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A COMPARISON OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM OF BRITAIN AND WEST  
GERMANY AS EXPERIENCED BY MINIMUM-AGE SCHOOL LEAVERS

A Case Study in Retailing

VOL I

ANNETTE KRATZ

Doctor of Philosophy

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

September 1990

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM  
A COMPARISON OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM IN BRITAIN AND WEST  
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SUMMARY

The sectoral and occupational structure of Britain and West Germany has changed over the last fifty years from a manual manufacturing base to a non-manual service sector base. There has been a trend towards more managerial and less menial type occupations. Britain employs a higher proportion of its population in the service sector compared to West Germany, except in retailing, where Germany employs twice as many people. This is a stable sector of the economy in terms of employment, but the requirements of the workforce have changed in line with changes in the industry.

School leavers in the two countries, faced with the same options (FE, training schemes or employment) have opted for them in different proportions: Germans are staying longer in education before embarking on training and Britons are now less likely to go straight into employment than ten years ago. Training is becoming more accepted as the normal route into employment with government policy leading the way, but public opinion still slow to respond. This study investigates how vocational training has adapted to the changing requirements of industry, often determined by technology. In some sectors the changes have been radical; in others e.g. retailing they have not, but skill requirements have changed. Social-communicative skills, frequently not even considered skills, are coming to the forefront.

Vocational training has adapted differently in the two countries: in West Germany on the basis of an established over-defined system and in Britain on the basis of an ill-defined and almost non-existent system. In retailing German school leavers opt for two or three year apprenticeships, whereas British school leavers are offered employment with or without formalised training. The occupation of sales assistant is seen as one of low-level skill, low intellectual demands and a job anyone can do. The traditional skills - product knowledge, selling and social-communicative skills - have been steadily eroded. In the last five years retailers have recognised that a return to customer service, utilising these traditional skills of their staff was necessary to remain competitive. This requires training. The German retail training system responded by adapting its training regulations in a long consultative process, whereas the British experimented with YTS, a formalised training scheme nationwide being a new departure. This thesis evaluates the changes in these regulations.

The case studies in four retail outlets demonstrate that it is indeed product knowledge and selling and social-communicative skills which are fundamental to being a competent sales assistant. When the skills are recognised and taught systematically, the foundations for career development in retailing are laid in a labour market which is continually looking for better qualified workers. In British retailing not enough systematic training to recognisable standards is carried out, whereas in West Germany the training system is better prepared to show innovative potential as a structure is in place on which to build.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING RETAILING COMPARISON BRITAIN WEST GERMANY

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## INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years British studies concerned with the development of a skilled workforce and a concomitant reduction in youth unemployment (Dutton 1982; Prais 1981; Finlayson et al 1979) have tended to regard the vocational training system in West Germany as an example of a successful system (Kloss 1985; Parkes and Russell 1983; Williams 1963). Government officials, politicians and representatives from various official bodies undertook visits to and studies of West Germany to investigate the vocational training system (Appendix 1). This comparative focus started in 1955, continuing at various levels until the mid-1980s and has recently become prominent again with a visit by John MacGregor, the Secretary of State for Education, to Berlin and Bonn in June 1990 to look at German training provision. Observers from outside Europe also saw the benefits:

"... countries, like Germany, with a strong apprenticeship system for school leavers have fewer complaints about the difficulties of moving young people from school to work than other countries. They cope with youth unemployment, which is heavily concentrated on those who never entered apprenticeship or who dropped out of it, by preparing young people to enter apprenticeship rather than devising emergency or remedial youth unemployment programmes."  
(Reubens 1979,4)

Germans themselves believe in their training system and generally regard it as good. This belief is based on the 'Modellcharakter', where changes are only implemented after lengthy trial runs. This concept is quite alien to the British. Interest in the British system by Germans is not apparent. One notable exception is the research conducted in 1982 by Lachenmann, who was in fact not looking to use the British system as a model but more to demonstrate its weaknesses in light of the good practices of the German system:

"Insgesamt gesehen könnte damit England und Wales in einem groß angelegten 'Feldversuch' auch den ausländischen Beobachtern gezeigt werden, daß eine Abgrenzung von 'beruflicher Erstausbildung' und 'beruflicher Weiterbildung' - die ja in England ohnehin nie von großer Bedeutung war - heute weniger denn je als Gliederungs- und Organisationsprinzip für die berufliche Bildung geeignet ist." (1982,902)

He concludes that the Further Education system used in England and Wales is not worthy of emulation in terms of structure and organisation. British commentators also recognised the weakness of their own provision:

- "... much as we would pretend otherwise, there really is no national system of vocational preparation: no comprehensive and discernible pattern of getting people into jobs and giving them the relevant preparation; no scheme of progressing through the system; no proper way for people to move about within the system. In particular there are no adequate ways of moving people about between work and education." (Wellens 1983d,301).

Admiration for the German vocational training system came not only from Britain; even supranational organisations praised the German system:

"Die Gesprächspartner aus der OECD hoben die besondere Rolle des dualen Systems der beruflichen Bildung in der BRD hervor. Das System verbinde optimal Theorie und Praxis, Arbeiten und Lernen. ... Die BRD solle die inspirierende Rolle dieses Systems aktiver auch im internationalen Erfahrungsaustausch einbringen."  
(Sozialpolitische Informationen XX/II 10 June 1986)

The OECD praised the West German vocational training system, stating that the system provided an optimal combination of theory and practice and working and learning. The OECD said that this inspirational role should be furthered in an international context. The above statement goes some way to support the comparative approach in research of vocational training, but recognition of this approach has also been gained in other areas:

"I believe that countries can learn from one another about ways to improve particular training delivery systems but I doubt that a country can decide on the proper balance among the various training systems on the basis of other countries' experiences."  
(Reubens 1979,4) and

"Comparative studies throw light on hidden assumptions in one's own system, inform on proposed partners in a relationship, and identify general trends earlier than might be the case in concentrating on a single system." (Parkes 1979, Foreword)

The literature reviewed suggests that, although there has been considerable research into the comparison of the vocational training systems of Britain and West Germany (CEDEFOP 1980,1982; Russell 1983,1984b), the majority of the studies have relied on secondary data and interviews with training experts. The research undertaken by the National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) (Prais and



Wagner 1983,1985) is an exception and will be discussed in detail (cf Part I). Previous studies have compared the structure of the vocational training systems and only two have put forward proposals as to how British policy-makers might proceed (NEDO 1984; Coopers & Lybrands 1985). Other studies have looked at the link between productivity and training (Sorge and Warner 1986 and Steedman and Wagner 1987). No previous research has looked at how the training provision in each country is able to adapt to changing occupational structures and technological innovations in general and in one sector - retailing - in particular. By looking at the retail trades as a subgroup of the labour market it becomes possible to study training developments in relation to employment opportunities and the impact of new technology in more detail. The choice of the retail sector in preference to other sectors such as engineering or construction is deliberate, because in these sectors training has a long tradition and has adapted to new developments without too much difficulty. The retail sector, however, in both Britain and West Germany is now being studied more closely after a long period of neglect and in both countries service industries, of which retailing is one of the major ones, present a growth sector in the future. Furthermore, retailing has traditionally been a large employer of school leavers, especially female ones, in both countries. In this context previous research has not surveyed the experiences and views of trainees or ex-trainees in a particular setting i.e. retail outlets in a cross-national framework.

Cross-national case studies in retailing are rare. Those which do exist, (Epstein et al 1986; Gregory 1990) are not primarily looking at developments in vocational training. Gregory (1990) looked at women working part-time in grocery retailing in France and Britain, comparing their working patterns. Epstein et al (1986) studied the link between work and family life among working-class women, with specific relevance to the time management aspect. It was a cross-cultural study involving three retail stores in Britain and West Germany. <sup>1</sup> The authors stated that most other studies that attempted cross-cultural comparisons did so by conducting surveys and/or using available statistics. Their analysis by contrast was based mainly on primary data using the participant observation method with the two researchers doing the job of a sales assistant for up to seven months and interviewing staff and

management. They believe that their reliance on qualitative data offered a more meaningful and powerful illustration of specific problem areas than could be achieved by quantification. Case studies have been used as the research method in this study for the same reasons. Case studies in a cross-national framework are the only way of gaining a deeper insight into how training provision is supplied to young people in two countries. The researcher is able to "test" generally held assumptions about the training culture, the attitude of all those involved directly in training and the implementation of laws or guidelines in a particular setting. They cannot be used to test hypotheses except in a limited context but the wealth of detail they provide can be used as a measure for future studies.

Research into vocational training in retailing, apart from the NIESR research, has on the whole been national rather than cross-national, Hutt and Atkinson (1975) in Britain and Goldmann and Müller (1986), Bargmann et al (1981), Ehrke (1981) in West Germany. Hutt and Atkinson did not use the case study approach, wishing to gain a representative view across the industry. Bargmann et al watched and observed 21 sales assistants in fifteen companies but did not interview trainees (cf. 4.3.). Ehrke, although highlighting the bad image of the occupation of sales assistant did not conduct interviews to establish what the best training for sales assistants would be, using a far more theoretical approach. Müller and Goldmann interviewed 71 trainees individually and in groups in seven different companies at the end of their second year of training and again two years later. They conducted their research from 1981 to 1984, but it was not published until 1986. The aim of their study is most directly comparable to this research as they also sought to find out how sales assistants experienced and judged their jobs. Their methodology was similar to mine, but being national was wider in scope. Their findings will be referred to in Chapter 7.

The form and structure of the case studies has been largely of my own design, as the aims of much of the previous research was not identical to mine. Most of the German studies highlighted the inadequacies of the two-year sales assistant training compared to the three-year retail trade merchant training and provided information on how the training could be improved. The international studies tended to describe the

legal, structural and financial differences (CECEFOP 1982, 1980) in the two countries. They were intended as source documents and not necessarily to guide policy. The growing interest in economic productivity in an increasingly competitive world market led Sorge and Warner and Prais et al to find ways of proving that better training of the workforce led to higher productivity. NEDO and the MSC among others have looked at the policy aspects of training (NEDO 1984; Select Committee on the European Communities 1984; PSI/AGF 1985) and some action has resulted with the extension of YTS to YTS-2.

This study attempts to link all these strands of research together by looking at how the trainees experience the provision supplied in one particular sector. Does it live up to expectations? What are the expectations? Is it equipping young people with the skills for the retailing jobs of the future? Are young people in one country being better trained than in the other and is this due to the training infrastructure, a training culture or does retailing present similar training problems in both countries? Where case studies were previously undertaken in retailing they were either not cross-national comparisons nor did they look specifically at vocational training and the attitude of trainees. This research study attempts to fill that gap.

A comparison of vocational training provision, looking at how concepts and practices of one could possibly be used by the other, is not sufficient when faced with the different starting points of the two systems. In addition an analysis of how vocational training has adjusted in the light of the economic and technological changes in each country, and whether they are equipping the future generation of workers not only with the technical skills required to carry out the new jobs but also with the social skills for life in the 1990s is needed.

The value attached to vocational training which is flexible enough to adapt to the changing labour market both in terms of meeting the needs of employers in order for the economy to compete on the world markets but also in terms of educating young people for life in general and the working world has been recognised in Britain (NEDO 1984; Coopers &

Lybrands 1985; PSI/AGF 1985). A traineeship is thus not just the process of imparting technical skill to produce a skilled worker, but a process of socialisation in the work sense:

"Apprenticeship is not simply skill training. It has functions and a potential in regard to new entrants that vocational education lacks. It eases transition from school to work. It is a planned means of socializing young people to the ways of the work world. Those with a Germanic background say that it produces industrial discipline." (Reubens 1979,4)

This is hard to achieve if a country does not believe in training as an end in itself, as is the case in British retailing in particular (Franklin 1985; NRTC 1984). However, if it is an aim in itself, one would have a better trained workforce now than before. It is, of course, worth training for 'the future', which is what happens in West Germany, so that if there is an upturn in the economy (which is not always a predictable occurrence) trained workers are there, ready to take on the extra work without delay. Therefore, one of the maxims for vocational education policy and practice in West Germany is:

"Any training is better than none at all. About two-thirds of our more than 800,000 currently unemployed are unskilled people who cannot fill the roughly 350,000 existing vacancies because they do not have the necessary qualifications." (Schmidt,1979,6)

There has been no change in policy in the last ten years. Nor is there likely to be a change if training is also intended not only as the basis of a specific trade but also for imparting the rudiments of citizenship. Then it is essential in any society:

"Berufliche Bildung muß mehr sein als fachliche Qualifizierung in einem engen Verständnis. Erziehung zu einem wertorientierten Zusammenleben in unserer Gesellschaft, zu Toleranz, zu Verständnis und zu Solidarität sind auch Aufgaben der Berufsausbildung." (IBW 4/88,51)

The Germans constantly reiterate this principle: vocational training has to encompass more than a trade-related qualification; it also has to educate us to live together, practise tolerance, understanding and solidarity. In Britain there has been a change in attitude in the 1980s:

"... there will be little disagreement, at any rate among people in industry, that while specific skills are obviously necessary, fast changing technology makes these skills obsolete within the lifetime of a worker. This puts a premium on his or her education and versatility which allows them to master problems at work and adapt to new situations." (Kaufman 1986,136)

but it was not radical enough, because on the one hand there is now a shortage of skilled workers and Britain cannot fully benefit from the economic upturn (The Guardian 2, 4, 17 August 1988) and on the other, vocational qualifications, accepted by all concerned, are not yet the norm in the majority of industries.

This study therefore attempts to look at the vocational training provision in two countries from a variety of angles. Firstly, it will study how labour markets in both countries have evolved over time affecting the options of minimum-age school leavers (Chapter 1). In all of Western Europe, not just in Britain and West Germany, while the pace of technological innovation has increased, the economies have struggled. A common result has been a rise in unemployment and more particularly in youth unemployment, due partly to a rising school leaver population until the mid-1980s. Few experts care to attempt to predict future patterns of employment, nor to assert what kind of skills will be needed for that employment. Most are conscious of a rapid decline in employment in the manufacturing sector but also of the rapid change in occupational structure and content, due to the range of new technologies. In this context, the labour market situation, both on the supply and demand side in each country will be looked at in great detail using mainly official statistics.

School leavers in West Germany and Britain are confronted with the same options on leaving school but opt for the same routes to quite differing degrees. Why? School leavers in Britain are less well qualified than their German counterparts and have less opportunity to continue their education. Why? It will be argued that it is because young people's decisions are determined by what the education, training and labour market have to offer them.

In Part I, this study will situate the role of vocational training in the changing labour markets of both countries to then be able to

analyse the developments in one sector - retailing - in more detail. The training systems will be studied to see how their development is linked to labour market changes and to the aspirations of young people (Chapter 2 and 3). Here the very formal regularised West German approach to vocational training faces the more voluntary ad hoc British approach. These have developed in this manner traditionally and are influenced by the culture of the two countries - the neat, organised, legalised approach of the German system is contrasted to the voluntary, ad hoc and "flexible" British approach to life.

The uniform German system of vocational training is better able to cope with the changes in occupational structure than the ad hoc British provision. More young people are trained to specific levels, measurable in terms of the qualifications obtained. The British system does not value qualifications, nor training to any great extent. Traditionally, manufacturing industry has attracted more interest in training terms, as apprenticeships were at least in existence. However, the growth of the service sector in terms of employment, turnover and productivity in both countries makes this a sector worthy of further analysis. The distributive trades is a sub-sector in which about one fifth of young people find training and employment. It is a sector which does not attract much academic interest, especially at the level of sales assistant.

Retail success does not make a country's economy more competitive on the world markets as higher levels of productivity in the manufacturing industry do, because it is not export-orientated. It concentrates on the local population, but influences international opinion with the continual rise in tourism in all countries. Shops have been called the "window of the world" and they are often the first contact a visitor has with a foreign country. More frequent holidays abroad have increased awareness of the level of quality of service elsewhere. The image of retailing is not generally a very positive one in either Britain or West Germany. In France, meanwhile, working in retailing has achieved relatively high status (Jarvis and Prais 1989). Can the occupation of sales assistant be enhanced through training in Britain and West Germany? Not enough retailers have yet realised the potential of their sales staff:

"Notwithstanding formal managerial decisions at all levels regarding marketing and merchandising, sales people, in their attitudes and behaviour, quite unwittingly can shape and reshape the effective policies of the store." (Clark 1983,39)

Apart from food purchases, shopping is increasingly becoming a leisure activity, not based principally on the department store in Britain as in the 1930s but on specialised multiples, chain stores and specialist shops. Although largely using self-service as the selling form the skill of recognising a customer in need of assistance, giving suitable knowledgeable advice and ensuring the customer leaves contented has not disappeared. In fact, one could almost argue the opposite: in a recent women's magazine survey it was revealed that 43% of women found spending money on new clothes or make-up was the most effective way of relieving stress. <sup>2</sup> If this is the case and more people are going shopping for shopping's sake, the role of the sales assistant grows in importance: her attitude, behaviour, her knowledge and skill will affect the turnover and profit of the shop as much as the product range, layout and decor of the store.

Not everyone is concerned or affected by the treatment received in shops, but the consumer is becoming increasingly aware of quality, price in relation to quality and the ambience in which a product is bought. Deciding whether to return to a certain shop, thus perhaps keeping it in business or taking one's trade elsewhere are fundamental to the survival of individual retailers. With more money to spend (demonstrated again in Britain by the consumer and credit boom of recent years), it is the consumer who decides where to shop and on which products to spend the money. If initial advice on a product is not good, the number of complaints and returns increase - the after sales department (if there is one) is overloaded; this increases costs and affects turnover, thereby reducing profits and ultimately employment. Training can remedy this. In retailing, if an employer trains an employee to a good standard - selling practices as well as knowledge about the shop and its products, consumer behaviour, till operation etc. he can hope for a more motivated, loyal and qualified employee. In Part II, therefore, the development of the distributive industry in both countries will be studied to put the retail training provision into context (Chapters 4 and 5).

Retailing lends itself most easily to abuse in training terms because among other things trainees can be used as shelf-fillers for longer than is necessary to learn that aspect of the job. The company would otherwise have to pay someone on night shift to do it at a higher rate of pay. Trainees can also be put on the checkout, again potentially saving the company money as it would otherwise have to pay a cashier to do that job. However, if the major functions - filling shelves, pricing and cash till operation are those of the job of sales assistant, it is difficult to see how anyone needs three years training to perform them as is the case in West Germany. In that case those companies where the demands on the trainee are so limited should not be allowed to do the full training if any at all. Instead unskilled labour should be employed as in "Aldi" in West Germany. YTS is now going to be the standard route of recruitment for employers of young people just as the Lehre is in West Germany. At present there is still a difference in the length spent on it and the content learned. Whether there is a job at the end of the scheme is equally debatable in both countries. The case studies do show that in retailing West Germany's record is better than Britain's.

The change in retailing practice as well as the change in the attitude of the consumer will be studied to see how these are taken into account in the design of the new retail training schemes in both West Germany and Britain. A more qualified, flexible and motivated workforce is required for the future, but are the skills which are required actually being imparted to the workforce? This question could only be answered by interviewing both trainees and ex-trainees, and checking their views against those of the management.

Therefore case studies were conducted to look in detail at the training operation of two retail outlets each in the twin-towns of Birmingham and Frankfurt. The cities were chosen because they were easily accessible and had a large selection of retail outlets. The four stores which participated in the case studies were chosen because of their good training record, as the aim of the study was not to highlight malpractices, but to compare and contrast the training provision in four retail outlets.



The purpose of the case studies is to exemplify the differences between the two national retail training systems and display the similarities and differences in retail strategy adopted by the trade (Chapter 6 and 7) using structured interviews with trainees, ex-trainees and managers. Specific emphasis is placed on the attitudes of shop assistants and whether their training has a great role to play or whether retailing is governed by similar constraints and attitudes in the two countries. By conducting case studies in retailing, it can be shown how the level of service provided in the two countries varies as a result of the quantity and quality of training. Ultimately, the quality of the staff affects the level of service and the case studies demonstrate that the skills i.e. social-communicative skills, often considered as inherent in a person, can be acquired by training. Other more obvious skills i.e. product knowledge and selling techniques can also be acquired through training: being a qualified sales assistant is not a job anyone can do.

My study concludes that training provision in both countries in retailing is geared towards the fundamental aim of training young people to be both skilled workers and responsible citizens. In practice German trainees receive a broader education on the one hand and a more in-depth vocational training on the other. West Germany trains a much larger proportion of its retailing workforce in specific trades and the actual training is good and liked (as shown in the case studies). In Britain expectations of training are not very high and even the more limited amount of training which is received is generally viewed positively.

Training in retailing can improve the performance of individuals, increase their motivation and contribute towards a positive attitude. It can help companies identify future managerial staff and help enhance the reputation of a company. The image of working in retailing can be improved through good training provision. Product knowledge and social-communicative skills are undervalued in retail training in Britain and West Germany in practice, although in theory, at least, in the German system provision for their transmission is made. German retail employees are likely to have a nationally-valued and recognised

qualification enabling them to work in any retail outlet in the country. Although by the late 1980s the British attitude towards training had started to change for the better with a unified programme of training for young people, a British retail employee will only in very recent years have been given the chance to acquire a qualification; this will not be the same nationally and will not confirm a recognised level of skills.

- <sup>1</sup> Although touching on the importance of training the study concentrates on the experiences of women working mainly part-time and the impact 'individual work time' and an approachable management can make on the lives of women and the profitability of a retail company.
- <sup>2</sup> Camilla Frank: "I shop therefore I am powerless?" in The Guardian 19.4.1989, 21.

Labour Market and Education Changes in Britain and West Germany

This chapter will analyse the changes in the German and British labour market to place training needs and provision into context, focusing on the growing service sector and especially the distributive industry. In order to determine how young people should be trained, in which sort of environment and what sort of skills they should and wish to acquire, questions about the structural, occupational and technological changes in the labour market need to be answered. The way in which educational and vocational qualification requirements have adapted to the changing labour market will also be discussed. Young people in Britain and West Germany have opted to obtain these educational and vocational qualifications in different ways, although faced with the same options. This chapter will explore these differences.

1.1. The Supply Side of the Labour Market

A recent study by MacInnes (1988) <sup>1</sup> in Britain concluded that the overall growth in jobs in the 1980s is similar to the 1970s, but the recent pattern is much more favourable both to service industries and to the south of the country. There was still an overall decline in employment and self-employment between 1979 and 1987 of 363,000, but jobs in the North fell by 908,000 compared to a rise of 545,000 in the South. The decline in manufacturing industry, due largely to the introduction of new technology and more sophisticated production techniques, has resulted in a need for fewer unskilled manual workers and more skilled non-manual employees. This has affected the regional balance of employment in Britain, with the North, the North West and the Midlands suffering over-proportionally, having been the centres of the manufacturing industry - shipbuilding, car manufacture and iron and steel production. The concurrent rise of the service sector has meant an increase in jobs in the South East, with financial and professional services centred on London. In West Germany the decline in heavy manufacturing industry is concentrated in the Ruhr and a concurrent

rise in light engineering employment in Baden-Wurtemberg and Bavaria. Service sector employment is concentrated in the big cities and the southern parts of the country.

This change in the labour market has implications for future workers. On the whole they will have to be better trained, more informed and more flexible. Technology will continue to evolve and demand adaptability of those using it, including those working in retailing.

Without going into too much detail about the reasons for the decline or growth of individual industries and occupations the following remarks need to be made, based on the details given in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 (IER 1982b,66; Rajan and Pearson 1986) for Britain and Table 1.3 (Rothkirch et al 1985) for West Germany.

#### 1.1.1. Sectoral Structure

In the majority of economic sectors the number of jobs has been declining in Britain. The hardest hit sectors have been engineering, textiles and clothing, agriculture, other manufacturing and metals, and these sectors are forecast to decline further in addition to transport and communications and chemicals (Table 1.2). The IMS/OSG (Rajan & Pearson 1986) survey concluded that sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and energy would continue to contract until 1990, reflecting continued uncompetitiveness and surplus/uneconomic capacity.

The sector of the economy where jobs have been on the increase is the service sector, including distribution. Except for distribution, jobs in these sectors are still predicted to increase. Most of the growth is in the professional and miscellaneous services (Table 1.2). The IMS/OSG survey believes that distribution, finance, business and leisure will continue to expand. This they say is due to the fact that employers have placed more emphasis on recent applications of new technologies and labour-saving working methods. Service sector employment is also more attractive to females, offering both full- and part-time employment. In fact, 85% of persons holding part-time jobs in Britain are women. The service sector offers both unskilled manual

and skilled non-manual work, ranging from checkout operators in the distributive industry to financial analysis in the banking sector. Emphasis is, however, on skilled and semi-skilled non-manual work. The more general acceptance of the "working woman/mother" in the 1980s, whether as a result of need or a desire for equal opportunity, has influenced life styles, family life and consumer demands, as well as the composition of the workforce.

The distributive industry is typical of the service sector, offering manual unskilled jobs e.g. shelf filling as well as skilled non-manual jobs e.g. buyer or store manager. The largest proportion of employees in the industry are sales assistants, which can be classified as either semi-skilled or skilled workers. Their role has changed markedly over the last twenty years, reflecting the changes in society, as they are in immediate contact with the consumer. Retailing both influences and is influenced by changes in working patterns, life styles, shifts in family life and by consumer behaviour. Sales assistants act as the go-between between industry and the consumer.

Comparing employment by industry groups in the two countries shows that the trends in the two countries are almost identical. Just as employment in agriculture, mining, chemicals, engineering, metals, textiles and clothing is expected to decline in Britain between 1980 and 1990 so it is too in West Germany (Table 1.3). However, food, drink and tobacco and transport and communications are expected to grow slightly in West Germany, but construction and distribution are expected to decline, whereas in Britain they are expected to increase slightly.

The decline in West Germany is anticipated to be much steeper in many sectors and especially marked in distribution, construction and engineering (Table 1.3). There is a slow down in the declining sectors in the next decade (1990-2000) with most sectors only predicted to lose half as many employees as in the previous decade, and the labour force as such is expected to increase slightly, having lost nearly one million employees between 1980 and 1990.

Up to 1980 West Germany showed more sectors of the economy with jobs increasing than Britain, but since then professional, social and miscellaneous services and public administration are the only sectors predicted to offer employment to increasing numbers. Except for public administration and social service occupations, the increases are all greater in Britain than in West Germany. The figures from 1985 for Britain show a stronger annual growth rate between 1984 and 1990 for professional and miscellaneous services in Britain than West Germany. Food, etc. and transport and communications are expected to show slight increases in employment between 1990 and 2000, and while social services are predicted to increase more slowly, public administration and miscellaneous services show further sharp increases in contrast to Britain, where 1985 figures predict a decline in public administration employment. An earlier study looking at the demand and supply sides of the German labour market to 1990 (Bloss et al 1975,24) came to similar conclusions, predicting that jobs in the public sector, in the service sector (not including restaurants) and in mechanical engineering would increase in absolute terms, and jobs in banking, insurance and the public sector would increase proportionally. Jobs would be lost in absolute terms in agriculture and forestry, textiles and the clothing and leather industry and proportionally in agriculture, mining and domestic employment.

Although the industry groups in each country do not perhaps include quite the same sectors in each category (Appendix 2), the overriding differences are clearly demonstrated (Table 1.4). In 1980 8.9% more of the West German working population were employed in manufacturing than in Britain and the gap to 1990 is predicted to widen. Britain, on the other hand, employed 6.8% more of its working population in the service sector than West Germany and the gap here is predicted to double by 1990. The other major areas of contrast are engineering, where by 1990 West Germany will employ 5.2% more of its population compared to Britain; miscellaneous services, where Britain will be employing 6.4% more of its population in 1990 than West Germany; and finally agriculture, which employs 2.5% more of the working population in West Germany than in Britain.

In summary 81.7% of the West German working population was working in industry compared to 77.1% of Britain's working population in 1980. By 1990 the gap is narrowing to 78.6% and 79.2% respectively.

Globally, it can then be concluded that as far as industrial groups are concerned, West Germany and Britain show similar trends of growth and decline in employment, with construction, public administration and the food industry showing the greatest contrasts.

