enable the young person to carry them forward to support a foundation level qualification.

At advanced level different rules were put forward. For open diplomas it suggested that of the 180 units:

Main Learning:	At least 40 Units at Advanced level A2 up to 80 Units at Advanced level A1
Core learning:	20 units extended project at advanced level
	40 units Functional skills at intermediate level

<div align="right">(Tomlinson,2004a, p.49).</div>

For specialised diplomas the recommendation adopted the main principle of interlocking though was not precise about the balance. It proposed that:

> designers of specialised diplomas should be asked to ensure that there is some overlap between the intermediate and advanced versions of their diplomas (e.g. that advanced level diplomas contain some intermediate material), while also ensuring that the balance of the diploma conforms with the requirements for the relevant level (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 47).

Core learning units had to be at the level of the diploma: for example, intermediate core for an intermediate diploma. The exception to this was the core functional skills at advanced could be at intermediate level.

This interlocking was an important part of the report's attempts to encourage progression and participation in learning. The interlocking was also a way of building stretch into the formative years of the 14-19 phase. However it also needed to demonstrate that such stretch was available at the advanced level. It did this by proposing a different grading system based on the A level extension system. The report also alluded to introducing elements of Level 4 qualifications for some students. However the process of interlocking with higher education was not developed.

Interlocking would facilitate easier progression. The idea was that a wide variety of units at all levels would be available to young people and they could pick and mix as was appropriate. However the report gave clear guidelines on how each level would be graded.

5.4.3 Grading criteria.

The report indicated that there were would be three models of grading used in Diplomas:

Entry level fail/pass;

Foundation level and above fail/pass/merit/distinction;

They also sought greater grade differentiation for certain advanced level components where fail/E/D/C/B/A/A+/A++ would be awarded though the overall advanced diploma would have a grade of fail/pass/merit/distinction and suggested that in advanced diplomas around 10% would get distinction in line with the then proportion of young people getting 3 grade As at A levels. They proposed different grading systems at advanced level between open and specialised qualifications:

> Grading criteria for an advanced 'open' diploma might be:
>
> Pass (minimum threshold) 60 core plus 120 main learning credits;
> all components gained at pass grade or above.
>
> Merit: 60 core credits; 140 main learning credits, including 60 at A2,
> (approximately equal to four A1s and three A2s) – 70 main learning
> credits to be achieved at grade C or above.
>
> Distinction: 60 core credits, including either functional mathematics
> or functional literacy and communication at advanced level; 160
> main learning credits, including 80 achieved at A2 level – 110 main
> learning credits achieved at grade A or above
> (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.72).

As the report recognised the different issues relating to the different balance between knowledge and skills in specialised diplomas, a different model was proposed for specialised diplomas

> Grading criteria for an advanced specialised diploma might be:
>
> Pass: 60 core credits, plus 120 main learning credits from
> components specified by the awarding body.

Merit: 60 core credits, plus 140 main learning credits from components specified by the awarding body; 100 of these credits achieved at merit grade or above.

Distinction: 60 core credits, including either functional mathematics or functional literacy and communication at advanced level; 160 main learning credits from components specified by the awarding body, including at least 80 achieved at distinction grade (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.73).

5.4.4 Teacher assessment as the dominant mode

The report came out strongly in favour of teacher assessment for the three first levels of the diploma and sought over time a better balance between teacher and externally assessed qualifications at the advanced level. The long term intent was that only A2 elements of the advanced diploma and the functional aspects of the core already indicated at any level would have external assessment. The report attended in great detail to the moderation and training needs of teachers to enable them to approach assessment with rigour and validity.

The QCA would be responsible for overseeing national consistency. It would discharge this function through identifying clear examples of the standards expected at each level and the publication of guidance and national exemplars which would be used in teacher training. Only licensed awarding bodies would be used for diplomas and part of the process of securing a licence would involve an institution satisfying the QCA on the quality of their standard setting and their policy for training individual teachers. Each centre would have trained Chartered Assessors to assist with its assessment strategy. There would be local moderation and this could be overseen by the awarding bodies. There would also be national sampling of papers to assess consistency and rigour. Individual centre approval would be a licence to operate dependent on the institution's ability and readiness to conform to national standards. An Institute for Assessment would be established to support the training needs of teachers and their institutions.

5.5 The theoretical background to the proposals

The proposals identified in this chapter represented a distillation of several connected ideas about educational reform and accordingly it is possible to detect

several of the intellectual foundations of the Tomlinson report's proposals within the ideas examined in Chapter 2.

There was clear evidence of the importance of knowledge within the reforms. There were examples of both of Young's perspectives in the proposals. First of all they accorded with his earlier ideas about a curriculum for the future by looking to new sources of knowledge within the curriculum. The innovation was strongest within the determination of the core as well as the curriculum content for entry and foundation level diplomas. The proposed introduction of a wide ranging set of vocational diplomas within a single system developed by the employers with the assistance of Higher Education also represented the ambition for widening knowledge values within the reform.

However the report also sought to conserve traditional knowledge values through the differentiation it made between academic and vocational programmes. The continuation of knowledge values was represented within the open lines where the intention was to work with subject specialists and HE institutions to transfer current separate GCSE and A level qualifications into units of the new diploma at Intermediate and Advanced respectively. One of the potential conflicts within the new system could have been how the two sets of knowledge values sat together within the academic line in the new diplomas. The history of treating more contemporary and utilitarian curriculum concerns as 'outside business' might have come into play and aspects of the core that went beyond the narrow functionality of certain skills might have felt enormous time and resource pressure within an education system seeking to maximise the time spent on the core business of academic learning.

White's historical analysis of the curriculum had led him to be dissatisfied with the adoption of a traditional curriculum in an unthinking way without due regard to contemporary conditions or the needs of a universal education system. Accordingly Reiss and White advanced an aims based rationality for education. For them the key to unlocking the curriculum was agreement on what the aims of education should be and then all else would follow. Tomlinson's transformational areas adopted Reiss and White's vision. Right at the start it offered a vision for education:

> every young person should be able to develop her/his full potential,
> and become equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes
> needed for adult life. This includes preparation for work to which
> they are well suited, development of positive attitudes to
> continuing learning and active participation within the community
> (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.5).

The core was central to achieving this and offers:

> a common format for all 14-19 learning programmes which
> combine the knowledge and skills everybody needs for
> participation in a full adult life with disciplines chosen
> by the learner to meet her/his own interests, aptitudes and
> ambitions   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.5).

In combining the functional skills with wider learning Tomlinson described a
curriculum based on a set of assumptions about what young people needed in
adult life and sought to offer preparation for this. The detail of the wider learning
offered by Tomlinson especially in CKSA enabled the young person to develop
such learning in a broad and balanced way.

However such broader learning was also closely aligned with some of the
curriculum reforms as proposed by Fielding and Moss. They would share with
Tomlinson the establishment of a core of learning common to all young people
and the development of common understandings of political and moral issues.
The aspects of the common knowledge, skills and attributes which supported
greater awareness of citizenship, rights and responsibilities, and the general
preparation for involvement in adult life followed closely the ideas advocated by
Reiss and White as well as Fielding and Moss.

The outline curriculum for entry level had two units devoted to preparation for
employment and independent living as adults. The details about the entry units
given in Annex F of the report showed curriculum concerns that overlapped with
many of the proposals made by Reiss and White. Similarly the pre-16 foundation
course identified preparation for work as a central part of main learning. There is
so much within the innovative part of the knowledge values in Tomlinson that
accords with Reiss and White's ideas of an aims based curriculum. This is not
surprising as the starting part for much of 14-19 reform is what we would expect

from an educated 19 year old and then to work the curriculum and other arrangements back from that.

Fielding and Moss (2011) wanted common schooling based upon democratic principles. Their critique of the current educational settlement is that it was based upon a narrow instrumentalism which resulted in a curriculum and pedagogy which reduced the young person's ability to tackle the problems of the 21st century. Tomlinson's core offered both the content of common schooling for 14-19 year olds but also the vision of reflective, empowered learners who construct their own learning route. Several aspects of the CKSA as well as the extended project and the entitlement to wider learning supported a view of learning which went beyond what could be assessed but which was important for developing the skills and awareness of learners and contributing to their development as citizens.

This underlying vision of the democratic practice within learning was extended by the transcript which captured the wider learning and offered a way of communicating the broader learner journey to employers and higher education institutions. The interlocking diploma was also a democratic mechanism which would develop qualifications as a ladder rather than as a series of hurdles.

Tomlinson's proposals for more teacher assessment also spoke to a more democratic view of education. The control of progress and assessment would be restored to the teacher rather than outsourced to an external element. Two implications arose from this: first of all schools and colleges would need to support each other in developing assessment practice as well as understanding the transparency of assessment. However such a development would be a serious impediment to the current role of assessment in defining institutional performance and reputation.

It was not surprising that Tomlinson adopted Hodgson and Spours' universal agenda for 14-19, given their close connection to the 14-19 Working group. The universal framework for 14-19 was foreshadowed in their work in the 1990s. This framework sought to balance the different demands of academic and vocational programmes without sacrificing status. The proposals identified 14-19 learning as a series of possibilities rather than a set of hurdles. The flexibility between routes

and between levels pointed to a system of potential rather than a system of limitations: education being organised to encourage participation and progression.

5.6 Identifying transformational change within Tomlinson

The previous section identified the close linkage to the reformers explored in Chapter 2. As a result it is possible to detect several transformational proposals within Tomlinson. This conclusion will identify eight transformational areas within the report.

The core itself was transformational. For the first time there would be a common core of learning across all 14-19 education. This reversed the usual model of curriculum planning which went from subject to aim.

Secondly such a core was a blend of functional learning with wider learning and as such represented the attempt to adopt a holistic view of learning and the learner rather than trying to shape them into preconceived ideas of what learning should be. The different vision of a learner that was implicit within Tomlinson pointed to greater autonomy and a social learner as well as a reflective one. Tomlinson proposals for wider learning within the core meant a transformation of learning activity and learning outcome. Both CKSA and the personal review, planning and guidance elements spoke to a different view of an active learner, more autonomous in and responsible for their learning. Such wider ideas of both the learner and learning being part of the core formed the second transformational change.

Tomlinson was asked to consider the universal framework as a potential long term transformational change. The proposals satisfied that request. 14-19 qualifications would have sat in a common framework with clear equivalence demonstrated as well as the facility for mixing and transferring qualifications. There were implications of the universal framework upon the academic–vocational divide. The report did not just explore the establishment of a common framework of learning but it sought to diminish the academic-vocational divide by acting upon the causes of that divide. Specialised diplomas were given the same weight and status as academic qualifications.

It is important to define what the report did not do. It did not end this divide: it softened it. Open qualifications would include what we now describe as academic and specialised would be vocational. The national curriculum would be maintained until 16 and all young people up until that age would take open qualifications. Finally the report advocated the ending of separate A levels and GCSEs but retained them as a composite group as advanced and intermediate diplomas within the open line of learning.

The fourth transformational reform within the new framework was the proposed establishment of four levels of learning. On the face of it this might not seem a transformational change but the dominance of level 2 and 3 in 14-19 education has proven impossible to break. At key stage 4 the assumption is made that all young people take GCSEs. For the first time there was to be a system wide acceptance that some young people did not gain 5 A-C GCSEs at 16 and that other levels of performance would be made available to them and with their own indications of success.

By seeking to strengthen vocational qualifications the report presented a challenge to the dominance of academic qualifications which had been the long term characteristic of English education. Their proposals for quality and for a single framework would have created a revolution within vocational education.

The report's sixth transformational proposal advocated the move away from qualifications being looked upon as hurdles to the idea of qualifications as a bridge. The idea of interlocking was to enable young people to amass units at one level which would encourage them to go for the next level. The new entry and foundation levels were to be introduced as a means of improving access to higher qualifications.

The seventh transformational change was the transcript. This was the document which would identify difference between learners and encourage them to value every aspect of their learning rather than to focus on just the qualifications they gained. The transcript was testament to a vision of the deeper value of wider learning.

Finally within assessment the report sought to call a halt to the imbalance in external assessment by reducing such assessment to certain aspects of functional skills and open advanced diplomas. This proposal ran into the use of qualifications as the mainstay of performance management and performance reporting which was one of the central assumptions of policy making.

These eight changes sought to introduce innovation into 14-19 education which went beyond the mind-set of policy making displayed in the 2001 White Paper and the 2002 Green Paper. As indicated in Chapter 4 the messages about transformation within the 2003 Discussion document were varied and really applied to the universal framework.

On the evidence of this chapter the Tomlinson report had comprehensively articulated a new system of 14-19 education. The next chapter will analyse the Tomlinson report for how it prepared its various audiences for the depth of transformational change it was proposing and how it addressed the issue of implementation. This consideration asks important questions about the visioning of transformational change and then the articulation of the means to implement such change. To do this it will also consider how policy was framed and the problems it was seeking to resolve. The final examination will seek to understand the means and method of the implementation it sought to use to deliver the new proposals.

Chapter 6 How the Tomlinson report envisaged implementation

6.1 Introduction

In January 2004 the Government issued five questions for the Working Group to answer in their final report. These questions emphasised many of the questions posed to the Group in its original terms of reference but indicated an attempt to give some focus to that detail:

- Excellence – will the reformed 14-19 framework stretch the most able young people?
- Vocational – will it address the historic failure to provide a high quality vocational offer that motivates young people?
- Employability – will it prepare all young people for the world of work?
- Assessment – will it reduce the burden of assessment?
- Disengagement – will it stop the scandal of our high dropout rate at 16 and 17?   (quoted in Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 19).

These questions are a reminder of the underlying instrumentality of the government's agenda for 14-19 education. They demonstrate continuity with the policy concerns mapped in Chapter 4. Such instrumentality fits in with Williams' observation about policy discussion resting on the institutional. This chapter will pick up the extent of such instrumentality in the conclusion where there will be an examination of the Tomlinson report through the three tensions of Williams.

The Government was anxious that the new framework could meet demands of excellence and stretch as well as employability and could reduce high drop- out. Only in the description of the vocational did the Government mention historic failure. It is not clear from these questions the extent they anticipated a set of truly transformational changes.

The previous chapter outlined the extent of the transformational change proposed by Tomlinson. The report is full of the details of this programme. However as the second theme of this research is on change process, this chapter is the more important because it analyses what was in the Tomlinson report that sought to promote and implement the change. In doing that it seeks to establish the conceptual relationship between the content and process of change within Tomlinson.

This chapter will be organised along the lines of the conceptual framework. It is important to distil what the authors of the Tomlinson report indicated was their vision for education and its purposes and how they saw their proposals taking these forward. In looking at the transformational nature of the changes we can detect an implicit vision and purposes but the subject matter of this chapter is what is explicit because this gives a sense of how reformers can articulate their change proposals within a policy making context. This will offer an insight into what can and cannot be said in terms of change processes.

The overriding question is the nature of the conceptual terrain upon which reformers placed their programme when trying to translate it into change processes. Key messages came out of stated vision and purposes as well as problem identification and policy framing. They illustrated how reform was to be packaged in order to be persuasive as well as implemented.

As indicated at the start of Chapter 5 the third aspect of the conceptual framework looking at policy proposals and implementation process has been divided between both chapters. The analysis here will concentrate upon what in the report is outlined as the tasks of implementation. The first of these involves selling the benefits of reform which are given some prominence in the report. The second is about building and maintaining a consensus. The final part is the implementation strategy outlined within the report.

As Chapter 5 indicated the majority of the main report was given over to the details of the implementation and this places a burden upon the analysis to reflect what was written about securing implementation. Such comments featured prominently within the covering letter where Mike Tomlinson outlined the overall approach to change adopted and gave a summary of the vision of the report. There was a specific section in the executive summary which outlined the vision in greater detail and is recorded here in full.

Two elements of problem identification will be covered in this chapter. There was a useful statement at the start of the main section which outlined the range of problems identified within the report and this is included in full in section 6.3.1. There was also a specific annex which outlined in depth the problems associated

with vocational education; this annex will be paraphrased here. Policy framing will be taken from how the document lodged its proposals within the current policy context and to what extent it accepted this context. A particular issue for the report writers was how they approached performance monitoring, a central part of the policy landscape. To ensure this is considered properly within this research their recommendation upon this will be reproduced in full in section 6.3.2.

It will become clear that the implementation strategy was based on a demonstration of what was both desirable and doable. In the covering letter Mike Tomlinson indicated the overall approach to change practices and this was reinforced within both the executive summary and the main document which outlined both the benefits of reform as well as made direct appeals to key stakeholders to assist with the reform process. The report outlined how it saw the reforms being taken forward and proposed a way of managing this process.

6.2 The vision

It is in the third and fourth paragraph in his letter to Charles Clarke that Mike Tomlinson outlined the vision which also included how they saw the new system:

> our report sets out a clear vision for a unified framework of 14-19 curriculum and qualifications. We want scholarship in subjects to be given room to flourish and we want high quality vocational provision to be available from age 14.These are different, but both, in their own terms, are vital to the future wellbeing of young people and hence our country. We want to bring back a passion for learning, and enable all learners to achieve as highly as possible and for their achievements to be recognised. We must ensure rigour and that all young people are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for HE, employment and adult life.

> Despite its weaknesses, the current system has its strengths. Many elements of the reforms we propose can already be found in schools and colleges around the country and we want to build on their good practice. We also wish to retain the best features of existing qualifications and particularly the well-established GCSE and A level route. While they would not be available as separate qualifications, GCSEs and A levels and good vocational qualifications would become 'components', which form the building blocks of the new system (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.1).

There are several things to note in these remarks. First of all the vision is phrased in language not too dissimilar from the language of the vision in the government documents examined in Chapter 4. The vision is vague: it summarises the main elements of the reform and indicates this will lead to better scholarship and a love of learning. There are references to highest achievement and rigour. The main purpose of education identified is preparing young people for higher education, work and adult life. One of the few details in the vision about vocational education starting from 14 is a peculiar reading of the report.

The second paragraph is also interesting because it seeks to locate the reforms within existing good practice in schools and colleges as well as offer a reminder about the intention to maintain the best features of A levels and GCSEs as they translate into components or building blocks of the new system.

The purpose of education in the letter is restated within the executive summary that follows

> every young person should be able to develop her/his full potential, and become equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for adult life. This includes preparation for work to which they are well suited, development of positive attitudes to continuing learning and active participation within the community (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.5).

It is interesting to note that this expands upon what preparation for adult life means to include preparation for appropriate work, encouragement of lifelong learning and active community participation. This makes a rational link to CKSA and the wider learning elements of the core.

The main report begins with a section headed *Our Vision* which is repeated here in full. This vision is clearly influenced by the type of economic and social issues that were important in the Government documents reviewed in Chapter 4. However the report locks wider learning and assessment reform more closely into that vision:

Our vision

29 Our work is underpinned and inspired by a conviction that the 14-19 phase of learning is crucial for all young people. They deserve the best chances of success, in activities that are demonstrably worthwhile, and widely recognised to be so. We passionately believe our work must be a catalyst for a step-change in the way all qualifications are viewed, and in breadth, depth and relevance of attainment.

30. We believe that by 19 all young people should have the skills, knowledge and attributes necessary to participate fully and effectively in adult life. They should have had the opportunity to develop their individual potential to the full, whether intellectual, creative, practical, or a combination of these. They should be active citizens, equipped to contribute to the economic, social, political and cultural life of the country as well as developing an understanding of the wider international community. They should share in the cultural heritage of the country and of its many communities. They should have a passion for learning and should see it as a natural, necessary and enjoyable part of adult life.

31. To achieve this goal, 14-19 learning should be inclusive and challenging. It should cater for and excite all young people, whatever their aspirations, abilities, interests and circumstances. It should build upon learning up to 14 and provide pathways beyond 19 to further learning or employment. It should value and encourage a variety of content, styles and contexts of learning, including 'academic' and 'vocational', school-, college- and work-based. It should recognise and reward all successful learning, differentiating between individuals and celebrating outstanding achievements.

32. The system should meet the legitimate demands of learners themselves and of parents, employers, HE and other stakeholders. It should be clear and simple to understand. It should provide teachers, lecturers and trainers with the time, space and support to provide exciting and challenging learning experiences for young people, where assessment is recognised as an integral part of the teaching process, and professional judgements are respected and valued (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.16).

This vision covers the main efforts of the Tomlinson report. It links the unified framework and the strengthening of vocational provision to a vision of all young people getting greater benefit from education. It offers a simplified system to understand and one that gives teachers and learners alike more space to reflect upon learning. The appeal is to support the development of the well rounded learner who can then move on to be a

better employee and a more creative and active citizen. There is a second appeal to integrating assessment into the teaching process as part of a move to valuing and respecting professional judgements.

However there is a weakness in such a vision. Although it supports the proposals in the report, this vision is capable of being shared by someone who does not. As already indicated the Government in 2003 was unsure about whether its reform on wider learning had removed the problem. It is thus possible to read the vision from the viewpoint of a supporter of the status quo who considered that the wider learning aspects were already in place.

Such an ambiguity in the vision arises because the vision is based on the outcomes of learning for an individual 19 year old rather than the types of wider learner and learning that were identified within the common knowledge, skills and attributes. The framing of the vision can therefore be made within the normal assumptions of educational policy making.

Later the report defines the purposes of assessment as part of its wider vision of how the burdens of assessment should be defined, shared and better balanced:

> Assessment during the 14-19 phase performs the following functions:
>
> • diagnosis: helping young people to establish a baseline and understand their progress, strengths and development needs;
>
> • recognition and motivation: recording and rewarding learners' progress and achievement;
>
> • standard setting: confirming levels and thresholds of achievement; and
>
> • differentiation and selection: enabling employers and HE to understand what young people have achieved, and how individuals compare to their peers (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.57).

The report indicates that all of these purposes are necessary across the 14-19 age range although it admits that the balance between them would vary according to age and stage of the young person as well as the different type of learning.

Again it is possible to agree with this definition of the roles within assessment but to come to radically different conclusions about the importance of external assessment and the corresponding emphasis given to the final bullet point.

6.3 Policy framing and problem identification

It is unsurprising that a report outlining such extensive reform proposals would give greater emphasis to problem identification than policy framing. The first part of this section will examine such problem identification. The second part of this section will analyse the way policy is framed both explicitly and implicitly within the Tomlinson report.

6.3.1 Problem identification

The second paragraph of Mike Tomlinson's introductory letter tries to underline the necessity of reform with a quick sketch of the problems:

> it is our view that the status quo is not an option. Nor do we believe further piecemeal changes are desirable. Too many young people leave education lacking basic and personal skills; our vocational provision is too fragmented; the burden of external assessment on learners, teachers and lecturers is too great; and our system is not providing the stretch and challenge needed, particularly for high attainers. The results are a low staying-on rate post-16; employers having to spend large sums of money to teach the 'basics'; HE struggling to differentiate between top performers; and young people's motivation and engagement with education reducing as they move through the system (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.1).

However the problems identified follow closely the concerns identified in the Government documents 2001-2003 and the summary of Charles Clarke's January 2004 letter. In the main section of the report there is an analysis of the broad nature of the problems facing 14-19 education:

> 33. The current system works well for many. We want a system that works well for all. To achieve our vision, we need to build on strengths within the current system while addressing its weaknesses, in order to:
>
> • **Raise participation and achievement** – for participation at 17, 2002 data rank the UK 24th out of 28 OECD countries with a participation rate of 76%. More than 5% of young people reach the end of compulsory schooling with no qualifications. Particular care

will be needed to ensure that we raise the disproportionately low participation and attainment of some minority ethnic groups.

• **Get the core right** – the literacy and numeracy and Key Stage 3 strategies are improving basic skills among our young people, but there is still more to do to ensure that all young people have the skills needed to succeed in higher education (HE) and the workplace.

• **Strengthen vocational routes** – the existing patchwork of vocational qualifications fails to provide coherence and progression for learners. Too many are of uncertain quality and fail to provide clear progression routes to further learning and/or employment.

• **Provide greater stretch and challenge** – this year, 22.4% of A level entries achieved an A grade. Higher education admission officers and employers complain they are finding it increasingly difficult to distinguish between top flight candidates and learners themselves are being held back by the lack of opportunity to demonstrate their full potential.

• **Reduce the assessment burden** – excluding the National Curriculum and vocational qualifications other than GNVQs and VCEs, there were around 7.5 million subject entries in 2004, with 57,000 examiners. The sheer volume of assessment creates a formidable burden at all levels of the system and is only partially off-set by the benefits derived from assessment.

• **Make the system more transparent and easier to understand for learners, universities and employers** – too many learners lack a clear route map through the system, and end-users are often unclear about the relevance and value of qualifications which young people hold (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.18).

The Tomlinson report gives extensive coverage of the problems facing assessment in England and describes such problems as burdens of cost and time:

> the current system, particularly within GCSEs, encourages a repetitive and burdensome focus on external assessment of individual learners and fails to make use of the significant expertise and professional judgement of those who know the learners' work the best – their teachers and lecturers. A young person doing eight GCSEs and three A levels will take 42 external examinations, and lose about two terms' worth of learning in preparation and examination time. An average school pays £150,000 a year in examination entry fees, and an average college £300,000. For assessment of components derived from the existing GCSE system, we believe it is possible to make a radical shift in this balance (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 57).

The report also points out that England is unique in its emphasis upon external examinations:

> no other qualifications and assessment system in Europe is built solely on national examinations. In many other countries, high status qualifications and assessment systems are built on different processes. Teacher assessment is a common, often dominant, characteristic of the lower secondary phase of education in the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Germany and France. Such a system also operates in Australia, the United States and in New Zealand (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 59).