#### 1.1.2. Occupational Structure

It is more relevant to look at the changing structure of occupations than economic sectors, because although aggregated jobs in an economic sector might be declining, non-manual jobs in that sector might be increasing. The Institute of Employment Research at the University of Warwick (IER) concluded that the basic long-term feature of changes in occupational structure had been the rising proportion of employment in non-manual occupations. This growth is common to most industries, but compared with the period 1961-71 the rate of increase in manufacturing industries slackened considerably during the 1970s, although in aggregate an acceleration of this trend has continued. Non-manual workers increased their share of total employment from 22.7% in 1961 to 26.3% by 1971 and by 1980 it had risen to 28.4% in manufacturing industries (IER 1982a,66).

This data demonstrates the generally assumed trend that manual occupations are declining and non-manual ones are increasing with a shift in proportion over twenty years in Britain as follows:

Year	1971	1980	1990
	Percentages		
Manual Occupations	58.1	52.4	47.8
Non-manual Occupations	41.9	47.6	52.2
	=====	=====	=====
Total workforce	100.0	100.0	100.0

Leontief et al <sup>2</sup> argued that the jobs with the best prospects were going to be in the professional sector in the United States. The IER predicted increases between 1980 and 1990 in Britain as follows: technicians and draughtsmen 15%; other professions 15%; managers and



administrators 8% and engineers and scientists etc. 15%. Certain other occupations - education professions, personal service occupations and clerical occupations - have experienced a positive rise over the last ten years, 1970 to 1980, but are predicted to increase only slightly or even decline up to 1990.

Looking at the occupational structures over the last two decades and their development over the next one in West Germany, it can be seen (Table 1.5) that in general terms the proportion of people employed in manual occupations has dropped by 9% between 1973 and 1980 with a further decline of 10% predicted to occur by 1990 and then slowing to 6% between 1990 and 2000. Concurrently non-manual occupations have increased by 8% between 1973 and 1980, 5% between 1980 and 1990, and are predicted to increase by 8% by the year 2000. The trend in Britain is very similar.

On the whole trends from the past are continuing and recent unemployment figures for Facharbeiter (skilled and trained workers) and unskilled operatives tend to confirm these predictions. Unemployment among Facharbeiter dropped by 17,900 to 386,900 in September 1985, representing 4% less than at the same time in the previous year, and a further drop of 35,900 to 351,000 had occurred by the end of September 1986, representing 9% less than the year before. Meanwhile unemployment among unskilled operatives increased from September 1984 to September 1985 by 13,300 (11%) to 966,800 and unemployment among simple clerical occupations increased by 14% (36,700) to 301,000 over the same time period. 60% of the unemployed population in West Germany were not vocationally qualified in September 1986. <sup>3</sup>

However, when looking at individual occupations in the two countries there are marked differences. It must be pointed out that the two studies being compared here are not identical and Appendix 3 shows the attempt to assimilate the occupational categories in the two studies. Bearing this fact in mind, an overview of the occupational change over almost two decades shows firstly that the decline in manual occupations is evident in both countries as well as the concurrent rise in non-manual occupations, an approximate 10% either way in both countries (Table 1.6). Proportionally West Germany does, however, still employ

approximately 6% more of its working population in manual occupations than Britain in both 1980 and 1990. This can largely be explained by the greater proportion of craftsmen: 20.4% in 1980 and 19.5% in 1990 in West Germany compared to 15.3% in 1980 and 14% in 1990 in Britain. Almost 10% of the working population in Britain are classified as managers and administrators compared to only 5% classified in this manner in West Germany. Some junior management posts in West Germany could well be classified as technical assistants or even as clerical occupations, but even when these three occupational groups are considered together, it can be shown that in 1980 27.8% of the British working population compared to 19.4% of the West German working population were classified in these occupations, with the figures for 1990 being 30.1% and 21.3% respectively.

As West Germany does not employ as great a proportion of managers and administrators as Britain does, nor as many technical assistants, the view that in Britain there could be some thinning out in this field is less likely in West Germany, with the increase in information technology requiring a greater number of people qualified to analyse and take decisions based on the better information and communications flow.

As far as technological developments are concerned, the differences between West Germany and Britain are not very great. Technological developments, on the one hand produce new products, awakening demand for these among customers and, on the other hand, they contribute to making production processes more efficient, calling for energy and raw material savings and more environment friendly techniques. The main developments are predicted to be better information, communication and organisation techniques, process and manufacturing techniques as well as improvements in the materials and preparation areas. These are often not sector specific effects, having impacts on several sectors and several occupations. Prognos (Rothkirch et al 1985) predict that these technological effects will reduce employment opportunities most markedly for operatives, especially unskilled ones, for supervisors and foremen, and engineering craftsmen, less so for sales occupations than in the period 1973 -80 and only slightly by the year 2000, whereas clerical employment, having benefited from technological developments

until 1980, is predicted to experience a slight drop by 1990 and a more dramatic one by 2000. Technology is also predicted to affect employment in service occupations reducing it slightly between 1980 and 2000.

Craftsmen and operatives will not be of the same kind as in the past with new entrants needing training in the new technology and then needing retraining as adults as technological change advances a step further. A certain amount of deskilling of jobs which have traditionally required a significant level of training is predicted, as certain craft skills are now carried out by machines. Finally increased employment opportunities are forecast for those involved in the installation and maintenance of new equipment, affecting both skilled workers and engineers and scientists. Many trades which were originally rigidly defined in scope have now been widened through the new training regulations in the electrical and mechanical engineering fields in West Germany, giving more flexibility to the workers being trained in these areas. The socio-economic effect only changes the above in as far as craftsmen involved in installing machinery are predicted to be in even greater demand as are clerical staff between 1980 and 1990, and less sales personnel is needed between these dates but more between 1990 and 2000.

In conclusion it can be said that in West Germany, as in Britain, there will be a reduction in the proportion of manual workers engaged in routine and repetitive tasks and a reduction in the proportion of non-manual workers engaged in routine information handling, which will mainly affect junior sales and clerical staff.<sup>4</sup> The number of clerical staff will most probably decline with office automation striding forwards, even if the most frequent vacancies at present seem to be for secretaries, typists and personal assistants; but the decline will not be rapid, as the machines will still need operating and the personal touch in any office or contact point with the customer will still be desired. The same applies for sales assistants. Vacancies are numerous, especially for part-time work.

1.1.3. Distributive Industry ... approximately 10% of the working

A sector of the economy which shows steady employment trends but a shift in occupational distribution is the distributive industry. It is a thriving component of the service sector, offering both manual and non-manual employment as indicated earlier.

In 1951 1,709,900 people of all ages in Britain (Table 1.7) were employed in retail distribution (Trinder 1986,56). This had increased to 2,248,800 by 1981. Figures from the Department of Employment are slightly more conservative but show that employment in retailing generally has been rising since 1978 (with a decrease between 1980 and 1983 in actual numbers) and increasing steadily, in percentage terms, as a sector supplying employment over the seven years (1978-85) from 9.2% to 10.3% (Table 1.8).<sup>5</sup>

However, the long-term prospects are not as good as has generally been thought:

"The long-term trend in retailing employment is downwards. There have been, and are likely to continue to be, cyclical and seasonal upturns in employment, particularly in the larger retail businesses. The peak employment level of a future upturn is likely to be lower than the previous one." (NEDO 1985,3)

In West Germany in 1970 2,104,000 people were employed in retail distribution. This remained relatively steady, standing at 2,083,000 in 1985 (Table 1.9), compared with 2,129,000 in 1985 in Britain (Table 1.8). The numbers employed as sales assistants and retail trade merchants have developed differently in recent years (1970-80). The number of sales assistants rose by 11% from 1970 to 1980 with an almost steady increase from year to year, whereas the number of employed retail trade merchants (in this case the employment statistics group buyers, wholesalers and retail trade merchants together) decreased in the same time period by 14%. By 1985 the employment of retail trade merchants had again increased by 6% compared to 1980 (Table 1.9). The sectors in both countries are therefore close in employment size even if a detailed comparison of occupations is not possible.

In West Germany between 1973 and 1990 approximately 10% of the working population is employed in sales occupations compared to approximately 5% in Britain (1971-90). Sales occupations show a slight increase in Britain between 1971 and 1980 (3%) but are then predicted to decline by 5% in the next ten years (Table 1.10), whereas in West Germany there has been a small but steady decline of 2% between 1973 and 1980 and a further 5% decline is predicted by 1990 (Table 1.5). However, West Germany employs approximately twice as many people in sales occupations as does Britain over the period 1970-90. These would not all be employed in retailing.

It has been predicted that in the service industries less skill-intensive personal and support service occupations will be in demand, with full-time employment in these occupations declining and part-time work being promoted. This is especially true in retailing.

In the service industries generally the demand effect has played more of a role, but the innovation effect in the form of new technologies and more centralised organisational structures has also been at work. Automation, reducing the need for clerical and administrative occupations, has meant a restructuring within companies, with certain employee groups such as cashiers in banks, sales assistants in retailing and waiters in restaurants requiring vital skills such as social skills (frequently considered as innate attributes) and work experience for these hitherto less skill-intensive occupations (Rajan & Pearson 1986). On a practical level this has gone largely unnoticed, as they are not skills which are traditionally valued. Why this should be and to what extent it has been taken into account in training terms will be discussed in later chapters.

In summary it can be stated that the general trend away from manual and towards non-manual occupations can be observed in both countries with variations in individual occupations in the two countries; Britain employing proportionally more managerial, technical and clerical staff than West Germany and West Germany employing more craftsmen, sales assistants and skilled operatives as a proportion of its working population than Britain. <sup>6</sup> However, the smallest change in both

countries has been and will be in sales occupations, therefore being a steady sector to analyse for training needs.

These changes in the labour market lead one to question what level and kind of qualifications, both educational and vocational, the workforce of the future will need to carry out the new jobs. The IER and IMS/OSG surveys did not study the changing qualification structure, indicating that this is of lesser concern to British policy makers. In contrast Rothkirch et al (1985) at the request of German policy makers looked at this problem in some detail.

#### 1.1.4. Qualifications

In its follow-up report Prognos attempted to establish which qualification levels would be in most demand by the year 2000. Prognos used various trend and occupational projections to arrive at the not surprising conclusion that the need for unqualified labour would continue to decrease. A concurrent need for higher education level labour would manifest itself, with those obtaining vocational qualifications increasing slightly and those with Meister (master craftsman) or equivalent level qualifications remaining stable.

However, not all occupational activities are predicted to be equally affected. Between 1982 and 2000 the total working population will decrease by 1%, but the number of unqualified workers will drop by almost 40%. In numerical terms those employees with an apprenticeship qualification or a higher education qualification will increase by 1.3 and 1.55 million respectively, but proportionally those with a vocational qualification will increase by "only" 10% and those with a degree level qualification by 70%.

The development of the qualification structure in the main occupational groupings <sup>7</sup> between 1976 and 2000 (Table 1.11) shows that employment for unskilled workers will decline in all occupational areas, but proportionally the largest decline in unskilled employment will be in production (-45%) and in storage, transport and sales (-48%) between 1982 and 2000. <sup>8</sup> The increase in employment for those with a vocational qualification is spread across all occupational categories,

but is most marked in management and research and development with over 50% of growth between 1982 and 2000 taking place in this occupational group. Service employment will experience a below average growth at this qualification level.

Employment for those with higher education qualifications is predicted to increase in all occupational areas with the largest increase occurring in the services group (845,000 between 1982 and 2000) and in management, research and development. Growth is below average in production (36%) and transport etc. (68%) but significantly above average in office employment (+245%). As there are no comparable figures available for Britain one has to rely on the evidence presented so far in this chapter, which shows that sectoral, occupational and technological trends are very similar in the two countries. It has thus been assumed that higher educational qualification levels are required of a higher proportion of the workforce in Britain as in West Germany.

The routes available to young people to obtain these qualifications are therefore important. One needs to distinguish here between educational qualifications i.e. those obtained at school, college or later at polytechnic or university and vocational qualifications obtained through study at the place of work linked to off-the-job training, either at a college or validated by external examining boards. These are however intricately linked to one another. Clearer routes from one to the other exist in the German than in the British system.

One needs to take a close look at the level of qualifications of school leavers, and their participation rates in post-compulsory education and training to see whether enough qualified young people are entering the training and employment market.

There has been a marked rise in the number of pupils obtaining educational qualifications in Britain (Table 1.12). Over the last fifteen years the proportion of school leavers leaving school with no qualifications has been reduced from 44% to just under 13%. At the same time the proportion obtaining higher grades at O-level has

increased from 16.8% in 1970/71 to a high point of 30.1% in 1982/83 but dropping since to 26.6%.

These figures are obviously influenced by the Raising of the School Leaving Age (ROSLA) of 1973 and the introduction of D-E grades in O-level, but the trend towards a more rather than a less qualified school leaver population is emerging, unless it can be proved that standards within each qualification level have dropped over the last ten years. Prais and Wagner (1983,26) indicated that in fact the rise in the proportion of pupils in England achieving some kind of graded result is partly due to the introduction of new lower grades of 'passing qualifications', which had been well recognised by official government sources. However, it is not the aim of this study to look into this, and it will be assumed that standards have not dropped, as a slow steady rise in those obtaining qualifications is still evident. When looking at the qualification levels of the labour force, it can be seen that those aged 16-29 are proportionally less likely to have no qualifications e.g. half the male population aged 45-59 are unqualified compared with about a quarter of the 16-29 age group (Employment Gazette April 1983,158). These figures would then refute the claim by industry that young people are now leaving school less educated than before and are often lacking aspects of the basic three Rs.

There is a very marked trend towards higher school leaving qualifications being achieved and a continued drop in those leaving school without any qualifications among West German school leavers (Table 1.13). In 1970 17.4% of minimum age school leavers left without a qualification; by 1980 it had dropped to 10.6% and by 1985 to 8.9%. This compares with 44% of United Kingdom school leavers in 1970, 15.5% of English leavers in 1980 and 12.9% in 1985/86 (Table 1.14). Concurrently the number of young people leaving with the Mittlere Reife (MR) increased from 117,200 in 1960 to 398,800 in 1986, and similarly the number of young people leaving with the Abitur increased from 56,700 in 1960 to 291,400 in 1986. This trend is increasingly reflected in the allocation of training places, with some occupations now dominated by applicants with the Abitur namely, bank clerk, where every second trainee had the Abitur in 1985 compared to 41.2% in 1984. 76.5% of all bookseller trainees have the Abitur and over half of all



trainees in certain commercial training occupations had the Abitur in 1985. The faith among the German population in its education and training system reinforces these views. In a recent survey (Allensbacher Archiv IfD-Umfrage 4063, Oktober 1985) 57% of the sample continued to believe that a grammar school education was a sensible investment for the future, even if this represented a reduced proportion compared to 1969 when 72% voted for a grammar school education. However, this positive evaluation of a higher school leaving qualification does not link into immediate attendance at university. Only 23% would recommend studying straight after the Abitur. 64% of the sample felt that solid vocational training with practical experience would lead to professional success. 42% clearly felt that doing an apprenticeship before studying was a good option.

On 25 October 1985 the State Secretary from the Ministry of Education and Science, Paul Harro Piazzolo stated that in the next ten years every second German employer would be affected by the introduction of micro-electronics at the place of work. As a rule this would demand higher not lower qualifications among the workforce and key qualifications would increase in importance. Qualities which were going to be needed were creativity, communication skills, abstracting skills, analytical thinking and the ability to understand interrelationships. In addition to the specialised technical skills, personal and social competence would be required (IBW 11-12/85,179).

Compared to Britain, where the rise in the level of qualifications obtained seems to have stopped since 1983 among school leavers (Table 1.14), the German picture is very much more promising and Anne Sofer's comment about Britain:

"But compared to other countries we have an awful lot of ground to make up" (The Guardian 26.7.88,21)

is very justified. A detailed comparison of schooling standards in England and West Germany was carried out by Prais and Wagner (1983,52ff), demonstrating both the difficulty of making educational comparisons between countries and obtaining comparable data. They demonstrated that whereas a third of German pupils had obtained the MR in 1982 only 14% of British pupils had left school having passed O-

levels in a core of subjects comparable to the scope of the Realschulabschluß (= MR). If one lowers the British comparable category to include one to four higher grade passes as well as five or more higher grade O-levels the proportions become somewhat more comparable. However, obtaining one O-level at grade C is not comparable to obtaining the MR at grade 3. If one compares the qualification levels obtained by English and German school leavers as a percentage of their age cohort (Table 1.14), making the figures between the two countries comparable to a certain extent, but not comparable to those obtained by Prais and Wagner, one sees that by 1985 over half of all 16 year old Germans had obtained the MR compared to 37% of English 16 year olds obtaining one or more higher grade O-levels. Only 10% had obtained a comparable qualification if one considers the MR to be equivalent to five or more higher grade O-levels. Probably a mixture of two to three higher grades and two to three lower grades would be the most appropriate comparison, but a more thorough study of school leaver statistics would have to be undertaken to obtain the figures. <sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, as Prais and Wagner state, only about one tenth (in fact only 8.9% in 1985) of German school leavers leave school with no qualifications. At present, the proportion for English school leavers is higher - 12.9% in 1985. In any case, obtaining one to four lower grade O-level passes cannot be compared to obtaining the Hauptschulabschluß (HSA), where approximately seven subjects are assessed including mathematics, German and a foreign language, which have to be passed at an appropriate level. Again a mixture of a greater number of CSEs would have to be obtained to make a sensible comparison. The new GCSE qualifications and the introduction of a National Curriculum are intended to make it possible for more school leavers to leave school with a statement of attainment. This issue has recently been given wide coverage in the media, and the series "Educating Britain" by LWT of 1987 presented various new curriculum development and assessment initiatives. However, the government seems to be moving towards an overtight national curriculum with great scope for political interference and standardised testing. How this new system will affect vocational training and competence is beyond the scope of this research.

Why young people in the two countries are qualified to such varying degrees on reaching school leaving age will be discussed below by analysing the options available to school leavers.

## 1.2. The Demand Side of the Labour Market

Since 1974 the population of 16 year olds in Britain has risen steadily from 786,000 to 932,000 in 1982 (Table 1.15). From 1983 onwards the number of 16 year olds has been declining, reflecting the decline in the birth rate from the mid-1960s; by 1996 there will be 208,000 fewer 16 year olds than in 1982, reaching a level well below that of 1974.

The population of West German 16 year olds has risen steadily from 764,000 in 1960 to 1,083,000 in 1980. Since then the number of 16 year olds has been declining, reflecting the decline in the birth rate from the mid-1960s as in Britain (Table 1.16). However, at its peak in 1980 West Germany had 100,000 more 16 year olds in its population than Britain, whereas during the previous two decades the difference in numbers had not been so marked. By 1986 the number of 16 year olds had again reached the same level as in 1970 - 815,000. By 1996 there will be 457,000 fewer 16 year olds than in 1980 (almost double the difference compared to Britain), reaching a level below that of 1960. An all time low is expected first in 1993/94 with 582,000 and a further drop to 394,000 in the year 2030. In comparison to Britain these figures are revealing. Britain still expects to have a population of 818,000 16 year olds in the year 2001, whereas West Germany is only predicting 601,000 16 year olds in the year 2000. <sup>11</sup>

Over the last twenty-five years (1960 to 1985) young people in the two countries have qualified themselves for the labour market in very different proportions. Young people on leaving school are faced with four options: continuing at school or going into Further Education (FE); going straight into employment or taking up an apprenticeship or a training scheme, or finally being unemployed. The latter not really representing an option as such, but more an outcome.

### 1.2.1. Staying on in Education

Over ten years (1974-84) the proportion of 16 year olds staying on at school in Britain has increased from 27% to 31% and over the same period the proportion of 16 year olds going into FE increased from 9% to 14%, reaching 16% in 1982 (Table 1.17). Between 1978 and 1982 full-time and sandwich enrolments of 16-18 year olds rose by 39%, whereas part-time day enrolments dropped by 20% and evening only study by 14% at FE colleges.

When this is analysed by economic sectors (Table 1.18) it can be seen that between 1978 and 1982 the enrolments in part-time day-release courses at FE and other colleges dropped dramatically in aggregate (94,000) and proportionally by 33%. One of the largest decreases was in distribution, hotels and catering and repair work (-35%). Men were more affected by the drop in day-release in distribution, hotels and catering and repair work than women, -41% compared to -23%.

From these figures the most surprising fact is the decline in the numbers receiving day-release over five years in distribution, hotels and catering and repair work (-35%), because jobs in these sectors have not been declining in aggregate (Table 1.1). As far as distribution, hotels and catering and repair work is concerned, however, the only explanation can be that employers decided not to use colleges to provide the off-the-job training or that training just declined in this sector. <sup>12</sup>

Continuing in education seems a sensible course of action, because it has generally been observed that unemployment is highest among unskilled workers and lowest among university graduates (Employment Gazette April 1983,158), employers normally preferring better-educated employees even though the latter do not always strictly need that education for the execution of their particular job. Van Ginneken (1982,58) argued that schooling measures do not therefore increase the volume of employment but only change its distribution. Higher-educated workers have a stronger labour market position, because employers use education as a "screening-device" (Thurow 1975), education being able to give them an indication of "trainability" and thus implying minimum

cost. Individuals who move from school to unskilled jobs, without acquiring any basic skills or technical education, are not easily retrained. Employers regard them as poor risks. They lack the basic vocational preparation on which to build (Roberts 1984,32).

The increase in the proportion of 16 year olds staying on at school after the statutory school leaving age in West Germany over the last two decades is more marked than in Britain (Table 1.19). Although the years for which figures are available are not the same, it can be seen that at the beginning of the 1970s just over a quarter of the age group were staying on in both countries, whereas by 1982 the proportion had only increased to 32% in Britain but to almost 47% in West Germany.

By the mid-1980s there was a further noticeable increase in West Germany to almost 57% of all 16 year olds continuing on at school, whereas in Britain the highest proportion reached was in 1982 with 32%, and it has since dropped back to 30%. Thus by the mid-1980s almost 60% of the German 16 year old population were continuing their general education at school compared to half that proportion, 30% of British 16 year olds. <sup>13</sup>

The introduction of the tenth school year in North Rhine Westphalia, Berlin and Bremen will have had an influence on the proportion of 16 year olds in full-time education from 1980 onwards, but does not account for the 10% rise between 1982 and 1984. This can be explained by the increasing number of young people aiming for the Abitur before starting an apprenticeship. Although the Abitur permits young people to enter university, many young people in West Germany do not take up this opportunity straight away. They are influenced by the growing number of unemployed graduates (Tessaring und Weißhuhn 1985,84-91) and the feeling that a completed apprenticeship is something they can fall back on should they not complete their university studies.

The proportion of 16 year olds participating in FE full-time (which in West Germany includes Berufsfachschulen and Fachoberschulen, Berufsaufbauschulen, the Berufsgrundbildungsjahr and Berufssonderschulen) as well as the general part-time vocational training school (Berufsschule) (see 3.2 for details) is much higher in

West Germany than in Britain. In West Germany it is interesting to note that part-time vocational training has been declining in recent years among 16 year olds with a concurrent rise in general education as discussed above, whereas full-time vocational education has experienced a rise over the same period from 8.2% in 1970 to 11.8% in 1984, looking at just Berufsfachschulen and Fachoberschulen (Table 1.20). This increase in take-up is especially marked among females, 14.8% compared to 6.3% for males in the Berufsfachschule in 1984. The same trend can also be noticed in Britain with 19% females compared to 12% males participating in FE in 1986 (Table 1.17).

These figures, rather than being significant in themselves, demonstrate a dramatic shift in the German education system over the last two decades. In 1960 72% of 16 year olds entered a vocational training school and 59% had already done so at the age of 15. Most of the rest stayed on at school (21% of 16 year olds). By 1980 49% were entering vocational training school at 16 and only 13% at 15 years old, with an almost equal proportion, 47% of 16 year olds (and 76% of 15 year olds) staying on at school. Correspondingly a greater proportion of 17-20 year olds are attending vocational training schools in the 1980s, having first continued their general schooling. In 1960 only 32% of the 18 year old population in West Germany was still in some form of secondary schooling, whereas by 1980 this had changed to 71%, with 24% of these having been in part-time vocational training schools in 1960 compared to 49% of them in 1980.

The proportion of 16 year olds partaking in FE in the two countries cannot be directly compared, as the figures (Table 1.17 and 1.20) refer to different groupings in the two countries. They are significant, however, for the trends they clearly demonstrate within each country. In Britain young people are increasingly continuing in both general and vocational education to increase their chances in the job market and in West Germany young people are continuing in general education, obtaining higher school leaving qualifications before embarking on job specific training in the form of an apprenticeship. In the German system this means that young people who are increasingly more educated are looking for apprenticeships at a later age than in previous years, with the ensuing problem that the courses offered at the vocational

training school and the in-company training are not geared up to their educational level.

There are three interlinked reasons for the change in the number of young people continuing in education: young people are trying to obtain higher qualifications because they believe it will enhance their job prospects and because the pressure from their parents and the government is telling them to stay on. Or, they are staying on because, having obtained good grades, and seeing the increase in the number of 16 year olds in the population and the not quite so rapid rise in the number of apprenticeship places in West Germany and employment opportunities in Britain during the same period they felt that this was a better option. This trend may be reversed in the coming years with a decline in the school leaver population, when employers will be enticing school leavers straight into apprenticeships, jobs or training schemes rather than full-time education at school or college.

#### 1.2.2. Employment

The second option for minimum age British school leavers, and the one traditionally adopted by the majority of them - getting a job - has become less of an option with the proportion obtaining direct employment on leaving school falling from 50% in 1976 to 18% in 1984 (Table 1.21).

The Department of Employment's analysis of their survey "First Employment of Young People" (Employment Gazette May 1984) states that the main contrast between the figures for 1980 and those for earlier years reflects the contraction of job opportunities in manufacturing industry for young new entrants, particularly for males and the shift towards other sectors. The service sector including the distributive trades provided jobs for around 40% of the 16 year old male entrants in 1978 and 1979 and for nearly 44% in 1980. In 1978 manufacturing was still providing almost as many jobs for male entrants as the service sector, but by 1980 it was only providing 32% compared with nearly 44% for services. More and more females were being absorbed by the service

sector with the proportion rising from 62% in 1978 and 1979 to over 70% in 1980 (although the total number of entrants was smaller).

When looking at the occupations of young entrants it can be seen that almost a quarter of males are employed in processing, making, repairing and related jobs and almost a third of female entrants are employed in clerical and related jobs, followed by a rising proportion in selling (20.3%) in 1980.

Traditionally young people have always been peripheral workers, sought in periods of labour shortages and denied jobs during recessions; many jobs offered to school leavers had no career prospects e.g. errand boys, floor sweepers, messengers. Roberts (1984,3) quotes the Social Survey of Merseyside which found that 74% of the first jobs obtained by school leavers led to dead ends. These jobs have now largely disappeared or have been taken over by adults e.g. despatch riders, contract cleaners and junior clerical staff (this is not to say that the latter are not dead-end jobs either). This can partly be explained by the fact that the aspirations and expectations of young people have changed. The jobs awaiting school leavers in the 1960s would not necessarily impress the leavers of the 1980s. Even by the 1960s in some areas of Britain there were groups of young people who were no longer content to build careers in unskilled jobs (Roberts 1984,44). These jobs were filled by immigrants from the Caribbean and Indian sub-continent as well as by former housewives. By the 1970s ethnic minorities and women were resisting this subordination, causing further friction on the labour market.

The situation in West Germany is very different. The number of young people aged 16 to 18 who have gone straight into employment or who are helping in the family business, but are still attending vocational training school, has been decreasing steadily in the second half of the 1980s, having halved between 1970 and 1980 and again between 1980 and 1983 (Table 1.22). In 1982 approximately 2% of school leavers from secondary school did not want any further training and were looking for a job (Berufsbildungsbericht 1983,63) and a study (Alex et al 1983) in the autumn of 1982 found that 54% of those without a training contract were without employment and half of these were not registered as



unemployed. It is clear from these figures that only a very small proportion of the age group opt to go straight into employment, because going straight into employment normally means obtaining an unskilled job (Hilfsarbeiter or in the case of young people Jungarbeiter), offering little or no training and no chance for promotion and little job security. Only a few school leavers, often those from ethnic minorities, are attracted by the initially higher wages than an apprenticeship offers or are forced to take a job, having been unsuccessful in obtaining an apprenticeship place.