The international experience of adopting a mixture of assessment processes is highlighted in the report:

> such systems are also characterised by:
> * a mixed economy of internal and external assessment in upper secondary education (post-16);
> * teachers being trained effectively for their role in assessment (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 59).

This international context also provides the basis of the comprehensive critique of current vocational learning which is the third major problem identified in the report. One of the annexes to the report is given over to this critique and identifies a number of weaknesses in existing vocational provision:

- High drop-out rates
- Lack of balance between vocational and general content
- Limited or unclear opportunities for progression
- Lack of employer involvement
- Inappropriate curriculum and assessment
- Inadequate facilities
- Lack of teacher expertise
  (Tomlinson, 2004b,pp. 39/40).

What is impressive about this section is that it is backed by significant research. Ofsted had undertaken a research programme of vocational education in Denmark, Netherlands and New South Wales. They had also undertaken a review of vocational A levels in 2004. From this research they had identified comparative deficiencies between the British vocational offer and other systems in terms of the balance between vocational and general content; lack of employer involvement and lack of teacher expertise. British vocational offers 'tend to be narrow and lack general educational content or to offer only a diluted vocational

experience' (Tomlinson, 2004b, p.39). This criticism extends to vocational A levels which the QCA had discovered were much more theoretical than GNVQs and made limited use of work experience.

The issue of correct balance of knowledge and skills within such programmes is an area addressed by Tomlinson and explored in the last chapter. In Chapter 9 there will be further consideration of how such knowledge values need to operate within a strengthened vocational education.

The report also highlights profound issues of quality relating to vocational programmes: the lack of employer engagement, inadequate facilities especially in school based provision and the lack of teacher expertise. The latter had been discovered by Ofsted and related to the requirement in other countries that:

> teachers of vocational courses are normally required to have industrial experience which is regularly updated through placements. This helps to ensure that teaching is firmly embedded in current practice and that strong links are forged with employers, who sometimes undertake inward placements (Tomlinson, 2004b, p.39).

In the main report there is reference to the need to raise 'the proportion gaining advanced level qualifications to the proportion found in many other European countries, particularly through the introduction of specialised diplomas of a vocational nature' (Tomlinson, 2004a. p.55). This is a key rationale for improving vocational courses because of the poor comparative international performance at level 3 as referenced in Chapter 4.

As was noted in the last chapter the Tomlinson report identified a comprehensive and universal approach to the raising of quality within vocational education in the hope that it would raise such participation and achievement. A central aspect of that approach was the post 16 nature of the new vocational diplomas.

6.3.2 Policy Framing

The last chapter recorded the importance given to the national curriculum and the statutory requirements afforded it at key stage 4. The acceptance of the post 1988 arrangements indicated the assumptions of how policy was framed by the Working Group. Such an acceptance had an impact upon both the detail of the 14-

19 curriculum and assessment and the implementation of the Tomlinson proposals.

In the main document there are three chapters assigned to delivering the proposals ranging over 18 pages. The first chapter is on the quality assurance of the new system and the second chapter is on a supportive infrastructure. Both of these chapters give an insight into the assumptions of the framing of policy that are made by the authors of the Tomlinson report. What makes this stand out is that these are not many remarks about programme delivery and the emphasis within them is upon quality assurance; performance monitoring and performance management.

The first emphasis within the quality arrangements is made on the first page of Chapter 14 which illustrates the purposive nature of the programme as well as the necessity for end user involvement in design. However what is also important in the arrangements on quality is the role ascribed to Ofsted to monitor institutions that:

> • collaborate to provide a wide range of programme and diploma options to young people within an area, with care taken to ensure that one institution has lead responsibility for each young person;
>
> • have appropriate accommodation and facilities and teachers with relevant and up-to-date expertise;
>
> • have arrangements in place to ensure that all components of the programme are delivered, with particular attention paid to arrangements for those components which do not have easily measurable outcomes:
>
> – CKSA;
>
> – personal review, planning and guidance;
>
> – entitlement to wider activities;
>
> • have robust arrangements in place that would ensure the validity and integrity of assessment, including:
>
> – administrative systems
>
> – robust internal quality assurance systems including a potentially pivotal role for Chartered Assessors in institutions, responsible for co-ordinating assessment across the institution, and ensuring that

standards are applied consistently and codes of fair practice are adhered to

– training for other teachers to ensure that they understand their role as assessors and the standards they must apply (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.104).

National bodies such as QCA would be given the role for oversight and the awarding bodies would be given a role for monitoring and centre approval.

Chapter 15 looks to develop a supportive infrastructure based around collaboration rather than competition to enable all young people to access all the diploma lines in their area. This raises a series of practical differences around professional qualifications and pay rates between teachers, lecturers and trainers and different funding arrangements for providers of 14-19 education and training. There are also issues about how performance would be monitored and the report proposes a change to institutional performance monitoring.

Recommendation 32 is central to understanding how policy is framed within the Tomlinson report. It represents the attempt within the report to come to terms with performance management and to reflect the changes proposed through a reformed system. The recommendation seeks to move the emphasis of current performance management away from institutional management towards systems management. In other words it attempts to identify the impact on the young person rather than demonstrate institutional performance. However it is also important to note two aspects of this recommendation: first of all it maintains the importance of performance management; and secondly in the third bullet point it retains the monitoring of individual institutions. Indeed it is possible to read this recommendation as adding to the portfolio of performance management requirements placed upon individual institutions:

Recommendation 32

We recommend that in reforming the performance management system, the Government should pay particular attention to:

• promoting participation at levels appropriate to the young people concerned, by recognising increased success in keeping young people in learning, especially after the end of compulsory schooling;

• fostering flexible progression throughout the 14-19 phase which recognises that not all programmes at a given level will take the same length of time for all learners, especially by focusing on continued participation and distance-travelled, rather than specific outcomes at specific ages, before the end of the phase;

• recognising institutions' success in raising the highest level of achievement which their learners reach, especially by focusing on achievement when young people leave the phase;

• ensuring that the achievements of all young people are counted, enabling all young people to feel pride in their achievements;

• recognising the collaborative efforts of all those institutions which contribute to 14-19 programmes, by giving credit for success to all partners in collaborative arrangements; and

• promoting responsible, professional assessment by teachers, by ensuring that their primary consideration is to deliver valid, dependable judgements on their learners, rather than to provide institutional performance monitoring data (Tomlinson, 2004a,p.108).

This analysis of the policy framing within Tomlinson suggests that though a difference in a collaborative approach was identified, the underlying assumptions are not significantly different from standard performance arrangements.

6.4 Implementation strategy and plan

The third aspect of the framework concerns change processes. The analysis here will consider the nature of such processes. The terms of reference had charged Tomlinson with securing confidence in the examination system while any changes were made and to embark upon transformational change only if a consensus

among stakeholders could be secured and maintained. The challenge was to be visionary but practical and achievable; maintaining consistency and reliability while being transformative and to sustain confidence in the system while it was being replaced. The implementation strategy identified by Tomlinson sought to demonstrate achievability and practicality and secure consensus among learners, teachers and wider stakeholders by indicating the list of practical improvements the reform proposals could bring.

In the executive summary the implementation strategy was divided into the three aspects of selling the benefits of the reform, building and maintaining a consensus to deliver the reform and having an implementation plan which would take the reform forward in a realistic and deliverable manner

Maintaining support was a key emphasis within the covering letter from Mike Tomlinson that introduced the report:

> change should be a managed evolution and not a revolution. It is vital that all stakeholders are involved in the detailed work necessary and that all decisions are informed by sound evidence borne out of careful piloting and modelling. Teachers, lecturers and trainers will need support throughout and their experience drawn upon. Parents, governors and young people should be kept fully informed and the credibility of the current qualifications protected through the period of change   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.1).

Considerable space in the executive summary was given over to explaining the benefits to targeted groups. The implementation strategy was detailed in the last chapter within the main report.

6.4.1 Selling the benefits of reform

There appeared to be significant overlap between selling the benefits of reform and building and maintaining the consensus. In the executive summary there were several headings of the offer to identified groups: learners; teachers, lecturers and trainers and finally end users which are HE institutions and employers. One of the key benefits, recorded several times, was the reduction of assessment and the implications this had for learners and teachers alike. There was also a section on the benefits of the diploma which identified several of the learning benefits as well as the operational ones. The offer to learners

emphasised five aspects: choice, stretch, motivation, review and increased time for learning.

The report believed that the meaningful choices would stretch and excite young people. Their learning programmes would be tailored to meet individual needs and aspirations and would enable the learner to discover particular talents which they could pursue to the highest level. 'The reduction of assessment and the introduction of the extended project would enable more space for exploratory learning and learning tailored to particular interests' (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.12).

The system would encourage the acceleration of learning for young people capable of learning at a faster rate or higher level than their peers. The example it gave of this was the taking of components from higher education which could be accredited in the transcript.

Those young people who required external motivation would benefit from the ability to bank credits as they went along and took tests in functional skills as they were ready. The interlocking nature of the diplomas would encourage young people to move forward.

Young people would also benefit from the central emphasis given to personal review, planning and guidance which would enable them to progress through the options and make well founded choices and if they had chosen the wrong specialism to be able to adjust quickly to move to a different, more appropriate set of qualifications.

The offer to teachers, lecturers and trainers had four aspects. The first was the overall reduction in the assessment burden. The second part of the offer was enhanced professional status as assessors as well as recognition for the teachers' professional judgement. The new arrangements would give more time to inspire learners and to develop local curricula within a national framework. The report also indicated that teachers would see more engaged learners benefiting from a wider programme of learning which met their needs and interests.

The executive summary identified other benefits relating to the 'Reducing the assessment burden' and 'the Benefits of the diploma'. On the assessment burden

the executive summary offered three means of achieving this: release of time and effort by taking the emphasis away from pursuing a large number of qualifications at the same level; reducing the number of assessment objectives in many courses and subjects; and the modernising and streamlining of examination and assessment procedures.

> The Executive summary stated that the diploma would:
> - ensure that all young people develop essential knowledge, skills and attributes, including specified levels in functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT;
> - provide learners with coherent and relevant programmes tailored to their needs, interests and aspirations and mitigate barriers to accessing them;
> - ensure breadth of study, particularly through core requirements;
> - enable certain features to be balanced across the whole programme – for example, use of a range of assessment methods, and development of common knowledge, skills and attributes. This would lessen the pressure on individual components;
> - ensure depth of study within individual disciplines by developing main learning components which offer young people scope to pursue aspects of their subjects in depth and to draw down components from higher levels;
> - offer clear progression routes in all subjects and areas of learning to advanced level within the diploma framework and into HE or other education and training and employment beyond; and
> - place all learning in a single framework, which emphasises the equally valid, but different, academic and vocational learning (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.13).

6.4.2 Building and maintaining a consensus

The report intended that by focusing on the benefits for teachers and learners this would not only win support but would also help to build and maintain the consensus to carry the proposals forward. The report also appealed to other constituencies of interests which it described as meeting the needs of end users, i.e. employers and HE. The report recognised that the support and valuing of the new qualifications by such end users was a necessary component of the success of the proposals.

The report felt it had responded to the concerns of employers by advocating four items. First of all young people would be competent in functional skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and most of them would be qualified to at least level 2 in these

skills. Secondly all young people would develop employability skills including the right attitude to work through wider activities. As employers would be involved in the design and delivery of the new vocational programmes this would raise the impact of such qualifications in the workplace. Finally the system would be simpler and more transparent.

The report identified five areas that HE would benefit from the proposals. First of all learners would come to university with their skills for independent learning already developed. The report felt that such skills would be a particular outcome of the extended project; personal review, planning and guidance; and wider learning activities. Secondly HE would appreciate the opportunities for young people to be stretched and challenged by both an extended range of demands and grades at advanced level as well as the chance to undertake aspects of work at level 4. The report felt that HE would respond favourably to the breadth in advanced programmes through both the core and complementary learning. The fourth benefit was the availability of vocational courses within the common framework: this should increase the number of advanced candidates for HE. The final benefit was for admissions officers who could use details of the extended project as additional information to assist the admissions process.

The report singled out the transcript as a benefit for both employers and HE because of the additional information it would provide about applicants. Such information would include clarity about the highest level reached by the learner as well as all aspects of the wider learning they had completed (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.14).

6.4.3 Implementation strategy

The implementation strategy was primarily about building on the existing good practice and enabling it to shift into the new paradigm. The report saw that in order to maintain stability within the system the change would take at least ten years. However they recognised the need to maintain momentum and identified certain elements of the reforms that could be introduced. A key part of the implementation strategy was maintaining the consensus and some thought was given to how programme management might be developed in order to secure

this. The final chapter of the report considered the implementation strategy. It was important to note that it was seen as a long process of interconnected reforms which would involve significant programme management and oversight and to this end the report proposed a management team independent of the Department for Education and Skills.

The chapter began with an overview of the implementation plan. This introduced the notion of mind-sets which the reforms would challenge. Here the mind-set saw qualifications as individual rather than part of whole programmes:

> the reforms described in this report are ambitious and far-reaching and it would take at least 10 years for their full implementation. There are multiple and interconnecting strands to the work and these should be carefully aligned to ensure manageability for those responsible for delivery. A strong coalition between teachers, employers and HEIs, between different government departments and between communities and a host of agencies providing services to young people would be needed if the reforms are to be a success. Perhaps the most significant challenge for implementation is the change in mind-sets that our proposals demand. Thinking would need to be in terms of whole programmes rather than individual qualifications. This has implications for everything from day-to-day teaching to institutional boundaries and accountability measures. Full introduction of the proposals would take 10 years, but some changes should be introduced earlier to alleviate quickly some of the more pressing weaknesses of the system. These 'quick wins' include:
>
> • changes to the structure, content and assessment of qualifications to reduce the burden of assessment;
>
> • development of components in functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT to be made available as stand-alone qualifications;
>
> • design of vocational programmes to form specialised diploma lines and development of vocational components for open diplomas;
>
> • development of criteria for and piloting of the extended project; and
>
> • greater availability of information on learners' performance to help HEIs, in particular, to distinguish between top performers.
>
> Each reform should secure significant improvements, but the full benefits would not be felt until the diploma is introduced. This

should only happen after careful piloting of the full system
(Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 110).

Momentum was central and the quick wins were planned to be introduced within
the three to five years after the report. Later on the report indicated that
specialised diplomas would have been introduced by 2010.

Piloting and review was seen as key to the change process alongside the
involvement of all stakeholders. The report expected their proposals to evolve as
this process developed and they proposed a sophisticated programme oversight:

> while it is clearly right that the Government should lead and be
> accountable for strategic reform on the scale which we propose,
> effective delivery would require a coalition across the very wide
> range of those who have a stake in the delivery and outcomes of
> 14-19 learning. Managing this would be a complex task. It would
> require a strong strategic focus and continuing dialogue with those
> involved in making it happen, including those in the many areas of
> the country where significant progress has already been made
> towards improving 14-19 learning. In the early stages, it would be
> important to work with teachers, lecturers, trainers and those
> running education and training institutions to model the impact of
> the reforms and to explore different approaches to their
> implementation. This would provide useful information on which
> further refinements of the system can be made. It would be
> important to involve inspection and funding agencies fully to
> ensure that systems align to support the principles of reform, as
> well as the detail. There would be an important role for
> development and support for curriculum and assessment bodies in
> testing methodologies and approaches and preparing guidance and
> support   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p. 115).

6.5   Transformational change in English policy making

The analysis of this chapter and in particular the last section indicates the gulf
between the transformational nature of the proposals within the Tomlinson
report and the way they are presented and pitched to the government and the
wider public. It is helpful to consider what has been identified in this chapter
through Williams' three tensions of organisation over purpose/vision; continuity
over change and market over democracy.

At the beginning of this chapter the Government served a reminder of what it
wanted from the Tomlinson enquiry in its questions issued in January 2004. The

underlying instrumentality of these questions was reflected in the way the vision of the report was identified in the covering letter. Mike Tomlinson expressed the desire for scholarship in subjects alongside high quality vocational provision. His reason for this was the future well-being of young people and society and he offered the reforms as a way of achieving better preparation for HE, employment and adult life.

This echo of instrumentality is an important issue because it offers the glimpse of the ambiguity of purpose that lies at the heart of 14-19 education reform. A dichotomy emerges between the analysis in Chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 5 reveals the transformational nature of change introduced in the Tomlinson report whereas Chapter 6 describes a series of transactional arguments to support the change process.

First of all there is an implicit democratic education within the proposals that speaks to a broader vision of learning as reflective, empowered and practiced through the learner in several dimensions: individual learner, learner as a member of a group and learner as a member of several communities. However when it comes to the actual expression of the vision of the learning examined in this chapter its explicit articulation moves away from such a vision and seeks to align with the traditional vision of education as about economic matters and preparation for adult life. There is reference to preparation for lifelong learning and active citizenship as well as a listing of other education outcomes but such references could sit within the policy assumptions identified in Chapter 4.

The other aspect of the vision/purpose-organisation/institution tension that emerges from the report is the emphasis placed on its detail that is such a large feature of the whole report. The Tomlinson report is about detail with very little space given over to what has been examined in this chapter. This balance is shown between 32 recommendations outlining its proposals and only 4 dealing with implementation (31-35). Accordingly the Tomlinson report is an exemplar of Williams' insight about the desire to discuss organisation over purpose.

As with Reiss and White the assumption is made that education is a rational system and all that needs to be done is to show a doable alternative. The

underlying message on the appeal for implementation that can be recorded from this analysis is that the Tomlinson report is convinced of the superiority of its proposals over the status quo. The rationality of that position is self-evident. Allied to this is the tremendous effort that is made within the report into demonstrating that the proposals were practical and achievable. The logical power of a system of education better than the one it seeks to replace, steeped in the details of its own construction would seem like an impressive offer of reform. This offer is strengthened by the breadth of the consensus that had been maintained in putting it forward and the apparent support of key political figures. The rationality of such an offer appears overwhelming.

Through Williams' second tension it is possible to detect a diminution of the transformational nature of the change proposals explored in the last chapter because the change process itself emphasises continuity: to use the phrase in the report, 'it is evolution not revolution'. Current good practice in schools and colleges is used as the basis of the reform: the reforms seek to build from what is good in the system including A levels and GCSEs. There is a continuity expressed in other issues such as the same way problems are defined by both authors of the report and the government. Stretch and the need to engage the less able appear in both sets of accounts. There is specific attention given to the problems associated with assessment in Tomlinson as well as the problems of vocational education. Such attention echoes the emphasis given in the terms of reference.

This continuity contradicts some of the myths generated around Tomlinson. The Tomlinson report does not seek to end the academic-vocational divide: it sets out a better accommodation between academic and vocational learning. Indeed it preserves academic provision. Individual A level and GCSEs after a ten year period of piloting and assimilation would become units in an open advanced diploma and intermediate diplomas respectively. There is also evidence of different treatment especially at advanced level between the two types. Open advanced diplomas would have had different grading regulations compared to advanced specialised diplomas. The contribution of units is different and the reporting of grading is more differentiated in the open diploma. Differences also apply to how interlocking would work: specialised advance diplomas would accept intermediate

units as a contribution whereas for open advanced diplomas first year advanced units would contribute in the same way AS levels contributed at the time of the report.

If the report's proposals had been adopted the likely scenario would be that as now the majority of young people would still be taking very similar qualifications to both GCSE and A level. Such qualifications would have a virtual monopoly on access to academic subjects within universities and the admissions procedures of prestigious universities would extend access to students who had distinctions in such awards.

The transformational proposals examined in Chapter 5 sought to bring forward democracy instead of market solutions to education. However the policy framing examined in this chapter indicates a more nuanced view in which the terrain of the policy implementation is configured through the 1988 educational settlement. First of all, the national curriculum divides the recommendations. The 14-19 framework proposed by Tomlinson operates as two joined frameworks pre 16 and post 16. Secondly the report seeks to use Ofsted to police the new arrangements. Although the report attempts to amend the performance monitoring regime, it still proposes a national system of performance monitoring and maintains individual institutions within such reporting. Finally the report is predicated on qualification reform. Of course there is development within the report of significant curriculum reform but the weight and emphasis of Tomlinson is upon qualifications. In doing this its discourse is firmly lodged within the post 1988 settlement.

The point of this analysis is not to show weakness in the power of argument put forward in the report but to describe limitations in the ability of reformers to fashion the language for reform beyond the proposals they seek to make. It was quite possible for the government to accept Tomlinson and align it from within. However the Government's response to the report was to be a complete reverse of what was expected and in doing so in such a blatant way it offers insight into the operation of the doxastic certainties within education. The next chapter makes this analysis.

7. The Government's Reaction

7.1 Introduction

This chapter completes the documentary analysis of this research. It provides the final part of the 14-19 policy journey from 2001 to 2005. In introducing the Tomlinson report to the House of Commons Charles Clarke indicated that the government would produce a White Paper in response within three months. The White Paper was duly published in February 2005. It was introduced by a new Secretary of State, Ruth Kelly.

First of all 2005 was a crowded time in the Labour Government's policy making agenda. In March 2005 the Department for Education and Skills published a Skills White paper, *Getting on in business, getting on at work.* This document set out a skill strategy for the next 15 years which included targets for level 2 and 3 for adults by the year 2020. The Department was also planning for a second more comprehensive White Paper to be produced after the 2005 General Election. Like the 2001 White Paper this paper would lay out the schools reform agenda for the next period of government. It is important to read the 2005 *14-19 Education and Skills* White Paper as a link document between these two agendas. It was seen to be contributing to the 14-19 aspect of the developing skills agenda for the government as well as providing the 14-19 aspect of the wider schools reform.

As a result the 2005 White Paper was unique in two related ways. First of all it was the only education White Paper in modern times to be formed of a governmental response to a major piece of research by a third party. Secondly it sought to link the two domains of the Department for Education and Skills. These differences are reflected in its name.

Annex 4 below contains the names and summary details of education White Papers between 1992 and 2010. The 2005 *14-19 Education and Skills* White Paper stands out from the other White Papers for its rather prosaic title as well as the specificity of its proposals. One of the questions that will be addressed in this chapter is whether it was exceptional in terms of vision, policy framing and strategic implementation. The 2005 White Paper is important in the analysis of

identifying the doxastic certainties because it is a response to Tomlinson and in being so it adopts a more direct approach to policy formulation. This means it exposes the underlying assumptions in a clearer way than the documents reviewed in Chapter 4.

The analysis here will replicate the same format as in Chapters 4 and 6. It will consider the vision for education and purpose in the first section. In the second section it will analyse policy framing and problem identification. Given the nature of the White Paper as a formal response to the Tomlinson report the part of the analysis which focuses on strategic implementation will both outline the overall strategic ideas of implementation that formed the basis of the White Paper as well as consider the extent that those ideas served as a response to the specific policy proposals put forward by Tomlinson.

Like the previous chapter the conclusion will be an examination of the 2005 White Paper against Williams' three tensions. In doing this it will highlight both the similarities and the differences between the Tomlinson report and the government's formal response.

7.2 2005 White Paper: purposes of education

Ruth Kelly in her introduction to the White Paper indicated that the purpose of education is about economic competitiveness as well as social justice through opening up the possibility of social mobility:

> the reforms I set out here are of vital importance. They are vital to our economy – equipping young people with the skills employers need and the ability to go on learning throughout their lives. They are vital for social justice – giving us the chance to break forever the historic link between social background, educational achievement and life chances that have dogged us as a nation. And most of all they are vital to each and every individual young person, whatever their needs and whatever their aspirations (DFES, 2005, p.3).

The main text of the White Paper continued to set out the purpose of education as developing individual potential but such potential was firmly set within the needs of employment:

3.1. We believe that every young person has potential; that the job of our education system is to develop and extend that potential; that in doing so, education must concern itself most of all about the future of young people and who they will become; that it must therefore enable young people to achieve and it must prepare them for life and for work, equipping them with the skills that employers need. We believe that there are many ways to achieve, and many ways to prepare young people for life and for work. We believe that all of these have dignity and value and deserve respect.

3.2. Our vision is therefore that our education system should provide every young person with a route to success in life through hard work and dedication   (DFES, 2005, p.23).

There was a concern that though many young people were well served by the system there were many who were not because they needed better choices which include vocational qualifications to enable them to compete in an increasingly global labour market:

3.5. The burning challenge we face is to transform this picture, so that every young person is engaged by the learning opportunities they have, many more continue in education, and dropping out by the age of 17 becomes increasingly rare. We aim for a 14-19 system of education that allows our young people to exceed the standards achieved abroad, which allows them to make the most of their opportunities within a global society and a global economy, and to achieve high-quality, internationally-recognised qualifications (DFES, 2005, p.23).

7.3 Policy framing and problem identification

There was a clear statement of what was important in the set of policies being announced in the White Paper as well as the corresponding identification of the set of problems it was dealing with. The policy framing gives further demonstration of the 'policy busyness' already noted and the emphasis on the improvement of performance in qualifications. It also extends the mechanisms of performance monitoring which relied quite significantly upon such qualifications as raw data.

In her opening remarks to the 2005 White Paper, Ruth Kelly outlined a journey of improvement that had been inaugurated by the Labour Government as well as the ultimate aim of the change processes involved:

> 1. Our aim is to transform secondary and post-secondary education so that all young people achieve and continue in learning until at least the age of 18.
>
> 2. Since 1997, we have carried through far-reaching reforms to raise standards, made possible by substantial new investment in schools and colleges. Primary school standards are at their highest ever level –and in international comparisons, our primary schools match the best anywhere. Results at secondary school are also at their best ever level: in 2004, over 53% of young people achieved 5 or more A*-C grade GCSEs (or equivalent), compared to around 45% in 1997. We have also put in place a range of measures to tackle barriers to learning. Education Maintenance Allowances provide a strong incentive for 16-19 year-olds to stay in education and have a proven track record in increasing participation (DFES, 2005, p.4.)