Young people in West Germany would normally expect to receive some kind of training, usually through an apprenticeship or otherwise through a state-funded measure rather than going straight into work. The standing accorded to a skilled worker (i.e. one who has completed an apprenticeship) is so entrenched in the German culture that not obtaining at least this is seen as a disaster for young people. It is possibly another reason why more and more young people qualified to go to university prefer to obtain this intermediate qualification first.

### 1.2.3. Apprenticeships

Looking at the third option for minimum age school leavers - apprenticeships - the British figures show a rapid decline. From 1979 to 1986 the number of apprenticeships on offer has more than halved from 153,000 to 63,700 and the trend is almost certain to continue. This is not due to a lack of suitable demand, but because the supply side has contracted due, on the one hand, to the economic climate and on the other to the declining need for traditionally trained workers in the manufacturing craft industries. The British engineering industries and shipbuilding, among the largest employers of apprentices, have experienced a decline both in the proportion that craftsmen constitute of total employment and in the ratio of apprentices to craftsmen. The ratio of apprentices to skilled workers increased from 1:6.4 in 1964 to 1:9.5 in 1974 (Employment Gazette Nov.1975,116). Furthermore, according to the employers a fair number of workers designated as craftsmen because of union pressure to maintain status and wages actually perform semi-skilled work, further reducing the share of actual craftsmen in the industry's labour force (Engineering Employers'

Federation April 1976).<sup>14</sup> Although the Department of Employment points out that other training "may involve training similar to apprenticeship training due to the move away from traditional apprenticeships", the statistics for other training do not show an increase.<sup>15</sup>

The number of young people actually in apprenticeships seems to vary greatly depending on the sources used and even when looking at percentages the picture obtained is not clear cut. In 1977 only 14% of young people entered apprenticeships in Britain after compulsory schooling (MSC 1980), whereas in 1974 25% of young people and 29% in 1976 entered apprenticeships (MSC 1977a,15). OECD figures give a proportion of 17.8% for England and Wales for 1974. When divided by gender the proportions are more startling still: in 1975 and 1976 approximately 50% of boys and less than 10% of girls became apprentices (MSC 1977a), whereas in 1974 43% of boys and 7% of girls entered apprenticeships (Parkes 1979,30). The figures for the 1980s would indicate a further decline to perhaps only 10% of minimum age school leavers (Table 1.23).

As explained, the normal course of action for a German school leaver would be to look for an apprenticeship place. However, with the increase in the number of school leavers, although the number of training places increased, it was not possible to provide a sufficient number (Table 1.24). Between 1978 and 1980 there was an oversupply of training places nationally, and it has taken until 1987 to reproduce this position with 1984 and 1985 being particularly bad years. This means that in certain areas e.g. Bremen, Lower-Saxony and North Rhine Westphalia there is still an undersupply of training places.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, even in a Land where there are more than sufficient training places available, e.g. Bavaria, demand for training places in more popular training occupations can outstrip supply. Training places in the Handwerk sector are increasingly difficult to fill in the late 1980s as young people opt for places in the service sector.

If the number of newly signed training contracts are calculated as a proportion of the 16 year old population, 55% in 1977 and 86% in 1986 (Grund- und Strukturdaten 1987/88,96) were entering the apprenticeship

system. This calculation does ignore the fact that over 15% of trainees have the Abitur and would therefore not start their training as 16 year olds, but clearly demonstrates the rising popularity of the apprenticeship system among school leavers.

A comparison of the number of apprenticeships in the manufacturing industry in the two countries, even taking into account the greater number of 16 year olds in the German population is very revealing: at no time in the last two decades did Britain ever train more apprentices than West Germany. In 1965 639,400 apprentices were being trained in the manufacturing industry in West Germany (Table 1.25). By 1985 the number had increased to 890,500, when it reached an all time peak. In Britain there were 236,000 apprentices in the manufacturing industry in 1968, but only 63,700 in 1986. So, whereas West Germany increased the number of apprentices being trained not just in the manufacturing industry, but in all sectors from 1,331,900 in 1965 to 1,831,300 in 1985, Britain reduced the total number of trainees and apprentices in the manufacturing industry from 151,000 in 1983 to 101,900 in 1986. If the total number of apprentices, trainees and YTS participants are used in the comparison 321,000 young people were receiving some form of officially recognised training in 1983 with the number rising to 343,600 by 1984. Even if these latter figures are used, it can be seen that only a fraction of the number of young people in Britain compared to West Germany are receiving officially recognised training (not including full-time vocational training school or FE college courses) - 18% in 1983 and 19% in 1984. Although the figures are not totally comparable <sup>17</sup> an idea of the order of magnitude of the difference can be gained. West Germany trained roughly five times as many young people in 1983 and 1984 as Britain at a time when the population of 16 year olds was about equal in the two countries. It could be argued that the number of newly signed apprenticeship contracts is more comparable with the number of apprentices and trainees in Britain, as this figure would represent the intake per year. But when using these figures (462,000 in 1975 and 705,000 in 1984) it can be stated that West Germany trained twice as many young people per year than Britain did in total, as the British figures quoted above do not differentiate out the new entrants.

#### 1.2.4. Training Schemes

The fourth option since 1978/79 for young school leavers has been supplied by the state - participation in a scheme for young unemployed people. A variety of schemes - Unified Vocational Programme, Youth Opportunities Programme, Youth Training Scheme - lasting from a few weeks to a full year were designed to help young people obtain permanent employment. The state paid employers to "train" young people in a work situation. The number of British 16 to 17 year olds participating in the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) rose steeply from 145,800 in 1978/79 to 508,760 in 1981/82 (Social Trends 1983,189), representing an ever increasing proportion of the 16 to 17 year old population. Before the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) came into being in September 1983 the proportion of 16 year olds taking part in a YOP scheme had risen from 4% in 1978/79 to 19% in 1982/83 (Social Trends 1985,49).<sup>18</sup>

Table 1.27 gives a more detailed and more up-to-date picture of the number of young people participating in YOP and YTS. These figures differ from those in Table 1.26 as they do not refer solely to 16 year olds. They do, however, demonstrate that the number of participants has not increased dramatically between 1984 and 1985.

The distributive industry is overproportionally represented in YTS. From the statistics available, it is impossible to state whether employers in these sectors are using YTS as a training vehicle at little cost to themselves, when before 1983 this opportunity was not available to them, or whether they are simply responding to the demands of their sectoral labour market which is requiring more trained workers. However, Deakin and Pratten state:

"Some companies do take advantage of YTS. A manager of one retail company stated that for the first two years of the scheme most of the firm's YTS trainees filled new places, but that the current trainees had replaced employees and this trend would continue. In future, this firm would not recruit 16 year-olds where they could get YTS trainees. Policies of this sort increase the pressure on other firms to use YTS in the same way." (1987,497)

Peter Morrison, then Minister of State for Employment, said that young people were "voting with their feet" (16-Up The YTS Report, BBC2,

19.10.1984) when explaining the growing number of participants on the YTS and the drop in the number of unemployed school leavers, but critics of the government schemes turned the argument round to state that having no other option, young people were joining YTS. A Youthaid Report (1985b), in fact, said that one in three of the YTS places remained unfilled and this low take-up is partly blamed on school leavers' disillusionment with the scheme. These different views will be analysed in a subsequent chapter.

In West Germany, as in Britain the government stepped in, urging employers to increase the number of training places on offer but on the other also expanding the state measures. This then provided another option for school leavers which was necessary as many special school and Hauptschule leavers, who would in the past have entered employment were now looking for an apprenticeship place. Their pressure at the bottom of the market was exasperated by the increasing number of Abitur candidates at the top end. In a period of recession the situation became even more urgent. The measures were mainly pre-vocational - Förderungslehrgänge (F-Lehrgänge), three types of Grundausbildungslehrgänge (G1 - G3), Maßnahmen zur beruflichen und sozialen Eingliederung junger Ausländer (MBSE), Eingliederungslehrgänge (LVE), Berufsvorbereitungsjahr (BVJ) and the Berufsgrundbildungsjahr (BGJ), and implied that it was the young people who needed further help before they could be accommodated in the training market. There has been a steady increase in the number of participants in these measures from 19,211 in 1975 to 43,891 in 1986 (Table 1.28). The measures which were introduced are similar to measures such as the Unified Vocational Programme (UVP), Work Experience on Employers' Premises (WEEP), YOP and more recently the Certificate in Prevocational Education (CPVE) and the Technical Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) in Britain. They will not be compared in this research in great detail, as they are either intended for unemployed young people, special groups of disadvantaged young people e.g. young foreigners or handicapped young people or take place whilst the young people are still at school. It is intended to focus here on the activities of the majority of young people leaving school.

Thus, it is perhaps more appropriate to look at the BVJ and BGJ in more detail and especially the BGJ, as this has certain similarities with the British YTS.<sup>19</sup> The number of young people participating in both the co-operative form of the BGJ (comparable to Mode A YTS) and the school BGJ (similar to Mode B YTS) are shown in Table 1.29. Between 1977 and 1984 the number of participants in the school BGJ has quadrupled, dropping since then, and the number of co-op BGJ participants has increased by more than a factor of ten between 1975 and 1986. While the number of participants in the school BGJ dropped by 8,676 between 1985 and 1986, the number on the co-op BGJ increased by 3,739. In 1978 5.6% of all school leavers went into the BGJ (Berufsbildungsbericht 1980,20).<sup>20</sup>

The BGJ was in no way intended to replace the apprenticeship system but to offer a broad based first year of training in mainly the craft sector, where common skills could be taught before specialisation in specific tasks. From this point of view it has similarities with the British YTS. On the whole the trade unions have favoured it, seeing it as widening young people's choice, but employers<sup>21</sup> have not always been willing to recognise it as equal to the first year of the recognised apprenticeship programme for a specific trade. This is due in part to the fact that young people with a mixture of abilities have participated in the programme, many using it as the only way of getting an apprenticeship in areas where demand outstripped supply, and in some areas it was introduced as a compulsory measure for all school leavers without an apprenticeship contract and not staying on at school (this is the case in Lower Saxony). In other instances, it has been developed as the first year of all training programmes, as is the case for several metal and electrical occupations.

The success of this initiative in terms both of training and transfer to the dual system has been studied in depth by official surveys conducted through the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildungsforschung (BIBB) and the Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (IAB), indicating that approximately 50% of young people participating do obtain an apprenticeship place or go onto further full-time vocational schooling. Various surveys indicate that the transfer rate from the dual system to a full-time job is approximately the same, indicating

that perhaps as much as half the training carried out in West Germany does not lead to suitable qualified employment. However, systematic training has made young people more able to learn, innovate and adapt to different kinds of employment without suffering a loss of status.

#### 1.2.5. Unemployment

The German government does not generally publish statistics on unemployed 16 year olds, because in theory young people of that age cannot be unemployed i.e. they are not entitled to claim benefit. If they have left school at either 15 or 16 years of age and have not started an apprenticeship, they are obliged to attend part-time vocational training school. In fact, what would happen is that these young people would enter a state provided programme as discussed above. The compulsory attendance at part-time vocational training schools for all young people, unless they are in general schooling, until the age of 18 is laid down in the Berufsbildungsgesetz (Vocational Training Law).<sup>22</sup> Thus to try and compare the proportion of unemployed 16 year olds in the two countries, different sets of figures have to be used. In the British system it is the residue of those not in a job, on YTS or on a course of FE, who before 1983 would have been registered unemployed and since then claimant unemployed, whereas in West Germany it would be the number of young people who had not yet been found a training or work place, but had registered with the local Arbeitsamt<sup>23</sup> for such a place. In West Germany unemployed young people in the statistical sense are all unemployed people under 20. If the young people are only looking for a vocational or school training place, they are not statistically counted as unemployed but counted in the statistics for applicants for training places.

It is possible to argue that one should also include the participants of special measure programmes, as these young people would originally also have been looking for training places or jobs, and are at present in "parking lots", waiting for a suitable opening. However, it can also be argued that these young people are not ready for employment or training and that the special measure programmes will make them ready. The only programme to perhaps exclude from this is the BGJ, which in certain respects bears similarity to the YTS.

The number of formally registered unemployed as shown in Table 1.30 are probably the most comparable with the British statistics in showing that the proportion of unemployed 16 year olds has increased from 9% to 13% over the last ten years (Table 1.31). Even when just the statistics for 1974 and 1982 are compared it can be seen that unemployment among 16 year olds was much worse in Britain in both years: 11,069 compared to 27,000 in 1974 and 13,262 compared to 114,000 in 1982, but with the gap in 1982 being much wider.

In fact, the "traditional" view of an apprentice of 15 or 16 with the minimum school leaving qualification, the HSA, is no longer applicable. The average age of training place applicants has increased markedly. 53% of applicants in 1985 were 18 or older compared with 32% in 1982 (Berufsbildungsbericht 1986,2). It is therefore impossible to compare accurately the proportion of unemployed 16 year olds in the two countries. <sup>24</sup>

### 1.3. Conclusion

In summary it can be said that the number of British 16 year olds participating in full-time education in schools or colleges of FE has increased, the number of 16 year olds employed with day-release (a large number of these would have been apprentices) decreased and since 1981 the number in employment without day-release also decreased. Although the total number of school leavers is projected to decline significantly after 1982/83, the number of leavers entering full-time FE are projected to remain roughly constant. In fact the proportions are even higher if private sector part-time provision and government sponsored youth training programmes are included (Table 1.32). According to these estimates 88% of all 16 year olds were participating in some form of education or training in 1984, and there has only been a 2% increase since 1980. As Table 1.32 only provides estimates, it is suggested (DES 1987) that in fact the proportion of young people receiving education and training is perhaps overestimated by 10-20%. There has been a steady rise in the number of 16 year olds registered as unemployed but since the start of YTS (1983) the number of



unemployed 16 year old school leavers has dropped considerably. In 1984 there were 114,000 unemployed 16 year olds, approximately 14,000 fewer than in 1983.

Over the last two decades an increasing number of West German 16 year olds have continued in education, obtaining higher qualifications before embarking on the training market. The most common activity on leaving school is to take up an apprenticeship with approximately 26% of the age group doing this, approximately 57% continue in general education, 12% study at full-time vocational training school and the rest either enter unskilled work, become unemployed or participate in a state or Land sponsored vocational preparation scheme. These proportions contrast with the British ones of approximately 28% on YTS, 20% in a full-time job, 42% in full-time education, both general and vocational and 10% being unemployed or doing something else (MSC 1987b).

Compared to Britain's 17%, 55% of 16 year old Germans were receiving vocational training in 1970. By 1985 these proportions had changed: 30% for Britain and 26% for West Germany, the reason being that an increasing proportion of young West Germans are continuing their education at school before embarking on an apprenticeship: 57% in 1985 compared to 31% of British 16 year olds. The increase over the last fifteen years is even more noticeable: only 26% of 16 year old West Germans were still in full-time education in 1970 compared to 27% of British 16 year olds (Table 1.33). It is thus not a case of less vocational training occurring in West Germany, but rather a shift in timing.

In conclusion it can be seen that not only do a greater proportion of young West Germans stay on in general education than is the case in Britain (which has the highest proportion of young people leaving school at 16 among its main competitors), but at the same time, perhaps not surprisingly West Germans obtain higher school leaving qualifications before continuing with their education in apprenticeships and part-time vocational training school. Prais and Wagner offer the following reason for this:

"The contrast between the growth of an intermediate stream of schooling in Germany with its explicit practical educational objectives and syllabus and its submergence in England, provides an overriding clue to many educational and social differences between these countries. The highly developed vocational training system in Germany may be seen as a complementary development of the same underlying view of the balance in the purpose of education." (1985,70)

It is difficult to predict accurately which jobs and in what quantity they will exist in the decades to come, with education, training and employment policy equally difficult to determine. From the data presented above it can be seen that a flexible, adaptable and more educated workforce is required. The workforce of tomorrow needs to master technology of greater and greater complexity. The adaptability will need to be at a higher level than previously, implying again a higher level of education and training. Whether the training is received in the educational field or in industry or the community is of less consequence at the moment as long as liaison between the sectors is in place.

Proportionally more young people in both countries are continuing in education because education has become more accessible, partly due to an increase in the general standard of living. The income of the 16 year old to the family household is not as important as in the past and parents have become more ambitious for their children, seeing that investing in education and/or training pays off in the long-term.

The shortage of training places in the early 1980s in West Germany "forced" young people to continue their education in school. They were, however, equally determined to take up an apprenticeship at a later date and still approximately 60-80% of all young people undertake an apprenticeship. This can be explained to a large extent by the strong training culture in West Germany which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

In contrast, in Britain, although an increasing number of young people are receiving training in a systematic form through the YTS this emergent training culture has not been given a chance to solidify. It is already becoming clear that with the decline in the number of school leavers, young people will again be entering the employment market at

the earliest possible moment to fill jobs which do not necessarily involve training. In addition there is a move among British young people to obtain higher and further education. Considering the requirements of the labour market this is a sensible move, but it again reduces the pool of school leavers available to enter training schemes. Just as employers have designed suitable schemes and have become more positive about training in general this good work is going to waste. With 1992 and the creation of the Single European Market only a few years away the lack of skills in a country can lead to locals being squeezed out of employment by nationals of another country. Already teachers are being actively recruited in West Germany to fill posts in Britain as not enough local teachers are being trained.

In this chapter it has been indicated that distribution is a large employer of young people, both in terms of immediate jobs and places on YTS; selling is one of the most common occupations among young female school leavers and the qualifications of school leavers are rising. The skills required by selling staff are changing, as sales people are increasingly put in the position of being the 'front' for the company. Social skills, innate attributes and experience are characteristics which have been identified as being of importance in the future for these occupations. How the training cultures in the two countries have developed and adapted to meet these changing labour market requirements in general will therefore be studied in the next two chapters, before concentrating on retailing particularly in the second half of the thesis.

- <sup>1</sup> quoted in The Guardian 14.7.1988,10.
- <sup>2</sup> quoted in The Guardian 7.2.1985,23.
- <sup>3</sup> As reported in Sozialpolitische Informationen XX/4, 14 Feb. 1986 and XXI/4, 6 March 1987.
- <sup>4</sup> Categories 9 and 12 in the German classification system.
- <sup>5</sup> Sales occupations in Table 1.6. are not identical with retail distribution employment in Table 1.8. (The latter would include buyers, managers etc.).
- <sup>6</sup> The conclusions reached by Daly, Hitchins & Wagner: "Productivity, Machinery and Skills in a sample of British and German Manufacturing Plants" in National Institute Economic Review February 1985, No.11,48-61, concerning productivity in manufacturing industry in West Germany and Britain are perhaps therefore not surprising. Nor the general statement regarding the problem of too many chiefs and not enough Indians could be used. Or finally the feeling that West Germany is better off because it still employs more people in manual manufacturing jobs producing at high productivity levels in comparison with Britain which has moved to being a predominantly service sector and non-manual non-producing society.
- <sup>7</sup> The original German groups have been kept for the qualification structure because there is no comparable British data.
- <sup>8</sup> Unfortunately the main occupational groupings do not make it possible to separate out sales occupations in the grouping: storage, transport and sales.
- <sup>9</sup> Reported in IBW 4/86,57-8.
- <sup>10</sup> DES Statistics of Education School leavers CSE and GCE 1985 could be used as a starting point.
- <sup>11</sup> One should bear in mind that the overall population of the two countries is different, approximately 61 million for West Germany and 55 million for the United Kingdom, with both figures changing with the drop in the birthrate.
- <sup>12</sup> Statistics for 1983 and 1984 do not separate out the 16-18 year old age group (DES Statistical Bulletin 5/86) except by isolating YTS trainees in the various categories. However, if those aged 19 and over are included in the earlier statistics, the picture is not significantly different to that outlined above. Therefore using all ages for 1983 and 1984 still provides a valid analysis for the 16-18 year old group.
- <sup>13</sup> As the statutory school leaving age in West Germany is 15 (except in Berlin, Bremen and NRW) from 1973 onwards when the school leaving age was raised to 16 in Britain, one ought to perhaps compare 15 year old Germans with 16 year old British pupils. However, this would distort the figures further and as the DES figures used for Britain refer to the age in August of the previous year and the Statistical Bulletin of September 1985 does not find it necessary to make this distinction, a relatively accurate picture is obtained, bearing in mind the difference in counting the population in each country. Furthermore, it is worth remembering that as a result of the system of being made to repeat a year if the pupil is not performing at the prescribed standard in Germany, age is not the determining criteria, but the leaving qualification achieved on ending school. It is thus possible to obtain the HSA at 15 or older, but then again it is also possible to retake CSEs and O-levels in the British system.
- <sup>14</sup> Manpower in Engineering, London, April 1976 quoted in OECD 1979.

- <sup>15</sup> This can be explained by the fact that YTS trainees without a contract of employment, which is the majority of YTS trainees, are not included in these figures and all apprentices being trained by the Construction Industry Training Board or the Engineering Industry Training Board (EITB) are now trained under YTS. Furthermore, the figures only refer to trainees in the manufacturing sector.
- <sup>16</sup> Details are given in the Berufsbildungsbericht 1988.
- <sup>17</sup> Due to the fact that for example the typical length of a German apprenticeship is three years and a British apprenticeship four years and that of the British traineeship one year and since 1987 two years.
- <sup>18</sup> The figures quoted here are much higher than those in Table 1.26, as the former include all 16-17 year old participants taking part over the year, whereas the latter figures are based upon those actually on schemes at the January count aged 16 and not all those involved in the scheme over a complete year. Approximately 80% of those involved in YTS in the 1983-84 academic year were included in the January count. The average length on YOP was considerably less than YTS, thus a lower percentage of those involved in the programme would be included in the January count. The proportions of the 16 year old population are nevertheless not very different.
- <sup>19</sup> The BGJ was introduced in West Germany in 1977 with two objectives in mind: to broaden the first year of the three-year apprenticeship system, enabling young people to delay their choice of occupation by experiencing a broad range of skills and to provide training for those young people who had not been able to find a training place. YTS was created to provide systematic training, covering a broad range of compulsory skills to enable young people to subsequently decide which occupation to pursue. Due to the high number of unemployed 16 year olds in 1983 (128,000) this government-funded scheme also helped to reduce the unemployment figures.
- <sup>20</sup> A similar trend should be observable between Mode A and B on YTS, partly due to the government's insistence that more employers should participate, the employers' recognition that perhaps they could benefit from the scheme and the starting decline in the number of young people.
- <sup>21</sup> In some regions e.g. Lower Saxony, BGJ "graduates" have to be accepted into the second year of training, a measure not liked by employers.
- <sup>22</sup> How compulsory attendance at vocational training school is governed in each Bundesland is described in detail in Petzold 1983, 179-83. Briefly, the author proves that in fact young people can be exempted from vocational training school after attending the BGJ or the BVJ for one year after leaving school if it is the only way of obtaining unskilled work (Hilfsarbeiter).
- <sup>23</sup> Unemployed is a person who has registered personally at the Arbeitsamt (Employment Office) and temporarily has no employment or is practising a part-time job (less than 20 hours per week), is available for employment, i.e. someone who can and is able to carry out a reasonable full-time job under the normal conditions of the general labour market (\$100 AFG).
- <sup>24</sup> The only vaguely comparable statistics over time are those of

unemployed young people under 20 in West Germany and under 19 in Britain, even though they would have been collected using different methods and at different points in time. The proportion of young people under 20 without employment dropped from 11% in 1982 to 8% in 1985, reaching 6% in 1986 (Sozialpolitische Informationen XX/13). This is surprising considering the large number of young people still entering the labour market, but reflects the efforts made by the authorities through increasing the number of training places and furthering special measures programmes. In both countries only the official figures of registered unemployment have been used. In West Germany the official figure of 195,000 unemployed under 20 year olds in September 1982 has to be increased by the 34,180 unsuccessful applicants for training places and the estimated 150,000 young people in vocational training measures who have little hope of transferring to an apprenticeship (Petzold 1983,31). This gives a grand total of 379,180 unemployed under 20 year olds which compares more favourably with the figure of 420,000 unemployed British under 19 year olds. However, the 420,000 are the officially registered British unemployed and to it one would have to add the 129,000 on YOP in 1982 giving a total of 549,000. Considering that the British figures do not include 19 year olds, they compare very unfavourably with those for West Germany from 1976 onwards. By 1982 Britain had over twice as many unemployed 16-18 year olds as West Germany had unemployed 15-19 year olds. More recent figures indicate a decline in youth unemployment in both countries, but as the statistics in both cases are either for different times to the normal statistical run or only represent estimates it would be inappropriate to compare them.

TABLE 1.1

Employment by Industry Group in Britain 1971 to 1990

Sector	Net Change in 000s			Growth % p.a.
	1975-79	1981-84	1981-90	1981-90
Whole Economy	32	-568	268	0.1

Sectors of the economy where jobs are declining:

Agriculture	- 38	- 33	-106	-2.1
Mining	- 15	- 17	- 37	-1.3
Food, Drink, Tobacco	- 24	- 15	- 37	-0.7
Chemicals	10	- 18	- 56	-1.5
Metals	- 50	- 21	- 49	-1.8
Engineering of which	-112	-161	-127	-0.5
mechanical	- 49	- 40	- 48	-0.7
electrical	- 25	- 25	- 3	-0.1
motor vehicles	7	- 18	- 21	-0.7
Textiles & Clothing	- 80	-101	-160	-2.7
Other manufacturing	- 16	- 84	-106	-1.0
Public Utilities	5	4	- 29	-1.0
Transport & Communications	- 30	- 9	- 54	-0.4
Distribution	42	13	- 44	-0.2

Sectors of the economy where jobs are increasing:

Construction	- 56	- 65	+165	+1.2
Professional Ser- vices (banking etc)	+104	+ 31	+238	+1.4
Miscell. Services	+241	+ 19	+362	+1.4
Social Services	+101	-138	+167	+0.5
Public Admin.	- 48	+ 18	+143	+0.8

Source: Review of the Economy IER Supplement 1982,15.

TABLE 1.2

Employment by Industry Group 1975 to 1990

Sector	Net Change in 000s			Growth % p.a.
	1975-80	1980-84	1984-90	1984-90
Whole Economy	+149	-1,210	+145	+0.1
<u>Sectors of the economy where jobs are declining</u>				
Agriculture	- 34	- 24	- 59	-1.7
Mining	- 14	- 63	- 53	-3.1
Food, Drink, Tobacco	- 36	- 93	- 52	-1.5
Chemicals	+ 4	- 76	- 29	-1.2
Metals	-101	-137	- 24	-1.5
Engineering of which	-210	-581	-264	-1.7
mechanical	- 72	-154	-104	-2.5
electrical	- 32	- 66	- 13	-0.3
motor vehicles	- 34	-128	- 61	-3.7
Textiles & Clothg.	-200	-217	-107	-3.4
Other manufact.	-112	-209	- 54	-0.8
Public Utilities	- 1	- 30	- 24	-1.3
Transport & Communications	+ 11	-145	- 0	-0.0
Public Admin.	- 80	-152	- 68	-0.7
<u>Sectors of the economy where jobs are increasing:</u>				
Distribution	+106	+141	+ 9	+0.0
Construction	- 35	-130	+ 27	+0.3
Professional Ser- vices (banking etc)	+267	+272	+263	+1.8
Miscell. Services	+398	+188	+539	+2.7
Social Services	+159	+ 45	+ 41	+0.2

Source: Review of the Economy and Employment IER 1985 - Vol.1, 51.



TABLE 1.3

Employment by Industry Group in West Germany 1976-2000

Sector	Net change in 000s			Growth % p.a.
	1976-80	1980-90	1990-2000	1980-90*
Whole economy	+721	-994	+ 25	-
<u>Sectors of the economy where jobs are declining:</u>				
Agriculture, Forestry	-246	-247	- 96	-1.9
Mining, Energy, Water	- 6	- 21	- 20	-0.7
Chemicals	- 2	- 77	- 69	-1.6
Metals	+ 14	-102	- 46	-1.0
Textiles & Clothing	- 83	-248	- 46	-2.6
Other manufacturing	- 50	-211	-125	-1.1
Distribution	+120	-250	-100	-0.5
Construction	+101	-257	-176	-0.7
Engineering	+103	-300	-192	0.0
of which				
mechanical & vehicles	+102	-164	-182	-0.8
electrical	+ 1	-146	- 10	-0.2

Sectors of the economy where jobs are increasing:

Transport & Communications	+ 6	- 31	+ 13	+0.1
Food, Drink, Tobacco	+ 24	- 45	+ 18	+0.1
Professional Services (banking etc)	+119	+195	+195	+1.4
Miscell. Services	+102	+197	+298	+1.1
Social Services	+254	+223	+112	+1.0
of which				
Health & Vet. Care	+152	+122	+ 78	+1.0
Public Administration	+ 85	+190	+316	+0.7

\* 1982-1990 for all sectors except the service sector, excluding distribution.