However problems remained which needed to be tackled by the reforms to be announced in the White Paper. The summary of problems echoed closely those identified within the Tomlinson report and the government documents reviewed in Chapter 4:

> 3. But the challenges ahead remain considerable. Numbers staying on post-16 have improved but are still too low – far down the international league table. Many employers are not satisfied with the basic skills of school leavers going directly into jobs. Some young people drift outside education, employment or training between the ages of 16 and 19. The most able young people are not as fully stretched as they could be (DFES, 2005, p.4).

There was also an analysis of the lack of clear choices available to young people with less than 5 GCSEs at 16 and a very frank account of the problems of vocational education and the failure of earlier reform:

> vocational education has long been a cause of concern in this country. Ever since the implementation of the 1944 Education Act, when the proposed technical schools were not developed on the scale initially envisaged, successive policy initiatives have never been more than partially effective. Vocational education for young people has often failed to command the confidence of employers, higher education and the general public.

2.21. We have never had in this country a vocational education track that is as well understood as the academic one, nor one which has been seen as a naturally effective means of preparing young people for work or further study, even though it works well for some learners. That compares unfavourably with many other advanced industrial countries, where the large numbers of young people pursuing vocational routes from the age of 14 onwards can have real confidence that what they are doing will be in demand from employers and from higher education establishments.

2.22. Successive policy initiatives over several decades have failed to resolve the issue   (DFES, 2005, p.20).

In response to this situation the White Paper signalled the policy intent for what it described as the radical reform of 14-19 vocational qualifications.

The themes of standards and choice were echoed in the executive summary of the White Paper which also identified a list of targets for the reforms. There are obvious echoes with the earlier government documents examined in Chapter 4:

In it we set out our proposals for an education system focused on high standards and much more tailored to the talents and aspirations of individual young people, with greater flexibility about what and where to study and when to take qualifications. These proposals will:
● tackle our low post-16 participation – we want participation at age 17 to increase from 75% to 90% over the next 10 years;
●ensure that every young person has a sound grounding in the basics of English and maths and the skills they need for employment;
●provide better vocational routes which equip young people with the knowledge and skills they need for further learning and employment;
●stretch all young people; and
●re-engage the disaffected   (DFES, 2005, p.4).

The White Paper was not solely about 14-19 reform. The main text began with a consideration of educational standards in which it quoted various international surveys PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) to underpin the assessment that the primary sector was now one of the best in the world. It identified truancy and poor behaviour at school as an issue for concern. It also

reaffirmed the policy focus of improving key stage 3 which was identified in the 2001 White Paper. It would achieve this by the setting of national performance targets:

> our target is that 85% of 14 year olds should achieve level 5 or above in English, Maths and ICT, and 80% in science by 2007; with at least 50% of pupils in all schools doing so by 2008 (DFES, 2005, p.31).

Chapter 12, *A sharp accountability framework*, sought to make sure that the best was offered to young people. There was a summary of the targets on performance and the new procedures for inspection as well as institutional monitoring for colleges and schools. The chapter gave a reminder of the extent of the published tables on performance for 14-19:

> The School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables report
>
> At age 14:
> ●the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 in English, maths, science, and from 2008, ICT; and
> ●value added from Key Stage 2 to 3.
>
> At age 16:
> ●the percentage of learners achieving level 2, i.e. 5 or more A*-C GCSE or equivalent;
> ●the percentage of learners achieving level 1, i.e. 5 or more A*-G GCSE or equivalent;
> ●the percentage of learners achieving at least one entry level qualification; and
> ●value added from Key Stage 2 to 4 and from Key Stage 3 to 4.
>
> At age 18:
> ●average A level (or equivalent) point score per student;
> ●average point score per examination; and
> ●from 2006, value added at level 3.
>
> We separately publish learner outcomes in FE colleges and work-based learning, including a measure of the number of young people achieving level 2 and level 3 by age 19. Detailed benchmarking data on Success, Retention and Achievement Rates in FE Colleges is published by the LSC.

National PSA targets to increase the proportion of young people achieving level 2 and level 3 define the goals for each part of the education system. We have set targets to:
● increase the proportion of 19 year-olds who achieve at least level 2 by 3 percentage points between 2004 and 2006;
● increase that number by a further 2 percentage points between 2006 and 2008; and
● increase the proportion of young people who achieve level 3 (DFES, 2005, pp.88/9).

The measurability of educational performance was the central element of how success was identified and the accountability of schools and colleges that it enabled was an important means of achieving the changes to support that success.

7.4 Policy proposals in the White Paper

The White Paper felt it necessary to locate itself within the policy journey which had led to the publication of the Tomlinson report:

it is now four years since we first set out in 2001 our intention to reform education for 14-19 year-olds in our Green Paper 'Schools: Building on Success'. It is two years since we established a Working Group on 14-19 Reform under the expert chairmanship of Sir Mike Tomlinson. The Working Group has now produced an important report, setting out its proposals for change. This White Paper sets out the Government's plans for the 14-19 phase in England, responding to that report and moving us on to implement large-scale change (DFES, 2005, p.10).

At one level this response influenced what was in the report and at another level it had no bearing upon it. There were several echoes of recommendations from Tomlinson which were picked up in the report. As we shall see some of Tomlinson's recommendations were set within key stage 3 and others were presented to other bodies to pilot or consider. A lot of Tomlinson's recommendations were filed away with the other initiatives. However it was clear that the White Paper did represent a consideration of most of Tomlinson recommendations: the challenge is to identify what exactly was accepted.

Of course the 2001-2005 policy journey had not occurred in a vacuum and the White Paper contained a summary of the increased vocational activity in key stage 4:

> In the last four years, there have been significant changes. It has become a normal part of life in schools in this country that some young people are studying and achieving recognised qualifications in vocational subjects before 16. New GCSEs in vocational subjects have been launched and the first group of young people have just succeeded in obtaining their qualifications. The Increased Flexibility Programme has given around 90,000 young people the opportunity to spend some time learning subjects in colleges which cannot easily be offered in schools. And from September 2004, for the first time, we have 14 year olds pursuing Young Apprenticeships, giving them the chance to combine school studies with learning alongside skilled workers. Work-related learning is now a statutory requirement and the entitlement to enterprise education will be in place by September 2005 (DFES, 2005, pp.10/11).

There were three elements identified within the White Paper regarding the proposals:

- A strong core for 14-19

- Routes to success for all

- A new system of diplomas.

The proposals contained within the White Paper will be considered against these headings. However an additional heading needs to be added around what the White Paper proposed around external assessment. The underlying question of this section is how did the Government proposals respond to the eight transformational areas proposed by Tomlinson?

7.4.1 A strong core for 14-19

The striking thing about the proposals in the White Paper was that as far as the core was concerned they did not just represent a retreat from what Tomlinson had recommended but they were far more limited than even those in the 2002 Green Paper. In 2005 the government did not feel able to yield the concession to commonality that was proposed within the earlier paper's proposal for a matriculation diploma.

This section will outline the proposals contained within the document for core skills. A summary of the differences between these proposals and what was contained in Tomlinson indicates:

Tomlinson proposals on core	White Paper's response
Core as a separately defined set of learning open to all 14 -19 year olds	Elements of core to be found among key stage 3 and functional skill parts of key stage 4: great emphasis upon the role of English and Maths GCSE as a core skill
CKSA-common set of knowledge, skills and attributes across core and main learning supporting the development of individual and social learners as members of different communities and a global citizen	Treatment of CKSA as a series of subject headings: environmental awareness to be included with PSHE. QCA invited to look at how thinking skills and analysis could be incorporated within national curriculum subjects. QCA invited to consider financial awareness in revised GCSE maths
Extended project –available in all 14-19 qualifications	QCA invited to consider how the extended project could become an optional examination at AS level
All learners to have personal review, planning and guidance	A view of all learners as consumers of information and guidance with improved access to such advice
Access to around 120 hours of wider learning including work experience and volunteering	Work related learning a statutory curriculum at key stage 4 from 2004

The new core represented a refined definition of basic skills with a greater emphasis on English and maths GCSE in performance measurement and a greater shift within those GCSEs towards functional skills:

at the heart of 14-19 education will be an even sharper focus on the basics. Achieving level 2 (GCSE level) in English and maths is an essential part of a good education.

In order to ensure more young people achieve that level:

>●we have already reduced the level of prescription in the Key Stage 4 (KS4) curriculum, providing more scope for schools to support catch-up;
>●we are extending the Key Stage 3 Strategy, so that it provides teaching materials and professional development across the secondary age range;
>●we will introduce a general (GCSE) Diploma, awarded when young people achieve 5 A*-C grade GCSEs including English and maths (see Chapter 6);
>●we will toughen the Achievement and Attainment Tables, showing what percentage of pupils have achieved the Diploma standard – i.e. 5 A*-C grade GCSEs including English and maths. We expect to phase out the existing 5 A*-C measure by 2008;
>● we will ensure that no-one can get a C or better in English and maths without mastering the functional elements. Where a young person achieves the functional element only, we will recognise that separately;
>●we will make sure that this functional core is the same in the adult Skills for Life qualifications, other Key Skills qualifications and in GCSEs; and
>● we will provide more opportunities and incentives for young people who have not achieved level 2 by 16 to do so post-16 and support them in achieving level 1 or entry level qualifications as steps on the way   (DFES, 2005, p.36).

As the White Paper reduced the core to English and maths it is necessary to reflect upon what happened to wider learning, the extended project, common knowledge, skills and attributes, and the personal review and guidance elements contained within Tomlinson.

The White Paper recognised that key stage 3 was the time when much of the breadth in the curriculum could be exercised. The White Paper wanted to demonstrate that much of the wider learning desired by Tomlinson was in hand at this stage. In doing this there was also some illustration of the variety of initiatives operating at the time:

>the National Curriculum is at its broadest in KS3. The study of the sciences becomes more formalised and intensive – and pupils

should begin to develop a scientific understanding of many aspects of the world around them. It is the moment at which they are introduced to some of the key writers in the English language, including Shakespeare. They develop skills of reading and writing, speaking and listening in a modern foreign language – and as our modern foreign languages strategy is implemented in full, they are increasingly doing so from a higher base. They develop historical understanding, including a sense of chronology and of some of the most famous episodes of the past. They develop an understanding of the human and physical geography of the world. They learn to compose, perform and appreciate music. They develop the skills to produce and manipulate products in a variety of materials. They study art and produce their own works in a variety of styles and forms.

We are committed to this breadth of study and want every pupil to have a high-quality learning experience in all these subjects. We will continue our work to improve teaching and learning in them, building on the successes of the Key Stage 3 National Strategy. Links to activities outside school are important too. The Music Manifesto set out our commitment to improve access to music through a range of experiences within and beyond the curriculum. Our PE and School Sport Strategy will give children two hours of sport each week and better access to local sports clubs   (DFES, 2005, p.31).

The White Paper felt satisfied that current arrangements for citizenship, religious education and PSHE offered young people the right preparation for adult life:

all of the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum provide knowledge and understanding which are an essential preparation for further study and for adult life. As we introduce greater flexibility into the curriculum after the age of 14, it becomes all the more important that young people have been well taught in these subjects by the time they are 14. Our objective is that in future, they have a better understanding of these subjects and their key concepts than they do now.

4.10. The compulsory elements of the curriculum also provide the foundations of citizenship. Through study of citizenship, young people develop as informed and responsible citizens with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to play an effective role in society. Through personal, social and health education (PSHE), they develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead healthy, confident and independent lives. Religious education encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, to develop respect and sensitivity to others, enabling them to flourish individually and as citizens within their communities (DFES, 2005, p.31).

In this section the White Paper also identified what was meant by an educated 14 year old. This vision sought to blend the need for basics with wider learning both within the curriculum and beyond it:

> 4.3. Our vision of educated 14 year olds is simply expressed. First and foremost, we want them to have achieved high standards in the basics, because without these, we know that young people do not flourish in education, employment or life. Second, we want them to have a broad range of knowledge across a rich curriculum. Third, we want to be confident that every young person has experienced a range of learning opportunities within and outside school. As a result, we want young people to be enthusiastic and expert learners and to continue learning and developing their skills throughout their adult lives (DFES, 2005, p.29).

In its considerations of CKSA the White Paper ignored the attempt by Tomlinson to recognise that the learner is both a social as well as a civic learner. The wider situation of the learner within a changing society was replaced by a focus on thinking skills which the White Paper hoped the QCA would take on board as it reformed syllabus content. The approach adopted for key stage 3 was replicated within a narrow framing of the curriculum at key stage 4.

Under a section entitled preparation for society there was an extensive description of many of the policy initiatives taking place at the time which helped prepare young people for adult life. The list is not that convincing because there were two mechanisms identified for dealing with the issues of wider learning. The first mechanism was to add to the already crowded agenda for PSHE. The White Paper without any hint of irony offered a reminder that 'KS4 requirements in RE, PE, sex education, citizenship and the non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE) provide a foundation of knowledge and skills crucial to living, learning and working in modern society' (DFES, 2005, p. 40). It then indicated that education about sustainable development could become part of PSHE. The Department should have been aware that PSHE was usually a maximum of I hour a week and was also burdened in most schools with other issues such as careers guidance, work based learning and the other learning listed above.

The White Paper also recognised the need for better education on the management of personal finances. In discussing this it used an example of the new Enterprise Education initiative which might help with this aim and indicated that it was asking the QCA to look at how financial capability might become a feature of a reformed maths GCSE.

The extended project was also sent to the QCA for consideration. The intention was for it to be turned into an examination only available for those students who chose it thus breaking its feature within Tomlinson as a common element of the core and a part of the 14-19 framework to pick up some of the assessment aims from other examinations.

In the White Paper a lot of the above discussion about wider learning implied ideas about common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA). However the White Paper's view of CKSA was significantly narrower and more traditional than Tomlinson:

> young people also need to develop their personal skills and a set of thinking and learning skills. Personal skills are those which give young people the ability to manage them and to develop effective social and working relationships. Thinking and learning skills mean knowing how to learn independently and adapt to a range of circumstances. Together these skills are essential for raising standards, further learning, employment and dealing with a range of real-world problems. We have worked with QCA to develop an outline description of these skills, building on the notion of Common Knowledge Skills and Attributes (CKSA) developed by the Working Group on 14-19 Reform, and on existing National Curriculum guidance.

> These skills and attitudes are not confined to particular subjects, but can be developed throughout the curriculum at all ages. They are fundamental to improving young people's employability as well as their learning. Many teachers and lecturers are able to develop young people's thinking and learning skills and personal skills as part of the teaching and learning process. Taking part in wider activities beyond the curriculum can also foster these skills (DFES, 2005, p. 41).

It was clearly the intention that CKSA would be an integrated part of the subjects within the national curriculum and not part of a separately identified core.

Similar treatment was given to Tomlinson proposals for learners being empowered to reflect upon and chart their journey through the learning. This idea was replaced by a view of young people as consumers of knowledge about choices working with agencies like Connexions:

> the Working Group said that it was crucial for young people to have high-quality and impartial information and guidance to get the most out of their learning, to enable successful progression from one stage to another and to inform the important choices that young people make between different options. We agree. We are setting out a clear route to improving choice for young people and their parents – in terms of both what and where to study. If young people are to get the most out of that choice, then we must be sure that:
>
> ● every young person understands the options open to them and their potential implications;
> ● the direct influences on young people, including parents, teachers and the peer group, support them to make decisions which work well for them in the long term; and
> ● young people develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to make good choices, determined by their aptitudes and the needs of employers, rather than stereotypes about their gender or background (DFES, 2005, p. 42).

7.4.2 Routes to success for all

The second element in the White Paper was to ensure a more customised education system around the needs of young people which enabled a mixture of learning styles and was a more flexible programme of learning in terms of time and place of its offer. This contained specific implications for the single framework and the four levels of provision:

> our intention is to create an education system tailored to the needs of the individual pupil, in which young people are stretched to achieve, are more able to take qualifications as soon as they are ready, rather than at fixed times, and are more able to mix academic, practical and work-based styles of learning.
>
> We will:
> ● introduce greater choice of what and where to study and make it easier to combine academic and vocational learning;
> ● retain GCSEs and A levels as cornerstones of the new system;
> ● introduce new specialised Diplomas, including vocational material and GCSEs and A levels where appropriate and covering each

> occupational sector of the economy. The Diplomas will be available
> at levels 1 (foundation), 2 (GCSE) and 3 (advanced);
> ● put employers and HE in the lead in designing specialised
> Diplomas through Sector Skills Councils which provide the right
> grounding for work and further study, supported by QCA;
> ● raise the bar by introducing a general (GCSE) Diploma, which will
> require achievement of 5 A*-C grade GCSEs, or equivalent,
> including English and maths; and
> ●challenge and support schools to ensure that young people take
> qualifications when they are ready, ending 16 as a fixed point in the
> system, encouraging acceleration and ensuring early achievement is
> recognised in Achievement and Attainment Tables and elsewhere
> (DFES, 2005, p.44).

The White Paper implicitly rejected the single framework of learning because it set out to maintain A levels and GCSE as the cornerstone of the new system while creating a new vocationally directed set of diplomas. There were elements of a potential single framing at GCSE level where the White Paper sought to situate the intermediate level of the new diplomas as GCSE diplomas but this naming did not represent a serious attempt to systematise the proposals into a new system. It was clear from the document that the proposals envisaged separate academic and vocational routes, albeit with greater flexibility and the opportunity to cross between them.

7.4.3. A new system of diplomas

There were two types of diploma proposed. The first was the GCSE diploma which includes 5 A*-Cs GCSE with English and maths. As this could include equivalences it overlapped with the intermediate level of the specialised diplomas which formed the second part of the diploma proposal.

The specialised diploma was to be a vocational diploma with English, maths and work experience. It could also include some relevant A level or GCSE (such as science). This diploma was to be at three levels: foundation, intermediate (or GCSE) and advanced:

> the Diplomas we are proposing will work as follows:
>
> - To achieve a Diploma, young people will need to achieve
>   appropriate standards in English and maths, specialised material,
>   relevant GCSEs and A levels and have work experience.

- We will introduce the Diplomas in 14 lines and make these a national entitlement by 2015. The first four Diplomas in information and communication technology, engineering, health and social care and creative and media will be available in 2008. Eight will be available by 2010.

- We will work with employers to offer more opportunities to young people to learn at work and outside school.

- We will continue to improve the quality and number of employment-based training places through Apprenticeships, bringing them within the Diploma framework

(DFES, 2005,pp. 6/7).

It might have seemed that the White Paper offered some movement towards Tomlinson on levels. After all it affirmed a foundational level within the new arrangements. However a closer examination of what was being proposed identified the significant differences to Tomlinson.

Whereas Tomlinson saw the foundation level (pre-16) as an open diploma to be taken by young people who would not achieve intermediate level (i.e. GCSE A-C), the White Paper sought to establish the foundation diploma as a vocational diploma. In other words reinforcing the stigma attached to vocational qualifications.

The section on support for those young people with special needs (DFES, 2005, p.70) indicated that much had been done to provide entry level qualifications for young people and QCA were reviewing such provision. What this section ignored was Tomlinson's proposals for a systemic entry level qualification as part of a portfolio of 14-19 learning.

The White Paper did appear to accept one transformational proposal from Tomlinson around specialised diplomas. It advocated 14 lines of learning for what it described as employer designed diplomas. However it is important to examine the core differences between Tomlinson and the White Paper.

First of all Tomlinson had rejected vocational diplomas as a pre-16 option. The report did exemplify students doing a specialised unit on science in engineering or modern languages for business as a way of banking units for post 16. The

impression given in the report was that such options would be taken by the more able GCSE student (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.28).

It was clear that Tomlinson was seeking to avoid the adverse associations of laying vocational tracks for the less able young people while at school. However there was another reason for Tomlinson's insistence upon the post-16 nature of the vocational qualification and that was around reducing options for young people pre-16.

The specialised diplomas proposed by Tomlinson put young people on a particular learning track and by definition would reduce a learner's options:

> specialised diplomas within which content would be prescribed according to the specialism. Progression into many disciplines and employment sectors requires quite specific and specialised combinations of knowledge and skills which should be delivered and accredited through carefully designed programmes and diplomas   (Tomlinson, 2004a, p.24).

Tomlinson identified up to 20 lines of learning in order to keep it simple. The report also acknowledged that there could be up to 100 lines of sub specialisms within the system. The White Paper fudged the specialism of the vocational qualification. Indeed in its examples it referred to A levels and GCSEs as part of such diplomas.

The final reason for Tomlinson's proposals around the post 16 nature of the specialised diplomas was quality. Tomlinson had referenced Ofsted reports which criticised the lack of expertise and facilities for vocational programmes especially in schools. Tomlinson wanted to establish esteem through quality of provision. Accordingly it had suggested that only institutions with the right facilities and staff would be licensed to provide special diplomas. The White Paper, on the other hand, wanted to encourage schools to undertake such programmes.

7.4.4. External assessment as the norm

The White Paper also dealt with the three proposals made by Tomlinson on assessment: the transcript, the recommendation for interlocking and teacher assessment.

The White Paper sought to lodge a parallel arrangement to the transcript. The key stage 3 section finished with the proposal for a pupil profile to capture all of a young person's achievements by the age of 14. This would record whether such aims had been achieved. There was no reference to any other record of achievement in the document and no reference to any document that was summative of the whole process which could have been taken to employers or further/higher education providers.

The White Paper implicitly rejected the principle of interlocking at GCSEs and was not wholly convinced about interlocking diplomas:

> Progression
>
> It will be a principle of the design of these Diplomas that achievement at one level is a full preparation to begin to work towards the next level. In addition, we want the design of Diplomas to encourage young people to move on from one level to the next. The most obvious route for achieving this is the one proposed by the Working Group on 14-19 Reform – that the Diplomas should interlock, so that some of what is achieved at one level counts towards what is needed at the next (DFES, 2005, p.53).

On assessment the Government offered additional support to teachers at key stage 3 for assessment though stopped short of suggesting that the core subjects be internally assessed:

> we do, however, agree with the Working Group on 14-19 Reform that more robust teacher assessment can enhance the professional judgement of teachers and contribute to better teaching and learning for young people. Formative assessment is an essential part of effective teaching at every level. We also agree that the assessment burden on students, teaching staff and the system should be reduced. This Chapter, therefore, summarises our plans for improving teacher assessment at KS3 and for reducing the assessment burden (DFES, 2005, p.73).

However in the next paragraph the Government reaffirmed the current balance of external to internal assessment at key stage 3:

> Externally set and marked National Curriculum tests will continue in the core subjects of English, maths and science. From 2008, subject to successful piloting, we will also introduce an external online examination in ICT. The remaining foundation subjects of history, geography, citizenship, design and technology, modern foreign

> languages, PE, music and art and design will continue to be
> assessed by teachers, but we will do more to improve the
> effectiveness of assessment. (DFES, 2005, p.73)

The changes on assessment proposed by Tomlinson were rejected because

> we believe that current assessment arrangements are valid,
> reliable, fair and transparent and meet the needs of those who use
> them. The Independent Committee on Examination Standards
> concluded that, "no examination system at the school level is better
> managed". We do not, therefore, accept the Working Group on 14-
> 19 Reform's proposals for radical changes to the assessment
> system. In particular, we do not accept the proposal for replacing
> existing external assessment with internal teacher assessment
> (DFES, 2005, p.72).

The Independent Committee on Examination Standards (McGaw et al, 2004) was set up by Mike Tomlinson and it was asked to focus on the question on consistency of examination standards of A levels over time. As the Tomlinson report was proposing maintaining external assessment for A levels, its use in this context was entirely inappropriate and misleading.

The White Paper confirmed the performance management regime and indeed amplified it through publishing a whole chapter on it. Young people's achievements would be recorded at 14, 16 and 18 and schools and colleges would be set targets for such achievement and a new inspection framework would be devised in 2005 which would involve more frequent inspections for weaker providers.

7.5 Conclusion.

The 2005 White Paper represents the conclusion of the policy journey and it is appropriate to observe the main elements of that journey. Such elements will be considered through Williams' tensions: continuity/change; organisation/purpose and market/democracy.

Although the 2005 document logs the important policy journey since 2001, there is an underlying set of continuities between it and the earlier documents. The 2001 and 2002 documents envisaged the improving of secondary education by the insertion of a strengthened vocational track from the age of 14 to provide

greater choice and improved outcomes for many young people. The main focus of change is the same in 2001 as it is in 2005: a proposal to establish a reinvigorated vocational stream.

The continuities in the 2005 document are more overt. There are several references to maintaining the existing academic track as the cornerstone of the new system. Issues of widening learning are a concern but as noted in Chapter 4 the government documents are always uncertain whether previous solutions have resolved the problem. In the 2005 document there is significant reference to activities to support physical and creative activity as well as citizenship and financial awareness. Indeed in reaffirming these it is essentially offering the same view as the 2003 document which considered the pre-16 aspects of wider learning as already achieved and suggested that the Working Group looked towards the post 16 aspects of such learning. It is also noticeable that the post 16 aspect of wider learning is conspicuous by its absence in the 2005 document (DFES 2005, p. 62) which means it was no longer a policy concern.

Those experiencing education within the period under discussion would have struggled to discern the continuities that I am describing because the 2005 White Paper (and the earlier documents) refer to a set of policy initiatives which would create the impression of significant changes being made within the curriculum.