Note: The middle variant has been used in all calculations.

Source: Rothkirch et al: Die Zukunft der Arbeitslandschaft, BeitrAB 94.1, 48 & 52 and BeitrAB 94.2, 37 & 49.

TABLE 1.4

A Comparison of Employment by Industry Groups for Britain and West Germany 1980/81 to 1990

Sector	Share of total employment (%)						Difference	
	Britain			West Germany			GB/WG	
	1981 000s	1981 %	1990 %	1980 000s	1980 %	1990 %	1980 in %	1990 in %
Agriculture	620	2.7	2.2	1,436	5.5	4.7	+2.8	+2.5
Mining & Public Utilities	672	2.9	2.2	501	1.9	1.9	-1.0	- 0.3
Food etc.	639	2.7	2.3	915	3.5	3.4	+0.8	+ 0.7
Chemicals	433	1.9	1.5	660	2.5	2.3	+0.6	+ 0.6
Metals	325	1.4	1.0	1,150	4.4	4.2	+3.0	+ 3.2
Engineering	2,769	11.8	9.8	4,107	15.7	15.0	+3.9	+ 5.2
Textiles & Clothing	733	3.1	1.9	790	3.0	2.2	-0.1	+ 0.3
Other manufact.	1,264	5.4	4.7	1,654	6.3	5.7	+0.9	+ 1.0
Construction	1,473	6.3	6.4	1,820	6.9	6.2	+0.6	- 0.2
Transport & Communications	1,499	6.4	6.1	1,468	5.6	5.7	-0.8	- 0.4
Distribution	3,062	13.1	14.5	3,485	13.3	12.8	+0.2	- 1.7
Prof. Services	1,840	7.9	10.5	1,430	5.4	6.4	-2.5	- 4.1
Misc. Services	2,692	11.5	15.3	2,058	7.8	8.9	-3.7	- 6.4
-----								
Manufacturing	6,162	26.4	21.3	9,276	35.3	32.6	+8.9	+11.3
Services	9,093	38.9	46.4	8,441	32.1	33.8	-6.8	-12.8
-----								
All Industries	18,020	77.1	78.6	21,474	81.7	79.2	+4.6	+ 0.6
-----								
Social Services	3,464	14.8	14.4	2,199	8.4	9.6	-6.4	- 4.8
Public Admin.	1,898	8.1	7.0	2,578	9.8	11.0	+1.7	+ 4.0
=====								
Whole Economy	23,382	100	100	26,251	100	100	-	-

Note: In 1980/81 West Germany had approx. 3 million more employed people than Britain.

Source: Own calculations from IER Supplement 1982,15, Review of the Economy and Employment IER 1985 Vol.1,51 and BeitrAB 94.1, 1985,52.

TABLE 1.5

## Occupational Employment Changes in West Germany: Past and Future

<u>Year</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>
<u>Occupation</u>	Thousands		<u>1973-80</u>	000s	<u>1980-90</u>	000s	<u>1990-2000</u>
			%		%		%
Manual Occupat.	16,673	15,237	- 9	13,676	-10	12,790	- 6
Non-manual Occupations	10,178	11,016	+ 8	11,582	+ 5	12,492	+ 8
<u>Occupations in decline:</u>							
Supervisors & Foremen	771	651	-16	507	-22	407	-20
Engineering Craftsmen	3,394	2,934	-14	2,520	-14	2,261	-10
Repair Activities (Craftsmen)	1,501	1,446	- 4	1,365	- 6	1,328	- 3
Skilled Operative	2,701	2,283	-15	1,853	-19	1,607	-13
Other Operatives	4,030	3,360	-17	2,925	-13	2,703	- 8
Sales Occupations	2,699	2,642	- 2	2,501	- 5	2,483	- 1
Clerical Occupat.	3,129	3,175	+ 1	3,084	- 3	3,047	- 1
Personal Service Occupations	1,473	1,367	- 7	1,356	- 1	1,360	0
Other Occupations (incl. trainees)	897	1,265	+41	1,145	- 9	956	-17
<u>Occupations on the increase:</u>							
Security Occupat. Installation, guidance, maintenance (Craftsmen)	967	960	- 1	973	+ 1	1,036	+ 6
Managers & Administrators	939	971	+ 3	1,032	+ 6	1,132	+10
Education Profes.	975	1,116	+14	1,344	+20	1,658	+23
Health Profession	795	1,080	+39	1,237	+15	1,379	+11
Other Professions	944	1,181	+25	1,301	+10	1,409	+ 8
Literary, artistic Occupations	263	311	+18	368	+18	447	+21
Engineers & Scientists (Research)	122	134	+10	146	+ 9	169	+16
Technicians & Technical Assistants	564	581	+ 3	646	+11	753	+17
	687	796	+16	955	+20	1,147	+20

Source: BeitrAB 94.1,85 and BeitrAB 94.2,241 & 249 and own calculations.

TABLE 1.6

A Comparison of Past and Future Occupational Employment Changes in West Germany and Britain

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Britain</u>			<u>West Germany</u>		
	1971 % of total	1980 % of total	1990 % of total	1973 % of total	1980 % of total	1990 % of total
Manual Occupat.	58.1	52.4	47.8	62	58	54
Non-manual Occupations	41.9	47.6	52.2	38	42	46
-----						
Supervisors & Foremen*	0.5	0.4	0.4	2.9	2.4	2.0
Engineering Craftsmen	9.5	9.0	8.9	12.6	11.2	10.0
Other transferable Craftsmen	3.8	3.2	2.8	3.5	3.7	4.1
Non-transferable Craftsmen	4.2	3.1	2.3	5.6	5.5	5.4
Skilled Operative	3.1	2.6	2.3	10.1	8.7	7.3
Other Operatives	20.4	17.9	15.2	15.0	12.8	11.6
Security Occupat.	1.3	1.2	1.7	3.6	3.7	3.9
Personal Service Occupations	10.5	11.5	11.9	5.5	5.2	5.4
Other Occupations	4.8	3.4	2.3	3.3	4.8	4.5
Managers & Administrators	7.8	9.0	9.9	3.7	4.3	5.3
Education Profes.	3.1	3.7	3.8	3.0	4.1	4.9
Health Profes.	3.2	4.0	4.8	3.5	4.5	5.2
Other Professions	1.9	2.3	2.7	1.0	1.1	1.5
Literary, artistic Occupations	1.4	1.8	2.4	0.5	0.5	0.6
Engineers & Scientists (Research)	2.1	2.4	2.9	2.1	2.2	2.6
Technicians etc.	2.1	2.5	2.9	2.6	3.0	3.8
Clerical Occupat.	15.0	16.3	17.3	11.7	12.1	12.2
Sales Occupations	5.4	5.6	5.5	10.0	10.1	9.9
All Occupations+	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* Because of classification difficulties this group in Britain only covers supervisors and foremen in the engineering and transport industries.

+ Excluding HM Forces (368,000 in 1971; 323,000 in 1980 and 334,000 in 1990).

Note: Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Source: BeitrAB 94.1 1985,85 and Review of the Economy and Employment 1982 IER,69 & 71.

TABLE 1.7

OPCS Estimates of the Employment of Young People in Retail Distribution in Britain in 1951 and 1981

Age (years)	Males		Females		Total	
	1951	1981	1951	1981	1951	1981
15	17.2	0	39.1	0	56.3	0
16-17	35.4	45.7	82.8	72.9	118.2	118.6
18-19	11.3	59.9	68.8	92.5	80.1	152.4
20-24	67.1	116.0	133.4	156.1	200.5	272.1
All ages	850.7	918.7	859.2	1,330.1	1,709.9	2,248.8

Source: Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (1984) and General Register Office (1957) in NIESR Report 1986,56

TABLE 1.8

The Department of Employment Estimate of Employees in Employment in Retail Distribution in Britain 1978-85

Not seasonally adjusted

	000's	as % of employed in employment in all industries and services
March 1978*	2034	9.2
March 1979	2100	9.4
March 1980	2129	9.5
March 1981	2044	9.5
March 1982	2008	9.6
March 1983	1985	9.7
March 1984	2072	10.1
March 1985	2129	10.3

Note: \* March figures on a comparable basis for earlier years have not been published.

Source: Department of Employment (1985) Employment Gazette Table 1.2, August and Historical Supplement Table 1.2, April in NIESR Report 1986,48.

TABLE 1.9

Sales Assistants, Wholesalers, Buyers and Retail Trade Merchants in Employment 1970-1985 in West Germany

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number in Employment</u>		
	<u>Wholesalers, Buyers Retail Trade Merchants</u>	<u>Sales Assistants</u>	<u>Retail Trade* Employees Total</u>
1970	702,000	1,058,000	2,104,000
1973	623,000	1,130,000	2,082,000
1976	583,000	1,107,000	1,964,000
1978	597,000	1,140,000	2,008,000
1980	607,000	1,176,000	2,043,000
1982	600,000	n/a	2,077,000+
1984	649,000	n/a	2,120,000+
1985	646,000	n/a	2,083,000+

\* Refers to Warenkaufleute and not just Einzelhandel employees.

+ Statistisches Jahrbuch various issues 1980-1988.

Source: Qualifikation und Erwerbstätigkeit in den Einzelhandelsberufen, Berichte zur beruflichen Bildung, Heft 56 1983,9

TABLE 1.10

Occupational Employment Changes in Past and Future in Britain

Occupation	1971	1980	1990	Percentage	
	Thousands			1971-80	1980-90
Manual Occupat.	14,109	12,696	11,283	-10	-11
Non-manual Occupations	10,168	11,538	12,322	+13	+ 7
<u>Occupations in decline:</u>					
Supervisors & Foremen	118	101	94	-15	- 7
Engineering Craftsmen	2,313	2,168	2,096	- 6	- 3
Other transferable craftsmen	930	777	651	-17	-16
Non-transferable Craftsmen	1,030	749	548	-27	-27
Skilled Operatives	744	635	549	-15	-14
Other Operatives	4,958	4,343	3,592	-12	-17
Security Occupat.	306	300	399	- 2	+35
Other Occupations	1,172	826	541	-30	-35
<u>Occupations on the increase:</u>					
Managers & Administrators	1,890	2,176	2,339	+15	+ 8
Education Profes.	752	902	895	+20	- 1
Health Profession	765	964	1,134	+26	+18
Other Professions	460	563	644	+22	+15
Literary, artistic & sports occupat.	341	438	570	+28	+30
Engineers & Scientists	502	592	684	+18	+15
Technicians, Draughtsmen	512	601	690	+17	+15
Clerical occupat.	3,632	3,946	4,074	+ 9	+ 3
Sales occupations	1,315	1,357	1,293	+ 3	- 5
Personal Service Occupations	2,539	2,797	2,813	+10	+ 1

Source: Review of the Economy and Employment IER 1982, 69 & 71.

Note: Newer analysis of the statistics are available in the Summer IER Review, 60, but these have not been considered here. The major differences are that between 1980 and 1990 education professions are expected to decline more steeply (4.3%), health professions increase by only 9.4%, clerical occupations increase by only 0.5%, supervisors and foremen are predicted to decline by 10%, security occupations only increase by 25%, personal service occupations decline by 3% rather than increase by 1% and overall non-manual occupations increase by 3.8% and manual occupations decline by 12.9%.

TABLE 1.11

Development of the Qualification Structure in Main Occupational Groupings 1976-2000 in West Germany

<u>Occupational area</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u> 000s	<u>Qualification groups in %</u>			
			I	II	III	IV
1-6 Production	1976	10,101	44.0	48.9	6.3	0.8
	1982	9,324	38.1	54.0	6.9	1.0
	1990	8,604	31.3	59.9	7.6	1.2
	2000	7,958	24.4	65.9	8.3	1.5
7-11 Storage, Transport & Sales	1976	4,293	36.0	58.5	3.9	1.6
	1982	4,258	30.2	64.3	3.6	2.0
	1990	4,090	23.4	70.8	3.3	2.6
	2000	3,963	16.8	76.8	2.9	3.6
12-14 Office Work	1976	3,155	26.2	68.4	3.6	1.8
	1982	3,116	21.8	71.9	3.6	2.7
	1990	3,084	16.8	74.9	3.5	4.9
	2000	3,047	11.7	75.4	3.4	9.6
15-17 Management, Research & De- velopment	1976	2,403	15.3	47.1	16.1	21.5
	1982	2,542	9.7	50.1	16.6	23.6
	1990	2,945	5.2	52.7	16.6	25.5
	2000	3,558	2.3	53.9	16.1	27.7
19-23 Services	1976	3,333	23.3	41.5	8.4	26.8
	1982	3,746	19.5	39.4	7.4	33.7
	1990	4,025	16.4	37.0	5.9	40.8
	2000	4,440	14.7	33.6	4.2	47.5
18,24 Personal Ser- vice & in training	1976	2,247	69.1	27.5	2.1	1.3
	1982	2,578	65.5	29.3	2.6	2.5
	1990	2,501	62.4	32.1	2.8	2.8
	2000	2,316	57.1	36.1	2.9	3.9
All Occupations	1976	25,530	37.2	49.9	6.4	6.5
	1982	25,564	32.0	52.9	6.6	8.5
	1990	25,249	25.9	56.2	6.7	11.2
	2000	25,282	19.8	58.7	6.7	14.8

Qualification Groups

- I No vocational qualification including work experience
- II Completed apprenticeship or equivalent full-time qualification
- III Master craftsman or technician or equivalent qualification from a specialised vocational training school
- IV Polytechnic (Engineering school) or University qualification

Source: v. Rothkirch & Weidig: Zum Arbeitskräftebedarf nach Qualifikationen bis zum Jahr 2000, BeitrAB 95 1986,4 & 37.



TABLE 1.12

Qualifications Obtained by English School Leavers at Minimum School Leaving Age

Academic Year	As a percentage of total leavers		
	1-4 A-C grade O-level*	1 or more D-E grade O-level~	No GCE/CSE qualification
1970/71	16.8+	9.8+	44.0+
1977/78	29.0	44.3	19.0
1978/79	29.8	45.2	17.2
1979/80	29.6	46.4	16.4
1980/81	29.1	47.5	15.5
1981/82	29.3	47.4	14.9
1981/82	25.6+	31.2+	12.9+
1982/83	30.1	48.0	13.5
1983/84	30.0	48.0	13.2
1985/86	26.6	50.0	12.9

+ Figures represent those for the United Kingdom

\* Including CSE Grade 1

~ Including CSE Grades 2-5

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 2/84, 12/86 and 5/88.

TABLE 1.13

School leavers according to their qualifications in West Germany

Year	(in thousands)				
	<u>Total no. of minimum age school leavers</u>	<u>Without HSA</u>	<u>With HSA</u>	<u>Mittlere Reife or equivalent</u>	<u>Abitur or equivalent from general or vocational school</u>
1960	468,6	114,0*	354,6*	117,2	56,7
1965	563,2	134,6	422,8	131,8	50,5
1970	489,1	140,3	348,8	200,1	91,5
1975	461,6	114,6	347,1	318,0	175,0
1976	466,5	114,9	351,6	317,4	175,0
1977	527,2	123,9	403,3	335,2	199,7
1978	537,6	123,4	414,2	371,0	212,0
1979	528,7	117,2	411,5	401,5	224,1
1980	500,8	109,4	391,4	422,2	193,3+
1981	454,1	101,0	353,1	435,9	258,4
1982	459,5	96,6	362,9	436,3	286,3
1983	449,7	90,7	359,0	443,2	305,7
1984	427,1	82,9	344,2	438,7	305,0
1985	391,6	71,7	319,9	419,7	298,9
1986	350,4	65,2	285,2	393,8	291,4

\* Estimate

+ The decrease in relation to the previous year can be explained by the short school year in 1966/67.

Source: Grund- und Strukturdaten 1987/88,70.

TABLE 1.14

Qualifications Obtained by English and German School Leavers as a Percentage of the Age Cohort 1970 to 1985

<u>Year</u>	<u>GB</u> No Quali- fications	<u>WG</u>	<u>GB</u> 5+ lower grades	<u>All</u> lower grades	<u>WG</u> HSA	<u>GB</u> 5+ high grades	<u>All</u> high grades	<u>WG</u> Mittlere Reife
1970	44.0*	17.4	9.8*	NA	43.2	NA	16.8*	24.8
1977	19.0	12.3	25.0	44.3	40.0	7.6	36.6	33.3
1980	15.5	10.6	29.1	47.5	37.8	7.8	36.9	41.0
1981	14.9	9.6	29.5	47.4	33.6	8.4	37.6	41.4
1982	13.5	9.5	30.1	48.0	35.6	8.3	38.4	42.8
1983	13.2	9.2	29.3	48.0	36.5	8.6	38.7	44.9
1984	11.7*	9.1	32.5*	NA	39.8	NA	26.8*	48.0
1985	12.9	8.9	NA	50.0	39.6	10.1	37.1	51.9

Lower grades refer to Grades D-E at O-level and CSE Grades 2-5.  
High grades refer to Grades A-C at O-level and CSE Grade 1.

\* Figures refer to the United Kingdom and are for 1 to 4 high grades and for 1 or more lower grades.

Source: Grund- und Strukturdaten 1986/87,66 and DES Statistical Bulletin 2/84, 12/86, 5/87 and 5/88.

TABLE 1.15

16 Year Olds\* in Britain 1974-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Numbers (Thousands)</u> January each year	
1951@	644	UK
1961@	785	UK
1974	786	
1975	803	
1976	821	
1977	844	
1978	874	
1979	893	
1980	910	
1981	931	
1982	932	
1983	910	
1984	897	
1985	872	
1986	860	
1987~	842	
1991#	702	UK
1996#	724	UK
2001#	818	UK

\* Ages as at August 31 of preceding year.

~ 1987 estimates are provisional

@ Census enumerated

# 1979-based projections

Source: DE Employment Gazette September 1987, 460 and Social Trends 13 1983, 186.

TABLE 1.16

16 Year Olds: by Gender in West Germany (including estimated numbers)

In thousands

<u>Year</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
1960	-	-	764
1970	-	-	815
1976	-	-	970
1979	543	514	1,057
1980	559	524	1,083
1981	549	515	1,064
1985	469	444	913
1986	418	397	815
1991	299	286	585
1996	320	306	626
2000	308	293	601
2030	202	192	394

Source: Various Tables from Grund- und Strukturdaten 1987/88,18-19 and 1984/85,232-3, Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft and own calculations.

TABLE 1.17

Proportion of British 16 Year Olds Continuing in Education

<u>England &amp; Wales</u>		<u>Percentages</u>
<u>Year</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Full-time FE</u>
1974	27	9
1976	28	13
1979	28	13
1981	30	14
1982	32	16
1984	31	14 (of which 11% men and 18% women)
1985	30*	15*
1986	30*	15* (of which 12% men and 19% women)
1987	31~	15~

\* Proportions refer to England only.

~ Proportion refers to Great Britain and is a provisional estimate

Note: Pupils attending mainland, independent and special schools are included.

Full-time and sandwich education including higher education but excluding private further education. Excludes those on YTS within colleges.

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 5/85 and 2/87 and Employment Gazette Sept. 1987,460.

TABLE 1.18

School in West Germany

Day Release Enrolments\* by Industry of Employees in England (1978 to 1984)

Males and Females	<u>Aged 16-18</u>		Thousands		<u>of which</u>	
	1978	1982	<u>All day</u> <u>release</u> <u>students</u>	1984	<u>YTS</u>	1984
Agricul., forestry & fishing	9	8	12	12	4	4
Energy & water supply	13	10	14	11	1	1
Mineral extrac. & production	24	11	16	15	1	2
Metal goods,engi- neering & vehicle	79	44	57	54	4	6
Other manufact.	22	13	20	21	2	4
Construction	28	21	29	32	2	4
Distrib.,hotels & catering & repairs	52	34	51	59	11	18
Transp. & commun.	10	10	14	11	1	1
Banking & finance	19	10	21	26	2	5
Public Admin. & other services	25	26	63	72	13	19
All in known employment	281	187	297	314	41	63

\* Excluding students not in employment attending day release courses and those for whom the industry of their employer is not known.

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 5/84 and 5/86

TABLE 1.19

Proportion of 16 Year Olds Staying On at School in West Germany

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentages</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
1960	22.8	18.7	20.8
1970	28.7	23.0	25.9
1980	46.7	47.7	47.2
1982	46.0	47.0	46.5
1984	56.5	57.3	56.9

Note: Figures include evening grammar schools and intermediate schools.

Source: As for Table 1.16,38 & 40 and own calculations.

TABLE 1.20

Proportion of 16 Year Old West Germans Going into Further Education Full-Time and Sandwich Courses

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentages</u>					
	<u>All schools</u>		<u>of which</u>		<u>Fachoberschulen</u>	
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
1960	73.3	71.3	2.8	6.4	-	-
1970	69.7	67.7	5.4	8.9	1.4	0.6
1980	50.5	48.4	6.6	14.6	1.2	1.3
1982	47.0	45.4	7.2	15.8	1.4	1.5
1984	42.8	40.8	6.3	14.8	1.1	1.2

Source: As for Table 1.16,38-39.

TABLE 1.21

Proportion of 16 Year Olds Going Straight into Employment in England and Wales 1975-1987

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage of population</u>	<u>Of which with part-time day release (percentage)</u>
1975*	61	16
1976	50	12
1979	47	12
1981	33	10
1982	25	7
1983	19	7
1984	18	6
1985*	19	5
1986*	19	5
1987~	17	-

\* Proportions refer to England only.

~ Proportion refers to Great Britain and is a provisional estimate.

Note: Including those who were neither employed nor seeking work (e.g. because of domestic responsibilities). Also including the unregistered unemployed before 1983 and from 1983 those who were seeking work but not claiming benefit. Excluding those holding a contract of employment under YTS.

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 5/85, 1985 and 2/87, 1987 and Employment Gazette Sept. 1987,460.

TABLE 1.22

Number of West Germans (16 to 18 years old) who are Attending Part-Time Vocational Training School Going Straight into Employment

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1960	297,500
1970	218,200
1980	91,300
1981	70,000
1982	52,000
1983	42,500
1984	37,900
1985	37,400
1986	34,500

Source: own calculations from Grund- und Strukturdaten 1987/88,58.

TABLE 1.23

The Number of Young People Being Trained in Apprenticeships and in Other Forms of Training in the Manufacturing Industry (Excluding Ship Building) in Britain

<u>Year</u>	<u>Apprenticeships</u>	<u>Other trainees</u>	<u>All trainees</u>
1968	236,000		
1979	153 100		
1980	149 500		
1981	147 600		
1982	114 100		
1983	102 100	49 000	151 000
1984	82 000	39 700	121 600
1985	73 200	39 200	112 400
1986	63 700	38 200	101 900

Note: Many of those receiving apprenticeships and other training under the YTS, specifically those without a contract of employment, are not counted as employees and so will not appear in this table. With the move away from traditional apprenticeship training in many industries some long duration schemes of a type which could previously have involved apprenticeship may now be classified as "other training".

Source: Employment Gazette Aug. 1983, 366; June 1984 S22; June 1986 S16; Roberts 1984,47.

TABLE 1.24

The Situation Regarding Training Places in West Germany

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of training places on offer</u>	<u>No. of training places not taken up</u>	<u>Proportion of over (+) or undersupply (-) of training places (%)</u>
1976	513,900	18,100	-1.8
1977	583,900	25,500	-0.3
1978	624,000	22,300	-0.2
1979	677,200	36,900	+2.6
1980	694,600	44,600	+4.1
1981	642,984	37,348	+2.4
1982	650,985	19,995	-2.1
1983	696,375	19,641	-3.8
1984	726,786	21,134	-4.9
1985	719,110	22,021	-4.9
1986	715,880	31,170	-2.1
1987	690,316	44,541	+1.6

Source: Informationen Bildung Wissenschaft 4/88,51.



TABLE 1.25

The Number of Young West Germans Being Trained in Apprenticeships in the Manufacturing Industry (Fertigungsberufe)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Manufacturing Apprentices</u>	<u>Total no. of Apprentices</u>
1965	639,400	1,331,900
1975	663,700	1,328,900
1979	833,600	1,644,600
1980	874,500	1,715,500
1981	852,200	1,676,900
1982	847,300	1,675,900
1983	862,600	1,722,400
1984	887,800	1,800,100
1985	890,500	1,831,300
1986	867,000	1,805,200

Source: As Table 1.16, 1987/88 version only, 98.

TABLE 1.26

The Number of Young People Participating in a YOP/YTS in Britain

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of 16 year olds</u>	<u>% of population</u>
1979	46,000 YOP	5
1980	52,000	6
1981	96,000	10
1982	129,000	14
1983	170,000 YTS	19
1984	222,000	25
1985	-	26*
1986	236,000	27
1987	228,000	27~

\* Proportions refer to England only.

~ Provisional estimate for 1987.

Note: Including those in further education establishments attending YOP/YTS courses.

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 5/85 and 2/87 and Employment Gazette Sept. 1987, 460.

TABLE 1.27

Young People in Training: YOP and YTS - 1983-85 in Britain

	1983	1984	1985
January	281,200	273,618	282,968
February	267,400	267,582	277,052
March	250,400	255,616	271,059
April	220,362	233,646	247,945
May	189,779	215,093	233,318
June	175,725	230,599	237,304
July	174,192	263,032	274,344
August	186,503	268,147	250,020
September	238,578	287,659	297,845
October	277,182	294,689	295,647
November	282,283	291,591	287,703
December	278,833	284,916	283,691

The January 1986 figure is 285,184. YOP peaked at 308,000 in November 1982.

YOP to March 1983; YOP and YTS April 1983 to April 1984; YTS from May 1984.

From April 1984 figures are updated by the MSC as information comes in. These figures are correct as at January 1986 and differ from earlier figures.

Source: Youthaid Bulletin Issue 25 March 1986,16.

TABLE 1.28

Completed Vocational Preparation Measures Sponsored by the Federal Bureau for Employment (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit) in West Germany

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Participants</u>
1975	19,211
1976	30,295
1977	31,377
1978	29,602
1979	26,440
1980	34,218
1981	42,427
1982	41,564
1983	38,501
1984	43,097
1985	41,836
1986	43,891

Source: As for Table 1.16 1987/88 version,112

Note: Includes programmes for the social integration of young foreigners, basic vocational training preparation and measures for handicapped young people who are not ready for an apprenticeship but not BGJ and BVJ.

TABLE 1.29

West German Pupils Participating in the Co-operative and School BGJ as well as Vocational Preparation Measures

<u>Year</u>	<u>Co-operative BGJ</u>	<u>School BGJ</u>	<u>All BGJ</u>	<u>BVJ</u>
1975	1,427	20,136	21,563	13,030
1976	2,635	23,145	25,780	24,751
1977	5,137	32,767	37,904	30,175
1978	7,930	45,063	52,993	44,797
1979	10,301	57,004	67,305	50,493
1980	14,468	62,649	77,117	46,787
1981	15,793	76,938	92,731	45,378
1982	15,861	83,036	98,897	46,146
1983	17,490	86,082	103,572	47,253
1984	16,780	84,986	101,766	41,675
1985	14,473	78,012	92,485	36,784
1986	18,212	69,336	87,548	27,352

Source: Grund- und Strukturdaten 1987/88,55 and Berufsbildungsbericht 1983, 1984, 1988.

TABLE 1.30

The Unemployed Under 20 Year Olds by Age in West Germany

<u>Age</u>	<u>Unemployed at end of month</u>			
	<u>September 1982</u>		<u>September 1974</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
15	1,256	0.6	7,020	10.1
16	13,262	6.8	11,069	15.9
17	34,618	17.8	15,484	22.2
18	63,430	32.6	17,315	24.8
19	82,282	42.2	18,905	27.1
	=====	=====	=====	=====
Total	194,848	100.0	69,793	100.0

Source: Bundesanstalt für Arbeit Statistik quoted by Gunther Kloss at the Association for Modern German Studies third conference 26 May 1984 in his workshop "Educational Opportunities for the Young in West Germany".

TABLE 1.31

Unemployment Among 16 Year Olds in Britain

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u> (thousands)	<u>Percentage of</u> <u>population</u>
1974	27	3
1975	36	4
1976	71	9
1977	84	10
1978	86	10
1979	55	6
1980	53	6
1981	110	12
1982	114	12
1983	128	14
1984	114	13
1985	-	11*
1986	101	12
1987	90	11~

\* Proportions refer to England only.

~ Provisional estimate for 1987.

Note: Registered unemployed prior to 1983 and claimants unemployed in 1983 and thereafter (Department of Education and Science estimates).

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 5/85 and 2/87 and Employment Gazette Sept. 1987,460.

TABLE 1.32

Estimated Participation in All Forms of Education and Training\* in England

January	Persons					
<b>1984</b>						
F/t education~	45	31	17	31	28	34
P/t day+ (excluding YTS)	13	19	21	18	22	13
YTS**	24	5	0	10	11	9
Evening only++	6	6	6	6	5	8
All	88	63	44	65	66	63
<b>1982</b>						
F/t education~	47	30	16	31	29	34
P/t day+ (excluding YOP)	21	20	21	21	26	15
YOP**	13	5	2	7	7	6
Evening only++	7	8	7	7	5	9
All	87	62	46	66	67	64
<b>1980</b>						
F/t education~	42	27	14	28	26	30
P/t day+ (excluding YOP)	32	25	23	27	34	19
YOP**	5	2	1	3	3	3
Evening only++	7	7	7	7	6	8
All	86	61	45	65	69	60

\* Participation rates for part-time (and all) education and training in this table includes estimates for private sector provision excluded from all other tables and charts. Estimates for private sector full-time education and training are excluded from the entries in this table.

~ Full-time includes sandwich. Excludes private sector full-time further education and training.

+ Including education and training conducted by employers and at private sector colleges.

\*\* Including those in further education establishments attending YOP/YTS courses.

++ Excluding an estimate of those also undertaking other forms of education and training. Leisure classes are included.

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 2/87.

TABLE 1.33

Estimated Activity of 16 Year Old in West Germany and Britain (selected dates)

in percentages

Year	<u>F/T Education</u>		<u>F/T FE</u>		<u>Vocational+ Training</u>		<u>Employment~</u>		<u>Unemployed~</u>	
	WG	GB	WG	GB	WG	GB	WG	GB	WG	GB
1960	21	na	5	na	59	na	14	na	1	na
1970*	26	27	8	9	55	17	10	44	1	3
1980	47	28	12	13	34	12	5	41	2	6
1985	57	31	12	14	26	30	3	12	2	13

Notes:

- na Figures were not available.
- \* Figures for Britain are for 1974.
- ~ Figures for Britain are for 1984.
- ~ Figures refer to the proportion of the 16-18 year olds population for West Germany and are therefore not directly comparable with the British figures.
- + Vocational Training in West Germany has been calculated on the basis of attendance at the Berufsschule (including the Berufssonderschule, Berufsaufbauschule and BGJ), with those in employment e.g. young employees and young members of families helping to run family businesses, unskilled workers as well as the unemployed being deducted. For Britain vocational training refers to those on YTS for 1984 i.e. training of at least one year and those on part-time day-release (therefore including apprenticeships). YOP has been included in the figures for employment as it was not really a training scheme. Those in employment basically refers to the untrained and therefore by implication to the unskilled or possibly semi-skilled.

Source: DES Statistical Bulletin 5/85, February 1985 and Grund- und Strukturdaten 1988/89, 18-19 and 54-55.

## PART ONE

This part of the thesis will focus on how vocational training in Britain and West Germany has adapted to the changing requirements of industry, often determined by technological advancements. What encompasses training in the two countries is very different, as is the importance attached to it. This is in part due to the historical development of education and training in each country, but also to political and economic influences at various points in history. Furthermore, the cultural traditions<sup>1</sup> of each country are strong factors in determining how change is viewed and what action is taken and at what speed.

Before looking in more detail at the actual training provision it is important to define what is meant by vocational training. Vocational training in the German context will generally mean the dual system: a combination of company-based training supplemented by one to two days of off-the-job training in a Berufsschule (vocational training school). In the British context vocational training refers in the present day mainly to government-sponsored training schemes, run either by companies, by colleges of FE or by private training organisations or a mixture of two or three of the above.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of training in very general terms is to ensure that the country has a qualified labour force to meet not only the needs of the present day economy but also those of the future. It should serve, especially in the German context, to instil good working practices and personal satisfaction in the individual. If possible it should serve as a stepping stone to further career opportunities.

The changing labour market has brought about a change in behaviour among young people and employers, and both West Germany and Britain are now faced with the question of whether their vocational training systems will be able to adapt fast enough to these continuing changes. The British approach is to institute new schemes as and when a problem is perceived as quickly as possible with little future planning:

"The usual rush towards early implementation might suggest to some that the novelty appeal of new schemes has superseded the real benefits of training policies." (Chapman and Tooze 1986,78)

The German approach seems almost diametrically opposed to this with long consultation processes and pilot programmes characterising the system. Will this system stand up to the continuing changes in the market place? And if not, does the system have other features which ensure that a flexible workforce, able to think for itself is trained to the levels required?

The German vocational training system, when contrasted with the British system has sometimes been criticised for its rigidity and lack of flexibility (Franklin 1985; Russell 1983). Due to its well defined structure, entrenched in law, its adaptability to changes in the labour market and the economy as a whole are questioned. The British system is characterised by very different features: wide-reaching powers are given to one ministry or a quango with changes in content of training regulations occurring with very short lead times and only a modicum of consultation. In both countries not just a change of skills is needed but also a change in the qualification level to adjust to the new needs of the labour market (cf Chapter 1). Much of this is attitude training - not to be entrenched in one specific job but to be adaptable to take on tasks as requirements change. Therefore the desire to learn and update knowledge rather than skills in the more manual sense is required.

The measures devised to achieve these aims can therefore be defined as a "system". The concept of system in the two countries is very different. German provision is enshrined in a consensus-based, closely monitored, formalised, legally structured system. In contrast the British provision is measure-driven, patchy, supplied in an ad hoc manner to solve short-term needs of the economy.

Previous studies have compared aspects of the British and German vocational training systems (CEDEFOP 1982; Williamson 1983; Casey 1983; Russell 1984) or included other countries as well e.g. the USA and Japan (NEDO/MSK 1984). These studies tended to highlight the superiority of the German system as it seemed to provide a better means



of educating and training a much greater proportion of the population. Doran (1984) when contrasting the significance, organisation and economic role of the craft sector in Britain and Germany highlighted the superiority in numbers and quality of the intermediate skilled population in West Germany compared to Britain, owing to the statutory backing given to the system of trade definition and control of entry through training standards. As yet there have been few cross-national case studies in the area of vocational training; those carried out by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) in London and those led by the Wissenschaftszentrum in Berlin being the exceptions.

It will be shown in the next two chapters that on account of the background against which training provision in West Germany and Britain has developed, systems which have advantages and disadvantages in meeting the changing requirements of the labour market have been established. When each system was devised, was it to meet the policy aims stated above, were the structures to be put in place thought through and was consideration given to how they would work together? Or, were different parts of the training provision set up at different points in time to meet specific needs? This could lead to a very flexible system, which can adapt easily to changes or it can lead to a plethora of provision with no-one being sure which measure is best for the individual. Or, is training provision which is well thought-out, rigidly defined by laws and arrived at by consensus better able to adapt to the changing requirements of the labour market?

Sorge and Warner (Wissenschaftszentrum) in their recent case study looked at the difference in qualification level and training of employees in three types of factories: tubes, fabrication and chemicals (1986,109-123). They concluded that the German system tried to achieve the greatest possible link between hierarchical position, practical experience and expertise, and formal qualifications. They noted the broad layer of basic qualifications and skills produced in an elaborate and practically relevant vocational training system and emphasised the continuity of skills and qualifications from the factory floor to staff through the practice of FE on top of craft-type skills and qualifications: a system, therefore, which is not measure-driven but

well thought-out and accepted by industry and employees. In Britain the link between working practice and education and training was more tenuous with a greater separation between technical competence and hierarchical position and a higher degree of selectivity<sup>3</sup> in vocational training: a more fluid set of measures, not universally used or accepted by employers or employees. The present study will explore these differences further.

It is not the aim of this study to duplicate the research of the NIESR, which has looked at the schooling levels and qualification structures of the workforce in Britain and Germany, at training in specific occupations in Britain, France and Germany and at the influence of training on productivity levels, but to complement it.<sup>4</sup> The conclusions reached by the various studies (discussed below) have very much influenced my line of analysis in this study, acting as a starting point for further exploration or as confirmation of a finding.

### Qualifications

The Institute's original research in this area concentrated on a comparison of qualification levels of the economically-active labour force in Britain and Germany (Prais 1981,47-59). This study found that the British system of pure on-the-job training, with less emphasis on formal qualifications based on external examinations was no longer adequate in a world of more rapid technological progress and faster economic change. The German system, which provides a greater stock of 'transferable' skills and where formal training and practical and theoretical external examinations play predominating roles, was more suited to a rapidly changing world. This was thus the starting point of my study.

Following on from this, the Institute took a closer look at five of the more popular occupations: mechanical fitter, electrician, construction worker, office worker and retail employee in both countries (Prais and Wagner 1983,46-65). This study provided inspiration for my own research and was one of the reasons I decided to look more closely at the retail sector, where Prais and Wagner found the gap between Britain and Germany in terms of general training and qualifications to be much

higher than for the other four occupations. In general the study again pointed to the greater emphasis placed on practical tests carried out under examination conditions in Germany in contrast to Britain. This therefore raised the question of how vocational training is monitored, which is one of the criteria of measuring the success of the system which will be used in the present study.

### Productivity

The most recent set of NIESR studies used the comparative case study approach to look specifically at the effect vocational training can have on productivity in different manufacturing industries. Daly, Hitchins and Wagner (1985,48-61) and Steedman and Wagner (1987,84-95 and 1989,40-57) used matched factories in metal-working, furniture and clothing manufacture in Britain and Germany to cast light on how productivity is affected by differences in the type of machinery used and by the differences in the skills and qualifications of the workforce on the factory floor. Interviews with management and factory floor employees was undertaken in a large number of plants (22 to 45 depending on the industry). The authors found that the greater levels of productivity achieved by the German workforce in the metal-working, furniture and clothing manufacturing plants was not due to the lack of new machinery in the British plants, but due to the lower qualifications at all levels of the hierarchy. The lack of technical expertise and training amongst British workers, and particularly foremen, was the stumbling block together with the more frequent machinery breakdowns and poor maintenance procedures. These findings demonstrate the importance of training for a country's economic success.

One therefore needs to ask what the provision in place is trying to achieve in Britain and West Germany. The following policy statements for both countries set out the aims very clearly: to remain competitive with world leaders, to meet the skill shortages of the future and to ensure that well-balanced, responsible citizens, not just technically competent staff are available to carry out the jobs of the future. And finally, in the German case especially, to ensure comparability across the country, so that a baker in Hamburg is equally employable in Munich

and that the acquired skills can be verified in the form of a nationally accepted qualification, tested to approved standards. This aim has only very recently (mid-1980s) (de Ville 1986) been expressed in Britain.

### Training Culture

Depending on the emphasis put on each aim and the methods employed to achieve them a distinct training culture develops. In West Germany the vocation (Beruf) has become of overriding importance. This can only be achieved by undergoing a recognised apprenticeship with formalised examinations at the end leading to a nationally accredited qualification, which has universal validity. In Britain the qualities of the individual, measured in terms of personality and personal achievement rather than by examinations and paper qualifications determines the training culture. In fact, it is questionable whether one could speak of a training culture in Britain before the mid-1980s.

Until recently the type of training which existed in a country did not matter greatly, as long as the needs of the economy were being met. However, as the Western World moves increasingly towards a technologically determined manufacturing society, with highly sophisticated service sector consumer-orientated needs, the type of person employed takes on a greater importance. The advent of 1992 and the Single European Market brings the two cultures much closer together than previously and makes the transferability of qualifications a more urgent question. It will no longer be sufficient to be able to demonstrate that one can carry out a certain task, increasingly employers will require proof. Not only will qualifications have to be nationally recognised but increasingly internationally acceptable.

The next two chapters will analyse how the training provision in the two countries has developed to meet the skill demands of the future. The success of a "system" can, to a certain extent, be measured by how universally acceptable it has become to those involved in it. The monitoring procedures used e.g. national examinations or central coordinating bodies are the more formal measures of success. These criteria will be used in this study.

- <sup>1</sup> the unquestioned beliefs and values of a society.
- <sup>2</sup> NEDO define (vocational) education and training as "learning activities which contribute to successful economic performance"(1984,iv).
- <sup>3</sup> It was not considered to be the norm to receive vocational training, and training tended to be given to staff in higher positions rather than to the workforce in general.
- <sup>4</sup> The Institute's various studies since 1981 have used the case study approach extensively, originally employing more "desk research" and a comparison of examination papers. However, they did not interview individual trainees to gain their views on training, preferring to concentrate on managers and shop floor workers in a larger number of companies. The research was invariably carried out by at least two researchers, sometimes both based in Britain, but not always.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The German Vocational Training System

West Germany has a training system which is founded on very strong historical foundations and holds a pivotal place in West German society. In Chapter 1 it was demonstrated that the majority of German school leavers progress through this system, but that a marked shift as to when they do this has occurred. Compared to Britain's 17%, 55% of 16 year old Germans were receiving vocational training in 1970. By 1985 these proportions had changed: 30% for Britain and 26% for West Germany. This is because an increasing proportion of young West Germans are continuing their education at school before embarking on an apprenticeship: 57% in 1985 compared to 31% of British 16 year olds. It is thus not a case of less vocational training occurring in West Germany, but rather a shift in timing and level of advanced training.

In this chapter the adaptation of the vocational training system to the changing requirements of the labour market, the economy and the needs of young people will be discussed. The structure of vocational training has already been presented in great detail both in historical terms (Taylor 1981), as a factual description (CEDEFOP 1982; Münch 1976; Fredebeul 1981; BDA n.d.), as guidance for overseas visitors (BMBW 1987; BIBB 1984; Carl Duisburg Gesellschaft 1983), as a comparison with other European Community states (CEDEFOP 1982) and even as a result of study visits for British policy makers to use (Inter Nationes 1981; DIHT 1982; Russell 1983; Franklin 1985; CBI 1985) and finally it has been presented on British television programmes (Panorama 1987; Jobwatch 1986).

These studies have, however, left certain questions unanswered. Is a system, where the training regulation for sales assistants has not changed since 1968, able to train young people in this occupation in an industry which has been changing rapidly in the last twenty years? Is a system, where a new training regulation can only be brought in through consensus by all parties not in danger of adapting too slowly to the new technologically determined environment? Although West

Germany does not lack a system of nationally recognised qualifications for all occupations, are the contents of these regulations so tightly defined that the characteristics of the dual system, of being able to confront trainees with new technology in the workplace being eroded? The framework to answer these questions will be set in this chapter.

How various aspects compare to the British system, looking particularly at the structure of the system, notably the dual components of vocational and general education and the integration of on- and off-the-job training will be studied, concentrating on the value of the Beruf and the difference between vocational and general education. Finally, the main problems facing the system as a whole in the 1980s will be studied: the choice of training place, governed by structural factors, regional mobility and the fear of unemployment; the rise in the number of Abitur candidates and the adaptability of trainees to new technology. An understanding of these issues will clarify the problems in the retailing sector and will put the case studies into a general context.

### 2.1. Historical Overview

The German apprenticeship system has its roots in the Middle Ages involving primarily the craft sector, governed by the statutes of the guilds. By the 18th century the guilds had disbanded, their statutory powers dismantled, strongly influenced by the start of industrialisation.<sup>1</sup>

Not until the mid-19th century did the government attempt to achieve comprehensive legal regulation with the Prussian Trade and Industry Code (Preussische Gewerbeordnung) of 1845. This laid down that a person could only employ an apprentice on proof of his competence and membership of a guild. By the early 20th century apprenticeship training was restored to its previous position but under stricter guidelines. However, it was still the employer, whether in the craft sector or in industry, who controlled the content of in-company training.<sup>2</sup>

Until the first half of the 20th century the apprenticeship system was the monopoly of the craft and trade sector, although individual industrial sectors trained their own workers. A systematic nationally accepted apprenticeship in industry did not start until the 20th century and was not regularised by law until 1969 to "guarantee" competence across the country and across companies in a given trade to prevent abuse of apprentices.

During the period of National Socialism, although vocational training was considered important, demonstrated by the expansion of the Deutsches Institut für technische Arbeitsschulung (Dinta), the German Institute for Technical Work Training (Neumann 1942, 429-30) (originally created in 1925) into the German Institute for National Socialist Technical Work Training in 1933, it was subsequently used primarily to further the needs of the party:

"Die Menschen müssen schon in der Schule den Berufen zugesteuert werden, die Bedarf an Menschen haben." (speech by Göring 18.11.1938 to the Defence Council) <sup>3</sup>

The Dinta was soon subsumed under the Deutsche Arbeiterfront (DAF), the Labour Front as the Amt für Berufserziehung und Betriebsführung, where until 1934 it specialised in technical and political instruction for apprentices in companies (Mason 1975, 93). The right to examine trainees, however, remained the preserve of the chambers of industry and crafts.

With the shortage of skilled workers needed generally to make Germany competitive internationally and especially later for the war effort the National Socialist government tried to direct young people into metal manufacturing industries and the building sector. <sup>4</sup> The number of apprenticeship places on offer for school leavers of 1938/39 was double that of 1935/36 (Mason 1975, 141), but the number of school leavers was actually declining. Not all apprenticeship places were, therefore, being filled. At the end of the 1930s more than two thirds of all apprentices were trained in the craft sector with industry profiting from this through a cheap and steady supply of skilled workers. However, the gap between the knowledge acquired in the small craft sector companies and that needed by industry was becoming wider. Towards the end of 1938 Göring ordered a shortening of apprenticeship



training, but a reform of the whole training system was long overdue. This was not achieved until after the end of the Second World War.

From 1939 - 1945 the "Reichsinstitut für Berufsbildung in Handwerk und Gewerbe" drew up training regulations for almost 1,000 recognised skilled and semi-skilled training jobs. These stayed in force until 1969. The training of the workers was, however, the domain of the firm with no direct legal regulations from the state.

The present West German vocational training system is very much determined by this historical development. It can be divided into two sectors: the apprenticeship system and vocational education, but it is dominated by the so called "dual system", combining the traditional apprenticeship training in the place of work with compulsory attendance at a vocational training school. The two systems did originally develop independently, but by the end of the 19th century the majority of apprentices were attending industrial further education schools, creating the present dual system in all but name. Compulsory attendance at vocational training school (Berufsschule) for all under eighteen year olds not attending a general school was not introduced until 6 July 1938. The clash of competences - federal for the practical side, regional for the schools - is important to note here, as it represents a fundamental difference to the British system. By 1964 the German Commission for Education (1953-65) already referred to the "dual" training in firm and school in its report on vocational training and schooling.

## 2.2. The Dual System: the Last Twenty-Five Years

The discussions relating to vocational training were generally brought to the forefront when it looked as if the country was not going to remain competitive in world markets. Germany's rise from a devastated country at the end of World War Two to a leading economic power by the 1970s at first left little time for thinking about vocational training. The pre-war training system controlled by employers had not been destroyed and served Germany well in its rebuilding phase. Although the European Recovery programme helped West Germany with up-dated

machinery and cheap imports of raw material, thus making her an ideal contender as a supplier of manufactured goods at a time when the Western World needed them, it has been argued that this was not sufficient to create a successful economy:

"Of decisive importance are the attitude of the individual towards work and his skill in the exercise of his trade or profession."  
(Taylor 1981,122) <sup>5</sup>

It will be argued below that in fact the West German vocational training system is not so much a success because of its legalistic and structural framework but because of the long drawn-out thought processes which imbue the system. These are characterised by two major discussions: that of the trade specialist versus the all-round educated personality, with the inherent value of the Beruf and that of Bildung (education) versus Ausbildung (training) linked to Kultur (culture) versus Zivilisation (the Western World). The development of these will be discussed below before considering the four other areas which have determined the German training system: the control of the employers on vocational training and their influence in preventing far-reaching reform in preference to the economic well-being of the nation, the division of educational responsibility between the Länder and the state, the financing of the system and finally the belief in training for all youth in the face of the risk of youth unemployment. At each stage the criteria of measuring success for the situation in hand, monitoring procedures and universal acceptability will be considered.

#### 2.2.1. Trade Specialism or All-Round Educated Personality

According to the Basic Law (Art 12 GG) every German has the right to choose his/her occupation:

"Alle Deutsche haben das Recht Beruf, Arbeitsplatz und Ausbildungsstätte frei zu wählen." (Bundesminister für Arbeit und Sozialordnung 1987,109)

This concept of vocation or trade is not found in the same way in Britain. <sup>6</sup> Instead a more club-like atmosphere of the professions reigns.

The strong philosophical traditions of human labour theory (Hegel, Kerschensteiner and Spranger) ' very much characterise the attitudes of the West German people towards their Beruf (vocation). The craftsman and the high standards which he maintains are central to a system where badly produced work is seen with disdain and where the unskilled worker, with no trade to call his own is viewed as a failure. The deep felt belief that the trade describes the person is still very much in evidence in German society today, with young people holding the Abitur increasingly taking up a trade before extending their knowledge at university. With the pride in a job well done go the two characteristics of "Leistungswillen" and "Tüchtigkeit" (the will to achieve and to work hard) already identified by Erhard, Minister for Economic Affairs (1949-63) and Vice Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, as the key to the economic rise of Germany in 1952.

The experience of National Socialism had not shaken the West Germans in their belief in the value of the Beruf, but the very narrow training received as a result of modern industrial production methods and city life did worry educationalists. They believed that the lack of time to reflect on general political and economic matters during the training period of a specialist worker had contributed in no small measure to the success of National Socialism. The DIHT, Deutscher Industrie- und Handelstag, representing employers, however, still saw the object of vocational training as equipping the individual with skills, knowledge and an understanding of work processes and inculcating in him a positive attitude towards work, in order to reach the desired levels of achievement in production. The view that the centre of life was work was not to be seriously questioned in Germany until the late 1960s.

Fundamentally it is a question of attitude. Every young German wants to be at least a Facharbeiter. This can only be achieved by undertaking an apprenticeship. The acceptability of the system is therefore ensured. School leavers will on the whole accept a training place even if it is not in their desired occupation just to be able to achieve "skilled" status and the benefits attached to this i.e. higher pay, relative job security, higher recognition within society in general and in the local community:

"In einer Gesellschaft, in der die Berufssituation so ausschlaggebend geworden ist, ja oft die einzige Basis auch für das außerberufliche Leben und seinen geselligen Verkehr darstellt, ist der Mensch ohne Beruf oft in einer abscheulichen Sonderlage, die ihn gerade nicht nur als Beispiel oder Extrem des normalen Gegenwartsbürger oder Gegenwartsjugendlichen erscheinen läßt." (Flitner 1963,50)

The structure of West German industry and commerce has meant that the workers trained in their various occupations formed the backbone of the economy. This has obviously enhanced the status of the Facharbeiter.

"Die Berufsposition des metallgewerblichen Facharbeiters ist in unserer demokratischen Leistungsgesellschaft mit den Rollen des mündigen Arbeits-, Wirtschafts-, Staats- und Kulturbürgers verknüpft, da Berufe Träger spezifisch gesellschaftlicher Funktionen und Werte sind und der einzelne über die Berufsposition in soziale Systeme eintritt." (Pukas 1979,19)

However, recent developments in German industry seem to be working against the specialist craftsman: Naumann and Köhler (1985,27) argued that technical innovation, industrial automation and modern Taylorist methods of work organisation are increasingly destroying this occupational structure in Germany. Firms no longer need the traditionally trained specialist craftsman, as labour processes through automation have become simpler and can be carried out by unskilled workers, or workers are trained in stages, attaining and often remaining at semi-skilled status (Stufenausbildung) rather than reaching skilled status. The German training system, because it is qualification orientated can adapt over time to this changing environment. Furthermore, in German companies there is an advancement structure from Facharbeiter to Meister and from there into some level of management. New training regulations ensure that all companies move forward at roughly the same pace and that no trainee is disadvantaged along the way. This is in contrast to Britain, where the qualification achieved, often not being nationally recognised, plays less of a role and the personality of the individual determines his/her success in a given post.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the economy has less need for a specialist trade craftsman, but still requires an increasing number of skilled workers, able to be flexible and adapt to new situations, having not just technical skills but also social facilities to promote

group work and communicate with management about technical innovation and working conditions. Technological innovation and changes in the market place do influence both occupational choice and the actual content of training, but above all the belief among the population in the Beruf has kept the dual system functioning. It is, therefore, not so much a question of a well-oiled, well-designed system, which, nevertheless, does exist, but rather a subtle inculcation in the minds of the people, and the consensus based design which means all interest groups in industry and the state authorities support it in principle. This is in great contrast to the situation in Britain, where training is still not an accepted part of everyday life.

### 2.2.2. Bildung v Ausbildung

Linked to the philosophy of the Beruf was the long existing debate about Bildung and Ausbildung and the division of competence for them: competence for Bildung lay with the Länder and Ausbildung with the state.

The inherited view from the early 19th century (Wilhelm v. Humboldt's Lithuanian School Plan of 1809) of the superiority of Bildung, meaning education in language and literature based on classical humanism at grammar school or equivalent and the relegation of Ausbildung - training at the work-bench, to a position of secondary importance flared up again throughout the 20th century. The restricted type of Bürgerkunde (civics), limited to the individual trade, the craft sector and the home town and more specifically the lack of Menschenbildung (character and personality training) in the vocational training schools was first identified by the American Committee for Social Studies in Germany in 1949, emphasising the strict division between Bildung and Ausbildung. As a result the teaching of character and personality training as well as political education was introduced into the syllabus of the vocational training schools at this time, with the aim of educating and preparing the whole man to take his place in the community, earn his living and make a contribution to the welfare and prosperity of the nation. This would, it was hoped, prevent the serious deficiencies of German vocational education, which had produced

highly-skilled technicians but not men of independent thought and well-formed character.

At the end of the 1950s the clear distinction between general and vocational education, i.e. between Kultur - history, literature, language and possibly mathematics, and Zivilisation - the industrial society, economics, technology and the modern world of work (Taylor 1981,169) continued to be made with no mention being made of vocational education in the "Rahmenplan zur Umgestaltung und Vereinheitlichung des allgemeinbildenden öffentlichen Schulwesens" (Framework for the transformation and unification of the public school system) of February 1959.

From the early 1960s moves to narrow and finally abolish the gap between Bildung and Ausbildung were being made. In 1962 at the CDU/CSU cultural conference in Augsburg the indivisibility of Bildung and Ausbildung was stressed, as well as the fact that the Wirtschaft (the industrial, craft and commercial sectors) was an educational sphere and that trade training and work were also educative processes. This opinion was suddenly voiced, due mainly to the CDU/CSU's need of the Wirtschaft for electoral success and at a time when West Germany depended on the Wirtschaft for economic survival. At the same time the SPD started its campaign, claiming that trade training was a public task involving state, employers and employees, supporting the unions in their demands for a vocational training law, clearly reducing the Wirtschaft's role in the preparation of young people for work. Training provision was, therefore, discussed at the highest level, involving political parties of all persuasions as well as the employers. Consensus through discussion, even if politically motivated initially, is the standard modus operandi in Germany.

Although the discussion of the 1970s relating to the value of Bildung v Ausbildung (Lempert & Franzke 1976; Baethge 1979) was quashed under the increasing pressure of finding sufficient training places in industry, it is still a topic of concern among training specialists in West Germany (Gaiser and Kanzleiter 1980; Auer v. 1984; Grieger 1985; ZBW January 1985). In recent years it has reached a more practical level: how can the Berufsschule and the company work better together to

provide society with both a skilled worker and a well-rounded personality (Fehrenbach 1983). This is one area British policy makers were particularly interested in when studying the German system as it was one of the areas which seemed to present a problem in the conceptulisation of the YTS (Collins et al 1976; Russell 1983).