The White Paper does outline its own change agenda; the introduction of the new diplomas and the intensification of performance monitoring. However such change proposals are not transformational in the sense described in the introduction to Chapter 5. Obviously the new diplomas if pursued as a genuine strengthening of a vocational route would by the same definition be indicated as transformational but there are already indications of a diluting of the vocational nature within the Paper. Academic qualifications are given as examples of possible units of the new diplomas and the generality of the vocational areas identified is in stark contrast to Tomlinson's indication of up to 100 sub categories.

What is clear in all the documents viewed, including Tomlinson, is that organisational detail is paramount and educational vision/purpose is secondary. In the following chapter there will be an analysis of the relationship between the

two. All the documents assume the rationality of what is being proposed and there is an underlying self-evidence to the assertion of policy reform.

There was recognition in each of the Government papers that attempts at strengthening vocational education had failed in the past. However there was no statement reflecting on such failure and a plan to avoid it happening with the plans being put forward. This lack of reflection on the failure of previous attempts at such reform extended to the Tomlinson report itself. All the documents examined in this phase of the research appeared to share a hubris that contemporary reform was in some way powered by a mindfulness that would overcome whatever prevented reform in the past. Such mindfulness did not extend to any examination of why previous attempts at reform had failed. This naïve optimism around implementing vocational reform where others had failed was a surprising feature of all the documents.

The policy landscape remained unaltered in essence. The concerns identified were the same: low levels of level 3 among young people primarily linked to the low profile of vocational education; the concern over stretch and the need to engage the disaffected and groups not benefiting from 14-19 education. However the solutions offered to deliver on such problems also remained the same and the mechanics of policy making were locked into an agenda of diversity, autonomy and increased scrutiny. The currency of such policy discussion was qualifications.

Performance management became more sophisticated across 2001-2005. The extent and number of targets increased over the period. As recorded here the Government had identified a plethora of ways of monitoring progress within education.

In terms of the 1988 settlement of market privileged over democracy we can see that such policies retained the dominance of such a settlement. As noted in Chapters 5 and 6 there were many democratic instincts behind the proposals within Tomlinson however such instincts had to be portrayed on a policy canvas which took its basic colours from the 1988 Education Reform Act and what has happened since in education policy making.

This completes the second phase of the research which offers the essence of the policy journey of 14-19 reform within the period 2001-2005 as the basis for a consideration of doxastic certainties alongside heterodoxy. The next phase will apply the examples of educational purpose/vision; policy framing/problem identification and the proposals for policy change and change processes. This will enable the research to move onto its aims: to identify what appear as such certainties and from that analysis to distil how change at the level of doxastic certainty might take place within the 14-19 age range.

Phase 3   Identifying doxastic certainties within 14-19 education and possible routes for change

Chapter 8   Doxastic certainties in 2001-2005 education policy making

8.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to secure the first aim of this research: to identify the *doxastic certainties* within education in the period of 2001 to 2005. It also seeks to offer a platform for how the second aim might be secured in the next chapter: to identify the change processes that operates for doxastic certainties and outline proposals for change within 14-19 education. The final section of this chapter will contain a summary of what doxastic certainties have appeared from this analysis.

To do this it will be necessary to explore two aspects of the analysis. In Chapter 2 reference was made to Michael Young's importance as a proponent of change in 14-19 education who turned against such reform. In seeking to explain what he saw as the failure of the Tomlinson report he outlines the relationship between education, knowledge and identity. These points are important for this research because they indirectly support its basic assumption that the framing of educational purpose and policy is an aspect of our general knowing system and therefore subject to different epistemic rules than normally apply to what I have described as first sphere thinking. In locating the failure of Tomlinson in its inability to have an impact upon such deep epistemic ideas Young points towards the philosophical nature of 14-19 reform.

Therefore it is useful to explore his perspective upon the importance of knowledge and identity within education and his references to the non-differentiation of knowledge and its links to a prior sense of what is sacred. Such thinking lies close to my aim of seeking out what are the aspects of education which are operating in the second sphere. Such an analysis offers a context for the examination of the policy journey and its relationship to assumptions about knowledge and identity.

The second part of the analysis in this chapter is the use of the conceptual framework to explore the government documents reviewed in Chapters 4 and 7

and to extract from this a better understanding of what is being said and implied in the documents. Such an analysis contains the problems already identified about the difficulty in trying to expose what are unsaid assumptions.

Two tactics of analysis are used to overcome such difficulties. The first owes its basis to Bourdieu when he talks about misrecognition. What will be argued here is that the stated purposes of education indicated in Chapters 4 and 7 are examples of misrecognition. The second tactic looks to what is implied within the documents about purpose, policy and implementation.

What emerges from both sets of analyses is that the distinctions that have been identified in this research as useful tools for ordering the analysis- the themes of change content and process and the conceptual framework - are not made within the doxastic certainties. Indeed as rationalising attempts to understand what is an undivided and multifaceted set of beliefs, such distinctions were always bound to collapse within the doxastic certainties themselves. In this chapter they prove their usefulness by enabling the analysis to be made. But such differences of perspective cannot be identified within the unspoken assumptions of education.

8.2 Young's observation of the sacred and identity in the curriculum

Michael Young's critique of Tomlinson is made in the immediate aftermath of its failure. However it begins in the wrong place:

> the question I want to ask is: were those of us who supported the change to a unified system in the 1990s just naïve idealists or, if not, what went wrong? Was it our economic analysis, that the new global economy needed a new national education system that was flawed? Was it our political analysis that assumed there was genuine popular support for the phasing out of A levels and the change to a unified system of upper secondary education that was wrong? Were we right in assuming that this reform would be seen as the logical completion of the comprehensive vision for secondary education that was launched by an earlier Labour Government in 1965? Or was it that our sociological analysis of the role of education in the wider society was flawed?
>
> (Young, 2008,p.161/2)

These questions assume rational answers to a policy framing situation. Accordingly they miss the wider point and it is interesting that he only deals with

them briefly before he moves onto more substantive issues when he begins with an appeal to commonly held ideas about education:

> educational common sense, as understood here, assumes that a major purpose of formal education is to enable students to acquire knowledge that: (i) is not accessible to most people in their everyday lives, and (ii) enables those who acquire it to move beyond their experience and gain some understanding of the social and natural worlds of which they are a part (Young, 2008, p.165).

From this he moves to the idea that the knowledge of such formal education must be differentiated to remove it from everyday experience. Young draws upon both Durkheim and Bernstein for the key features of such differentiated knowledge. He uses the social anthropological studies of religion made by Durkheim to note two different foundations of knowledge: one theoretical, generalising and relatively fixed; and the other practical which by necessity was subject to change.

In primitive society such generalising knowledge was sacred and the practical knowledge profane. The main distinguishing factor that Young draws from this analysis is the idea of context independent knowledge which is logically separate from everyday context dependent understandings.

> The properties of context independent knowledge are that (i) it can provide generalizations and explanations that go beyond specific cases (hence its paradigm case is the natural sciences), and (ii) it allows those who acquire it to develop the capacity to imagine alternatives   (Young, 2008, p.166).

Therefore there are some central aspects of such knowledge: it is universal, belief sustaining and semi-permanent. It also enables explanation as well as higher order analysis. It is differentiated from the mundane. Accordingly it has some correspondence with the ideas of second sphere thinking developed in Chapter 3 in being linked to ideas of the sacred and in what it does, as an enabler of understanding.

Young then looks to Bernstein to gain a perspective on such differentiated knowledge and the impact on the understanding of identity. He quotes Bernstein's claim 'that identities are forged by boundaries between domains of knowledge and between knowledge and everyday experience' (Young, 2008,

p.166). Such identities are so closely linked to how knowledge is classified and framed that it becomes very difficult to understand alternatives to knowledge:

> if Bernstein's theory is right, this can explain the resistance to unification and the persistence of the academic/vocational division in all societies. Unless an alternative basis for learner identity is developed unification is likely to generate a weakening of both teacher and learner identities. A possible consequence of unification might be an increase in participation but with no parallel expansion of knowledge   (Young, 2008, p.167).

For Young, attempts such as Tomlinson's to unify the curriculum are doomed to fail because they seek to mix up different types of knowledge and undermine the important subject boundaries that carry the messages that demarcate our identities as knowing individuals. In Young's analysis Tomlinson would raise the number of individuals involved in education but would dilute the content basis of their knowing.

What Young is doing is to observe the important links between a view of knowledge, the education organised around that view and the identities that flow from them. Such observations give support to the philosophical assumptions of this research as well as draw a picture of a series of relationships around knowing and the expectations placed upon schools about what should be taught.

Furthermore he suggests an intricate network of assumptions based around identity and knowledge. This network is consciously associated with the idea of the sacred. In other words he implies education is an initiation into a traditional set of beliefs and he gives concrete evidence of this by his support for non-differentiated knowledge which is counter posed to more mundane and relevant knowledge assumptions.

There are consequences of this for the analysis of education policy. The deep-seated ideas of self that are wrapped into how we know make superfluous any appeal to rationality in the analysis of educational knowledge. In the context of such a picture it is now useful to move onto how education is envisioned in terms of purpose and policy framing in the documents reviewed.

8.3 Stated purpose of education in the policy documents

Michael Young is also concerned about the continuing instrumentality of the purpose of education through linking it to global competitiveness. He updates Williams' readings of curriculum policy makers and describes the new policy dominance as 'technical-instrumentalists':

> those who Raymond Williams (1961) referred to as industrial trainers but who are referred to here by the broader term as 'technical-instrumentalists', have consistently challenged the neo-conservative view in education and in policy terms are now the dominant group. For them, the curriculum is not educational in the traditional sense, but directed towards what they see as the needs of the economy. In the late 1990s this was expressed in terms of preparing for the global and more competitive knowledge economy of the future (Department for Education 1998 and 1999) (Young, 2008, p.20).

The references that Young makes are two White Papers associated with post compulsory education: *the Learning Age* in 1998 and *Learning to Succeed* in 1999. Young complains that 'from this perspective education, the curriculum and even knowledge itself becomes a means to an end' (Young, 2008, p.21). The analysis in Chapters 4 and 7 confirms that such instrumentality is reflected in the purposes identified for education.

The education White Papers considered in this research carry a view of education as serving two aims. It was reported that Estelle Morris introduced the 2001 White Paper with a statement about education having a dual purpose offering fulfilment as well as the skills and values to meet the demands of a fast changing world. In the 2005 White Paper her successor Ruth Kelly focused the purposes of education more closely with the needs of work.

Such instrumentality does yield much in the way of explaining what education is meant to be as it focuses on its outcome. In other words, in terms of Williams' tension between the discussion of purpose and the institutional arrangements, the stated purpose itself is about the institutional outcomes of education and does not discuss why education is the way it is. In the policy discussion the purpose of education itself is an accepted thing. It is an assumed entity which needs no further comment.

At one level such purposes are obvious. It is clearly the case that there are economic benefits from learning for individuals. It is also the case that some young people from a disadvantaged background can access such benefits through education. Therefore improving educational access for people from disadvantaged backgrounds seems likely to act both as an economic stimulant but also as a policy measure that assists social justice. However it is possible that both assumptions contain the fallacy of hasty generalisation. In other words whereas an individual might benefit economically from learning, if there is limited social mobility, then it would be impossible for many to benefit. Similarly if there is no extra demand in the economy for more people with qualifications then it is possible that increasing the number of people with them will not have any effect upon the economy.

An example of this might be viewed from the consequence of the policy of extending the proportion of people undertaking Higher Education. Such a policy when it was introduced by New Labour assumed a causal relationship between such increases and economic growth. However without such economic growth the increase in graduates can only lead to an increase in the number of graduates in non-graduates jobs and a displacement of people with non-graduate qualifications in the labour market. Similarly even if the increase in numbers attending university is disproportionately from young people from a disadvantaged background it is unlikely to affect social mobility. This is because the key factor here is not obtaining a degree; it is obtaining a particular type of degree-a type which is less likely to lead to a non-graduate job. There are also other factors at work such as social networks which restrict access to graduate jobs especially the higher status ones.

Accordingly the stated economic purposes of education are affected by their ability to prepare young people for the labour market as well as other decisions within the economy that enable economic growth. The social purposes of education are determined by what is happening to social mobility. In simple terms, increasing the numbers in education is a supply side aspect of a complex reality and accordingly its effectiveness must always be limited by what occurs on the demand side.

There are other tests that could be applied to these stated purposes. There is little connection between how education is organised and these stated aims. An education service that wanted to promote our place in the global economic race would be organised in an entirely different way. There would be greater emphasis given to global finance and management, export, technical development and innovation. Many of us would be learning Mandarin. Logistics and shipping would be an option at school. Certainly an education system that was serious about improving economic competitiveness would not struggle as this one has to develop technical and vocational learning.

In the same way there are few attempts to address the causes of disadvantage in education. Marketised systems by their nature are likely to exploit material differences between people and a marketised education system will do the same. There is evidence from Australia (Perry and Southwell, 2014) that market educational systems restrict access of the less well off to the full breadth of the curriculum. Such restrictions form an additional barrier to learning for disadvantaged young people. The assertion to improve social justice as an education purpose without considerable efforts to diminish the effect of a market system cannot be anything but pious intent.

The history and practice of education in England suggests a different truth than the one Michael Young seeks to describe. The suggestion being made here is that the stated purposes of education which emphasise economic competitiveness are elements of misrecognition of the vision of education that operates within England. Accordingly Young is commenting on the illusion rather than the reality. However he is correct to complain about the language about purpose and vision in Government documents being highly instrumental. The point I am trying to make is that the language conceals the real purposes of education which remain unstated. The language of economics and social purposes also leaves the organisation of the curriculum in its traditional academic form. The task of the next section is to draw out what the documents imply is the real vision and purpose of education.

8.4 Policy framing and problem identification

In the analysis of the Government documents conducted in Chapters 4 and 7 there emerges a focus of policy framing on success, excellence and standards and this focus is integral to the policy focus on choice and diversity often described in the documents as opportunity. The intention of such policy framing is to raise standards and the means to do this is achieved through expanding opportunity. However in the two chapters examined there is also reference to increasing institutional autonomy which in itself is linked to the performance monitoring regime. As this regime itself is based on increasing qualifications it returns in a loop of policy assumptions to standards. The aim of this section is to examine the elements of this policy framing and problem identification to assist in the task of revealing the true nature of the purposes of education as indicated within the Government documents.

It is now time to consider what are the implications of the term, 'standards', upon educational policy. The 2005 White Paper is forced by Tomlinson to defend A levels and GCSEs rigorously and is fixed on the notion that these examinations are highly regarded in the world. Policy is then framed in terms of raising standards. The narrative in the documents is that we need to reform education in order to enable standards to rise and our economic competiveness to improve. However this term is assumed and never explained. Such standards appear as the beginning and end of any discussion about the nature of education itself.

In the 2005 documents there is even an allusion to a fictitious international playing field of such standards which exposes them to further lack of specification:

> we aim for a 14-19 system of education that allows our young people to exceed the standards achieved abroad, which allows them to make the most of their opportunities within a global society and a global economy, and to achieve high-quality, internationally-recognised qualifications (DFES, 2005,p. 23).

In Chapter 4 the analysis of such standards shows ambivalence between basic skills and wider knowledge and such ambivalence is maintained in the 2005 document. GCSEs and A levels are assumed as the representatives of wider

knowledge but the policy innovation is to introduce a limitation on the target of 5 A*-C GCSEs which would then require young people to attain Maths and English. Such a policy change might originate from the idea that such standards link to basic or core skills. However it is possible to read that the ambivalence over what is meant by standards illustrates a multi-natured idea of standards which is more implicitly than explicitly expressed within policy documents.

There are other aspects of their multi-nature. Standards and especially the idea of raising them are aligned to performance within education. However there is more than a hint of a close relationship in the modern context between standards and examinations which is why the policy discussion focuses on qualifications rather than curriculum. In the Government documents there is no discussion of the nature of the curriculum in GCSEs or A levels per se. Such discussion only occurs in the margins when vocational qualifications are being proposed or when aspects of wider learning are under consideration. Often it leads to statements about how such matters are covered within the standard curriculum. The highest level of such change that is proposed in the 2005 White Paper is a referral to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for them to consider some amendment to the standard curriculum.

The Working Group was asked to consider change but only by maintaining standards. The Tomlinson report replied by seeking to establish better scholarship through its proposals. However scholarship is an ambiguous term. In Tomlinson it meant both the nature of curriculum especially in the core as well as maintaining the integrity of qualifications. However in the standard framing of policy the first was never conceived as a possibility and Tomlinson was not convincing on the second aspect. Curriculum change stood outside policy framing and the proposals for assessment reform threatened the neutrality of performance monitoring by putting such matters into the hands of the very institutions that were being monitored.

For the authors of the Tomlinson report standards would be delivered through a new framework of learning which would be based on the transformational policies identified in Chapter 5 but would be subject to the policy framework of rigour they proposed. However it would still be interpreted through examination

success. To the Government, as such proposals also challenged the integrity of qualifications they meant a decline in standards as traditionally conceived.

The 2005 White Paper is quite clear in its message: standards are protected by adopting GCSEs and A levels as the cornerstone of the system. Such examinations represent the bedrock of standards. The performance measurement signals this and encourages schools and college to raise their pass rates. The 2005 White Paper retreats from the nuances of earlier Government documents on introducing core and wider learning because it has been pushed into making clear delineations by Tomlinson.

The policy framing on standards is very narrow indeed. Excellence or success is achieved through better examination results in 14-19 education. It is indistinct within such assumptions whether the standard is the examination result or the learning that lies behind it. In policy terms this is illustrated by the outcomes of English policy making which has been to raise 5 A*-C GCSE pass rates from 34.5% in 1990 to 81% in 2013. In such a statement it is not clear which comes first the rise in qualifications or the rise in standards. Such ambiguity reflects our understanding of standards.

Chapter 4 recorded a close alignment between the policy framing on standards and the problem identification which is highlighted in the documents. The problem of English education is the low achievement of young adults when compared to other countries. This problem is exacerbated by the comparative low participation of 17 year olds in education. Problem identification is consistent throughout the documents. The 2002 Green Paper quoted OECD data about 16-18 participation being well below European and OECD averages. The 2003 document is concerned about the ranking of 25th out of 29 developed countries for participation of 17 year olds and the 2005 White Paper repeats the same statistic. Such participation has a knock on impact upon performance. The 2002 document points out that as a result of such low participation there is a gap in performance especially at level 3 among young adults:

> a recent report found that, overall, the proportions of the
> workforce holding Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in the UK are
> below those in France and Germany. Although the gap between the

> UK and the best of the rest of the world is narrowing in terms of the achievement of Level 2 qualifications, the majority of these gains are made by rising attainment at GCSE (DFES, 2002, p.8).

The last sentence supports my interpretation that GCSE is seen within policy framing as part of the contribution being made to economic competitiveness.

The policy framing around standards is also linked in the four government documents to ideas about choice/diversity/ opportunity and institutional autonomy. The 2001 White Paper was at pains to show it was at the heart of the government's wider public reform agenda around four objectives of increased accountability; devolution to the front line; increased consumer choice and reform of public sector professionals:

> the education service has made considerable progress towards all four objectives. This White Paper opens the way to significant further achievements. Devolution and diversity are its hallmarks. The systematic drive for higher national standards, focused particularly on schools which are under-performing, will be extended from primary to secondary level (DFES, 2001, p.7).

In Chapter 4 the analysis of all three documents shows continual reference to increasing autonomy of schools within 14-19 education. Giving schools such autonomy is a lodestar of policy framing which is replicated in most of the White Papers (Annex 4) since 1992 and indeed in the most recent White Paper (DFE, 2016). The implication of such a policy is that it automatically leads to raising standards.

The idea of diversity and choice is a particular motivation behind 14-19 reform. The introduction of new vocational qualifications is seen as providing greater choice for young people and as a means of increasing performance. The emphasis on performance indicators blurs the line between whether such indicators measure the performance and participation of young people or the means of identifying system performance as a whole. This is an important difference from the point of view of this research because it is clear from the analysis here that the former relates to the focus on the content of change whereas as was seen in Chapter 4 the latter is an element of the focus of change process. In other words increasing performance monitoring is both a part of the policy aims in 14-19 and

an important part of the change process. This opens up the important observation that not only are standards part of the policy proposals and the means of measuring them but also the policy itself is part of the change mechanism. This will be considered in greater depth in the next section.

8.5 Strategic ideas on policy implementation

In a rational set of policy statements there would be a clear line connecting vision through problem identification to actions and then the measuring of success in what the policy intends to do. In the policy journey reviewed there was a statement of purpose identified in the 2001 White Paper which was supported in the 2002 Green Paper and the 2003 document. This statement of purpose was reiterated in the 2005 White Paper. This is a statement about the joint aims of economic purpose and social justice and is set within the context of an international global economic race. All of the documents identify a policy framing which seeks to secure the raising of standards through the policies of greater choice and autonomy. It justifies the set of interventions it proposes by the problems that are identified (the participation and performance of young adults). This section examines more closely the set of interventions within each document and tests the apparent rationality of them. Again it is important to look for the possibility of misrecognition and some guidance as to what the doxastic certainties might be.

There are two types of interventions that can be identified within the policy documents: policy initiatives and change practices. The first are the individual policies that are advanced within each document. The second is the set of assumptions that are made within the documents about how change happens within the system.

In terms of policy initiatives although there is an underlying similarity to the 14-19 policy reforms that are put forward in each document, there is also some variety. All documents advocate strengthening vocational qualifications within the system: however there is a different means of doing this advocated in each. As we have seen there is an attempt to introduce core and wider learning into the matriculation diploma proposed in the 2002 Green Paper.

The 2003 Paper shelves this reform in expectation of a more radical approach being put forward by Tomlinson which would have moved away from the tracked system proposed in 2002 to a more universal system. However the 2005 document advocates an unchanged academic system as the cornerstone of 14-19 and a new set of specialised diplomas to strengthen vocational provision.

The language of the government's document is invested with the rhetoric of transformational change. However the analysis of actual policy proposals indicates a vocational track alongside an unchanged academic system. None of the changes proposed meet the definition of transformation that is found in the introduction of Chapter 5.

In Chapter 4 it was noted that the Government had not fully formed its strategy for change. Such a strategy was emerging from the initial statements in the 2001 White Paper and there was greater technical detail given in the 2002 document. But the process was waiting on affirmation through a consultation process. This change dynamic was altered by the events of 2002 in changing both the context and the anticipation of transformational reform. As a result the 2003 document while containing short term changes rested that expectation of transformational reform within Tomlinson. The 2005 White Paper as analysed in the previous chapter indicated a return to the policy assumptions of the earlier documents as well as a restitution of a change programme. However this change programme comes through the proposals themselves. They are the specialised diplomas proposed by the Government. Their implementation is both the content of change and the process of change.

Increased performance management of education and greater institutional autonomy are both change proposals endorsed by the documents but also key parts of the ideas of implementation and change management. However what emerges is a performance culture which links more closely to the unchanged state of education rather than what is allegedly being transformed by the policy changes.

An example of this is in the 2002 document where there is a re-affirmation of the importance of targets and performance tables have in driving up standards.

However such performance is measured by performance in individual subjects at key stage 3, achieving 5 A-C GCSE and level 2 and level 3 at 19.

By the 2003 document the priority targets are more aligned to a 14-19 phase:

- compared with 2002, the proportion of 19 year-olds achieving 5 GCSE grades A* to C or the equivalent vocational qualifications will rise by three percentage points by 2004, and a further three percentage points by 2006;
- by 2010, 90% of young people by age 22 will have participated in a full-time programme fitting them for entry into higher education or skilled employment;
- by 2004, 28% of young people will enter Modern Apprenticeships by age 22; and
- by 2010, to increase participation in higher education towards 50% of those aged 18 to 30. Also, to make significant progress year on year towards fair access, and to bear down on rates of non-completion (DFES, 2003, p.17).

These targets are a development of the 2001 targets and seek to address the issue of performance at or beyond 19 but what are their messages to schools and colleges? The first target tells schools to concentrate upon the numbers of young people getting 5 A*- C GCSEs. Although vocational equivalence is included given the number taking academic subjects at this level, it is primarily an academic target. The same interpretation applies to the second and fourth target. Given the proportion of academic full time courses available to young people beyond 16 such targets focus on academic education. Only the third target clearly goes outside current institutional arrangements.

However because of the increasing number of young people getting 5 A-C GCSEs at 16 and the proportion of young people achieving A levels, the academic targets would be likely to be met whereas the apprenticeship target could only be aspirational. According to BIS statistics in 2004/5 there were 405,000 apprentices under 24 by 2013/4 the figure had risen to 500,000 (BIS 2014): there are over 5 million 16-24 year olds. One major reason for the failure to reach such a target is the large numbers of young people on academic courses.

The way success in education is measured is illuminative. First of all there is the assumption that the most important things in education are measurable.

Performance can only be identified through numbers. The system then generates a set of statistics which in the main are about the achievement of qualifications. The assumption behind these statistics is the increase in such measurable performance delivers the declared aims and purposes of education. As the majority of young people are on academic courses, this means that such courses contribute towards increased economic performance and improving social mobility.

In practice the declared purposes of improving our global economic performance and improving social justice are offered up in order to justify the maintenance of an academic system of education. The central ideas in the 2005 White Paper are to introduce specialised diplomas to fill the vocational skills gap and to endorse more sophisticated performance management systems. If considered impartially such ideas could only have marginal impact on delivering the declared purposes of the White Paper because the majority of young people would not take vocational qualifications. Of course it is also assumed that GCSEs and A levels themselves serve economic goals. Such an assumption then leaves the question why have vocational educational reforms in the first place: a question which is then answered by the history of such reform.

The documents develop a narrative of reform based upon economic progress and social justice. However the proposals that follow do not address these issues. None of the documents refer to the traditional economic problems of the UK economy (low skills, low pay and low productivity). There is an implication that the reforms will raise the level of skills. Such skills are never explained and from this analysis the policy assumption is that they will be achieved mainly through academic qualifications. The 2002 Green Paper indicates how people with higher qualifications receive better pay but the argument and its supporting statistics are presented in a superficial way. While the rhetoric is about improving UK economic performance there is no linkage to any economic or regeneration policy that actually might mean there is some planning behind that intention. Instead the economic relevance of the reforms is assumed as self-evident.

It is now appropriate to return to the question asked earlier about what is the real purpose of education as demonstrated in these documents. The stated purposes

of economics and social justice are not illustrated through the policy documentation. What is seen in their stead is the reification of the idea of standards as well as the ideas of choice and autonomy. Standards operate as the beginning and end of any discussion about the nature of education itself. They indicate purpose, curriculum and policy. They act as a stand-in for the desired outcome of education reform which is consistently about raising standards. They are also self-evident.

This is not a rational system. It is a system of beliefs where each belief supports each other. Success slides into standards which appear as qualifications: such qualifications appear as performance which supports the raising of standards. The whole set of interconnecting relationships present itself as self-evident and difficult to distinguish.

The overt purposes of education do not relate to the results of reform. Indeed the real outcomes of the policy journey identified are increased performance measurement, greater choice at key stage 4 and increased institutional autonomy. Such outcomes suggest that in the period reviewed the purposes of education policy were standards, choice and autonomy. It now remains to summarise this discussion and provide what are the doxastic certainties that appear to operate in the 14-19 policy journey 2001-2005.

8.6 Identifying doxastic certainties in 2001-2005

The stated purpose of education and vision is like an iceberg. There are statements about economic and social justification: the first relating to both individual and national economic prosperity and the second relating to the social justice of an education system that allows all to prosper. However the analysis in this research has sought to get below the surface and identify what is involved in the vision and purpose that is at the heart of the beliefs demonstrated in the period 2001-2005.

First of all there are knowledge values that operate within the government documents reviewed in Chapters 4 and 7. These values work on the basis of traditional and hierarchical understandings of subjects and the knowledge that is deemed important therein. In Chapter 2 traditional knowledge values were

identified by Biesta and Osberg. Such values were based upon an assumption of a knowable external reality.

Such values delineate the way knowledge is approached. As the analysis of Carr and Hartnett (1996) indicated in Chapter 1 knowledge is implicit within the institutional arrangements that are made. The hierarchy of institutional arrangements mirrors the hierarchical assumptions attached to subjects within the curriculum. Such knowledge values form an intricate package of assumptions and implicit understandings which underlie the policy statements within the government documents reviewed in Chapters 4 and 7. They lie behind the ideas of educational success and of the ability of qualifications to measure it.

The second set of beliefs flow from this. These standards reflect not only what is known and how it is known but also reflect the processes and context of knowing. There is a comfortable connection between the subject matter itself, the test that affirms the learning, the mode of teaching and learning and the institutional arrangements that support that mode. This enables us to talk in terms of standards without any further discussion about what it means. The word '*standards'* contains a package of implicit traditional and assumed values. Indeed standards are like one of Wittgenstein's certainties; any attempt at explanation would seem unnecessary and odd.

The third set of beliefs is particularly relevant to the discussion of 14-19 reform and is in part a reflection of the intersection between the first and second set of assumptions. There is a peculiar intimacy between curriculum and institutional arrangements at the end of schooling. Such arrangements turn on the close relationship that exists between the idea of a sixth form (a set of institutional arrangements) and the examination that is the main outcome of that set of arrangements: the A level.

The sixth form contains a set of traditional and moral values which support the zenith of schooling as well as the period in which the adolescent transfers to the university to become a young adult. However as Carr and Hartnett (1996) pointed out the sixth form contains many messages about the hidden curriculum and the moral values that schooling seeks to impart. These messages also support the A

level which is the examination most associated with the sixth form. Standards, sixth form, A levels are sub-consciously connected within the purposes and vision of education. Accordingly A levels (and sixth forms) are the cornerstones of any 14-19 system. This was made explicit in the 2005 White Paper. Another way of saying this is that in our unsaid thoughts about 14-19 we assume A levels and sixth forms and the alternatives to these are not part of such assumptions. Sometimes such assumptions are made explicit when vocational education is referred to as education for other people's children.

Policy framing flows from this. Standards operate both as the vision and purpose as well as the outcome of policy implementation. Policy must be justified in the way it raises standards (and sometimes by spreading standards among those who currently do not benefit from them). Standards are therefore at the heart of doxastic certainties and they are held in place by other doxastic certainties of choice (and diversity) and institutional autonomy. These policies are linked into standards in some unseen and unexplained way.

This research is based upon distinctions which are not made within the doxastic certainties themselves. The two themes of change content and change process do not appear within the practice of educational policy reviewed here. Ideas such as the specifics of change and performance management operate both as proposals and as change mechanisms. It is a central part of doxastic certainties that it is so because this is not meant to be a rational system but a set of beliefs which support each other: accordingly everything is multi-faceted and overlaps.

Although the conceptual framework proves highly useful as a tool it is also apparent that the distinction it makes is not replicated within the doxastic certainties. The analysis here suggests that the stated purposes are misrecognitions of the reality which sit above a more mundane reading of the real purpose of education. These beliefs confirm Gramsci's insight about the new reality being based on polemic. They give evidence to the importance of the 1988 Act and Lawlor's polemic associated with it. From this research it seems that the Act has enabled a new set of central beliefs within education in England.

Education in all the documents including Tomlinson is presented as a rational affair. This is fundamentally challenged by this research. It has shown that the rationality of education is self-assumed and not related to its true purposes which are bound up in beliefs. Such beliefs counter the idea of a rational understanding of education: all that can be discovered is a series of ideas that appear bound together as a set of beliefs which frame the operation of education and its policies.

Even the idea of 14-19 reform itself might be such a doxastic certainty. At the beginning of Chapter 4 I observed that the 14-19 age range was introduced as self-evidently the right frame for reform even though the White Paper was described as '**Schools** Achieving Success'. There were no arguments presented for this. Such self-evidence points to a belief that is held without questioning.

The challenge now is to see how change might occur even in a system which elides change mechanisms into change proposals and is so successfully able to prevent transformational change even when it appears to have government backing and the support of an extensive professional consensus. The next chapter seeks through the analysis here to discern a way forward for change. It does this by analysing the relationship between change proposals of Tomlinson and what has been identified here as doxastic certainties, in the language identified in Chapter 2 the difference between heterodoxy and doxa. This is an important analysis because it gives the differences between what we are able to think and what we are able to change. The second aspect of the change process analysis is the identification of how doxastic changes might occur. This analysis will then lead into possible change proposals which could occur without presenting an immediate challenge to the majority of doxastic certainties identified in the beliefs analysed here.

Chapter 9   The understanding of change within educational policy making

9.1 Introduction

There is a danger of profound pessimism within this research. Not only do the observations of the 2001-2005 policy journey support McCulloch's judgement about the little likelihood of any change in the 21st century, but the analysis in Chapters 4-7 exposes a fundamental barrier to the articulation of process for transformational change.

This chapter seeks to secure the second aim of the research: to identify the change processes that operate within doxastic certainties and outline proposals for change within 14-19 education. However it also seeks to transcend the problem that my research presents to such reform. It will attempt to outline the nature of change processes to secure such transformational change. This will need care as the analysis to date seems to indicate that such an attempt is conceptually impossible.

Understanding the nature of change is central to securing the aim of this chapter. The chapter is constructed to build from the analysis observations about how change operates within educational policy. The first section considers the problem of 'policy busyness' that was identified in Chapter 1. At one level this can be understood by Williams' tensions and the demarcation between first and second sphere thinking that is the basis of this research. However another layer of interpretation will be added here as the possibility of such 'policy busyness' being a doxastic certainty is explored.

The second aspect of change to be considered is the relationship between doxastic certainties and the heterodoxy that is proposed to alter them. Understanding this relationship is central to a proper understanding of the nature of change possibilities. What emerges is a surprising overlap and interchange between the two states. On one level heterodoxy is codified thought and doxastic certainties are unstated beliefs but the relationship between them is far more complicated than such a demarcation suggests. In considering the second aspect

of change it will become possible to identify why 14-19 reform is associated with the concepts of policy memory and amnesia as referenced in Chapter 1.

The final aspect of change is about the potential for change within doxastic certainties themselves. This picks up the discussion from Chapter 3 about the Marxist and neo-Marxist assumptions of system crisis as opposed to the Wittgensteinian idea of incidental change. There will be a short consideration of the nature of change introduced by the 1988 Educational Reform Act. From this analysis it will become possible to move to the final section about the nature of potential change within 14-19 reform.

It is important to recognise that in the final analysis within this section, the nature of the research changes. Accordingly there is a corresponding change in methodology and a need for a different set of weights to measure the claims that are being made. This part is no longer a historic reflection on the practice of education policy but becomes a proposal for the future based upon the analysis of doxastic certainties. The proposal takes its context from the thinking of Gramsci and Williams on education and its details from the suite of transformational reform as identified within Chapter 5. However it must also give attention to the process of change as well as its content and that consideration completes the chapter.

This chapter is a necessary part of the research because it enables a better understanding of the change dimensions around 14-19 reform. It also seeks to remove the cul-de-sac from such reform. It enables the research to achieve a balance between the consideration of continuity and change. However by its nature it is an introduction into a wider debate about the possibilities of change within 14-19 reform. The change process that is advanced is transactional but in starting a debate about determining new knowledge values for vocational education it also opens the possibility of new epistemic understandings which would transform the nature of the second sphere itself. Obviously this aspect of the research is speculative.

9.2 Change as a certainty within education

It is important to register the volume of policy review, change proposals and implementation that is recorded within Chapters 4-7. There was reference to major reviews of creativity and culture in education as well as citizenship and democracy. There were also reviews of enterprise and work experience being conducted. Tomlinson refers to Professor Smith's review of mathematics education. The Tomlinson report was preceded by the Tomlinson report on A levels. This was a policy environment rich in discussion and review.

In terms of policy changes there was a series of major policy initiatives: the introduction of Curriculum 2000; Citizenship as a statutory subject from 2002; and a new set of Vocational GCSEs in the same year. There had also been a reduction in the number of compulsory subjects at GCSE. There was over the period 2001-2005 evidence of a continuing review of such changes for example, vocational GCSEs lost their designation as vocational and the advanced extension award was first abandoned and then restored.

In Chapter 7 there was a glimpse of the 'policy busyness' in two other regards: national strategies and changes in accountability measurement. The 2005 White Paper indicated a *Key Stage 3 National Strategy* as well as *PE and School Sport Strategy*. There was also a *Music Manifesto* to extend access to music. The 2005 White Paper also listed all the methods of accountability that schools and colleges had to work through. It also announced that the 5 A*-C target for schools would change its focus to include English and Mathematics GCSE.

There was also reference to institutional changes for schools. This was the period of the expansion of specialist schools whereby schools could apply for designation in curriculum areas. The documents also referred to the possibility of earned autonomy by better performing schools.

Overall performance was improving. The 2005 White Paper recorded 5 A*-C GCSE success as rising from 47% in 1997 to 53% in 2004 (and as already indicated was to increase to 81% by 2013). The Government also introduced the 50% target for Higher Education by 2010. The expectation was a massive expansion of both accreditation and places in HE. Although such changes were significant for both

young people and the institutions that served them, they did not represent a transformational change of education itself. They did not challenge any of the doxastic certainties identified in this research. Indeed they confirmed them. They did not alter the basis of the curriculum or the institutional hierarchies that support education policy making. Certainly the degree of such change and the rapidity of the process added weight to the observation of 'policy busyness'.

At one level Gramsci's distinction between organic and conjunctural phenomena offers a way of understanding and framing such change. When Lumby and Foskett (2007) referred to 14-19 education reform as turbulence masquerading as change, they were observing that the 14-19 policy journey had not resulted in any significant change despite such activities. From this research it is clear that the position for 14-19 policy in 2001 was broadly similar to the position in 2005. The policy intent was to establish a vocational track alongside the successful academic one. The changes announced did not alter the basic structure and assumptions of education in England. In the terms identified in this research the hectic change and the massive increase in volumes attending post 16 and Higher Education represented transactional change in that they maintained the overall direction of travel of educational policy.

However something more is going on. The last chapter observed that policy proposals had become the change mechanism. In other words there was a blurring of means with ends. This raises the possibility that 'policy busyness' itself is a doxastic certainty- possibly developing alongside standards, choice and diversity as part of the new managerialist formulation of education. In other words change arises naturally as standards need to be defined and redefined and the curriculum needs to be re-focused. Choice can only be exercised through the integrity of examinations and such qualifications can always be improved. School autonomy can only be exercised if there is confidence in the performance and monitoring regimes established. As a result changes in all these areas become constant and therefore appear natural.

It appears then that continuous change is the result of the educational settlement introduced by the 1988 Act. However such change becomes the natural

assumption of policy practice and suggests itself as part of the network of doxastic certainties that sustain educational policy in England.

9.3 The relationship between heterodoxy and doxastic certainties in education

As was noted in Chapter 2 Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours have demonstrated in their writing since Tomlinson an unwavering commitment to the ideas of a unified framework of 14-19 education. They have also reflected on the reasons why the Tomlinson report failed:

a) there was a lack of preparation amid the wider public (although the reforms were the results of a long period of germination within the educational community, they had not been much discussion within the wider public);

b) it was not immediately clear how the proposals built on the A level tradition;

c) it was prepared in haste and as the result of a committee the proposals were complicated and difficult to explain;

d) the consensus was superficial because people had different interpretations of it; and

e) a qualification led reform which risked isolation and dilution because it was not 'supported by wider organisational, labour market, professional and policy change' (Hodgson and Spours, 2012, pp.11/2).

They make a plea for any future reform to be clear about its rationale and over-arching purpose and that any reform should have a vision and involve proper preparation of the wider audience to understand and accept it.

This is an important reflection because it re-affirms the analysis made in Chapter 6. Hodgson and Spours seek two pillars to build their transformational change upon: the assumption of rationality and the will to build change out of current practice. For them Tomlinson was let down by poor preparation, complexity and a superficial supporting consensus. These are searches for a rational explanation of the failure of a rational set of reform proposals. However they also want to maintain it as a qualification led reform.

It is necessary to examine the relationship between proposals for reform and the status quo because such a relationship yields a better understanding of both the potential for reform and the limits it endures. From the analysis in both Chapters 2 and 5 there is the capacity for educational thinkers to identify and describe a transformed state of education. What appears from both the general analysis in Chapter 2 and the specific analysis in Chapter 6 is that what is problematic for such thinking is the means to turn it into practical proposals for implementation.

As was also noted in Chapter 2 the policy reformers had problems with developing the implementation strategies for their ideas. Such problems resulted in the length of time waiting for reform to be implemented as well as difficulties in identifying and articulating the means for successful change. The Tomlinson report is a specific example of these difficulties in articulation. Chapter 6 describes how the transformational proposals were restricted by the way they were presented. The selling of the reforms was on a transactional basis. The language of the report assumed the changes as self-evident and rational. It is possible to describe this in two ways: a bad tactic/a mistaken approach or as evidence of a deeper truth that visioning of education (and the corresponding visioning of the implementation of transformational reform) must be within the certainties that frame thinking about education. Hodgson and Spours imply the former interpretation: the analysis in this research points to the second.

However there is still incompleteness in the idea that reformers can imagine a transformed state but they cannot describe the means in a transformational way. Young is pointing to something more than just an epistemic breakdown in articulating transformational change. He indicates a fundamental problem in visioning a set of underpinning knowledge arrangements for a transformed educational state. In other words the reformers' view of a changed educational world is only partial: it comprises an underworked set of assumptions about the knowledge values that will operate within such a transformed state. There is some evidence of this within the Tomlinson report.

The transformational arrangements afforded a ten year period to translate A level and GCSE subjects into open diploma units. However such generosity was not extended to the vocational units. They would be delivered within 5 years. Their

content would be derived from employers and lecturers in this period. This could only be envisioned if the underpinning knowledge values were seen as non-contentious. This lack of contention displays an underdeveloped idea of what the underpinning knowledge values of vocational qualifications are. Such an idea is clearly represented in the terms of reference for Tomlinson which asks the Working Group to consider full time vocational courses as if they are the same as academic qualifications. This assumption is carried into the report because the diplomas are constructed as full time qualifications.

It appears from this that the knowledge assumptions about vocational learning within Tomlinson probably reflect academic principles. This is not surprising if the assumption of the link between knowledge and education policy is correct because doxastic certainties must apply to everyone. In other words the advocates of reform cannot challenge traditional knowledge values. Vocational education is made to fit in within such values.

However if proponents of heterodoxy share the doxastic certainties then the reverse is true with proponents of the status quo. The argument is simple. It is based upon the readiness of UK government to consider the possibility of change on a regular basis. This points to a surprising quality about the relationship between doxa and heterodoxy and that is they share many of the same assumptions. What is observed in Chapters 4-7 is the recognition by the Government that there is a need to broaden secondary education. This recognition leads to the reviews and activities which support not only 14-19 reform but also the encouragement of cultural and creative education as well as citizenship. These are almost instinctive thoughts. I shall describe them as a set of policy impulses. However the pattern of such policy impulses is also demonstrated within Chapters 4-7. Concern is expressed: a body is set up to review that concern and then actions are taken. In the case of creative and cultural education as well as other aspects of education for character there is a continuing debate within the documentation as to the extent of the problem and whether previous solutions have cured it. What references to the PE and Sports strategy and the Music Manifesto reveal is that such activities are there to illustrate the policy impulse is

being addressed but not in such a way as to involve transformational change of the curriculum.

In Chapter 2 there was reference to Williams' 'outside business' in education. This description fits how creative/cultural, citizenship and 14-19 reform is treated within policy making in England. At best they go as far as piecemeal or showcase reform: the small number of University Technology Colleges that have been recently established or the 4 % of secondary technical schools in the post war period. The appearance of doing something is the best outcome because it offers examples of change while leaving most young people within the traditional curriculum. If this account is correct, Tomlinson took his visioning too far by offering a systematic change to a series of concerns about the narrowness of the curriculum.

Further support for the suggestion about concern being within the doxastic certainties of education policy comes from recent history. There has been a 14-19 review by Alison Wolf (2011), the Henley (2012) inquiry into creative education followed by the Warwick enquiry (2015) into the same area. In December 2014 Nicky Morgan, the Secretary of State for Education, announced an initiative to seek out good practice within schools on the issue of character education (Morgan, 2014). Chapter 1 referred to the CBI's call in April 2015 for 14-19 reform, a call which was then picked up by the shadow education spokesperson who seemed to want to reintroduce a version of Tomlinson (Hunt, 2015). These are not outsiders' perspectives. The continuing policy cycle of reforms in this area points to the nature of such doxastic certainties.

There has already been reference to the failure of policy memory across the attempts at reform (Higham and Yeomans, 2007). Wolf (2002, p.65) reminds us about the large number of attempts at reforming technical education in the period 1860 to 1960. Another result of this set of policy impulses is that earlier attempts at reform are not interrogated for reasons for failure. The assumption is made by advocates of change (whether piecemeal or total) that this time the reform will succeed and therefore it is unnecessary to pay attention to what happened before. Policy amnesia, therefore, is the consequence of two aspects of the policy impulse. First of all because the policy impulse can never achieve

successful change it persists as a belief over time, possibly a doxastic certainty. This belief then leads to a repeated attempt at the same change: hence the policy cycle of unsuccessful reform. Secondly as an element of the policy impulse is a certainty that success will be achieved then there is no need for examination of earlier failures because they occurred when circumstances were different.

The overlap between doxa and heterodoxy as observed in this research might be described thus:

Doxa–heterodoxy shared assumptions	Doxa–heterodoxy different assumptions
The need for wider learning in education in England (e.g. strengthening vocational education, wider learning including creative and cultural learning, analytical and critical skills).	Heterodoxy can visualise system wide and transformational change: within doxa such change is ad hoc and piecemeal.
Change processes are transactional: they do not involve the review of previous attempts at reform.	
Knowledge values are the same: reform is seen as a broader set of the same knowledge not as something different.	

Chapter 1 drew attention to Williams' three readings of the discussion about educational purpose and these are important sense makers of the tensions within education. The analysis in this research indicates that such readings are important perspectives for historical analysis. However the research also shows that it is a conceptual mistake to see them as fixed positions offering different versions of a curriculum reality. This research leads to a more nuanced view of the relationship between them. It is as if the three readings are from the same page.

This analysis demonstrates the paradox of change within the doxastic certainties. Change is foreseen in the desire for wider learning but it is not to be realised

because the imagination of change processes for transformational change proposals is limited to the transactional. It also appears from the analysis in this chapter that the inability to consider a different set of knowledge assumptions outside of the current ones prevents the proper articulation of vocational education. The disconnection between two sets of imagination around the content and the practice of change is the conceptual gap that prevents transformational reform from occurring. The challenge of the next section is to identify within doxastic certainties the way that such change might occur.

9.4 What is the nature of change within the doxastic certainties?

The question of how are doxastic certainties changed is implicit in the solutions advanced in Chapter 2 as well as the change process of the Tomlinson report. The underlying nature of the approach adopted is one of balancing transformational change with the reality of the present state of understanding of learning. Such a balance is given different names.

In Chapter 2 Reiss and White attempt to break down aims based curriculum into aspects of the current education landscape. They seek to demonstrate what it would mean for the curriculum so teachers could understand its implications for classroom practice and they also identify means of changing management practices so that aims based curriculum could grow out of current policy arrangements. Although Fielding and Moss are more radical in their vision for education and consider at length the change processes to support such transformational change, one of their main proposals is the development of pre-emptive practice which establishes aspects of the changed state in advance of wider change. This they describe as radical incrementalism.

Hodgson and Spours address the issue of transformational change within the debate of 14-19 reform. They seek a change mechanism that would be effective. Writing in 2008 they asked the question:

> how can 14-19 education and training be turned from a competitive battleground (Lumby and Foskett 2005) into an area of common purpose; from a focus on recycling partial policies centred around vocational education (Higham and Yeomans 2007) to system wide reform of all forms of learning and from a selective approach which

benefits some to a comprehensive approach which promotes progression for all? (Hodgson and Spours, 2008, p.124)

In order to achieve this they identify a process of change as 'strategic gradualism' which builds from the bottom of locally directed radical change and pushes the national system towards gradual Tomlinson-like change.

This is the nature of the change challenge faced by reformers: it must be visionary but it must also be doable and practical. But there is also the danger of seeking to compromise in doing this. Hodgson and Spours are very wary of what they describe as partial reforms of vocational education which do not challenge the status quo. They are very critical of the diploma initiative that followed the 2005 White Paper because it gave wider 14-19 reform a bad name. They are also wary of attempts to reform vocational qualification in isolation because it runs the risk of entrenching the academic-vocational divide rather than being a move towards reducing its hold upon the education system.

In Chapter 3 that there was a difference identified about how doxastic certainties might change. Those influenced by the Marxist tradition believe that crisis brought the potential of change: whereas Wittgenstein sees doxastic change as both haphazard and individual. Change happens and then a specific certainty no long seems so sure. The picture he paints is of fragility and susceptibility towards change at the level of a single certainty. Such change would mean they became empirical propositions again; ones that can be argued about.

The Wittgensteinian view therefore seems more predisposed to ideas of incremental change but it does involve a difference of approach not readily accepted by the reformers. The issue becomes changing one certainty and then hoping to build a different framing of policy from that. The change dynamic would appear to be an incremental approach through the certainties.

However this is not entirely a theoretical discussion because there is the practice of what actually happened in 1988 with the passing of the Education Reform Act. At one level the reforms introduced then were such a major revision of educational practice and purpose that they seemed like a paradigmatic change. Indeed this research serves to underline the new reality formed from Lawlor's

1987 polemic. Clearly the discussion about standards, choice and diversity that took place in the previous chapter supports the idea that a paradigmatic transformation of educational policy framing and problem identification was secured by the 1988 Act.

However as Carr and Hartnett (1986) also make clear the reforms had significant congruence with the traditions and practices of education in England. In the 1988 Act there is a sophisticated amalgam of radicalism and traditionalism. Williams' three tensions can help the analysis of what happened. In terms of purpose over institutional arrangements the Act demonstrates little concern for purpose. It is only possible to read the broadest statements about purpose that accompany the Act. But the central elements of the Act are the introduction of the national curriculum, national testing and the publication of league tables. Such changes shift the focus of educational policy making towards organisational and institutional arrangements. Managerialism and markets within education, though a radical departure, align closely with what Williams described as the tendency to promote the institutional.

This helps a better understanding of the second of Williams' tensions: continuity over change. As Aldrich (1988) pointed out there was a close parallel between the 1904 Secondary Regulations and Baker's national curriculum. This re-statement of traditional curriculum practice is made without justification: it relates to a set of beliefs and assumptions about the curriculum. It has the effect of maintaining the curriculum assumptions into contemporary policy practice. Alongside it the main institutional arrangements of education are preserved: prestigious universities and public schools; and the external examination system at 16 and 18. Even the remaining grammar schools and comprehensives (though the latter were to change their names and status) continue as the core of the institutional arrangements. The curriculum changes that were introduced by the Act focus on the detailed arrangements of a standardised curriculum and its associated testing arrangements.