It is my belief that because companies and schools have different aims when training young people for a place in our economic and social environment that the content of what is taught in either will never in practice be co-ordinated except under particular circumstances. <sup>e</sup> West Germany has taken the step to at least determine that young people in vocational training in a work situation have to extend their theoretical knowledge at school as well as enlarging their horizons. Although a trainee shop assistant or car mechanic may not be interested in learning about other religions or racial prejudice, preferring to concentrate on the composition of various materials, the system makes them attend classes covering the above topics. Even if the young person is not at first interested, depending on the way the material is taught, it will at least encourage that person to reflect, even subconsciously, about the various environmental and social topics covered in the German, Religious Education or General Studies class once a week. Furthermore, the students' written and oral skills will be improved through participation in the class and written assignments as well as their mathematical ability, applied to their specific occupation. At a recent UNESCO conference these qualities were seen as those needed for the future:

"Grundlage muß eine solide Allgemeinbildung einschließlich einer wissenschaftlichen Grundbildung und Mathematik sein." (Krekeler 1988,9)

As all trainees have to sit and pass written and oral examinations to obtain their training qualification, a certain amount of motivation to attend the BS and do well in class is given.

The question then arises of how much political and/or social education trainees need to make them "mündige Bürger" (responsible adults). Young people in Britain seem to get no political education, this being excluded from the YTS curriculum, whereas German educationalists feel

that young people do not get enough, when they spend 20-40% of their time at the BS studying these subjects. This problem will be studied again in more detail when looking at the syllabuses for retail trainees in both countries. That young people should be both educated and vocationally trained is, however, accepted by the social partners, political parties and the population at large. This enables the dual system to function successfully. Nevertheless, the powerful role of employers in training, their organisation and administration of the system and the risk of restrictive training hindering mobility and flexibility among the workforce and narrow specialisation at the expense of educating the whole person was a matter of concern.

### 2.2.3. Control by Employers

The powerful position of employers in the West German economy made progress towards a vocational training law very slow during the 1960s. Their argument that any encroachment on their traditional rights to control in-plant training on the grounds that they bore the final responsibility for the success of the economy and that their capital was at risk countered that of the unions. They had since 1919 been demanding a law to increase state control of work preparation, to ensure a uniformly high standard of training and to grant the unions co-determination rights in the control and administration of the system.

The mid-1960s were characterised by the continued battle between the unions and employers regarding control and administration of the vocational training system. Both the SPD and the CDU supported by the FDP put forward draft laws in the late summer of 1966. But not until June 1969 was a compromise law finally passed by the Bundestag, based partly on the original 1959 DGB proposals and the recommendations of the Bildungskommission of the Deutscher Bildungsrat "Zur Verbesserung der Lehrlingsausbildung" in 1969.

"The aim of the law was to provide a legal framework and an institutional basis for the regulation of vocational training by the interested parties, to improve the educational opportunities of the individual and to provide for the needs of the economy and society at large for skilled, responsible, efficient and adaptable tradesmen. This was to be accomplished by facilitating the expansion and adaptability of the dual system of training.



Excluded from the provisions of the law were the vocational school system, the seafaring, medical, dental and nursing trades and some areas of public service. For the sake of legislative coherence part of the regulations on craft training were left in the Handicraft Regulation Act of 1953 but the wording of this was adapted to correspond to that of the present legislation.... Four main aspects of vocational training were covered by the law: the initial training relationship of apprentices; the organisation of training at the place of work; the federal, Länder and local committees to control and administer training; and the establishment of a federal vocational training research institute." (Taylor 1981,209-10)

This "conflict" of control of vocational training by the employers is still valid today, because in reality not very much has changed. Without the cooperation of the companies no training can take place. The employers know this and, therefore, have the upper hand. However, in contrast to Britain they see training as being to their long-term advantage.

Pukas (1979,19) exemplified the educationalists' position and he is not alone in his belief (Lempert & Franzke 1979; Fehrenbach 1984). He argued that the dominance of the employers in the vocational training system prevents young people from developing their personality in an emancipatory process of vocational socialisation and from obtaining the extra education needed to meet the constant occupational changes resulting from continuing industrialisation.

In certain situations one is forced to agree that the training given to young people is too narrow and that the pressures of the production process prevent a suitable learning environment at a formative stage in young people's lives. The Meister in a small company is sometimes not fully qualified to undertake the role of trainer (Pukas 1979), partly because of time and inadequate training and partly because he is the boss. Mainly "training" is carried out by the journeyman who is frequently not interested in training. In industry trainers are sometimes not even qualified in the occupation for which they are training young people.

Although the Vocational Training Act increased the state's control of vocational training by establishing training schedules issued by the Federal Government (and not the chambers as before) and setting out the

regulations covering the obligations of both the apprentice and the training employer, the dual system as such was confirmed by parliament. Its faith in the Wirtschaft's ability to successfully control vocational training for the benefit of the nation was confirmed by locating the vocational training committee which was to control and administer training at the place of work in the employer organisation, the chamber of trade and industry. Parity of representation was guaranteed but employers' representatives had the final say if decisions taken by the committees required additional finance (sections 56-59 of the Act). A uniform method of monitoring training was thus put into place.

Not all the criticisms of the vocational training system voiced in 1964 were answered by the 1969 Act. Neither co-determination nor effective control of the craft sector had not been achieved, and the training in vocational training schools had been excluded from the Act. The economic health of the nation and the control of this by the employers had prevented far-reaching reforms of the system. The impetus for the Act had been achieved through the belief in the causal relationship between education and training and national prosperity, and this was to continue dominating the discussions of the 1970s, combined with the need for equality of opportunity for reasons of social justice. The latter were, however, largely abandoned in the face of economic recession, rising unemployment and a shortage of training places.

#### 2.2.4. The Division of Educational Responsibility

With the advent of the Federal Republic's first social-liberal coalition government, not only did economic policies change but so did educational ones. The failure of the education and training system to meet the requirements of equality of opportunity as laid down in the Basic Law now came under considerable criticism. The Federal Government assumed some of the responsibility for education previously enjoyed by the Länder through an amendment of the constitution. This was to aid the effective co-ordination of the theoretical instruction given by the vocational training school and the content of the in-plant training schedules in the companies as well as reducing regional discrepancies through the various educational plans adopted by the

Länder. It was also intended to finally close the gap between general and vocational education, making it possible for young people to move between the two systems (cf 2.3).

While equal opportunity and efficiency was being debated for the vocational education system (cf Strukturplan 1970; Bildungsgesamtplan 1974) increased public control over the examination system, the modernisation of trade profiles, instructor standards and the suitability of training establishments, the promotion of inter-firm workshop construction and the introduction of the Berufsgrundschuljahr (BGJ), the basic trade training year was aimed for in in-plant training as well as further training facilities and the expansion of vocational training research. <sup>9</sup>

The original concept of the BGJ of providing basic training relevant to one of thirteen occupational fields thus leaving young people longer to decide which career to follow - because school leavers of 15 or 16 often do not know what they want to be (Boßmann 1982,12; Pukas 1979,27; Baethge 1979,2) and are influenced largely by family, friends and the local environment (Hübner-Funk et al 1983,131-174) - was only grudgingly accepted by some employers. Although formal recognition of the training time towards an apprenticeship (Anrechnungsverordnung) was laid down in the Berufsbildungsgesetz (§29 para.1) and the Handwerksordnung (§27a para.1) employers often refused to recognise the more general training transmitted during the scheme. It was hoped that the BGJ would make the young person more flexible and mobile later on and it would also be cheaper and easier to give further training or retrain such a young person. If this training was partly carried out in the inter-firm workshops more young people could be given the chance of a training place, preventing youth unemployment and its consequences. In the more sheltered environment of a workshop, it would also be possible to give special attention to both physically and mentally handicapped young people, furthering the official policy of providing training for all based on the concepts of social justice and equal opportunity.

Instead employers opted for training by stages (Stufenausbildung), which they argued increased training capacity, training being shorter,

and it enabled many young people who were not capable of attaining skilled status to receive systematic training. The trade unions, however, argued that training by steps prevented many young people from getting qualified training. As explained above (cf 2.2.1.) this type of training diminishes the value of the Beruf unless permeability from one step to the next is created for all. This concept will be looked at specifically for the two year training of shop assistants, where only a small proportion continue on to become Einzelhandelskaufmann or -frau.

The modernisation of trade profiles was to move forward more slowly, although the number of recognised training occupations was reduced from 606 in 1970 to 465 in 1975 (Berufsbildungsbericht 1988,72). Through the establishment of the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildungsforschung (BBF), the federal institute for vocational training research, in 1970 an institution was created whose main tasks were to conduct research and to advise the government on all areas of vocational training, to collect statistics and cooperate in the drafting of training schedules that were adapted to the current economic, social and technical conditions. <sup>10</sup> Another method for monitoring the system at national level and a way of creating uniformity was, therefore, devised. The joint final minutes of the meeting between the Federal Government and the cultural ministers of the Länder of 30 May 1972 (Benner 1982,79-80) established a procedure for the co-ordination of the content of the training schedules (Ausbildungsordnung) used in the companies and the syllabus for the vocational training schools (Rahmenlehrplan) of the Länder (Appendix 4). This democratic consultative process, (involving five different sets of meetings) adopted on 8 August 1974, is somewhat cumbersome and slow, but it leads to an acceptance of the system by all sides, as everyone has been given the opportunity to express an opinion. Change is, therefore, brought about in small incremental steps, upsetting the existing structure as little as possible.

By 1980 120 new training occupations had been approved, replacing 170 old ones. However, only 32 of the 90 training regulations had been harmonized with the syllabuses of the vocational training schools (Berufsbildungsbericht 1980,51). Even by 1988 175 old training regulations had still not been checked and revised. Some of these

would date back to the 1930s. It is the stated aim of the present Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB), the Federal Institute of Vocational Training, to have completed the modernisation of 95% of all recognised training occupations by 1990, leaving approximately 80 with a very small number of participants (Berufsbildungsbericht 1988,73).

The method of changing the training regulation exemplifies the corporate policy-making process in West Germany (Katzenstein 1987,313) and the change by incremental steps. The distinctive parapublic institutions, e.g. BIBB, of West Germany's semisovereign state favour incremental policy-making and deliberate experimentation over programmes for large-scale change. In addition:

"The West German variant of semisovereignty is distinguished by the strong effect that legal norms have on the formulation and implementation of policy and possibly on public attitudes more generally. ... In West Germany law is the embodiment of the state. Both shape and reflect political reality." (Katzenstein 1987,382)

Consensus is arrived at in vocational training policy as in other policy areas on the basis of the lowest common denominator. At each stage a legal provision is made to which everyone adheres, because they know that it has been arrived at after much thought and consultation. This process will be looked at specifically in Chapter 4 for the new sales assistant training regulation.

#### 2.2.5. Training for All versus Youth Unemployment

The fundamental aims of unifying vocational and general education and strengthening public control of vocational training in both quality and quantity terms were finally shelved by the SPD in the mid-1970s, with the government's failure of renewing the Vocational Training Act of 1969, based on the Markierungspunkte of the Federal Minister for Education and Science, v. Dohnanyi. It was again the strength of the employers which prevented reform. At a time when the number of apprenticeship places was declining, as a result of the provisions of the 1969 Act and the further requirement of 1972 to accept the BGJ as equivalent to the first year of an apprenticeship, the government gave way in the face of a growing school leaver population and rising youth unemployment.

"...Die Verringerung der Zahl der Ausbildungsplätze habe viele Ursachen, so die wirklichkeitsfremden Regelungen und unnötigen Erschwerungen, die das Berufsbildungsgesetz von 1969 gebracht habe, sowie die politische Agitation gegen die betriebliche Ausbildung." (FAZ, 27 March 1974)

The government also felt, somewhat belatedly, that radical reform of the vocational training system might adversely affect the efficiency of the West German economy:

"Die Verdrossenheit, die in den Ausbildungsbetrieben herrsche, erfülle auch die Wirtschaft mit Sorge. Die Bundesrepublik sei auf qualifizierten Nachwuchs angewiesen, um international konkurrenzfähig zu bleiben.... Die Neufassung des Berufsbildungsgesetzes sollte zurückgestellt werden. Alle notwendigen Reformen könnten auf der Grundlage des geltenden Rechts verwirklicht werden." (FAZ, 27 March 1974)

As the recession of the early 1970s, due to the increase in oil prices in 1973 was beginning to hit, it was not wise to put the economy at further risk. The fear of social instability as a result of massive unemployment made even the socialists imbued with ideas of social justice heed the warnings of the Wirtschaft, as exemplified in the report in the Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung above of a conference of the representatives of the major employers' federations.

Social justice was no longer the determining factor for the reform of vocational training. Instead the need to ensure a sufficient number of training places for the majority of school leavers took over.

#### 2.2.6. Financing Vocational Training

The Edding-Kommission, which had been asked to report on the costing and financing of vocational training in 1974, stated that in industry, commerce and the craft sector only an average of 16% of all firms provided apprenticeship places. More recent surveys (which, however, do not apply to all sectors of the economy nor to the whole of the Federal Republic) put the proportion at nearer 50% (Berufsbildungsbericht 1980, 31 and 1987, 47). The commission recommended a fairer system of financing apprenticeship training i.e. the creation of a central fund made up from contributions, according to the pay roll, of all public and private firms who employed trained workers (Müller-Steineck & Wiederhold-Fritz 1980, 3). This financing

system was to pay the training costs of all firms whose training had been accredited. The system had far too long been based on the voluntary co-operation of the employers and although in principle this method would encourage more companies to train, whether the quality of training would improve was debatable. The Wirtschaft in West Germany in 1975 reacted in similar terms to British industry, rejecting state intervention in the financing of "its" system and even using the British example as an argument of employers preferring to pay the levy rather than engage apprentices.

One more attempt to arrive at a compromise was made in 1976. The draft proposal of 16 April 1976 to amend the 1969 Vocational Training Act was to:

- a) remedy deficiencies in the content of the 1969 law;
- b) lay down an organisational form for vocational training which combines public responsibility with co-determination rights for those involved in training;
- c) introduce financing regulations oriented to requirement criteria;
- d) facilitate prescient and coordinated planning of vocational training so that economic and technical changes shall not adversely affect the claims of young people to vocational training (BMBW 1975,8).

The bill was, however, rejected by the Bundesrat where the CDU/CSU was in the majority, but it was promptly replaced by a bill extending the 1969 Act and not requiring the agreement of the Bundesrat. This was the Ausbildungsförderungsgesetz, (Training Place Promotion Act) which strengthened the legal basis of vocational training mainly through its financial clause (BGBl.I S.3180), but also through regulating the planning and statistics of vocational training and the extended role of the BIBB. Again a method of monitoring the provision was established at the same time as changes to the system were being made. This, as will be seen in the next chapter, is in stark contrast to Britain.

The financial clause in the original bill, which had failed, was, therefore, amended. The FDP had persuaded the SPD to change the proposal for the financing of vocational training in the light of the

unstable world economy, Germany's internal investment climate and the need of firms to improve their capability to adapt to technological change. Only if in any one year the supply of apprenticeships failed to exceed demand by 12.5% would a levy of not more than 0.25% of the wage bill of all public and private enterprises with a wage bill of more than DM 400,000 be imposed (Müller-Steineck & Wiederhold-Fritz 1980,4 and CEDEFOP 1980,6-7).

Although the Wirtschaft was not convinced that this financial regulation would increase the number of apprentices it, nevertheless, asked employers to increase the number of places on offer. According to the first Berufsbildungsbericht of 1977 30,000 more apprenticeship contracts were concluded in 1976 than in 1975, which with demand expected to be approximately 554,000 in 1977 would together with additional measures from the Wirtschaft and the public authorities leave a 12.5% margin. <sup>11</sup> In fact, through to 1980 when the Ausbildungsförderungsgesetz was declared unconstitutional <sup>12</sup> by the Bundesverfassungsgericht (the federal constitutional court) <sup>13</sup>, the number of apprenticeship places on offer increased dramatically, reaching 694,600 places for 667,300 applicants in 1980. Since then, except for 1981, when a slight oversupply of places was recorded there have not been enough places to meet demand until 1987, by which time the number of 16 year olds had declined to the 1970 level. It is, therefore, possible to argue that the threat of financial penalties, although never imposed had the desired effect. It has, however, also been argued, especially by the trade unions (Görs 1981,322) that the statistics hide the real state of affairs, stating that in 1980 there were actually more than 230,000 young people without a training contract, with 115,000 coming from the 15-16 age group. <sup>14</sup> Furthermore, provisions are inadequate if they are related to preferred (i.e. first choice) training.

German employers had again shown that they would control and administer the system of vocational training. The Bundesverfassungsgericht actually gave them that responsibility:

"In dem in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland bestehenden dualen Berufsausbildungssystem mit den Lernorten Schule und Betrieb (Behörde) liegt die spezifische Verantwortung für ein ausreichendes Angebot an betrieblichen Ausbildungsplätzen der Natur



der Sache nach bei den Arbeitgebern, denn nur sie verfügen - zumal in einer insoweit durch Art. 2 Abs. 1 und Art. 12 GG geprägten Rechtsordnung - typischerweise über die Möglichkeit, Ausbildungsplätze zu schaffen und anzubieten." (Benner 1981,21)

It is the responsibility of German employers to supply a sufficient number of training places, as only they have the possibility of creating and offering training places. This is an important contrast with the British system, where no such legal provision exists. Training provision is very much left to the free functioning of the market place, with companies, FE colleges and private training providers competing against each other.

Since 1976 the BIBB, amalgamating the previous Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildungsforschung and the Bundesausschuss für Berufsbildung had taken a more directive role on behalf of the government in planning vocational training through research, the gathering of statistics and actively participating in the establishment of new training regulations as well as the publication of the annual Berufsbildungsbericht, which contains suggestions for improvements in the future (BWP 1/81,1). However, the central and vital role of the employers had not been questioned again. <sup>15</sup> This is in large part due to the change in government in 1983 to the CDU/CSU, the party who had traditionally supported the Wirtschaft and especially the craft sector. In recent years the government has praised the efforts of the Wirtschaft for its further increase in the number of training places in the face of rising demand.

### 2.3. The Vocational Training Schools: the Last Twenty-Five Years

Vocational education has almost as long a history as apprenticeship training in West Germany in contrast with Britain, where vocational education is a more recent development. The origins of the Berufsschule, the vocational training school, stem from the religious and industrial Sunday Schools of the 16th and the 17th centuries; the industrial Sunday Schools providing instruction in arithmetic, drawing, mechanics and general technology and the religious Sunday Schools concentrating on the Christian ethic. During the 19th century Fortbildungsschulen, general and vocational further education schools,

were formed as immediate predecessors to the present-day Berufsschule, with attendance no longer being on a Sunday but, as a rule, once a week in the morning or afternoon of a working day.

Fachschulen (specialised subject schools) were founded in the 18th century and various forms of Berufsfachschulen (special professional schools) with various titles also existed at that time. They received their present description as a result of a decree from the Minister for Education on 29 October 1937, differentiating between Berufsschulen, Berufsfachschulen and Fachschulen. Berufsaufbauschulen were not founded until after the Second World War. The Fachoberschule did not appear until 1969 with the conversion of Höhere Technische Schulen to Fachhochschulen.

#### 2.3.1. Berufsschule (BS)

By the 1920s the term "Berufsschule" for vocationally-structured further education schools had become generally accepted. Contrary to Britain, the compulsory attendance at these schools for apprentices was already established in 1837 in Saxony and in 1869 for the North German States. The general compulsory attendance at a BS was not brought in until the passing of the Reichsschulpflichtgesetz, the Reich Compulsory Education Act of 6 July 1938 and reiterated through the Basic Law of 8 May 1949 the Länders' competence to regulate compulsory education and FE. Until 1942 companies used to have to pay to send their apprentices to the BS, whereas today it is free for companies and trainees, the cost being borne by the Land and the community through tax revenue (Münch 1976, 24 & 103).

Today Berufsschulen are compulsory state-funded schools for young people, who after the completion of the first secondary level (Sekundarstufe I) i.e. Hauptschule, Realschule or Gesamtschule, are engaged as trainees or who have entered employment as unskilled workers. Compulsory attendance at the BS is also applicable to unemployed young people in contrast with Britain, i.e. it is compulsory for all young people not in full-time education. As a rule it lasts for three years on a part-time basis but in any case until the end of the apprenticeship. Instruction at the BS is part-time, occurring on

one or more days per week or in the form of block instruction, in theory related closely to the training in firms, including group training workshops. <sup>16</sup> In practice this is not so straightforward, as the BS is regionally administered.

An average of 62% of all 16-18 year olds attended the BS between 1960 and 1986, with just under 70% doing so in 1986 (Table 2.1). The remaining young people would either be in general education or full-time vocational education, with the latter representing a small proportion. The BS is therefore the most important vocational school in West Germany and has no parallel in Britain, where compulsory day-release for all under 18 year olds not still in general education does not exist. The BS therefore very much represents the other pillar of the dual system, although especially the trade unions and the teachers' federations would state that it is very much a junior partner:

"Der Betrieb spielt im "dualen System" zwar die Hauptrolle, und die Berufsschule erfüllt lediglich, wie es häufig heißt, eine "berufsbegleitende Funktion". Insofern ist der Ausdruck "duales System", der auf ein Gleichgewicht hindeutet, irreführend."  
(Lempert & Franzke 1976,41)

However, it should not be seen in that way:

"Duale Berufsausbildung kann nur bedeuten, daß Berufsschule und Ausbildungsbetrieb gleichberechtigte Ausbildungsorte sind, sie sich bei der Erfüllung der Aufgaben der beruflichen Bildung gegenseitig ergänzen." (Benetreu & Obenauer 1983,249)

The trade unions have continued to argue for the equal status of the training company and the BS, and in view of this they have pressed for an increase in the number of hours of compulsory attendance at the BS to 12 per week. They argue that any less relegates the BS to an examination preparation centre. Young people have to have time to not only learn the material but also absorb and practise it in light of their daily work and the requirements of the examinations.

Although the tasks of the BS are to impart general and technical learning contents with special regard to the requirements of vocational training and to contribute to the obtaining of vocational qualifications, it should also enable a young person to acquire humane, social and political competency (Bazak et al 1983,244). This requires

the teaching of the German language, politics, sport and religious education. Which combination of these more general subjects is taught varies from Land to Land and occupation to occupation.<sup>17</sup> In the case studies I will look at how relevant and useful trainees in retailing actually find these subjects for their future life.

Particularly in larger towns special classes for apprentices in a particular occupation are organised and sometimes special BS exist for a specific occupational field, where the technical content of the curriculum can be geared to the pupil groups according to subject area and sometimes also according to previous qualification levels. This ideal set-up is not nearly as common in rural areas where apprentices are frequently in mixed classes with young workers and young unemployed people. Among the latter the absenteeism rate is high, often reaching 50% (CEDEFOP 1980,15). On the whole apprentices in large towns, employed by a large company and attending a specialised BS have better chances of doing well in the examinations conferring skilled status. Apprenticeships in certain companies are thus more likely to be oversubscribed but conversely also require higher entry requirements as the employer can be more selective. This in turn means the pupil will have a higher school leaving qualification and be more motivated to do well.

There have been more and more moves to remove young workers and the unemployed from apprenticeship BS classes and to organise special programmes for them in line with trying to increase compulsory attendance at school until the age of 16 (tenth school year). Each Land has organised a different format.<sup>18</sup>

The BS thus represents the junior, but, nevertheless, essential partner of the dual system - very much like the role of the FDP as a coalition partner. It further strengthens the system by creating a balance between providers.

Just as providers of FE in Britain offer different courses for different types of pupils, but are generally based within one institution, so it is the case in West Germany. The location of the different schools can be the same, but the intention and provision very

different. There are basically two kinds of schools, those which primarily impart vocational qualifications (Berufsfachschule and Fachschule) and those which confer qualifying entrance certificates for ultimately higher education (Berufsaufbauschule and Fachoberschule). The Decision of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Culture of 8 December 1975 regarding the 'Designations of Vocational Schools' (Münch 1982,308-9) determined the role of each type of school in general terms for all eleven Länder. Variations in each Land are of course still possible.

### 2.3.2. Berufsfachschule (BFS)

Berufsfachschulen are the most common form of full-time vocational schools in West Germany. In 1986 322,800 pupils were registered, a peak of 361,100 having been reached in 1983 (Table 2.2). However, they can in no way be seen as a competitor of the dual system, which trained 1,710,300 young people aged 16-18 in 1983 and 1,796,300 in 1986 (Grund- und Strukturdaten 1987/88,58). They are schools providing courses lasting at least one year with no vocational prerequisites demanded of entrants. Their aim is to enable pupils to acquire a qualifying certificate in a recognised skilled occupation, or part qualifications in one or more occupations, or a vocational qualification which can only be obtained at school. As each of these aims is quite distinct from the other, a different type of BFS has developed for each. Those BFS leading to a qualifying certificate in a recognised skilled occupation or those where the qualification can only be obtained by attending the school generally last three years and are relatively rare. Most BFS are those whose attendance is recognised as on the whole the first year of a training course in the dual system.<sup>19</sup> Although many subject areas are represented in these schools a large proportion are either of the administrative-clerical or home economics-social care variety. Two thirds of the pupils are, not surprisingly, female.

It has been recognised that these schools act as an intermediate station for the majority of pupils, with 64% of those leaving in October 1979 going straight into an apprenticeship (BWP February 1983,1/5). There has been a steady increase in numbers since 1977,

which the BIBB definitely puts down to the declining number of places available in the dual system. Numbers have declined more recently i.e. since 1983, which is probably explained by the increased number of apprenticeship places on offer, although only 18% of those questioned in 1979 had originally wanted to go straight into an apprenticeship. Due to the number of places at a BFS not being determined by the Wirtschaft, these schools provide a suitable alternative to training places in the dual system for certain occupations. Courses in the administrative-clerical area would be very similar to secretarial courses at FE colleges, the difference being that the majority of German students would then continue their training for a further two years in the dual system, whereas British students would embark straight on the job market.

#### 2.3.3. Fachschule (FS)

Fachschulen represent the second most important type of vocational training school in numerical terms (181,400 students in 1979; 201,800 in 1986). These schools cannot be entered by minimum-age school leavers, as the normal prerequisite is the completion of a course of vocational training or corresponding practical experience in the relevant field. They normally last one year full-time and correspondingly longer part-time. (There is a steady move towards part-time attendance: 3% in 1975, 6% in 1980 and 10% in 1986.) They are intended for those young people who wish to improve their specialised skill training with the aim of becoming a technician or master craftsman. About half the students attend FS des Gesundheitswesens (Public Health FS). All FS are gaining in popularity with the demand for higher qualifications from employers and technological developments being the determining factors.

#### 2.3.4. Berufsaufbauschulen (BAS)

The Berufsaufbauschule is the smallest of the vocational training schools in West Germany with only 8,200 students attending in 1986, having declined rapidly from 53,000 in 1965 (Table 2.2). The BAS is normally attended part-time at the same time as the BS or on completion of the BS full-time for one year. It provides general and specialised

theoretical instruction which extends beyond the objectives of the BS, and the course culminates in the Fachschulreife, equivalent to the MR gained at the Realschule. The BAS were originally intended for young people, who not having followed the traditional grammar school path to higher education, could hereby gain admittance to a Höhere Technische Schule, higher technical school, now the Fachhochschule and then a university via vocational education.

The decline in students is mainly due to the fact that more and more young people now stay longer in general education, where they obtain the MR or Abitur (MR: 117,200 in 1960 compared to 393,800 in 1986; Abitur: 56,700 in 1960 compared to 291,400 in 1986) before entering the dual system. Finally, although originally part-time study was the normal route (78% in 1965) by the mid-1970s only half and by the beginning of the 1980s only a quarter of students chose this mode of study (49% in 1975; 26% in 1980; 17% in 1986). This was because attendance for two evenings a week and on Saturdays proved too much for many young people, who had not had a great love for school in the first place. In Berlin for example the BAS has been abolished and integrated into other types of vocational schools, leaving the young people the option of obtaining additional general qualifications or not.<sup>20</sup>

#### 2.3.5. Fachoberschule (FOS)

The Fachoberschule cannot be entered directly by minimum-age school leavers, as their attendance gives access to the Fachhochschule (FHS) and ultimately to university. They were created as a result of the Hamburg Agreement<sup>21</sup> of 1964, later ratified on 6 February 1969 by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Culture. A prerequisite to entry is the MR or the qualification from the BAS. In two years, the first class, covering mainly practical training (often via practical work experience on four days per week) and theoretical specialised skill knowledge and the second class covering mainly general knowledge, the Fachhochschulreife can be obtained, entitling the student after four successful Semesters at the FHS to transfer to a university.