It is the last tension where it is possible to observe the real change that has taken place. Carr and Hartnett are correct to identify the central changes introduced by the Act: the introduction of a new set of arrangements associated with the market

and managerialism. In Williams' terms they represent the triumph of the market over democracy and in Chapter 2 Fielding and Moss (2011) recognised the total barriers to the ideas of common schooling and democratic education entailed by the introduction of markets into education.

Accordingly there is an answer to the question posed in the introduction about whether the 1988 Act is a fundamental break from the past. In its fundamentals the 1988 Act replaced many of the earlier beliefs about educational practice. It established its own polemic as the central set of beliefs that operated in education (at least up until the period considered in this research). However it achieved this through maintaining and emphasising many of the earlier aspects of curricular and institutional practice. Such continuities enable McCulloch to observe the continuing disposition of education to fail the ordinary child and this disposition was undisturbed by the introduction of the Act. The continuities also support his conclusion about the likely future development of policy.

In terms of the analysis that has been adopted in this research the 1988 Act changed the purpose and policy framing of education by aligning new certainties with old ones. Some of the determining features of the old certainties around the emphasis upon institutional arrangements and the hierarchical difference of institutions were deployed within the new certainties. The idea of standards and the assumptions of tests and traditional curriculum that form much of that idea were constructed out of age-old certainties of English education.

The implementation of the 1988 reforms points to a more Wittgensteinian approach rather than a Marxist system wide upheaval. The changes were transformational but they were made in alignment with earlier beliefs and co-opted such beliefs. In Chapters 2 and 6 there is evidence that the partial approach is favoured by all those who advocate transformational change policies.

This is important because it identifies the means for change. The question that flows from it is how can such transformational reform be developed which is both in line with the assumptions and beliefs of English education but which would also offer the potential for transformational change. The next section seeks to address this question.

9.5 Changing the certainties of 14-19 education

This is the part of the chapter where the focus changes from the rest of research: it moves from the past to the future tense. The method remains observation but there is more speculation in what is being presented. The two themes need to be deployed: reform proposals and the process of change will be identified. However as already indicated the second theme is very problematic. The analysis in Chapter 6 and to an extent in this chapter points to the fundamental difficulties experienced by advocates of transformational reform in advancing the means of the reform and indeed I have indicated that the articulation of transformational change mechanisms within doxastic certainties is impossible. Accordingly the change strategy is tentative here but it is enriched by the analysis of this research.

The tactics to be adopted are as follows:

a)   rational challenge of two beliefs (which may be doxastic certainties) ;

b)   identification of a set of changes initially proposed by Gramsci and Williams and in more detailed form in the Tomlinson report;

c)   explanation of how such changes might impact upon the other certainties around the academic route (this is a transactional analysis);

d)   locating the intent for transformational change (both content and process) within the development of knowledge values around vocational learning which will contribute to how knowledge is seen.

From the analysis so far reform seems more likely if it does not seek to challenge the totality of the doxastic certainties. Obviously if as in the 1980s there was a more systemic challenge to the world view of education then it might be possible to challenge the neo-liberal underpinnings of the reality of education policy that has been reiterated in this research. The assumption for this section is no such challenges will be made in the near future (though that does not absolve us from trying- this research also demonstrates the poor quality of those underpinnings). What is advocated is a minor amendment to the doxastic certainties described here (on the assumption that something like them will operate in the future).

There are two apparent doxastic certainties which are challenged and the challenges are so tangential they appear as transactional change.

The first challenge is the assumed framing of the age for reform as 14-19. In framing reform for 14-19 year olds reformers are asked to identify vocational routes as a default curriculum for those who are deemed unlikely to achieve in the traditional academic route at key stage 4. Constructing such routes associates vocational learning with both failure and the least able in the system. However the reformers are also asked to devise a vocational route which because it demonstrates parity of esteem with the academic route, offers a positive option at 16. One set of changes undermines the other. Tomlinson did try to square this circle with the proposal for vocational diplomas to start at 16. But, as already noted, the 2005 White Paper reverted to the policy framing of the starting age of any new vocational route being 14. The proposal therefore is simple: vocational reform should begin at 16.

The second assumption to be challenged was raised above when the policy impulse towards reform was being discussed. This may not be a doxastic certainty but it appears as a consistent belief of reformers and policy makers alike- the view that there is no need to review earlier attempts at reform. Accordingly the technique for change will include a review of all earlier attempts at reform of vocational education. Of course in writing this I could be committing the same mistake as everyone else in describing vocational education as doable and expecting that this time it can be achieved. But the advantage gained by this analysis is that it enables an understanding that such change is not a given and that there is a need to reflect upon previous failure. Such reform requires enormous belief changes on the behalf of employers and government. Realising the scope of the challenge of vocational reform is a better alternative to the certainty adopted by both Tomlinson and the Government that vocational reform would happen as a result of policy intent. The reform must begin in full recognition of its small chance of success. Paradoxically drawing out the reasons why it is unlikely to succeed is the best guarantor of its possible realisation.

The context and nature of the reform is drawn from the thinking of Gramsci and Williams. Gramsci ,writing about education, in Italy countered the debate about

the need for instrumental and specialist education by offering common schools for all 'imparting a general, humanistic, formative culture'(1971, p.26). His view was that every young person had an entitlement to a shared learning experience drawn from general education. Entwistle (1979) has argued that Gramsci supported a traditional curriculum. Certainly in his writing on education Gramsci was clearly opposed to the education reforms being introduced by Mussolini's ministers which challenged traditional ideas of education. However Gramsci was clear in the view that there needed to be some new relationship within the curriculum between academic and vocational learning (Gramsci, 1971, p.33).

For Gramsci common schools could prepare young people for more specialised learning and he suggested that such schooling should go up to the age of 15 or 16. Williams picks a similar theme when he speculates upon the area of education which offers the most potential for curriculum change:

> we ought perhaps not to keep adolescents at schools of the present kind beyond sixteen, at which age at latest their human growth has entered a new stage. Much of the most interesting work in the curriculum might be done after this age, in a much greater variety of institutions than we now have, and with provision in many cases for the beginning of specific vocational training alongside the continuing general education…..a variety of institutions, at this period of growth is more likely to meet the problems of varying capacity and interest than the crude grading of two or three 'types of mind', followed by leaving one large 'type' to its own devices…here is the great educational challenge and opportunity, which we can only rise to if we take secondary education as a preparation for this phase. We might then be expressing the shape of our society rather than reproducing the patterns of others

> (Williams, 1965, p.176).

He is asking for change of focus on curriculum reform and to ask questions about how we support all young people in their transition to the world of work and adult life. Clearly Williams wanted a more collaborative approach to such learning shared across institutions which went beyond the tripartite distinctions that were prevalent in 1960s. There was an attempt in the 1980s to create such comprehensive institutions – tertiary colleges, where young people could take the full range of post 16 courses. However it was local education authorities who instituted such reform and their power over the whole of post- 16 education was

removed by the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act. No more tertiary colleges were opened after that and the existing ones were treated as further education colleges.

From Gramsci and Williams it is possible to take 16 as the starting point of reform. In the context of the prevalence of A levels and the experience of the Tomlinson report it is not possible to seek to develop the full vision that Williams offered. Instead what is suggested is the full emphasis of the transformational reforms worked upon the single aspect of vocational education.

Chapter 6 reported on the critique given by Tomlinson of vocational education: such a critique needs to be re-examined. The report records the poor balance between theoretical and vocational skills in much vocational education. The report is also correct to highlight the poor comparisons with other countries in terms of the quality of vocational education. However on its own this critique is insufficient, there is also a need to draw upon the widest research and thinking to construct the knowledge and identity assumptions of learning about work.

Although Tomlinson offers learning about being a member of a group and critical awareness of rights and responsibilities within CKSA as well as the need for wider learning, there is some naivety about the construction of the vocational curriculum. Employers are assumed to be holders of specialised knowledge on the skills of the workplace and that specialised units will be constructed in order to pass on such knowledge and skills. There is also an assumption that employers are in a position to articulate them. There is no consideration of the wider social dimension of the work place or the participative aspects of work based learning (Lave and Wenger 1993). There is no attention given to the relationship between the move from peripheral participation, the growth of identity within the workplace and the nature of skill acquisition involved in the successful development of working knowledge and aptitude. Knowledge values within the area of adult life and work are different to the assumptions of knowledge transfer which supports the traditional school curriculum. Articulating such values is a key part of developing sustainable vocational education.

Such articulation is a significant undertaking and requires the reconsideration of the extensive research in this area as well as setting that research within broader ideas of learning. One clear example of such an approach is the need to revisit the failure of earlier vocational reforms within the context of the epistemic nature of such reform. The unhappy experience of the introduction of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in the 1990s illustrates what happens when such knowledge assumptions remain undeveloped. Such qualifications focus on the performance of a skill rather than the underlying set of knowledge and identity which supports that performance. The qualification is then not valued by employers because it is incomplete.

Tomlinson contains the beginning of the ideas for such reform. A single framework of a reinvigorated vocational programme of learning could incorporate a core which involves the preparation of the learner as a global citizen and a social actor. The basis of the Tomlinson report should be used to form a new vocational system of education which could link into the academic route as proposed in 2004. The essential difference from the Tomlinson report is that this proposal would leave the academic route untouched.

Accordingly post 16 vocational reform offers the potential for transformational reform. The change proposed is on a transactional basis: a vocational Trojan horse to challenge the assumptions that underpin the academic route. At present this would mean maintaining A levels and the challenge would be in establishing a proper vocational system post 16. The Tomlinson report with its ideas of core and main learning: the extensive and different views of learning behind the core; as well as easy links back into the academic route offer significant ideas for the development of such a vocational route and it would be sensible to build from this report where possible.

However such changes have the capacity to transform other elements of the educational landscape. First of all it will have an impact on key stage 4. It is very important that no vocational reform is undertaken pre-16 in the first instance. However young people and teachers will become aware of a growing number of vocational programmes that are available in the developing network of providers that emerge to offer such provision. Young people can apply for such programmes

on the basis of their key stage 4 qualifications. However what will be natural is for schools to try to develop programmes which help young people be better prepared for transition at 16.

Providers of post 16 vocational programmes will have an interest in assisting such developments as long as they do not undermine the integrity and value attributed to their own programmes. However such pre-16 programmes would be local and ad hoc and would not mount to a national programme of vocational provision. The principle would be retained that vocational education as a distinct programme of learning should begin at 16.

However what might also happen is that the broader knowledge thinking of such programmes might impact on the practice of learning in key stage 4 and ideas from Tomlinson such as CKSA might infiltrate all learning at 14-16. Such infiltration might also occur at 16-18. A levels themselves and especially the support programmes around them might be affected by a successful development of Tomlinson type vocational qualifications. The wider learning skills of such vocational programmes might prove attractive to students wanting to be better prepared not only for university but also to be able to demonstrate a greater readiness for the world of work.

Finally there would be an impact on higher education. A stronger vocational system introduced at 16 would look to develop level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications. It would build upon partnerships of employers and colleges to scope out the technical and vocational requirements for the future. Such partnerships could seek to develop progression points for students who want to develop further technical and managerial skills. Such progression points go far beyond securing equivalence for vocational qualifications. It starts to ask questions about part time degrees which meet the needs of employers and the young people who are their employees.

What is proposed is a redrawing of vocational education to raise its quality and its profile and to enable it to provide both a challenge and an alternative to the academic route. If vocational education was strengthened as envisaged in Tomlinson it would show up the superficiality and narrowness of that route.

Indeed it could be more effective than all the enquiries that have been held on A levels. It might lead to actual improvements in academic pedagogy and assessment. Key stage 4 would also be under pressure to offer introductory units which through interlocking would enable young people to have banked units when they transfer into tertiary institutions licensed to offer vocational provision. Such courses would not be offered as a default to young people but only if they had requested them. Their quality would be sustained through partnership arrangements with those licensed providers of post 16 vocational education.

There has been a long standing reluctance by business to invest in vocational programmes and this encourages a similar reluctance on the part of the State to do so. Further education has not been a particularly high priority of either policy attention or investment by successive governments. Given the policy and knowledge understandings demonstrated in this research this is unsurprising. However if vocational reform could be introduced in a systematic way which produces quality learning and good outcomes, it would offer significant challenges to the academic framing of 14-19 educational policy certainties.

The success of this proposal lies in the fact that while it maintains the academic set of knowledge, culture and identity understandings, it will insert alongside them new knowledge, cultural and identity understandings from the vocational and the applied. In other words the aim of the reform is not a new set of qualifications but a new set of understandings about what we can learn, what we see as important to learn and how we see ourselves as learners.

9.6 Understanding the limits and potential of 14-19 reform.

Two questions were identified at the start of this chapter. The first question considers whether is it possible to transcend the limits placed upon change by the analysis of the doxastic certainties that formed the first part of this research. There is a danger of a cruel scepticism about change to be adopted if education policy making is lodged in some timeless chamber of unchanging beliefs. This chapter intends to demonstrate the possibility of change and the manner of such change within the past 30 years.

The second question considers what the nature of possible change might be. What has been proposed is certainly not the only possible candidate for such change. In some ways it is illustrative of what can be meant by a strategic gradualism or radical incrementalism: it is a single act of a transformational change which, if pursued purposefully and strategically, can unlock the current set of certainties that operate within educational policy making in England.

The picture can be drawn about the possibilities of change within the framing of educational policy. Such a picture is built around the relationship between doxa and heterodoxy and the wider relationship between doxastic certainties and the nature of change. There is a consensus about change identified in the reformers from Chapter 2 who wanted to pursue transformational change within the here and now. Such thinking was common to those advocates of reform influenced by a Marxist tradition as well as those who were not. In the absence of systemic change piecemeal reform appears as the answer and accords with the Wittgensteinian idea of change. In other words it is not systemic change of beliefs that is sought but a change in practice which might change the context for such beliefs. Wittgenstein emphasised the arbitrary nature of such change. The difference proposed here is to mobilise the change intentionally.

Such practice of change has a recent example when the Conservative Government, having struggled in the period 1979-1985 to develop a coherent set of policies on education, constructed a change programme which was both radical and conservative. There is evidence in Chapters 4-8 that this change programme remained successful in 2005 and that the ideas of standards, choice and autonomy provided the new reality for policy making in English education.

The only relevant issue that was not settled was whether such change represents a systematic change of ideas about educational knowledge, purpose and policy framing. The previous chapter indicated that Young thought the battle in policy terms was between marketisation and managerialism and the old traditional knowledge values. However what was observed in Chapters 4- 8 is an accommodation between the two in which markets and managerialism dominate the policy framing but the older ideas about knowledge and identity within English education are also preserved. This is an important point for how change is

manifested within doxastic certainties. Thatcher and Baker were successful because as Carr and Hartnett indicated a lot of what they did was congruent with the older traditions. In this chapter their changes were analysed against Williams' three tensions and it was only in the tension around democracy that the 1988 settlement offered a new route and that is where the radicalism lay and the doxastic certainties of pre 1988 were challenged.

The challenge that arises from this analysis is to develop an area of change which might also challenge the current doxastic certainties while at the same time fitting in with the majority of them. What has been done in this chapter is to take one of the certainties such as the need for vocational education and adapt that certainty to make it post 16. Other possibilities are available: the need for thinking and analytic skills is one such possibility or developing creative and cultural education. However vocational education is put forward for three reasons.

It moves reform away from what is described here as the cul-de-sac of 14-19 age framing of reform. In doing that it takes the reform outside of the statutory schooling and the conceptual and practical limits put forward by such linkage.

The second reason is that on its own vocational reform does not challenge the basic assumptions described in the previous chapter around the importance of A levels, standards and sixth forms in education in England. This gives a potential space for the reforms to be introduced but their introduction if developed in the correct way could present a fundamental challenge to such doxastic certainties. The final reason is that what is proposed here enables the reform to take forward the ideas of Gramsci and Williams as well as afford the opportunity to develop many of the transformational changes that were identified in the Tomlinson report.

This chapter had two tasks. First of all it explored the nature of change. It examined 'policy busyness' as an effect of the increased instrumentalism of post 1988 education and suggested under the analysis of this research it might be a doxastic certainty. The next aspect of change was to consider the relationship between doxa and heterodoxy. The curious overlapping of the two helps explain how transformational change is difficult to implement. This section indicated that

vocational reform is also limited by a failure to form a vision of its knowledge values. The final aspect of change was to observe how change has taken place within the certainties themselves in education using 1988 as the most recent example.

The second task was to draw out proposals for reform. This section represented a methodological break with the rest of the research. For here the analysis though still based on both historical review and the insights from this research seeks to outline a set of proposals that might introduce transformational change. This is an area of analysis which must be more tentative in its claims. What is offered is a mixture of transactional change practices which is in line with the restriction on change methods identified in this research. However there is also the possibility of the construction of a new set of underpinning knowledge values which offers the potential of transformational change being articulated. Interestingly enough this brings me back to the idea of changed knowledge values which I indicated in Chapter 1 I had jettisoned earlier in my research.

This chapter completes the research. The next chapter assesses to what extent have the aims and ambitions set out in the opening chapter been met. It will also consider the problems in light of the analysis as well as the rationale and method. If the perspective, the insights and the claims of this research have some validity, the chapter will conclude with what the research offers in terms of originality and new understandings.

Chapter 10   What has been achieved in this research?

10.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 outlined the ambition of this research which is to understand why 14-19 reform has not been achieved and whether there is a possibility of reform in the future. Two themes on change content and process emerged in that chapter as central to the organisation of this research. From these themes emerged the assumptions, argument and aims of the research. This chapter will provide an evaluation of the extent they have been met in this thesis. That evaluation will be based on an assessment of the assumptions and arguments developed through Chapters 2-9. This assessment will be made through the same framing as the introductory chapter: the analysis of problem–method-outcome.

At the start of the research reference was made to the longstanding problem of uneven benefit of education which disadvantaged the ordinary child (McCulloch, 1998). He also indicated that there was little likelihood that this disadvantage would alter in the 21st century. The two themes of change content and process was a response to both problems and focused upon conceptualising the specifics of change proposals required and the change process.

Carr and Hartnett offered a summary of the traditional characteristics of English education upon which they argued the 1988 settlement had overlaid marketisation and managerialism. The review in the next section will seek to establish the extent that this research confirms the problem identification of both sets of thinkers. It will also consider what additional problems emerge from the considerations in this research.

Aspects of method were considered within the first chapter: rationale, organisation and methodology. The third section in this chapter will return to this examination of method. It will reflect upon the original choices made in light of what has been researched. It will evaluate the choices that were made at the start of the research. Such choices were about the philosophical assumption which underpins the research, the specific assumption about the link between change process and change content and the focus of research. This evaluation will consider the impact of such choices in how the research has developed. The

second part of this section will consider the methodological challenges faced in this research against the two arguments that have been presented. Given the nature of this research this involves the important consideration of the plausibility and cogency of the claims being made.

In Chapter 1 there were various summative statements made about the likely outcomes of this research. The research offers new ways to approach the research of educational policy as well as general understandings of education and specific understandings of 14-19 reform. It also seeks to outline a better understanding of how transformational change in education might occur. The fourth section in this chapter will highlight the originality of the research. It will also consider the impact of such outcomes as well as the implications for further research.

This research offers a different perspective on educational policy and a different understanding of 14-19 educational reform. This perspective and understanding offers the opportunity to discover new ideas about 14-19 reform and education generally. The final section in this chapter will examine the ambitions and aims of this research and evaluate the extent they have been served by perspective and approach adopted.

10.2 Reviewing the problems of secondary education in England

There are two sets of problems: problems of practice (and the conceptualisation of that practice including the articulation of reform) and problems of change (including problems of the policy cycle as well as policy amnesia). An important consideration of the problem of change is an understanding of the type of paradigm that operated within educational policy making in the period 2001-2005.

The aim of this section is to consider the problems of change content and change practice within the research in light of the review of the problems made in the first chapter. It is possible to build a fuller picture of the problems facing secondary education in England as a result of such a review.

There are two issues among the policy concerns examined in Chapter 4 that provide evidence of both the failure of the ordinary child as well as the continuing problem of the curriculum in contributing to such failure. The Government identified as a central problem at the heart of the rationale for 14-19 reform the failure of many young people to get the qualifications that their counterparts in France and Germany were succeeding in achieving. In McCulloch's terms a high proportion of young people would achieve a Level 3 qualification in Germany and France whereas such an achievement was beyond many young people in the UK. This clear numerical disparity was the most constant feature of problem identification within the documentation examined and 14-19 reform was seen as its remedy.

What was the cause of this problem? In the introduction there was the identification of the long standing problem of a failure to establish a comprehensive framing of English education with the advent of universal education in the 20th century. Instead mass secondary education was bolted onto a selective system which continued its intellectual and organisational dominance. Such dominance was to be sustained even after the destruction of the majority of institutions which provided this education, the grammar schools, because the new comprehensive schools in the main maintained the differentiation of knowledge that had been inherited from Victorian times.

McCulloch identified this specifically as the failure of the secondary modern experiment between 1944 and the 1970s. He indicated that this experiment was to establish a separate set of knowledge practices for the 70% of young people who attended such schools. McCulloch indicated that because there had no examination of the failure of this experiment the ordinary child was doomed to fail in the future as well.

The second piece of evidence to confirm McCulloch's analysis in my research is 14-19 reform itself. In the 2001-2005 policy journey the contemporary version of the secondary modern experiment was to propose 14-19 reform and specifically the strengthening of the vocational element within it. In Chapter 4 the policy solution to the problem of disengaged 14 and 15 year olds as well as 17 and 18 year olds without suitable qualifications was the introduction of vocational

reform. This was the amalgam of secondary modern and technical education which would offer a separate set of knowledge values to the ordinary child/ young person or for those who failed to get 5 A*-C GCSEs.

McCulloch's work underlines the continuing nature of education in England to disadvantage many young people. This demonstrates continuity rather than change being introduced by the 1988 Education Reform Act. Carr and Hartnett's analysis is helpful because it points to both the continuities and divergence of that Act. In this research there is corroboration of many of the characteristics identified by them. The emphasis on laissez faire of institutions linked to the satisfaction of standards is mirrored in government policy on earned autonomy identified in Chapter 4. Carr and Hartnett emphasised the importance of grading and testing. In Chapters 4-7 such emphasis emerged as the dominance of qualifications in modern education policy making. Finally they indicated the sixth form as a Trojan horse for old values and in Chapter 8 there was an examination of the important role sixth forms plays in the policy assumptions of 14-19 education.

Chapter 8 also offered that the 1988 Act had introduced a total revising of education purpose and policy framing around standards, choice and autonomy. However it was also observed in Chapter 9 that such a revision owed its strength to its ability to build upon previous knowledge practices and values. This confirms McCulloch's idea of the underlying discriminatory practices of English education from the Victorian period and the continuing failure to develop appropriate knowledge values for the many young people.

The 14-19 reform agenda is an organisational response to a curriculum issue. At key stage 4 young people are required to undertake an academic curriculum with some modifications. However there is also evidence in Chapter 4 that the curriculum itself is also seen as a problem. In short this curriculum does not offer sufficient opportunities especially in the years in which the young person is closest to being an adult:

- to develop their ideas about responsibility and citizenship

- to think critically, to reflect and to develop skills of analysis

- to exercise their creativity

- to understand and explore the breadth of culture

- to develop their awareness of and prepare for a working life

- to prepare for other aspects of adult life.

Such problems of content are exacerbated by a curriculum emphasis which privileges traditional subjects and approaches to learning which only benefits a proportion of learners. What is also clear from the analysis in Chapter 4 is that the Government shares this critical stance towards the curriculum-admittedly not always consistently. They observe shortcomings in the wider development of the characters of young people. They point to deficiencies in learning analytical and critical skills. Policy worries since 1988 have regularly returned to the problem of creativity in the curriculum. Indeed there appear to be two sets of interrelated policy cycles at play: one over 14-19 reform which looks to strengthening vocational education and the other over what the 2001 White Paper calls 'education with character' that covers the wider political, cultural, moral and analytical skills' deficit identified in modern education.

The research in Chapter 9 offers an explanation for this. The doxastic certainties contain an acceptance that education is too narrow, that breadth is sacrificed by the national curriculum, national testing and the league tables. As a result a policy pressure develops to create space for such broader learning. Such pressure also contains the understanding that vocational education should be strengthened within the curriculum settlement. However whereas this belief is sufficient to call for the consideration of reform it is insufficient to overcome the central belief that the institution of the national curriculum, the emphasis on testing and the league tables is more important than anything else. In other words the sacrifice of breadth must continue: except in isolated cases which serve the benefit of being seen to be doing something without actually challenging the overarching belief.

The result of these two contradictory beliefs is the returning policy cycle. The lack of policy memory can be described in first sphere terms as a lack of genuine intent but it is more likely just a recognition that such beliefs are not rational and that

seeking to learn from the past is unnecessary. As a result the second problem of change is manifested in several failed attempts to change the curriculum which reinforces the impression that the narrowness of the curriculum will pertain into the foreseeable future.

The effect of this in terms of the two problems that are at the heart of this research is to emphasise the traditional curriculum as fixed which exacerbates the problem of curriculum content. The new educational settlement from 1988 adds to the problems of change because it presents a series of organisational barriers (such as the importance of qualifications) in addition to the more traditional barriers to reform. It also creates a new set of expectations around education linked to inspection and the ability to quantify educational success.

10.3 Methods: rationale and methodology

In the introductory chapter the methods were divided to give an overview of the choices, the organisation and methodological challenges within the research. As the research is now completed there is no need here to outline its organisation however aspects of it will be drawn to assist in the evaluation of rationale and methodology.

The choices identified in the introduction related first to the underlying philosophical assumption of the research. This will be evaluated here in what has been considered in terms of support in the analysis: the deep-seated links of education to knowledge and identity; the cultural aspects of such links and the absence of rationality in the education policy researched.

The second choice is the assumed requirement between the need to gain an understanding of change content in order to develop a better understanding of change process. Much of the analysis of this was anticipated in the introduction but what also emerges is the important analysis in Chapter 9 which will be used to evaluate this assumption.

The third choice is about the focus of research. The introduction concentrated upon the rationale for the choice of Tomlinson. The evaluation here will consider that choice within the wider policy context of 2001-2005.

In terms of methodology there are two main challenges presented by this research. Chapter 3 identified the first challenge and that is how hidden and unsaid assumptions/beliefs can be identified from the examination of written policy documents. In other words what is the evidential basis of what is said in Chapters 8 and 9 about the doxastic certainties? This challenge sits across both arguments presented in this research

The second challenge is how transformational processes can be described in Chapter 9 when the analysis of Chapters 2 and 6 indicate that reformers are not able to articulate a transformational change process. This challenge is particular to the second part of the second argument.

10.3.1 Rationale

The underlying assumption of this research is that only a philosophical approach can sustain the ambition and aims of it. This assumption is derived from the close relationship between education and knowledge values and the resulting expectation that as the means of knowing must be differentiated conceptually from what is known then there will be a similar difference between education purpose and the policy framing from the practice of education. This assumption offers the first important innovation in this research as it eschews traditional explanations of educational policy.

In the course of the research there has been several indications given to support this assumption. First of all Carr and Hartnett describe a purpose of education which links education to democracy. In their book this assertion is assumed rather than explained. The analysis of the characteristics made in Chapter 1 focuses on the organisation of education in terms of eight characteristics which are based in long standing cultural assumptions of education.

Young explores the implicit assumptions of education values. His account of the reasons for the failure of Tomlinson, explored in Chapter 8, gives an explicit linkage between education, knowledge values and identity. Young locates a type of knowledge as a separate generalising form which is not justified and which allows the framing of learning. His exploration of this type of knowledge affords support for the philosophical assumption of this research.

The final support of such a philosophical approach comes from White's statement made in 1973 that any rational education system must proceed from stated aims to organisation of practice. The examination of policy making between 2001 and 2005 illustrates such rationality is not evident. The lack of rationality in education might also explain why after 40 years he has not been able to convince policy makers to introduce such an aims based approach.

The second choice made in this research was to assume that determining the nature of change content was a prerequisite of identifying the change processes. The problematic of such relationship was identified in the introduction and further explored in Chapters 2 and 6. However what was also discovered in this research is that there is a tendency for both policy makers and reformers to jettison the distinction between content and process. In Chapters 4 and 7 there was evidence of the switch between the content of proposals and the process needed to institute them. The Government was searching for a series of reform which would also be their own change process supported by increasing performance management and institutional autonomy which also serve as both the content of reform and a change management process. Chapters 5 and 6 outlined the over emphasis in the Tomlinson report of the details of the new system of 14-19 education which was made at the expense of the change process. However the analysis in Chapter 5 also observed that the practicality and do-ability of these proposals were part of the appeal being made to introduce them. Once again the change proposals become the change mechanism.

Accordingly it is not only important to maintain the distinction between change proposals and change mechanism but also it is important to explore the doxastic certainties before being able to move onto how change might take place. Chapter 9 demonstrates how the analysis of change can only occur based upon the prior examination of the doxastic certainties.

The third choice covered why Tomlinson was the focus of the report. In the course of the research this choice has been supported by the wider context offered by the policy journey of 2001-2005. In Chapter 4 it emerged that the Working Group on 14-19 reform was limited in its scope by what had gone on before but also was expected to determine transformational change for 14-19. In Chapter 7 the

response of the Government was not only to jettison the changes offered but also to do so in a way that exposed the doxastic certainties in an unusually explicit way. Accordingly Tomlinson illustrates both the limitation placed upon the potential of reform and also the best opportunity for such reform. The 2001-2005 policy journey has enabled both the observation of doxastic certainties and the heterodoxy associated with them.

The choices made at the start of this research have enabled the development of the arguments of the research. It is now time to consider how these arguments have been supported and in doing so how the research met the methodological challenges identified in Chapter 1.

10.3.2 Methodological challenges

In the introduction three methodological challenges were identified for this research and it indicated that the conclusion of the research would address how successfully those challenges have been met. It is necessary to treat this examination against each argument separately. The first argument is:

> that some of the doxastic certainties of education policy making in
> England can be observed from the 14-19 reform policy journey of 2001-
> 2005

The first challenge looked at the perspective needed to identify the doxastic certainties as they were a part of the framing of our understanding and not aspects of understanding. As was noted in Chapter 3 historical analysis helps to get over such a problem. The research was determinedly historic even to the extent of excluding any reference to contemporary reflection upon the events of 2001-2005.

The second challenge was about the ability to identify and then describe the unspoken assumptions. The conceptual framework has proven useful in identifying aspects of such assumptions in the documents reviewed. The framework has enabled comparison to be made which has enable continuities and divergences to emerge. Such comparisons enabled doxastic certainties to be observed in Chapters 8 and 9. The process of identifying misrecognition was

applied to the stated purposes of education advanced in the 2001 and 2005 White Papers. The analysis allowed by the conceptual framework was able to show that such stated purposes were not followed through in a rational way either by the policy framing or the announced implementation of policy. What emerged from the analysis was a policy framing based around the undefined links between standards, choice and institutional autonomy. These were the consistent underpinning of the government documents. What was also observed was that in crucial areas the Tomlinson report shared this thinking which impeded the articulation of a transformational change process.

The third challenge involved the question how could the research demonstrate the evidential basis for what it sought to describe as doxastic certainties if such certainties could not be proven? There were several tests that were given to such certainties. The first was self-evidence. As assumptions which cannot be justified any statement in the documents reviewed which appeared without justification but was asserted as a truth suggested itself as a doxastic certainty. Such a test provides a sufficient condition of a doxastic certainty: but not all self-evident statements are doxastic certainties.

The second indicator which was applied was their relationship to each other. Wittgenstein described that doxastic certainties operated as group giving each other mutual support. Accordingly such mutual support acted as a further test for them. From the 2001-2005 what stood out was the relationship between standards, choice and institutional autonomy. These links were supported by other assumptions such as performance management, inspections and the overwhelming need to refer to learning as qualifications. In Chapter 9 the possibility of 'policy busyness' as part of such a network of beliefs was also considered.

The second argument sought to demonstrate that

> based on an understanding of such doxastic certainties lessons can be drawn about the future possibilities of reform.

The introduction identified that the methodological challenges were different for the second argument because it sought to deploy the doxastic certainties to

develop lessons about change. In doing this there were two types of analysis taking place: the first of doxastic certainties themselves and the second of the nature of change and change possibilities. The first type of analysis is akin to what has just been described and covers the first part of Chapter 9 where doxa and heterodoxy is compared. This type of analysis is covered by the remarks made above.

The second type of the analysis is a rational attempt to develop an understanding of change. The first part of this examines the nature of change of doxastic certainties. The second part draws out potential areas of reform which will have a better chance of success than what has been attempted in the past. Both parts seek to understand change through rational analysis and are subject to different ideas of evidence than in the previous discussion.

In Chapter 9 there was a discussion over how doxastic certainties change. This discussion compares theoretical analysis with actual practice in terms of what is advanced by the thinkers in Chapter 2 as well as what happened with the 1988 Education Reform Act. From this discussion there is little support for identifying change in doxastic certainties as a system wide change. Indeed the experience of the 1988 Act both as interpreted by Carr and Hartnett but also as evidenced in what has been described as doxastic certainties in this research points to the conclusion that doxastic change occurs when some certainties are altered alongside many certainties staying the same. Lawlor's polemic of standards, choice and autonomy becoming the new reality is evidenced by the analysis in this research. But the research also confirms that this new reality also merged with many of the common sense beliefs and assumptions that existed before 1988.

From this conclusion comes the possibility of a single set of reforms which might enable a transformational change to take place. The content of such reform is drawn from Gramsci and Williams and incorporates one of the transformational proposals in the Tomlinson report. It involves an amendment to one of the doxastic certainties and a reversal of another possible certainty. It also involves a different attitude towards change.

It amends the doxastic certainty which advocates vocational reform as relating to 14-19 age range by only advancing a post-16 solution. It reverses the apparent doxastic certainty that such vocational reform can succeed where attempts in the past have failed. It does this because it challenges the idea that change itself is not problematic. In doing that it seeks out deliberately how vocational reform has failed in the past as well as advances its claims to reform in the full and self-conscious knowledge of the difficulties faced by attempts to strengthen vocational education in England.

In terms of this analysis the change process identified is itself transactional as it seeks to fashion from a single set of reform a change agent for a wider transformational reform. This attempt is based upon the awareness of educational change that has been developed by this research. However it also advances the possibility of the development of a new set of knowledge values based around vocational learning as a means for enabling such transformational change to have meaning. Through such a development transactional reform of post 16 vocational education could lead to transformational change in the way we see education and knowledge. Obviously this aspect requires extensive research and thinking about the knowledge values of vocational education and accordingly is a tentative suggestion.

10.4 What has been achieved in this research?

In the introductory chapter there were several anticipated outcomes of this research. In this section I want to highlight four of them and indicate both their originality and their contribution to new knowledge. This discussion will also consider the further research that could be triggered by these outcomes and new understandings.

Tools of Analysis	Understanding about education	Improved understanding of change processes within education	Specific understanding of the potential of change within the 14-19 age range
The philosophical approach to research of educational policy Usefulness of new conceptual framework as a tool of analysis of specific policy documentation	The observation of doxastic certainties of educational purpose and policy in 2001-5	The observation of the ability to articulate transformational change in education is not matched by ability to identify transformational change processes	The identification of a change mechanism for post 16 education based on a transactional hope for transformational change as well as the possibility of true transformational change through a new set of knowledge values for vocational education

The first claim to originality is the development of tools of analysis through the philosophical assumption. This assumption offers both a new perspective on educational policy as well as a new way of analysis. The perspective it gives is of educational policy at its highest level being made up by a series of mutual supporting beliefs that form part of our wider framing of knowledge. Such beliefs appear as certainties and are not usually made explicit. Their tacit acceptance gives them strength as common sense, mutually accepted understandings, which include education purpose and policy framing. By their nature they are difficult to examine and almost impossible to shift. This new perspective represents new knowledge.

This philosophical approach is different to traditional ways of explaining educational policy because it posits policy framing in a different epistemic sphere.

The approach adopted here seeks no explanation of educational purpose and policy framing beyond a set of historical observations of such purpose and policy framing in practice. The outcome of such research cannot be used to make social descriptions because they are not constructed to carry the burden of social explanation. Indeed attempts at such explanation are considered illegitimate in this approach.

The different set of perspectives that come from the assumptions of this research enable the development of the conceptual framework. The separate analysis of purpose, policy framing/problem identification and strategic implementation provides a useful tool for the analysis of any education policy discussion. Indeed it is a tool that can be transferred to policy statements arising in different contexts: such as other UK nations like Scotland and Wales; other similar systems like the US and Australia and continental education systems, for example France and Germany. The outcome of the analysis would reflect different traditions and understandings but should expose implicit assumptions which frame such policy contexts. This tool of analysis would help in comparative educational analysis.

The second claim for originality is the demonstration of the conceptual framework in a specific period of policy making. This demonstration leads to the exposure of the doxastic certainties identified in Chapters 8 and 9. As part of an implicit set of understandings about knowing they are difficult to examine. The successful exposure of them in the 2001-2005 policy documents overcomes such difficulties and offers up a new set of understandings about education itself. What is recorded here is from a specific time. However there is some evidence in the White Papers listed in Annex 4 as well as the recent publication of the 2016 White Paper to indicate similarities across other time periods.

Accordingly additional research could be undertaken to examine the doxastic certainties of more recent policy formulation: for example Gove's reform agenda of 2010 -2014. Such research could be compared with the analysis contained here. A picture might then emerge of the general outline of assumptions that persist.

The third claim for originality is the discovery of the practice of change within education. Chapter 2 and the examination of the Tomlinson report indicate ability of reformers to envisage and articulate profound and transformational change in education. However they also describe that the transformational vision for change can only be accompanied by a transactional plan of change which often undermines the change that takes place.

The final claim on originality and new knowledge is the proposal for change which seeks transformational change as a result of the awareness enabled by this research. This seeks to establish a transformational set of changes for 14-19 education through the aspect of a coherent new vocational programme of learning. It also offers the possibility of a new set of understandings about knowledge through the examination of the underpinning knowledge and identity values of this new programme of learning. This final claim is the fundamental challenge presented by my research. The pursuit of such knowledge values is the means to achieve lasting reform of education because if this research is right then only at the level of our knowledge assumptions will we be able to achieve true reform. Interestingly this brings me right back to the pursuit of knowledge values that I jettisoned earlier in my research. However then I was trying to fashion a rationally superior form of argument. From this research I can see that is the wrong place to begin. New knowledge values emerge from different practices, new experiences and changing identity.

10.5 Conclusion

Before I began this research I felt intuitively that there were serious barriers to prevent 14-19 reform and such barriers operated through cultural and knowledge values. I also understood that an understanding of such barriers was needed in order to make reform possible. As indicated in the introductory chapter I spent some time trying to fashion a better set of knowledge values before I realised that the attempt was based on the wrong set of assumptions. I could neither explain the barriers nor seek to replace them through better ideas. The philosophical assumption made in this research was the key to unlocking the conceptual problems around the barriers to change as well leading up to how change itself might be visualised.

There are two aims in this research. The first aim is to identify the doxastic certainties of both the reformers and the policy makers who do not accept reform. The analysis in Chapter 8 and the first part of Chapter 9 does that. In this chapter I have explained the methods and approaches that have supported this determination. The doxastic certainties are important aspects of our understanding and being more conscious of them will help in furthering understanding of educational policy and practice.

The second aim is to use this understanding to identify the change processes within the certainties and to outline proposals for change within the 14-19 age range. This aim required an approach which combined both first sphere and second sphere thinking. However its claims are made as verifiable statements. The first is that change within doxastic certainties is not systemic but partial. The evidence for this is the experience of 1988 Act as interpreted by Carr and Hartnett and supported by the doxastic certainties observed in this research. The second statement is that post-16 vocational reform could act, if done in the right way, as a means of introducing transformational 14-19 reform. The plausibility of that statement is intended by what is said at the end of Chapter 9: its verification needs to await events.

The ambition of the research is to identify what prevents 14-19 reform in education and to identify means of change. The analysis here points to the longstanding strength of the doxastic certainties alongside their inherent epistemic weakness. Change can come by asking what the basis of the certainty is: turning a certainty into an empirical question means that the certainty no longer exists. In Chapter 9 I outlined a proposal for changing the 14-19 certainties. The lesson of this research is that they may change through other means. The contribution this research makes is to outline their frailty and to raise our consciousness of them. In doing that we can become aware how inappropriate they are for the world we live in. Such awareness is the beginning of how they change.

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Glossary

BIS   Business, Innovation and Skills, the Government department responsible for Apprenticeships in England

CBI   Confederation of British Industry, one of the biggest representative groups of employers in Britain

CKSA   Common knowledge, skills and attributes, a central feature of the unified 14-19 framework proposed in the Tomlinson report.

DFE   Department for Education, the Government department responsible for English education since 2010

DFES   Department for Education and Skills, the Government department responsible for English education for the period of this research

GCSE   General Certificate in Secondary education, English examination at level 2 normally sat by 15 year olds

GNVQ   General National Vocational Qualification, a general vocational qualification normally at level 2 and 3.

HE   Higher Education

HEIs   Higher Education Institutions

NVQ   National Vocational Qualification, a national system of vocational qualifications at levels 1,2 and 3

OECD   Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development is an organisation formed from 34 countries which inter alia publishes international comparisons on education

Ofsted   English schools and college inspectorate

PSHE   Personal, social and health education- part of the school curriculum given over to wider learning including in many schools citizenship, careers and wider learning

QCA   Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, body responsible for responsible for all external assessment in English schools and colleges

TVEI   Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, major 14-18 vocational initiative introduced by Mrs Thatcher in 1982 which lasted until 1997

Annex 1   Consultation Questions from the 2002 Green Paper

Chapter 1 The vision for 14-19
Q: Do you share our vision of the 14–19 phase?

Chapter 2 14-19 Marking the start of the phase

Q: Do you agree that the aims set out in paragraph 2.6 are the right ones to mark the start of the phase?
Q: Do you support the proposal that pupils should draw up an individual learning plan towards the end of Key Stage 3 to plot how they would achieve their planned goals by age 19?
Q: What support should be available to prepare young people for entry to the 14–19 phase?
-from the school?
-from the Connexions Service?
Q: Would you welcome guidance on how different models of marking the start of the 14–19 phase might be developed?
Q: Would it be helpful for schools to have access to a toolkit based on the approaches, materials and processes developed for Progress File?
Q: Are there any further measures that might be taken to encourage young people from groups under-represented in higher education to aim for entry to higher education?

Chapter 3 the content of the 14-19 curriculum

Q: Do you agree with the rationale for the 14–16 compulsory curriculum set out in paragraph 3.9?
Q: Do you agree that mathematics, English, science and ICT should form the core of the 14–16 curriculum?
Q: Do you agree that the areas set out in paragraphs 3.12–3.14 should also be compulsory at 14–16?
Q: Do you support the proposal for the new statutory entitlement to a subject within modern foreign languages, design and technology, the arts and the humanities set out in paragraphs 3.16–3.23?
Q: Do you support the changes to the disapplication arrangements proposed in paragraph 3.24?
Q: Do you support the extension of vocational options proposed in paragraphs 3.28–3.29?
Q: Do you support the development of hybrid qualifications as proposed in paragraph 3.30?
Q: Do you agree that more opportunities should be provided at A Level for the most able students to demonstrate greater depth of understanding?
Q: Do you agree that the existing grade range at A Level should be extended to provide greater differentiation between more able candidates?
Q: Do you agree with the proposal to introduce more demanding questions into A2 papers so as to produce a higher grade at A Level?
Q: Do you agree with the proposal to relabel vocational A Levels in paragraph 3.41?

Q: Do you agree that all young people aged 16–19 should be entitled to continue studying literacy, numeracy and ICT until they have reached Level 2 (paragraph 3.43)?

Q: Do you support the framework proposed in paragraph 3.44?

Q: Do you agree that we should expect all young people to participate in active citizenship, wider interests and work-related learning (paragraphs 3.49–3.50)?

Chapter 4 Recognising achievement – a new award

Q: Do you agree that there should be a new overarching award to recognise achievement by age 19 (paragraph 4.2)?

Q: Do you prefer the model for the award outlined in paragraphs 4.8–4.15 or for a Certificate as outlined in paragraph 4.16?

Q: What do you think the award should be called (paragraph 4.3)?

Q: Do you agree with a structure for the award that includes a common strand and main qualifications (paragraph 4.8)?

Q: Do you agree that there should be a record of progress for those who do not gain the intermediate award (paragraph 4.9)?

Q: Do you agree with our proposal that the award should have three different levels (paragraph 4.10)?

Q: Do you agree with our proposals for main qualifications thresholds for the Intermediate, Advanced and Higher awards (paragraph 4.10 and diagram 1)?

Q: Should general studies A/AS Levels count towards the thresholds for the Advanced and Higher awards (paragraph 4.11)?

Q: Do you agree that the award should have a common strand of attainment at Level 2 in literacy, numeracy and ICT (paragraph 4.12)?

Q: Do you think wider activities should be required for the achievement of the award (paragraph 4.13)?

Q: How do you think the wider activities could be assessed (paragraph 4.14)?

Chapter 5 Pace and progression

Q: Do you support our proposals for ensuring that young people should be able to progress at a pace consistent with their potential and abilities?

Chapter 6 Advice, guidance and support for young people

Q: Do you support the proposed focus of the national specification for careers education and guidance described above?

Q: Do you agree that it should begin from Year 7, with a very light touch in the early years of Key Stage 3?

Q: Are there other ways in which Connexions Personal Advisers should provide support to young people in the 14–19 phase?

Chapter 7 Drivers and support for change

Q: Do you support our proposals for extending the qualifications included in the performance tables?

Q: Do you agree with our proposals for recording the performance of AS?

Q: How would you propose that the performance tables deal with the achievements of those who take GCSE or equivalent qualifications up to a year later than age 16?

Q: Do you support the proposal to change the performance indicators for schools and colleges at age 18 to reflect achievement of Levels 2 and 3?

Q: What further measures would help to support improvement in the FE sector?

Chapter 8 Implementation

Q: Do you agree with the timetable indicated?

Q: Do you support our proposals for pathfinders?

Q: Are there aspects other than those mentioned which should be covered by the pathfinders?

Q: Do you have a view on the way students attending both school and college should be funded?

Q: Do you support the ways we wish to encourage collaboration?

Q: Are there additional ways in which collaboration could be encouraged?

Annex 2 Terms of Reference for Working Group to be chaired by Mike Tomlinson

1 The Working Group is invited to consider the three overlapping strategic directions for change identified in the Department's response to its consultation on the Green Paper, 14–19: extending opportunities, raising standards , and to make recommendations.

2 The Government is looking for progress over time towards:

- strengthened structure and content of full-time vocational programmes, and to offer greater coherence in learning programmes for all young people throughout their 14–19 education;
- assessment arrangements for 14–19 year-olds that are appropriate to different types of course and styles of teaching and learning, with the overall amount of assessment manageable for learners and teachers alike; and
- a unified framework of qualifications that stretches the performance of learners, motivates progression, and recognises different levels of achievement.

3 In considering these three overlapping areas the Group should identify and propose action to resolve the range of issues affecting an effective 14–19 strategy that have not been already addressed by the agenda set out in the Government's response to its 14–19 Green Paper.
The Group is asked specifically to consider the recommendations for the longer term identified by Mike Tomlinson in his second report into A Level standards.
The Group is also asked specifically to consider the following:

Coherent learning programmes:

4 To examine and, where appropriate, make recommendations on how:

- programmes, particularly predominantly vocational programmes, should be better structured to offer clear progress and achievement;
- such programmes can be more readily understood as part of a clear framework, progressing from Key Stage 4 to further options in skilled employment or higher education;
- such programmes might be developed to achieve broad public recognition and currency with employers and HE providers as a distinctive choice with respected outcomes;
- the qualifications goals in programmes can best provide an appropriate combination of general and specialist education;
- 14–19 programmes generally can help promote the acquisition of essential, practical skills for life, and how also they might encourage the development of analytical, problem-solving and thinking skills and the confidence and ability to present and argue conclusions;
- the contribution of employers to the design and delivery of this framework could be strengthened; and

- additional breadth and complementary study should be included within the post -16 element of 14–19 programmes, particularly for the most able students.

5 Though this aspect of the Group's work should encompass all learning within the 14–19 phase, the priority is to address 16–19 programmes of study outside the A Level route.

6 The Group should focus on programmes from Level 1 to Level 3 and should reflect the needs of learners at all levels. The Group should include the contribution of the Key Skills qualifications, including the wider Key Skills. The Group will note that the structure and promotion of Modern Apprenticeships have been the subject of a recent major review under the chairmanship of Sir John Cassells and the reforms that are being taken forward by the Learning and Skills Council.

Assessment arrangements.

7 To examine and, where appropriate, make recommendations on how the nature and amount of assessment for 14–19 year-olds should develop to ensure that arrangements:

- are fit for purpose and match the teaching and learning styles appropriate to both qualification and course of study;

- are manageable for students, taking account of the amount of assessment during the 14–19 phase and during examination periods;

- ensure manageable administrative costs on schools, colleges, training providers and awarding bodies;

- motivate all learners, including support for those facing physical or social barriers to learning and slower learners so that perception of earlier failure is avoided;

- maintain sufficient independence and transparency to deliver consistent, reliable standards; and command the support of employers, higher education and the wider public, including young people.

This strand of work, which should focus on the principles underpinning effective assessment rather than looking at the detailed arrangements within individual qualifications, will include the assessment of all general qualifications which may be undertaken by young people from the start of Key Stage 4 to the age of 19. It should, however, consider Mike Tomlinson's recommendations for the decoupling of the AS and A2 to create two free-standing qualifications.

8 It should take account of the assessment required at the end of Key Stage 3 to provide a basis for wider curriculum choice at 14.

9 The work of the Group on assessment should include GNVQs and A Levels in vocational subjects but excludes NVQs, other occupational qualifications and the requirements of Modern Apprenticeships (but the work of the Group on coherent learning programmes must include NVQs and other occupational qualifications).

A unified framework of qualifications

10 To examine and, where appropriate, make recommendations for a unified framework of qualifications for the 14–19 phase of education that will:

- provide a challenge for all students, including the most able;
- embrace the full range of programmes of study;
- raise standards of achievement at 19;
- provide a template for a broad and engaging educational experience;
- deliver consistent robust standards and be capable of rigorous, impartial assessment; and
- be capable of commanding a wide range of support among key stakeholders, in particular higher education and employers.

11 The Group should advise on the practical steps that would be necessary to implement such a model, on potential costs and on a process for implementation that would minimise the risk of adverse impact on young people's education or the management of the education system. In doing so, it should consider the merits and implications of decoupling the AS and A2 to create two free-standing qualifications as recommended by Mike Tomlinson, as a practical step towards the implementation of such a model.