Although very actively promoting the second educational path and showing a steady increase in student numbers to 1983 (86,500 compared

to 50,300 in 1970), criticisms are leveled at the schools. The problem of finding suitable work experience and then co-ordinating it with school-based training and the formers' applicability to further study in this more or less non-structured form causes pedagogical problems in the second year when students with a great variety of backgrounds and interests come together. The other problem is that failing the examinations leaves the young person with no valid qualification for the labour market. Nevertheless, the schools in their short time of existence have become a recognised and integral part of the vocational education system.

The vocational education sector in West Germany does not play, proportionally-speaking, nearly as large a role in vocational training as the FE sector does in Britain (26% in 1980 and 27% in 1984 in West Germany compared to 71% in 1980 and 77% in 1984 in Britain).<sup>22</sup> The main activity of the German vocational school sector remains the BS with 1,858,300 pupils in 1984 compared to 368,000 trainees being released for day-release from their employers in Britain in that year. Although training in the dual system is considered as the first choice of most young people who enter vocational training, the vocational education sector offers viable alternatives and structured paths of further advancement after the completion of an apprenticeship. The system, although regionally determined, has been agreed in broad outline nationally. The provision can, therefore, be adapted to local demands, but at the same time guarantees transferability from one Land to the next in a given profession.

The vocational education sector in West Germany is very much complementary to the dual system and does not act as a competitor for the same pool of young people. Each type of college fulfils a particular function. The provision is, therefore, not measure-driven but institutionally structured. The function of the colleges is able to evolve as circumstances change. This is in contrast with the British FE sector as will be seen in the next chapter.



#### 2.4. Current Problems Facing the West German Vocational Training System

It has been demonstrated that the German vocational training system is complex, legally highly defined and fundamentally well supported by political parties of all persuasions, the unions, employers and the general public. However, whether it is really well-planned in historical terms and unified in the present day is debatable and Münch (1976,31) would argue that in fact the dual system came about by chance. The Berufsschulpflichtgesetz of 1938 introduced compulsory attendance at vocational training school and after the disaster of National Socialism, employers saw the need for a full rounded personality in place of the unquestioning technicians which were being trained before the Second World War.

With the divorce between the Länder and the state in respect of jurisdiction over the dual system, it can hardly be called unified. None of the state legislation (the 1969, 1976 or 1981 Acts) mention the vocational training schools and trainees can still become skilled workers without being tested in politics, German language or religion. It could be argued that young people do not need to be examined in these subjects as they do not relate to their competence in the work place, but under the promotion of the responsible citizen verifying knowledge in these subjects is important in a democratic society. Extra tuition is required in most firms to pass the trade examinations because the BS covers its own Rahmenlehrplan, which is not geared specifically to the examination set by the relevant chamber (craft or trade and industry). The major criticism of the system, as in Britain, is the continued lack of integration between the vocational school syllabus and the chambers' syllabuses. Bodies at the highest level have been established to solve this dilemma (cf 2.1.5.) but there is evidence that the problem has not been solved (Collins et al 1976,8).

Below further problems which have resulted partly due to the changing nature of the requirements of the labour market and those determined by economic and political views and the complex structure of the system will be discussed. The problems inherent in the system itself will be

concentrated upon here, as these will be studied more closely by looking at retailing in particular, and the case studies will provide an explanation of how the global structural problems affect the individual company and trainee.

The following issues will be discussed in the German context:

- a) choice of training place
  - i) structural factors
  - ii) regional mobility
  - iii) fear of unemployment
- b) the rise in Abitur candidates
- c) adaptability of trainees to changes in new technology

This is by no means an exhaustive list. Other topics which deserve attention are the specific problems faced by young women, young foreigners, young people with learning difficulties and the handicapped. For all these groups the state has provided special schemes e.g. Mädchen in gewerblich-technischen Berufen, MSBE for young foreigners, Lehrgänge nach dem Arbeitsförderungsgesetz for handicapped young people.<sup>23</sup> Most of these schemes have been introduced to combat youth unemployment and in a country such as West Germany, where a comprehensive standard range of training and employment opportunities exist, such special schemes tend to aggravate the marginal position of these young people.

The areas of discussion outlined above are, however, of relevance both to the individual trainee and to companies. They demonstrate the complexity of the German vocational training system and they are particularly relevant to retailing. The topics referred to above will be discussed in a general context to then be further pursued in Chapter 4 and in the case studies where relevant.

#### 2.4.1. Choice of Training Places

##### 2.4.1.1. Structural Factors

More opportunities for training are available in the craft sector and in manufacturing industry but young people are actually looking increasingly for apprenticeships in the service sector. 40% of those having undertaken an apprenticeship have subsequently changed occupations and are, therefore, carrying out tasks not necessarily related to their training. Both these points are interrelated in the discussion concerning the choice of training places.

Heinz and Krüger (1985) have undertaken a very detailed longitudinal study (1978-83) of the decision making process of Hauptschule pupils facing the training and labour market. They concluded that young people are in fact flexible in their choices, adapting them frequently in light of their experiences on the training market:

"Mit Herannahen des Übergangs in die Arbeitswelt wird die Berufsfindung durch die Erfahrungen in Schule und Familie auf die Suche nach einem Ausbildungsplatz zugespitzt. Dabei treten Interessen und Fähigkeiten der Jugendlichen als Berufswahlkriterien immer mehr in den Hintergrund." (1985,24)

As the process of obtaining a training place progresses, unsuccessful applicants are more and more inclined to continue with their schooling, be it by staying on at school for an extra year to try and obtain the Realschulabschluß or to take part in some sort of bridging scheme:

"Der Grund für einen Perspektivenwechsel von der Berufssuche hin zu einem weiteren Schulbesuch liegt stets darin, daß die bisherige schulische Qualifikation für die Lehrstellensuche als zu gering eingeschätzt wird. Daß sich zugleich auch Schüler mit guten Noten und relativ sicheren Aussichten auf einen Ausbildungsplatz in Überbrückungsmaßnahmen anmelden, zeugt von der grundlegenden Verunsicherung der sich bewerbenden Schüler." (Heinz and Krüger 1985,26)

This recent study is very much in line with previous surveys: Boßmann's (1982) survey of 2,500 school children (1977-80) and the DJI's (1983) survey (1976-81) of three localities found that young people's occupational wishes were mainly influenced by the local labour market and its offer of training places. The full spectrum of opportunities seemed to be unknown to them. Holzbauer's sample of 1977

school leavers (MatAB 1/1980) showed that when the training market becomes tight, young people apply earlier, more frequently and for a greater variety of training places. Even figures from 1970 (Gaulke 1976) demonstrate that young people's occupational choice is influenced to a large extent by the local availability of training places and their contacts in companies e.g. family relations. The structure of the adult labour market and its development seems to have no demonstrable effect on occupational wishes and decisions of young people.

The criticisms by the employers that young people are only applying for fashionable jobs and that they are not flexible in their wishes is refuted by several studies (Chabery 1982; Frackmann 1979). There is a close correlation between the occupational desires of young people and the top 25 training jobs. However, more training contracts in these occupations (in some cases several thousand more) are signed than the number of young people who originally expressed an interest in them. This is especially true for the occupation of butcher for boys and sales assistant in food retailing for girls when there is a general shortage of training places. Nevertheless, unoccupied training places exist in some of the 25 most desired occupations whereas there are hardly any vacancies in the less well-known training occupations.

A study by Becker (1983) showed that the dual system was training almost double the number of bakers and butchers needed by the economy. On completion of their training more than half the bakers and 37% of the butchers had to seek work in other occupations. Because they only have narrow qualification they could only change to unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. This does not mean that the training they had received was bad, it was just too specific and in the current labour market the chances of obtaining employment in semi-skilled jobs is lower than when the study was undertaken, forcing these young people into unemployment. Becker argued that as 62% of the unemployed bakers in 1982 were under 25, increasing the number of training places in these occupations was not going to solve the problem. Although there may well be a shortage of candidates for apprenticeships in these occupations in the coming years due to the decline of the school leaver population and more attractive traineeships being on offer, it cannot be expected that the

skills which have been transmitted will still be usable in the next ten years when the young person has had no chance of practising them inbetween times.

This quite severe level of "misqualification" does not yet hamper the social reproduction process. Industry still largely absorbs the craft sector trainees into employment, to a large extent because a car mechanic (Kfz Mechaniker) trained in that sector is cheaper than an industry trained car mechanic (Schlosser). Industry thus receives trained skilled workers who only need a minimum of retraining to be effective on the shop floor, but they have actually borne none of the cost. The craft sector on the other hand needs the labour of the young apprentices to survive, but can then not afford to keep them on. A problem arises, however, when a young person is trained in a craft sector occupation, perhaps not under ideal conditions, for a job which does not interest him, but where he was lucky enough to find a training place. He may well then be a skilled worker e.g. a baker, but with no prospect of practising his trade even if he did find job satisfaction in it. The dequalification is borne solely by the young person who may be trained for an occupation with no future and in addition he may well have been comparatively badly trained for it (Frackmann 1979,134).

This transfer of labour from craft to industry implies that the dual system has, nevertheless, trained a pool of young people who are both flexible i.e. willing to adapt to new practices, new environments and new working conditions and transferable i.e. taking the skills from an apprenticeship in one trade to a job in another (probably related) trade.

As the majority of young Germans are qualified for a specific occupation which they may or may not wish to practise, their attitude towards change and their ability to adapt their skills are almost more important than the formal qualification they acquire. The German system has instituted the importance of qualifications, recognised by everyone and exemplified by the better employment rates of qualified compared to unqualified labour. An apprenticeship teaches more than just the skills to carry out specific tasks. It imbues young people with a certain attitude of mind.

#### 2.4.1.2. Regional Mobility

Apart from the concentration of school leavers into a relatively small number of training occupations there has been criticism on the one hand of young people's lack of regional mobility to take up training places away from their parental home, and on the other the disparity of provision of training places across the Länder (Frey et al 1979,625-35). Regional analyses have shown that young people in Bavaria and Baden Wurttemberg have proportionally more training places available to them than school leavers in Lower Saxony and in some of the city states e.g. Bremen (Berufsbildungsbericht 1981,31; 1988,51). However, globally the chances of obtaining a training place are better in rural areas but the chance of obtaining the training place of one's choice is greater in the cities (Berufsbildungsbericht 1984,54). §40 of the Arbeitsförderungsgesetz (AFG), the Employment Promotion Act does provide extra funding for young people who need to live away from home to undertake training (Berufsbildungsbericht 1984,104-5), but the uptake of this is very low, partly because the level of the training allowance in many occupations is too high for young people to qualify (Berufsbildungsbericht 1984,105). In total the amount of Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe, vocational training grant, has increased from DM 433.6 million in 1983 to DM 670 million in 1987 (Berufsbildungsbericht 1982 and 1988). The government in its party statement of 20 February 1984 proposed measures to create suitable living conditions for trainees away from home:

"Zur Förderung der Mobilität von Auszubildenden sind angemessene Wohnmöglichkeiten in Lehrlingswohnheimen, in sozialpädagogischen begleiteten Wohngemeinschaften und in Patenfamilien zu schaffen und finanziell zu fördern." (CDU 1984,11)

and since 1986 special mention of additional funding to encourage the mobility of young people is made in the Berufsbildungsbericht. Nevertheless, less than 7% of young people actually opt to train outside their home area and even then they do not go very far (Berufsbildungsbericht 1983,35). In Bavaria where the training balance is good anyway, it is further improved in certain areas by young people not being trained in the local area e.g. every fourth trainee in Freising is being trained in a company not belonging to the local

administrative unit. In Hamburg and Cologne the opposite is the case with 14% and 18% of trainees respectively commuting in from the surrounding areas (Berufsbildungsbericht 1984,54).

The regional distribution of training places, therefore, remains a problem in West Germany. Government intervention has not made a great impact. As the number of training places in a given area is governed by the location of companies there, the training system as such cannot be expected to solve this dilemma. On the whole, it has to be added that the German people are generally not a very mobile nation. This is due to the investment made in building one's own home, the premium attached to company loyalty, the relative strength of the local community and regional pride and affinity.

#### 2.4.1.3. The Fear of Unemployment

Finally, young people have since the beginning of the mid 1970s increasingly been faced with either the fear of unemployment or unemployment itself. This to a large extent has influenced their occupational choices as the following quotations demonstrate:

"'Überhaupt nur um ne Lehrstelle (ging es ihm). Ja, als Schlosser - hät ich irgendwas genommen, ne. Hauptsache Lehre, Hauptsache, du hast sie in der Tasche.'" (Adam et al 1981,51)

or

"Den Schlüssel zur Minderung von Arbeitsmarktrisiken sehen die Jugendlichen in ihrer eigenen Flexibilität, die sich in der Bereitschaft ausdrückt, auf andere Tätigkeitsfelder ausweichen zu wollen, gegebenenfalls sogar auf jede inhaltliche Festlegung des Berufswunsches zu verzichten zugunsten des Ziels, überhaupt eine Lehrstelle zu bekommen." (Heinz and Krüger 1985,22)

or finally

"... daß die Jugendlichen die Suche nach einem Beruf vor allem unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Vermeidung von Arbeitslosigkeit betreiben. ...Mit der Argumentationformel 'bloß nicht auf der Straße liegen' entsteht schließlich die Bereitschaft, auch Ungelerntentätigkeiten und das Ausweichen auf einen erneuten schulischen Weg zum Beruf explizit als Möglichkeiten zu verfolgen." (Heinz and Krüger 1985,24 and 27)

School leavers therefore often relegate their occupational wishes and accept whatever the market place has to offer. At each stage of the decision making process the fear of becoming unemployed prompted the school leavers to adapt their ideals to local and individual circumstances. If a training place in the preferred occupation could not be obtained, any training place was acceptable followed by continuing in education in one form or another, accepting unskilled work or taking part in a government sponsored scheme rather than 'ending up on the street'.

Taking up any occupation rather than the preferred one is by no means an ideal situation, but as Jansen is forced to conclude:

"Natürlich ist eine Ausbildung, egal welche, allemal besser, als wenn der Jugendliche gar nichts tut, arbeitslos ist oder versucht sich durch Jobs über Wasser zu halten." (1984,617)

Training for any occupation is better than if the young person does nothing, is unemployed or tries to keep his head above water through casual labour. This has been amply proven by the unemployment statistics, where those with no vocational qualifications are over-proportionally represented. Furthermore, the IAB felt that if the integration of the high number of school leavers had been achieved by training young people "auf Vorrat" i.e. stock piling them, then a step in the right direction had been taken (ZBW June 1983,459). This runs very much contrary to the previously held concept that vocational education should not be conducted for its own sake but should prepare for activities in the labour market:

"Berufserziehung wird nicht um ihrer selbst willen betrieben; sie soll vielmehr auf Tätigkeiten im Beschäftigungssystem vorbereiten." (Lempert and Franzke 1976,179)

Young people, one has to conclude, are, therefore, adapting their occupational choices to what the market place has to offer, willing to train in occupations for which at first they have no inclination rather than face unemployment or a state-funded scheme. The lack of regional mobility is also understandable on the part of minimum-age school leavers, as the sheltered and supportive environment of family and friends is as important in a young person's social and occupational development as being trained in an occupation with a promising future.



No studies have been undertaken or are planned to see whether school leavers who have left home to train in the occupation of their choice are later both more successful and content in their working life than those who have stayed in their local environment but have trained in an occupation not necessarily of their choosing. Heller (1980,346-7) argued that the introduction of the BGJ would be a structural reform, which would not only potentially improve the occupational and regional mobility of young people but also relieve the companies in peripheral regions of the high cost of the first training year, enabling them to offer more second and third year places. This argument has not been accepted by employers, as the majority still feel that the BGJ is not an adequate substitute for the first year of an apprenticeship. Also, it makes it more difficult to get an apprenticeship since the BGJ has to be recognised as the first year for apprentices recruited into the second year. This is not liked by employers.

#### 2.4.2. The Rise in Abitur Candidates

The Bundesminister für Bildung und Wissenschaft (IBW 4/88) stated that even in the future, quite obviously, various training regulations were going to be different, especially in the cognitive area. This influences in turn the repartition of trainees with different schooling levels into different training jobs. The government believes that the schooling level must not, however, become the determining criteria for the individual qualification level. A differentiation of training courses based on the schooling level cannot be defended from either an education or employment policy perspective, especially in view of the changing structure of the schooling level of the applicants. What should be happening is that applicants with the HSA should have more access to service sector training and applicants with the Abitur to trade orientated training. The Berufsbildungsgesetz enables young people to either complete their training faster than the norm and acquire additional qualifications or for young people who are slower at learning to spend longer in training. The government is asking companies to continue to offer this kind of individualisation in training (IBW 4/88,50). Due to the age restriction for apprenticeships and for YTS in the British system, the problem of inappropriate courses has not surfaced in Britain. The impact this Verdrängungseffekt and

suitability of courses has in West Germany on the labour market will be discussed below.

The German dual system has often been accused of being inflexible by onlookers from other countries and critics within the system. However, compared to Britain, West Germany enables young people between the ages of 15 and 19 to start an apprenticeship with whatever level of schooling they have achieved. The shift towards Abitur applicants has been welcomed by the government as explained by Dr Dorothee Wilms, then the Federal Minister for Education and Science, on 9 July 1986 to the Federal cabinet:

"Die Bundesregierung begrüßt die verstärkte Hinwendung der Abiturienten und anderen Studienberechtigten zur Berufsausbildung im dualen System. Die berufliche Bildung gewinnt wieder die Bedeutung, die ihr gesellschaftspolitisch und pädagogisch zu kommt....Eine in den 70er Jahren oft zu beobachtende ideologisch-motivierte Überbewertung des Hochschulstudiums ist überwunden."  
(IBW 7-8/86,107)

Attempts have been made to make the training in some occupations more applicable to more highly educated candidates e.g. special Abitur classes in vocational schools, shortened training periods, ways of obtaining additional vocational qualifications while undertaking the apprenticeship, links with Berufsakademien, thoughts about future occupations as a result of new technologies requiring Abitur level qualifications and a widening of access to all types of occupations in the dual system from both applicants and employers (IBW 7-8/85,143).

The proportion of trainees with the Abitur is growing, rising in four years (1983-86) from 9.8% to 15.1% of all trainees (Table 2.3). In 1980/81 the proportion was just 6% (IBW 7-8/86,107). Whole sections of the Berufsbildungsbericht each year are now devoted to the analysis of Abitur trainees, their success in the dual system, their future careers and aspirations. <sup>24</sup>

As these are not minimum age school leavers, they will not be studied here in more detail, but the fact which must be recognised is that their concentration in organisation, administration and office work does limit the opportunities of those with the MR, let alone those with the HSA entering these occupations. This in turn affects the

application numbers for other training occupations, although the survey conducted by the Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft in 1987 stated:

"Steigende Abiturientenquoten in der betrieblichen Ausbildung werden nach Einschätzung der Betriebe nicht zu einem Verdrängungswettbewerb auf Kosten der Real- oder Hauptschulabsolventen führen." (IBW 10/87,152).

This is confirmed by the qualification structure of unprovided for applicants for training places (Table 2.4). Fewer young people with the MR or the HSA are unsuccessful in obtaining a training place than young people with the Abitur, graduates or those without the HSA, showing that the vocational training system is primarily geared towards training the mass of average qualified young people. In the case studies I will look at how this selection procedure works in practice and at the efforts made by retailers to recruit Abitur candidates for accelerated promotion.

One further point to note at this stage is the fact that the government is favouring the dual system compared to university studies, but the Prognos study predicted that demand for employees with degree level qualifications was going to increase faster than for those with a vocational qualification up to the year 2000 (70% compared to 10%), even if in numerical terms the increase was predicted to be almost the same, 1.55 million and 1.3 million respectively. With the declining number of school leavers over the next decades it is important to ensure that the trend towards higher qualifications among school leavers continues. According to the Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) predictions (Grund- und Strukturdaten 1986/87,66) the proportion of school leavers without the HSA is expected to remain at approximately 10%, those obtaining the HSA are expected to have reached their peak of 39.9% in 1985 dropping to 34.3% by 1995, with those obtaining the Realschulabschluss also peaking in 1985 with 51.9% and dropping to 36.0% by 1995. Among the older (18 year old) school leaver population the proportion obtaining the Abitur or equivalent is expected to peak later in 1989 with 36.8% compared to 29.4% in 1985 and then drop back gradually to 32.9% by 1994. Whereas the proportion of those obtaining the HSA and the MR are predicted to increase again up to the year 2000 by 4% each, the proportion obtaining the Abitur is expected to drop slightly to between 30.9% and 32.7%.

However, as previously stated, it is very difficult to define exactly which qualification structures will be needed in the future. In Chapter 1 the trend towards a more highly qualified labour force in all fields seemed to be demonstrated (Rothkirch et al 1985). The decision by many young people, capable of completing a university education, to first qualify themselves at the vocational level seems very sensible. This would make them polyvalent and multi-trained, ideally suited for the jobs of the future. The vocational training system in West Germany allows these young people to do this. Under the strict entry requirements of the YTS this would be impossible in the British system, as will be shown in the next chapter.

#### 2.4.3. Adaptability of Trainees to New Technologies

The question which is generally asked of any system of vocational training is whether the training is preparing young people for the technical occupational demands of the future (Benner 1984, 308-311). By this in turn is meant the preparation for the use of new technologies, whether these are CAD/CAM machines, computers in their various forms including data processing, record and account keeping or, as in retailing, integrated stock control and ordering systems.

In Chapter 1 the impact new technologies have had and are likely to have on the labour market has already been discussed, i.e the need for a more highly qualified workforce. Here the adaptability of trainees to the introduction of new technology will be analysed. The process of changing the formal training regulations for a particular training occupation has already been discussed (cf 2.1.5.). This does not, however, mean that individual companies are not adapting their training to the needs of their companies. Many of the larger companies and especially those involved in electronics provide their trainees with the most up-to-date technological training possible. The trainees who are more likely to be disadvantaged are those being trained in small or medium sized companies. This, however, is the majority - 65% of all employees were trained in companies with less than 50 employees in 1985/86 (BWP 1/87, I/2). Regional and Land Technology Centres, assisted by the Chambers of Commerce, have been set up in certain industries by

small and medium sized companies to counter the shortfall of new technology - at least on paper. It is not a method used to any great extent in the distributive industry.

It has been argued that the state has to play an active role in ensuring that an equal distribution of skills across industries and companies is achieved (Grünwald 1984,153), even if in theory the dual system is ideally placed, embedded in the labour market, to transmit developments in new technologies directly to the trainees. It will be shown later in Chapter 5 and more specifically in the case studies that in fact even large companies are not responding very quickly at the trainee level to the new technologies. <sup>25</sup> There are several reasons for this: the management of the companies is itself not well enough prepared for the impact of the computer, or management believes that it is too early to implement radical technological changes or does not believe its junior staff (in this case shop assistants) are affected by the introduction of a new system. Young people on the other hand are on the whole very open to learning about the use and application of computers:

"Wenn die Jugendlichen in ihrer Ausbildung bisher nicht oder nicht ausreichend auf die neuen Techniken vorbereitet wurden, so liegt das nicht an ihrer ablehnenden Haltung, sondern daran, daß trotz des offensichtlich hohen Bedarfs der Wirtschaft an entsprechend qualifizierten Fachkräften die neuen Technologien in der Ausbildung noch nicht den Stellenwert haben, der ihnen zukommen müßte." (Hecker & Jansen 1986,108)

It seems to be more a question of inadequate emphasis being put on the imparting of knowledge in this area to trainees. The government through the BIBB has furthered the study of new technologies, their level of distribution, the level of qualification needed and the working conditions associated with them (IAB 1987), finding, for example, that nearly 60% of employees in banking and insurance were using programmable machines in 1985/86. <sup>26</sup> Out of all respondents 41% of main users stated that they were using skills and knowledge acquired during their vocational training. <sup>27</sup> This latter point, however, seems to be the only reference to how applicable the training is to the demands of the future job in the use of technologies. As with all other aspects of training in West Germany Modellversuche, lengthy trial runs were instigated to develop teaching and learning material, run

seminars and identify training contents in the application of certain technologies for specific occupations (Buschendorf et al 1986,194-7).

All new training regulations are making reference to the minimum requirements of new technology training, but technical innovation cannot be introduced into companies through regulations. The process of change is relatively fluid: practical innovation by companies and colleges eventually leads to a change in training regulations, which reinforce the changes which have already happened and places them into examinations. Vocational qualifications which are based on such technological innovations that they have not yet been implemented in all companies can be transmitted by inter-company training workshops. However, until the first cohorts of trainees following these regulations enter employment it will be difficult to assess whether the minimum requirements are sufficient. The slow process of experimentation rather than large-scale change typical of the German policy-making approach is again in evidence here.

Training regulations may, therefore, in some cases not be as specific on technological developments as may be needed. However, all new training regulations are making reference to the broader changes of independent decision-making and the team-work approach. With these competences the apprentice should be able to master new technological developments as they occur. If the apprentice of the past had to obey orders, the apprentice of the future will learn to initiate, evaluate and to communicate. All new BIBB training regulations envisage this newer type of trainee and the bottleneck in the system may well be a mismatch between the expectations of the trainer and training company and those of the training regulations and expectations of the trainee.

The new regulation for retail assistants will be studied in more detail to exemplify this situation. In the comparative case studies the view of the German and British trainees and companies to new technology will be explored, as it can be argued that Britain's less structured vocational training system allows trainees more freedom to adapt to technological innovation on the shop floor.

## 2.5. Conclusion

It has been demonstrated in this chapter that the West German vocational training system is able to adapt to the changes in the labour market because, although codified, formalised and legally enshrined, it is based on consensus. Formal requirements are laid down to be followed by companies and schools nationally. These requirements may differ (cf Rahmenlehrplan v Ausbildungsordnung) and the aims of the two establishments may only be tenuously linked, one wishing to educate and the other to train for the production process. However, the need for a young person to be both educated and vocationally trained is disputed by neither party. The fact that there are national qualifications which are accepted equally by young people, their parents and employers means that a training culture is established. Fundamental changes to the dual system are difficult to achieve, because there is national trust in the existing system. It can be seen to work: high productivity, low youth unemployment and a growing economy.

The system is relatively slow to respond in formal terms i.e. through the training regulations, due to the lengthy coordinating process needed to change these, <sup>28</sup> but it seems as if it can respond within companies, on the shop floor in advance of the regulations. This is because the majority of young people are trained not only to carry out a specific job requiring certain technical skills but also to work in teams, think through a task and show initiative. These competences make it easier for a young person to adapt to a new working environment, potentially involving new technologies.

There is a mismatch between the training places available and the preferred occupation of young people. Not all young people do obtain training places, partly due to a structural and regional imbalance of places and a lack of mobility on the part of the young people. But also because of the increase in the number of school leavers looking for apprenticeships and the pressure from above by the Abiturienten. The BGJ, one can argue, is a better preparation for future working life, because as the concept of one occupation for the duration of one's working life has largely disappeared (Boßmann 1982,12; Schuchardt

and Thomas 1984 <sup>29</sup>; ZBW March 1983, 214 <sup>30</sup>) the need to train for flexibility and adaptability is given. Although young people still wish "to be something", based on the inherent belief in the Beruf and the status accorded to the Facharbeiter, in a tight training and labour market they are forced to accept any training place rather than the one of their choice. One then has to ask: is it more important to be in a working situation as a trainee in whatever occupation rather than in the occupation of one's choice, when it is very likely that this will not be an occupation for life anyway? Have we all got to get used to being a "jack of all trades" and a "master of none"?