12 The Group should include all education and training undertaken by young people in the 14–19 phase. The Group should consider how the achievement of a Modern Apprenticeship should be integrated within the awards structure

Cross-cutting considerations

13 The Group should have regard to the following cross-cutting priorities:
- to increase post-16 participation and attainment, and to narrow the attainment gap;
- to enhance diversity and breadth of provision, local innovation and student choice;
- to meet the needs of low achievers and those who face significant obstacles to learning;
- to reduce the significance of 16 as a potential break point and focus on outcomes at 19; and
- to reduce unnecessary burdens on the system, especially on teachers and learners.

Annex 3 Recommendations from Tomlinson Report

Recommendation 1: balanced programmes

To provide all young people with a balance of generic and specialised learning, all 14-19 programmes should comprise:
• Core learning, designed to ensure that all young people develop a range of generic knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to progress and succeed, including progression over time to at least level 2 in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication, and functional ICT; and
 • Main learning, designed to ensure achievement and progression within recognised academic and vocational disciplines which provide a basis for progression within the diploma framework and access to employment, work-based training and HE. Main learning defines the type of programme and may be chosen to reflect learners' strengths, interests and aspirations.

Recommendation 2: programmes and diplomas

 The existing system of qualifications taken by 14-19 year olds should be replaced by a system of diplomas, available at entry, foundation, intermediate and advanced levels.

Each diploma should be sub-divided into separately assessed components. A diploma should be awarded for successful completion of a coherent programme meeting threshold requirements at a particular level.

Achievements in the programme beyond the threshold should be recorded on a transcript of achievement (see chapter 7).

Young people should be able to enter the framework at age 14 at the level that best meets their capabilities and complete more than one diploma as they progress through the 14-19 phase.

Existing qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, and NVQs should cease to be free-standing qualifications in their own right but should evolve to become components of the new diplomas.

Recommendation 3: diploma lines and programme types

We propose that there should be up to 20 'lines of learning' within the diploma framework.

Diplomas within each line should be named – and sometimes sub-titled – according to the content of the main learning.

One line should be open, providing a relatively unconstrained choice of subjects and diploma components, similar to the mixed programmes of A levels or GCSEs or equivalent vocational qualifications that many young people currently undertake.

Learners should be able to select from a wide choice of subjects and areas of learning, including traditional academic subjects and specially-designed components distilled from the content of specialised diploma lines. In this way, young people would be able to elect to take relatively short vocational options so that they could sample, and make a start on, the content of the more substantial vocational pathways represented in the specialist lines. The other lines should cover a wide range of employment sectors and/or academic areas of study. These lines would not normally be available to pre-16 learners.

Recommendations for integrating the diploma framework and apprenticeships are set out in chapter 8 and exemplified in annex I.

Recommendation 4: subject aggregations

We recommend that drawing upon subject aggregations used successfully here and abroad, QCA works with relevant subject and sector bodies, including subject associations, HE, Sector Skills Councils, employers, and providers to develop a framework and design criteria for up to 20 named lines which:

• include a line that recognises achievement in 'open' programmes, where learner choice is relatively unconstrained;
• cover a wide range of options, combining them where appropriate;
• ensure that programme content is relevant to the needs of learners   aspiring to particular destinations and to the needs of individual academic   and employment sectors;
• allow for the development of optional areas of further specialisation;
• are flexible and kept under review; and
• are transparent and readily understood by end-users.

Recommendation 5: Key Stage 4

All 14-16 year olds should be required to follow the statutory National Curriculum at Key Stage 4 and other statutory curriculum requirements, such as RE, as they are now. Achievement in statutory KS4 subjects, such as science, which are not part of the core, should give credit towards main learning.

Recommendation 6: the core

 We propose that the core, common to all programmes and diplomas, should comprise:
• functional mathematics;
• functional literacy and communication;
• functional ICT;
• an extended project;
 • common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA);
 • personal review, planning and guidance; and
• an entitlement to wider activities.

Recommendation 7: functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT

We recommend that QCA works with all stakeholders, including end-users and subject experts, to develop core components in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication and functional ICT which:

- are based on an understanding, shared between stakeholders, about what constitute common requirements for informed citizens, effective learners and a wide range of workplaces;
- reflect the detailed criteria for these subjects in annex C and, in the case of functional mathematics, build upon the recommendations made by Professor Adrian Smith for reform of mathematics education;
- meet the needs of end-users; and
- are available at all levels within the diploma framework, from entry to advanced level. These components should be available in advance of introduction of the diplomas to begin meeting the needs of employers for more thorough acquisition of the relevant skills. Until the new components are in place, all young people should continue to be encouraged to undertake the available options, such as Key Skills, in these subjects as part of their 14-19 learning programmes.

Recommendation 8: common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA)

Opportunities to develop CKSA should be integrated into all 14-19 programmes through carefully managed institutional teaching and learning strategies. They need not be separately assessed, but delivering them within all programmes would mean that learners cannot achieve their diploma without developing them.

Schools, colleges and training providers should be responsible for ensuring that learners develop the CKSA across the learning programmes which they offer. Specialised diplomas should be designed from the start to recognise the full range of CKSA.

The effectiveness and quality of delivery of CKSA within individual institutions should be monitored through external inspection and centre approval arrangements.

QCA should develop guidance and exemplars setting out how CKSA can be integrated into institutions' teaching, learning and assessment. Guidance and exemplar models for effective delivery should also be developed. This should include an examination of the role to be played by personal review, planning and guidance.

Building upon existing qualifications and assessment systems which already accredit some aspects of what we have labelled CKSA (such as the wider Key Skills), diploma components should be available for those who wish some formal accreditation of their attainment within the core and personal development.

Recommendation 9: personal review, planning and guidance

All 14-19 programmes should include regular formal personal review, planning and guidance to enable learners to:
- review and draw together their progress and achievements, and identify the knowledge, skills and understanding they have gained from the full range of their learning;
- raise their personal awareness, understand their strengths and identify learning and development needs; and
- formulate and review medium- and long-term objectives and goals, based on sound, impartial advice and guidance about the options open to them. Guidance and exemplar material should be made available to schools, colleges and training providers to support effective delivery and the recording of the outcomes of personal review, planning and guidance.

Recommendation 10: wider activities

Wider activities should not be a compulsory component of the core, but they should be an entitlement for all learners. Learners would be strongly encouraged to undertake one or more wider activities which could be detailed on their transcript if they so wished. Recording and attestation models should be developed and piloted, involving a range of providers and drawing upon existing practice in this field. Research should be undertaken to establish the extent of the current provision of wider activities and the strategies required to secure equity of access to provision of an agreed standard. Options for further enhancing the status of wider activities within the diploma should be kept under review in the light of progress towards securing consistent access for all young people.

Recommendation 11: main learning

Criteria and processes for the development of 14-19 learning programmes and components should be adopted by QCA following the design principles and recommendations set out in this report, as a basis for the design of diplomas and components by awarding bodies and relevant stakeholders. Particular attention should be paid to:
- the need to ensure that the content of specialised diplomas is coherent and relevant to the area of specialisation. In many cases this would mean a single awarding body or consortium taking responsibility for the overall content and division into components of main learning within individual diplomas; and
- preserving within individual components the integrity of individual subjects and areas of learning and preventing these from becoming fragmented.

Recommendation 12: vocational main learning
Vocational programmes giving access to a diploma should replace the existing range of vocational qualifications taken by young people.

These should be developed by awarding bodies, working closely with employer organisations, including SSCs, 14-19 providers and HE. They should build upon the best of existing qualifications and operate within design criteria specified by QCA, based on the design parameters set out in this report.

Most vocational lines should incorporate a substantial period of structured work placement, related to the area of specialisation and giving credit towards main learning.

Centre approval criteria should ensure that vocational learning is only delivered where there are appropriate facilities and teachers, tutors and instructors with relevant expertise.

Recommendation 13: English, mathematics and ICT in main learning

We recommend that – alongside functional maths, literacy and communication and ICT – extended, transition and supplementary components should be available to ensure that these subjects can be pursued in breadth and depth as part of the main learning requirements of 14-19 programmes and diplomas.

Recommendation 14: modern foreign and community languages

In developing the new 14-19 framework the Government should ensure a comprehensive and flexible modern foreign language offer, building upon the national languages strategy, and ensuring that the 'languages ladder' is integrated into the reformed system.

The existing entitlement to study a modern foreign language at Key Stage 4 should be extended to 16-19 year olds. The diploma lines should include the option to specialise in modern foreign languages.

The design criteria and process for all named diploma lines should ensure that consideration is given to the inclusion of supplementary modern foreign languages learning as either an elective or a compulsory component.

Recommendation 15: interlocking diplomas

All diplomas should contain learning not just at the level of the diploma but also at the level below.

Designers of specialised diplomas should be asked to ensure that there is some overlap between the intermediate and advanced versions of their diplomas (e.g. that advanced level diplomas contain some intermediate material), while also ensuring that the balance of the diploma conforms with the requirements for the relevant level.

Recommendation 16: using a credit system
Each available diploma component should be assigned a credit value according to the volume of learning it contains, and each diploma should require successful

achievement of a minimum number of credits. The way credit is established for 14-19 diplomas should be the same as that for qualifications within the adult framework.

Recommendation 17: meeting the needs of different learners – entry programmes and diplomas

Learners who cannot access full programmes at foundation level or above should have access to programmes based on personalised planning and targets and entry level components.

The entry diploma should incorporate all the principal features of the diplomas at other levels, including all the elements of core and main learning tailored to learners' needs. The balance between, and levels of achievement within, core and main learning should be allowed to vary according to the capabilities of the learner.

In-course assessment should predominate at this level, supported by training and exemplars to ensure consistent application of standards. Achievement of the diploma should be based on the attainment of individual learning goals.

Successful completion of a personalised programme below foundation level should be recognised through award of an entry diploma.

Entry diplomas should interlock with foundation level through target-setting processes which ensure that learners with the capability undertake components at entry, foundation or higher levels as part of their personalised programme.

Recommendation 18: meeting the needs of different learners – entry programmes and diplomas

Entry programmes and diplomas should provide and recognise a range of options relevant to learners' particular needs in employment, later learning and adult life. This should include to the opportunity to undertake components in:

- preparing for employment;
- preparing for independent adult living;
- developing study or learning skills; and
- preparing for supported living.

The broad design framework of entry components should be determined centrally, but schools and colleges should be able to develop their own components and programmes to meet the individual needs of their learners.

A central bank of 'off-the-shelf' components should be available to support entry diplomas.

Recommendation 19: meeting the needs of different learners – foundation and intermediate level

Components and programmes should be developed that recognise the particular needs of learners for whom foundation level would be a significant achievement. These must stand in their own right as effective preparation for employment and adult life for those who are not yet capable of progressing further in learning. Alongside specialised vocational and practical options, these might include components in life skills such as personal finance and food preparation.

Specialised options should be developed within open programmes at foundation and intermediate level, building upon initiatives such as the Increased Flexibility Programme and Young Apprenticeship to provide practical, coherent alternatives to GCSE at Key Stage 4 and to promote progression into relevant open and specialised diploma lines at the end of Key Stage 4.

Assessment at foundation and intermediate components should either:
- enable learners to demonstrate a range of achievement, spanning foundation and intermediate level; or, where this is not possible,
- allow and encourage rapid progression from foundation level to components at intermediate level.

Recommendation 20: in-course assessment

In open diplomas at entry, foundation and intermediate levels, in-course assessment within clear national standards should be the predominant mode of assessment.

Assessment should be based upon a mixture of: on-going assessment; one-off, time limited, internal and external written and practical tests and examinations; and project/portfolio work.

Teachers should be able to draw upon banks of tests to supplement the assessment tasks which they devise themselves.

The focus of external assessment and quality control should be on ensuring that: teacher-led judgements are exercised reliably and consistently, through mechanisms such as institutional inspections and validation, teacher training and development; sampling of learners' work; and the establishment of a network of Chartered Assessors who can act as a focus for quality-control within their institutions.

Sufficient resources are made available for: the training and development of teaching staff; the quality assurance system set out in paragraph 148; a national information system and ICT infrastructure that supports tracking of performance data; and performance measures and accountability systems that support this form of assessment.

Recommendation 21: assessing functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT

Assessment of functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT should:
- be externally set, marked and moderated and based on a mastery model;
- not create a large additional burden on learners, and where appropriate be subsumed within assessment of another relevant subject, such as English; and
- be available to be taken when a young person is ready be assessed in that area. QCA would need to develop approaches to the assessment of these subjects.

Recommendation 22: assessing the extended project

Assessment of the extended project should be in-course, carried out by teaching staff or suitably qualified people in other organisations, and should assess the quality of the processes as well as the final piece of work.

Assessment should take place in stages throughout the project, including an oral presentation or viva by the learner, and against level descriptions and nationally agreed guidance and criteria.

Recommendation 23: advanced level assessment

Advanced level assessment should be a balance between assessment based on professional judgement (in-course) and formal external assessment which reflects both the nature of the learning being assessed and the levels of differentiation required within individual subjects, areas of learning and individual components.

In time, there should be a shift away from external and coursework assessment towards professional, teacher-led assessment, especially at A1, underpinned by the proposed quality assurance arrangements to maintain the dependability of teacher judgements.

The AS and A2 elements of existing A levels should each consist of two rather than three assessment units. In time, this arrangement should be reproduced in equivalent A1 and A2 diploma components.

The levels of teacher-led assessment currently associated with many vocational and occupational qualifications should be retained.

Recommendation 24: component grading
Each main learning component should be graded appropriately and would use one of three scales:
 – fail/pass;
– fail/pass/merit/distinction; or
 – for some advanced components, fail/E/D/C/B/A/A+/A++.

These three scales should retain common grade boundaries to establish the equivalence of components graded in different ways.

Recommendation 25: diploma grading

All successfully completed diplomas at foundation, intermediate and advanced level should be graded pass, merit or distinction.

Grades above pass should be awarded on the basis of a combination of breadth and depth of achievement.

Grading criteria should be fixed and transparent, so that any candidate who achieves the defined breadth and depth should receive the relevant grade. This means that patterns of achievement may vary over time.

QCA should advise on establishing grading criteria for each diploma line which represent increments of additional value above a threshold pass. Entry diplomas should not be graded.

Recommendation 26: the transcript

All learners should receive a transcript, detailing achievements within their 14-19 programmes to accompany the award of a diploma and to provide a record of their progress at key transition points, such as moving between institutions.

The transcript should be available electronically and be capable of acting as an on-line gateway to further more detailed information about the learner.

Recommendation 27: integrating apprenticeships

All apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3 (equivalent to intermediate and advanced levels) should eventually incorporate the same components of core learning that are adopted for every other 14-19 programme at that level, but with sector bodies determining all other aspects of programme content to meet the employment requirements of their sector and satisfy the needs of the young people concerned.

Sector bodies should be encouraged to adopt the components of core learning by the early development and release of specifications and the provision of appropriate resources and support to assist their introduction.

Technical Certificates used in apprenticeship should, from the start, feature as options within relevant diploma lines.

Sectors with apprenticeships that already include some or all of the components of core learning and meet the minimum threshold size of an intermediate and/or advanced diploma award should be encouraged to align their frameworks with the diploma system, with appropriate incentives for them to do so.

Once the appropriate systems are in place, trainees should receive full credit for all their achievements during the apprenticeship programme and recognition by means of the transcript.

Recommendation 28: bridging between diplomas and apprenticeships

Once the new diploma system is in place for all 14-19 year-olds:

> • apprentices whose sector frameworks do not meet the threshold requirements for a diploma award should be guaranteed access to impartial advice and guidance on completion of the relevant diploma, if they wish to do so; and
> • sector bodies with apprenticeship frameworks which do not meet the threshold requirements for a diploma award should design one or more 'bridging programmes' to enable those who wish to do so to complete a full diploma that is relevant to the employment needs of the sector and satisfies the aspirations and potential of the individual.

Recommendation 29: reducing the assessment burden

GCE A level specifications should be revised to reduce the number of units in an A level from six to four, and reduce the weight and prescription of the assessment criteria, as already proposed by QCA.

GCSE and GCE should have no specific requirement for coursework.

Research into the impact on attainment for specific groups of learners should be undertaken.

The NAA's work on modernisation should be extended to cover the vocational awarding bodies.

Moving swiftly to establish a single point of entry for registration of learners for qualifications would reduce considerably the assessment burden on centres.

Use of electronic learning and assessment in 14-19 provision should be extended.

Recommendation 30: Key Stage 3

5-14 education, and particularly KS3, should be reviewed to ensure that it prepares young people to make the most of opportunities post-14. Particular attention should be paid to lessons from the KS3 strategy and two-year KS3 pilot, particularly in focusing on basic skills, and options for enhancing curriculum flexibility to allow time for learning.

Systems should be introduced for identifying and measuring, during KS3, as full a range as possible of each young person's latent potential – in the form of aptitudes, interests and other characteristics – as a basis for building confidence and motivation, informing the choice of pathways through the 14-19 phase,

underpinning the development of individual learning plans and choice of work experience placements, and providing a foundation for subsequent career, learning and life decisions.

Recommendation 31: aligning 14-19 and adult learning

The approaches to credit in the diploma framework and Framework for Recognising Achievement should be developed to ensure consistency and transferability where appropriate across the two frameworks.

Recommendation 32: institutional performance measurement

In reforming the performance management system, the Government should pay particular attention to:

- promoting participation at levels appropriate to the young people concerned, by recognising increased success in keeping young people in learning, especially after the end of compulsory schooling;
- fostering flexible progression throughout the 14-19 phase which recognises that not all programmes at a given level will take the same length of time for all learners, especially by focusing on continued participation and distance-travelled, rather than specific outcomes at specific ages, before the end of the phase;
- recognising institutions' success in raising the highest level of achievement which their learners reach, especially by focusing on achievement when young people leave the phase;
- ensuring that the achievements of all young people are counted, enabling all young people to feel pride in their achievements;
- recognising the collaborative efforts of all those institutions which contribute to 14-19 programmes, by giving credit for success to all partners in collaborative arrangements; and
- promoting responsible, professional assessment by teachers, by ensuring that their primary consideration is to deliver valid, dependable judgements on their learners, rather than to provide institutional performance monitoring data.

Recommendation 33: implementation strategy

The strategy for implementing reform should include:
- early implementation of some changes that would deliver benefits in their own right and pave the way for implementation of the new system;
- continuation and support of curriculum innovation projects to encourage them to accommodate and pilot elements of the new system;
- establishment of a four-year pilot of the diploma system with a sample of 14-19 year olds. Evaluation of the pilot prior to full roll-out should consider whether it meets the objectives we have set and whether it has any adverse impacts on a specific group of learners; and
- extensive research and modelling of the proposals and their impact on institutions and systems.

A strategy for communication between those involved in delivery, and with stakeholders, young people and the public should be established in the early stages of the work and maintained throughout.

Recommendation 34: resources

We recommend that funding of the reforms should take account of:

> • transition costs, including:
> – workforce development
> – curriculum and assessment development
> – developing and piloting the diploma components and system in operation, including the infrastructure to support the system
> – building the national and local infrastructure – including ICT-based information systems, and awarding infrastructure support for extended projects, wider activities and common skills, local planning and increased collaboration
> – communication;
> • steady state costs, including:
> – the impact of increased participation, greater take-up of vocational courses and their additional cost and higher average programme volume
> – funding per pupil
> – local infrastructure, to support the assessment system, local timetabling, increased   collaboration and improved, information advice and guidance with better advice on pathways and opportunities; and
> – maintenance of national infrastructure, including ICT and data management to support the diploma system.

Recommendation 35: advising on implementation

Alongside the implementation programme, management arrangements would be needed to ensure that all the strands of activity are co-ordinated and contribute effectively to the implementation process. We recommend the establishment of an independent advisory panel comprising key stakeholders and experts (including young people and representation of equal opportunities issues) to advise upon the implementation of the reforms.

Recommendation 36: decoupling of AS and A2 (annex J)

AS and A2 should be decoupled as A1 and A2 diploma components at the point of transition from free-standing A levels to the diploma system.

Annex 4 Educational White Papers between 1992 and 2010

 (with extracts from their summaries)

Choice and Diversity (1992)

'the great themes of quality, diversity, parental choice, school autonomy and accountability run through the White Paper' John Major's introduction

 It enhances parental choice by simplifying the creation of grant-maintained schools and by opening the way to greater variety in education through the formation of new schools and by encouraging specialisation. It establishes a new body dealing with the content of the curriculum and the examination of standards; this will lead to greater rigour, simplicity and clarity of approach.   It sets the long-term funding of grant-maintained schools on a secure basis, and enables small village schools, too, to benefit from GM status.

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/wp1992/choice-and-diversity.html

Self-government for schools (1996)

We propose action in four areas: first, to give local authority schools more control of their budgets; secondly, to give grant-maintained schools more freedom in developing the education that they provide; thirdly, to define more clearly the role of LEAs in supporting schools; fourthly, to encourage more choice and diversity, including through more selection of pupils. (Gillian Shepherd introducing the White Paper in the House of Commons) http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1996/jun/25/schools-self-government

Excellence in Schools (1997)

Our overall approach to policy will be underpinned by six principles:
1 Education will be at the heart of government.
2 Policies will be designed to benefit the many, not just the few.
3 The focus will be on standards, not structures.
4 Intervention will be in inverse proportion to success.
5 There will be zero tolerance of underperformance.
6 Government will work in partnership with all those committed to raising standards.
http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/wp1997/excellence-in-schools.html

Schools Achieving Success (2001)

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2001-schools-achieving-success.pdf

section 1.5 Ours is a vision of a school system which values opportunity for all, and embraces diversity and autonomy as the means to achieve it. **Autonomy** so that well led schools take full responsibility for their mission. **Diversity** so that schools–individually and as a broader family locally and nationally –cater significantly better for the diverse requirements and aspirations of today's young people.

 section 1.6 Our second term is dedicated to carrying through this reform of secondary education:

Giving successlul (sic) schools the freedom they need to excel and innovate.
Encouraging all schools to build a distinct ethos and centre of excellence, whether as a specialist school or by some other means. Opening secondary education to a new era of engagement with the worlds of enterprise, higher education and civic responsibility. Building the curriculum –particularly beyond the age of 14, when the talents of pupils diversify –around the needs of each individual, with far better opportunities for vocational and academic study.
Intervening where necessary to tackle failure and low standards

14-19 Education and Skills (2005)

we set out our proposals for an education system focused on high standards
and much more tailored to the talents and aspirations of individual young people, with greater flexibility about what and where to study and when to take qualifications. These proposals will:

- tackle our low post-16 participation – we want participation at age 17 to increase from 75% to 90% over the next 10 years;
- ensure that every young person has a sound grounding in the basics of English and maths and the skills they need for employment;
- provide better vocational routes which equip young people with the knowledge and skills they need for further learning and employment;
- stretch all young people; and
- re-engage the disaffected.

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2005-white-paper-14-19-education-and-skills.pdf

Higher Standards, Better schools for All: more choice for parents and pupils (2005)

- every school will be able to acquire a self-governing Trust similar to those supporting Academies, which will give them the freedom to work with new partners to help develop their ethos and raise standards;

- Academies will remain at the heart of the programme, with continued and new opportunities to develop them in schools and areas of real and historical underperformance and underachievement;
- independent schools will find it easier to enter the new system;
- and a national Schools Commissioner will drive change, matching schools and new partners, promoting the benefits of choice, access and diversity, and taking action where parental choices are being frustrated.
- introducing better information for all parents when their child enters primary and secondary school, and dedicated choice advisers to help the least well-off parents to exercise their choices
- extending the rights to free school transport to children from poorer families to their three nearest secondary schools within a six mile radius (when they are outside walking distance) and piloting transport to support such choices for all parents, which will help the environment as well as school choice; and
- making it easier for schools to introduce banding into their admissions policies, so that they can keep a proportion of places for students who live outside traditional school catchment areas within a genuinely comprehensive intake. Some specialist schools and Academies already successfully use this approach.

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2005-white-paper-higher-standards.pdf

The Importance of Teaching: the schools white paper (2010)

This White Paper outlines the steps necessary to enact such whole-system reform in England. It encompasses both profound structural change and rigorous attention to standards. It includes a plan for attracting and training even better teachers. It outlines a direction of travel on the curriculum and qualifications which allows us to learn from, and outpace, the world's best. (Gove's introduction)

Intentions include :

Review the National Curriculum, with the aim of reducing prescription and allowing schools to decide how to teach, while refocusing on the core subject knowledge that every child and young person should gain at each stage of their education

Introduce the English Baccalaureate to encourage schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16, whether or not students then go down an academic or vocational route

Reform vocational education so that it supports progression to further and higher education and employment, and overhaul our vocational qualifications following Professor Alison Wolf's review to ensure that they match the world's best.

Raise to 17 by 2013 and then 18 by 2015 the age to which all young people will be expected to participate in education or training

Increase freedom and autonomy for all schools, removing unnecessary duties and burdens, and allowing all schools to choose for themselves how best to develop.

Restore for all Academies the freedoms they originally had while continuing to ensure a level playing field on admissions particularly in relation to children with Special Educational Needs.

Ensure that the lowest performing schools, attaining poorly and in an Ofsted category or not improving, are considered for conversion to become Academies to effect educational transformation.

Dramatically extend the Academies programme, opening it up to all schools: already there are 347 Academies, up from 203 in July.

Ensure that there is support for schools increasingly to collaborate through Academy chains and multi-school trusts and federations.

Support teachers and parents to set up new Free Schools to meet parental demand, especially in areas of deprivation.

Give local authorities a strong strategic role as champions for parents, families and vulnerable pupils. They will promote educational excellence by ensuring a good supply of high quality school places, co-ordinating fair admissions and developing their own school improvement strategies to support local schools.

http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2010-white-paper-teaching.pdf