How this idea is especially applicable to the training of a shop assistant will be discussed in subsequent chapters with the emphasis no longer being so much on specific technical skills as on "Schlüsselqualifikationen", transferable skills e.g. knowledge of the system, ability to work in teams, competence in various methods and communicative abilities (Krekeler 1988,9). Whether the training in individual companies is actually achieving this will then be looked at. Whether the British system, established on a very different basis, but with the same aims in mind is equally able to meet the changing requirements of the labour market will be studied in the next chapter.



- <sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the historical development of the German education system see Paulsen "German Education Past and Present" 1908, and for vocational training see: Hedderich "5000 Jahre Berufsausbildung. Vom Codex Hammurabi zum neuen Berufsbildungsgesetz" 1970, Stratmann "Quellen und Dokumente zur Geschichte der Berufsbildung in Deutschland" 1980 and Hoffmann "Zur Geschichte der Berufsausbildung in Deutschland" 1962.
- <sup>2</sup> Recent historical developments are covered in Kieslinger "20 Jahre Berufsausbildung in the BRD 1945-1965" n.d.
- <sup>3</sup> For the remainder of the text of the speech and other reproduced speeches and documents from this time period see Mason 175,178-1234.
- <sup>4</sup> For details of the "Anordnung zur Durchführung des Vierjahresplans" of 7.11.1936 see Mason 1975,223-4.
- <sup>5</sup> M.E. Taylor's book "Education and work in the Federal Republic of Germany" provides a very detailed analysis of the political framework surrounding the development of the vocational training system in the Federal Republic of Germany. His analysis is of special importance for the period since 1945, but unfortunately ends with events in 1977. His book is a major source of reference for the rest of this chapter.
- <sup>6</sup> The strength of the concept of the Beruf and the subsequent status conferred on the Facharbeiter and more especially the Meister (master craftsman) has been commented upon by British observers (Russell 1983,11) as well as discussed at length by German researchers (Henniges et al MittAB 1/1976,1-8).
- <sup>7</sup> For Kerschensteiner true vocational education is trade training, social training and Menschenbildung, character and personality training. This set the parameters of the Berufsschule providing training of the autonomous moral personality and not narrowly based trade training. For Spranger vocational education is not merely trade training (Berufsausbildung) but education in its widest sense by means of a trade (Berufsbildung). In the trade the fundamental knowledge and skills are activated, modified and specialised and then form a centre of achievement and interest. This centre is complemented by general education (Allgemeinbildung). Hegel's theories of the spiritual, moral and humanising powers inherent in work may be traced through Kerschensteiner to present-day vocational education in West Germany (Taylor 1981,18,25,123).
- <sup>8</sup> As will be seen later in the case studies some German companies do make an effort to work more closely together with both secondary and vocational schools.
- <sup>9</sup> The number of inter-firm workshops was increased considerably to approximately 4,000 by 1972 (CEDEFOP 1982,46) to enable practical training away from the production process and with up-to-date machinery to be carried out for mainly apprentices in small craft businesses, who lacked their own facilities. It also lessened dependence on the supply of training places offered by employers in times of economic recession.
- <sup>10</sup> For details of the procedure worked out for this see Gärtner et al, BWP 6/81,1-5.
- <sup>11</sup> See Benner 1981 or Görs 1981 for details.
- <sup>12</sup> It was replaced by the 'Law to promote vocational training through planning and research', the Berufsbildungsförderungsgesetz (Vocational Training Promotion Act) on 23 December 1981. The only

- difference to the 1976 Act was the absence of regulations concerning the financing of the system, the government stating that the balance of training places was no longer the same as before and therefore there was no need for a levy system.
- <sup>13</sup> The Bundesverfassungsgericht is the organ which is called into action whenever there is a dispute between either the state and the Länder, between Länder, or between two organs of state, e.g. the Bundestag and the Bundesrat. It checks for the compatibility between federal laws and the constitution and Länder laws and federal laws and decides in the case of complaints against the constitution (v. Bernewitz 1978,217).  
The Ausbildungsplatzförderungsgesetz could in fact not be passed simply by the Bundestag, it needed the approval of the Bundesrat for certain sections.
- <sup>14</sup> The concept of the "stille Reserve" does not normally refer to young people but is appropriate here i.e. those young people in training but not for the occupation they wanted, and those who actually wanted a job but have been pushed into training. It is normally referred to as the "Dunkelziffer". This is discussed further in v.d. Haar and v.d. Haar 1984,533-545 WSI Mitteilungen. Further references to this concept can be found in Lenhart & Schober 1980,942; Schierholz & Westhoff 1982,206.  
Young foreigners are often also left unaccounted for in the statistics (Bazak et al GB 10/83,240).
- <sup>15</sup> It had previously been questioned by the Edding-Kommission and in the 1976 Draft Proposal of Amendment to the Vocational Training Act of 1969.
- <sup>16</sup> The definitions of the different vocational schools were laid down in 1975 as discussed in 2.3..
- <sup>17</sup> For examples of different combinations see CEDEFOP 1982,316-7. The number of hours taught per week in a BS also varies per Land and on aggregate nationally, with the trend being for a greater number of hours (approx. 12% of pupils have 12 hours or more) and an increase in block instruction. For details see Grund-und Strukturdaten 1987/88,60.
- <sup>18</sup> See CEDEFOP 1980,33-35 for examples of programmes.
- <sup>19</sup> Verordnung über die Anrechnung auf die Ausbildungszeit in Ausbildungsberufen der Gewerblichen Wirtschaft - Anrechnung des Besuchs eines schulischen Berufsgrundbildungsjahres und einer einjährigen Berufsfachschule of 17 July 1978, quoted in Münch 1982,181.
- <sup>20</sup> This has been achieved as a result of an increase in the number of hours of attendance at the Berufsschule for all trainees (in 42.6% of cases in 1986 12 hours per week, the national average being 11.7% for 12 hours of Berufsschule instruction). For details see Der Senator für Schulwesen, Jugend und Sport (1985) Berufsbildende Oberschulen und berufsfeldbezogene Oberstufenzentren, Berlin.
- <sup>21</sup> Hamburg Agreement: Abkommen zwischen den Ländern der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Vereinheitlichung auf dem Gebiet des Schulwesens vom 28 Oktober 1964 quoted in Münch 1982,194.
- <sup>22</sup> Calculated according to figures in Grund-und Strukturdaten 1987/88,37 (excluding Fachschulen, Fachakademien and Schulen des Gesundheitswesens as being above NAFE courses) and figures from the DES Statistical Bulletin 5/84 and 5/86.
- <sup>23</sup> Reports and analyses of the effectiveness of the various schemes are available in abundance: Kloas 1981 "Berufsvorbereitung

- behinderter Jugendlichen"; Landwehr-Dobberstein 1981 "Mädchen zwischen Schule und Beruf"; Möller and Ströhl "MBSE besser als ihr Ruf" (MatAB 4-1984); Alt et al 1984 "Informationen aus dem Modellversuchsprogramm zur Erschließung gewerblich-technischer Ausbildungsberufe für Mädchen - Bibliographie. Aufsätze und Schriften aus dem Modellversuch" to name a few. It would go beyond the scope of this study to evaluate the above as well.
- <sup>24</sup> For further details see IBW 10/87, 151-4 and Berufsbildungsbericht 1988,88ff among others.
- <sup>25</sup> Companies in the manufacturing sector have been faster to respond to new production processes in terms of training, often having to change training practice ahead of regulations and examinations.
- <sup>26</sup> In 1986 24% of all male and 18% of all female Abiturienten were undertaking an apprenticeship in the banking sector (Berufsbildungsbericht 1988,85). For men this was the most popular training field. The shift in the higher levels of academic qualifications needed to train in this field are thereby demonstrated.
- <sup>27</sup> The Berufsbildungsbericht 1988,68 offers a summary, as the actual study from the Institut für Arbeitsmarkt und Berufsforschung der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit was not available when writing this research.
- <sup>28</sup> For an illustration of the procedures involved in up-dating the training regulations in one sector - here the electrical occupations - see Bongard GB 11/84,293-7.
- <sup>29</sup> This article (GB 11/84) reports that the concept of a job for life was already abolished by the trade unions at their annual conference in 1966!
- <sup>30</sup> Reported speech by the Cultural Minister of Lower Saxony, Oschatz at the beginning of 1983.

TABLE 2.1

Number of Pupils at Berufsschulen as a Percentage of the 16-18 Year Old Population.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1960	71.3
1965	77.1
1970	66.3
1975	58.6
1976	56.1
1977	56.1
1978	57.7
1979	58.8
1980	58.2
1981	56.5
1982	55.7
1983	57.8
1984	61.5
1985	65.6
1986	69.1

Source: Grund-und Strukturdaten 1987/88,59.

TABLE 2.2

Number of Pupils at Vocational Training Schools in Thousands for Selected Dates

<u>Year</u>	<u>Berufsfach- schule</u>	<u>Berufsauf- bauschule</u>	<u>Fachschule</u>	<u>Fachoberschule</u>
1960	125.7	-	141.8	-
1965	148.5	53.0	145.9	-
1970	205.0	40.4	167.5	50.3
1974	236.7	31.7	214.3	-
1979	339.2	17.6	181.4	-
1980	329.6	21.8	181.6	79.3
1983	361.1	15.7	194.2	86.5
1986	322.8	8.2	201.8	75.5

Source: Grund-und Strukturdaten 1987/88,36-37 and Münch 1982, 182,186,190.

TABLE 2.3

School Qualifications of Trainees on Starting an Apprenticeship in West GermanyNumbers and proportions (%) per year

<u>Qualifi- cation</u>	1983	%	1984	%	1985	%	1986	%
Without HSA	29,719	2.6	24,143	1.9	21,021	1.6	19,678	1.5
HSA	415,085	36.4	415,521	32.7	407,276	31.0	392,247	29.9
Mittlere Reife or equivalent	400,354	35.1	453,643	35.7	474,280	36.1	473,583	36.1
Abitur or equivalent	111,933	9.8	158,839	12.5	185,245	14.1	198,091	15.1
BGJ (school)	67,820	5.9	74,972	5.9	76,200	5.8	76,088	5.8
Special Vocational School	107,593	9.4	134,695	10.6	141,890	10.8	141,681	10.8
BVJ	9,293	0.8	8,895	0.7	9,197	0.7	9,183	0.7
Sub Total	1,141,797	100	1,270,708	100	1,313,794	100.1#	1,311,863	99.9~
No Information*	150,896	11.6	85,962	6.3	66,110	4.8	60,896	4.4
Total+	1,292,693	100	1,356,670	100	1,379,904	100.0	1,372,759	100

Notes:

- \* including "other schooling" and "not recorded".
- + including trainees involved in maritime traffic.
- # 1,313 = 0.1% extra given in the percentage total i.e. 100.1%.
- ~ 1,312 = 0.1% less given in the percentage total i.e.99.9%.

Source: Grund- und Strukturdaten 1984/85,89; 1986/87,98 and 1987/88,106 and own calculations.

TABLE 2.4

Qualifications of Applicants Still Registered with the Employment Office for a Training Place (September 30 values)

as % of the registered applicants with the same qualification

<u>Type of Quali- fication</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>
Without HSA	6.9	9.3	10.3	11.6	11.2	8.6	7.0
With HSA	5.2	7.1	8.5	10.0	9.8	8.0	6.4
Mittlere Reife	4.2	5.3	6.2	7.2	7.2	6.0	4.7
Abitur or equiv.	8.5	10.2	10.8	11.9	10.3	8.1	6.5
Univ. drop-outs & graduates	12.4	13.7	14.4	14.6	15.2	12.2	10.1
Total							
Nos.	22,140	34,180	47,408	58,426	58,905	46,270	33,880
%	5.0	6.8	7.9	8.9	8.9	7.2	5.7

Source: Berufsbildungsbericht 1983,23; 1985,30; 1986,30; 1987,30 & 1988, 28 and own calculations.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The British Vocational Training System

In this chapter it will be shown that in contrast with West Germany Britain does not have a vocational training "system". Instead it possesses three sectors of activity which are not necessarily linked to each other: the declining apprenticeship programme, a variety of Further Education (FE) provision and state-initiated measures, originally designed to combat the rise in youth unemployment. There is a fourth sector, that of internal company schemes about which there is little published information, but which is relatively important for the retail sector and will be discussed in Chapter 4. Whether this provision is equally suited to meet the needs of the changing labour market will be studied here.

The historical development of the different sectors has been well-documented (Williams 1963; Wellens 1963; Bristow 1976).<sup>1</sup> The changes of the last twenty-five years will be considered here to put the present day problems into context: the historical lack of a "system" of vocational training, the subsequent decentralised, voluntary approach to training, leading finally to a more centralised but still voluntary employer-dominated system under the Conservative government. How training provision is established i.e. is it measure-driven or, as in West Germany, consensus-based, who monitors it and how is acceptability ensured will be answered in this chapter.

In recent years it has frequently been stated that education and training for the post-compulsory school leaver in Britain has been sorely neglected. This criticism comes not only from educationalists, trade unions (TUC 1986), the Labour Party (TUC/Labour Party 1984) and academics (Daly et al 1985; Chapman and Tooze 1987), but also from the government itself (Secretary of State for Employment 1985; Select Committee on the European Communities 1984; NEDO/MSO 1984; Gray and King 1986) as well as from the general press (The Financial Times 30.8.1984; The Guardian 3.12.1984) and the public.<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that the problem was not recognised earlier: a major discussion occurred in 1963 (Wellens; Williams) and again in 1972 (English) and

even before 1945, in the 1930s various measures (Horne 1983).<sup>3</sup> were discussed and implemented. However, four major factors have caused the question of education and training for minimum age school leavers to be considered in the 1980s:

- a) the economic recession initiated by the oil crisis of 1973;
- b) the subsequent decline in economic activity, due to the higher cost of energy, leading to a rise in unemployment, but especially to an unprecedented peak in youth unemployment;
- c) the rapidly changing industrial fabric with a decline in activity of the manufacturing sector and a rapid rise in high technology industries;
- d) the rising school leaver population up to the mid 1980s.<sup>4</sup>

Britain's objective was to provide the economy with a better educated, better trained and more adaptable workforce in order to pull herself out of the economic recession and concurrently make her competitive on the world markets with the aid of the new technologies. In addition, the needs and desires of these young people had to be taken into consideration and a system devised whereby the young people are enabled to prepare adequately for work and life in general, so that possible frustration with society does not arise.

### 3.1 Training Without a System

Until the mid-1970s the British government did not feel that it was its role to intervene directly in the vocational training process which developed between industry and education. At first sight this method of laissez-faire seems a suitable approach, as government interference through legislation may hamper innovation and distort the operation of the market place. However, a historical appraisal of the apprenticeship and FE provision in Britain up to the introduction of the 1964 Industrial Training Act shows that the two sectors did not operate effectively in the interests of the national economy, individual companies or employees i.e. Britain was not competitive in world markets due to a lack of skilled labour. Whether the



introduction of the Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) in 1964 and the establishment of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in 1974 improved the situation will be studied. It will be shown that in fact the lack of a unified training system, with governments reacting to events in the market place with no long-term strategy until the early 1980s has led to an acceptance by young people and employers of the status quo. Both sides are, therefore, individually trying to remedy the situation, young people obtaining more and higher qualifications, employers participating in government sponsored training schemes, benefitting from the free labour but not necessarily providing training, which will be of long-term use to young people, nor using it to improve productivity, working conditions or customer service. How the lack of co-ordination has affected one sector - distribution - in particular will be discussed in Chapter 4 and examined further by case studies.

The organisation of training in Britain reflects a tradition of dispersed rather than centralised control and of gradual development and accretion rather than a systematic and analytical approach. Control of content, standards and duration in industrial training has been uneasily split between employers, unions and ITBs and public and private education institutions and examination boards. One of the distinctive features, therefore, of British training is the multiplicity of agencies involved. There is no Ministry of Education and Training with ultimate responsibility: education-based training is governed by the Department of Education and Science (DES) and employer-based training by the Department of Employment.

"Only within recent months has the point come to the fore that we simply do not have a system of vocational preparation able to handle all situations, all age groups and all job levels. Instead, what we have is a random, disjointed collection of hastily-cobbled up expedients, too incomplete to merit the description of system, unrelated to each other, with no provision for progression." (ICT Oct.1983,304)

Vocational training in Britain can, nevertheless, be divided into two main sectors:

- a) employer-based training, which embraces apprenticeships and individual company in-house training programmes; and

- b) education-based training, which are mainly full-time courses at colleges of FE, leading in the main to a recognised qualification.

There is a certain amount of overlap between the two sectors with apprentices in general attending a college of FE for day-release and students on full-time courses are often released for work experience in local companies.

Recently a third sector, which since 1973 has linked the two sectors above more closely, has come to be of overriding importance:

- c) state-initiated and state-funded training, running under a variety of names - Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP), Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) and Youth Training Scheme (YTS).

Each sector had different origins and attracts a different kind of school leaver, differentiated by ability, gender and class. Proportions joining each sector have also varied, being influenced by economic and political policies as analysed in Chapter 1. The oldest sector is that of apprenticeships and will be discussed first.

### 3.2. Apprenticeship Schemes: the Last Twenty-Five Years

The purpose of apprenticeships in Britain, as in West Germany, is to train young people for skilled employment. The labour of the skilled workforce enables a country to produce goods and provide services to meet the competition on world markets. Apprenticeships in Britain have had a chequered history, with attempts being made to raise their standing after the Industrial Revolution, but the governments of the day never acted with great enthusiasm on the recommendations of the committees it had commissioned (Appendix 5 provides a summary of pre-1964 developments). The turning point came in 1964 with the passing of the Industrial Training Act. This had three main objectives:

- a) to secure an adequate supply of trained men and women at all levels;

- b) to secure an improvement in the quality and efficiency of industrial training; and
- c) to share the cost of training more evenly between firms.

To fulfil these objectives the Act empowered the Minister of Labour (now the Secretary of State for Employment) to set up an Industrial Training Board (ITB) for each industry. Each Board was to be responsible for the provision of adequate training places of good quality in its industry. The Boards could receive up to £50 million of public money towards administrative expenses and towards providing particular aspects of training deemed to be of national importance. A levy on employers could be raised to meet the Board's expenses.

In addition, the Central Training Council was set up to advise the Minister on all matters relating to industrial and commercial training. This superseded the Industrial Training Council.

In the early 1960s there was much talk about apprenticeships in general, their function in the economy and their usefulness as a method of training skilled workers for the future, considering the other training paths which were developing. However, a distinction was made between craft apprenticeships providing training for skilled manual occupations; an apprenticeship usually for skilled occupations where the term craftsman is not normally used e.g. in the cotton textile industry; technician apprenticeship for technician level occupations, commercial apprenticeship for occupations in the commercial, administrative or accounting field and leading to an appropriate educational qualification; finally student apprenticeships for students in higher education. <sup>5</sup>

As this research is concerned with minimum-age school leavers and more specifically with retailing only the development of the first two types of apprenticeships will be looked at here, as commercial apprenticeships were very rare and the required minimum educational standard of entrants were at least GCE O-levels if not A-levels.

Apprenticeships in Britain were characterised by a fragmented, individualised approach, where each industry had set up its own

collective agreement between the relevant employer federation and the trade union governing length of training, age of entry or completion, form of written agreement, content of the training and conditions for educational study and ratios which were devised and administered by National Joint Apprenticeship Bodies (NJAB). Nearly one hundred industry apprenticeship schemes were in existence covering mainly the craft sector: engineering and allied trades, construction, motor vehicles, printing and allied trades and road transport, and hairdressing for two thirds of the female apprentices. The main point to note is that apprenticeships were structured by industry and not by the level of skills demanded. Many schemes covered very small numbers of apprentices. It was considered the responsibility of the employers to train their employees to meet their own needs and no government legislation was, therefore, required. The length of the apprenticeship enabled employers to recuperate their training costs and high wages were guaranteed through union negotiations for skilled employees by the relatively small numbers being trained. Accurate statistics on the number of apprentices do not exist because employers would not necessarily distinguish between indentured apprentices and young people following the same scheme as trainees.

### 3.2.1. Training Under the Industrial Training Boards (ITB)

The United Kingdom is exceptional in having no legislation on apprenticeships directly, although the Industrial Training Act of 1964 and its amendments in 1973 directly affect certain aspects of apprenticeships.

Although the NJAB continued to exist, the ITBs very largely took on their role, publishing training regulations of a more sophisticated character covering most of the craft occupations for which apprenticeships still exist. NJABs tended to provide the contractual framework within which ITB recommendations were implemented. There were no conflicts between these bodies, as representatives on both came from the same or similar industrial bodies. The practical relationship between the ITB and the NJAB varied considerably. In 1974 there were 82 craft apprenticeship schemes, with 52 of them administered by joint employer/trade union bodies, eleven by the employer associations and

trade unions concerned, three by ITBs, nine by nationalised industries, five by employer associations and one each by a professional institute and a private training association (Wheatley 1976,12). Craft apprenticeships would in the main be undertaken in small companies, with the apprentice "sitting by Nellie" and learning by watching, whereas the industrial apprenticeships would take place in larger companies, where workshops are set aside for teaching and learning purposes.

In how far the weaknesses of the apprenticeship system of 1963 have been removed either through legislation or employer and union negotiations over the last twenty-five years can be seen by looking at each of the criticisms in Table 3.1 in turn. This will provide an up-to-date position of the apprenticeship system still in existence in Britain in the late 1980s, considering that there were only 63,700 apprentices indentured in 1986 compared to over four times that many young people participating in newer forms of industrial training.

#### 3.2.1.1. The Duration of Apprenticeships

The starting age and duration of apprenticeships has changed noticeably since 1964. Up until 1983 apprenticeships were still based entirely on time-serving. Apprentices would normally enter at the age of 16 (in earlier centuries at 14 or 15) and were usually required to complete by the age of 20 or 21. The majority of apprenticeships thus lasted four to five years. By 1979 the duration for engineering and shipbuilding apprenticeships had been reduced to four and for building crafts, hairdressing and agriculture to three (Parkes 1979,18). In engineering time-serving had been replaced by agreed standards; <sup>6</sup> in electrical contracting a standards-based and modular system had been established with no age restrictions on entry. The printing and clerical unions and employers had made important advancements, indicating, however, that the advances were not as far-reaching as those in the engineering and electrical contracting industries (para 35,10). By November 1985 the printing industry had come to an agreement, whereby unqualified and semi-skilled adults could upgrade their skills as well as allowing for youth entry and adult retraining (Cooper & Lybrands 1985,26). The construction industry, however, is using YTS as its first year of

apprenticeship and is planning to offer apprenticeships to the majority of its trainees. ' 7

#### 3.2.1.2. Demarcation

From the available evidence (Coopers & Lybrand Associates 1985,11) demarcation lines between related trades still seem to exist but to a much lesser extent. The EITB, CITB and the Electrical Contractors Association and the electricians' union (EETPU) have instituted first year off-the-job training to offer apprentices or trainees a greater choice in their ultimate occupation (Wellens 1983a,110) and also increasing their flexibility at the place of work. This attitude would instil in the trainees a feeling that they are capable of not just doing their own job, but if need be also that of an absent team member or colleague.

#### 3.2.1.3. The Question of Qualifications

The ITBs developed new concepts for identifying the training needs of particular occupations (apprenticeships had been structured by industry and not by occupation), specifying the standards to be aimed at and designing and validating the respective training programmes. Only in a few selected apprenticeship schemes had there been provision for essential formal assessment of performance or certification of competence on completion of the training period. <sup>8</sup> Skilled status in all other apprenticeship schemes before 1964 was reached by having served the specified period of time and being accepted as a craftsman by the employer and by the union. Success in examinations could add to the status and prospects of the apprentice but had no bearing on the apprentice's status of craftsman once the training period was completed and this is still largely the case.

The introduction of phased testing by the ITBs in the engineering, electricity supply, iron and steel, shipbuilding, road transport, chemical and allied products, petroleum, and air transport and traffic sectors, as well as the similar arrangements in the foundry industry, construction industry and agriculture at least meant that a completion certificate could be awarded. The following conditions had to be

fulfilled: the overall training and education programme provided by or on behalf of the employer had to be approved by the ITB; records maintained by the trainee and the employer had to show that the trainee had satisfactorily proceeded through the various stages of the training programme; the phased tests and stage tests to establish appropriate standards of performance had to have been approved by the ITB and the trainee had to have achieved a satisfactory standard of performance in a specified range of phased tests and/or stage tests (Wheatley 1976,51). Attendance at college for part-time or block-release associated vocational education was required or recommended in all the apprenticeship schemes and attendance by apprentices in the main training fields was high (80-95%). Whether the apprentice has learned what is being taught cannot be determined as there is no compulsion to take any exams. Passing associated CGLI (City and Guilds of London Institute) examinations at College, except in a few cases is still not a compulsory feature of apprenticeship training. However, since 1983 all training boards or industrial agents have turned to a system whereby first year foundation training counts as the first year of the industry's formal traineeship (or apprenticeship) for YTS trainees. Nevertheless, conventional apprenticeships have not been renounced formally and there is often still a two tier entrance system: the YTS entry and the apprenticeship entry. Only since 1987 has the MSC through the NCVQ (National Council for Vocational Qualifications) tried to institute gaining vocational qualifications as a normal requirement of proving competence in a given occupation. This requirement is part of the two year YTS programme and does not necessarily apply to all craft apprenticeships unless they form part of the YTS.

Even at the craft apprenticeship level a noticeable change in entry qualifications has occurred. In 1963 most craft apprentices were recruited "from secondary modern schools where no formal school leaving examination was taken" (Crawford and Sterland 1963,14). The conditions of entry now are GCE O-level in English and Mathematics and a science subject, technical drawing or physics being popular ones. These entry requirements were formerly those required for a technician apprenticeship and with 5 O-levels it was possible to enter industry as a student apprentice. With the decline in numbers to the present day, higher entry requirements, and more developed selection procedures in

the form of tests and interviews have made apprenticeships the domain of the chosen few, with most young people who are looking for skilled status in a manual occupation trying first to obtain an apprenticeship in preference to a place on YTS. This development reflects the trend of rising school leaving qualifications in the 1980s but should also have made it possible for more apprentices to reach both the intermediate standard and the final examination standard of CGLI courses in their trade.

#### 3.2.1.4. The Financing of Apprenticeships

The question of apprentices' wages has still not been answered except that under YTS the state pays trainees a fixed allowance.<sup>9</sup> Craft apprentices receive payment at a rate which represents an agreed proportion of the wage of a skilled craftsman.<sup>10</sup> Trade unions argue that "... until recently apprentices' wages were low, but still employers provided few opportunities for the rest of their recruits" (Monks 1982,68), and it is the duty of a trade union to obtain the best conditions possible for its members including apprentices and there is no law which states that young people have to receive a low wage. The practice of relating apprentices' wages to chronological age rather than to length of service was of course a strong inducement to employers to recruit school leavers at the minimum age (Wheatley 1976,13). This fact does not, however, square with the payment rates per training year and demonstrates the still fragmented approach to pay which exists in the craft sector.

The fact that small companies have to pay relatively high wages is perhaps the reason that in only a few British industries was the absolute number of apprentices larger in the small firms than the medium or large firms in the 1970s. There is furthermore, also indirect evidence that the smallest firms, employing the highest proportion of craftsmen, lose many who have served apprenticeships with them, since they report the greatest shortages of skilled workers (OECD 1979,53). Finally sufficient training is not occurring in the sectors subsequently complaining of skill shortages e.g. skilled construction workers, technicians, draughtsmen and computing specialists.



The criticism that the financial burden of skill training falls entirely on those companies who carry out the training, subsequently making their apprentices ripe for poaching led to a system of collective financing through the levy-grant system. Through this system of being able to demand a levy of between 1 to 2.5% of the pay roll of each company within each sector the ITB was able to make real improvements in the quality of training for its industry, but did not succeed in raising the quantity of transferable skill training to the level required to meet the needs of industry generally. This was not surprising, because the ITBs were industry specific, and although they could relieve companies of some of the cost of training by providing grants and thereby influencing recruitment, they did not provide a mechanism for ensuring adequate recruitment in industry as a whole. Their influence in this sphere was hampered by the fact that they could only offer financial incentives and were eventually even forced to exempt small companies from the system. This negated the principle that the users of skill should contribute to the creation of that skill, either in money or in kind. Many employers did not trust their training advice, as at the beginning ITBs lacked qualified training advisers and some of the new ITBs in industries with little training set their standards too high, while others in industries with extensive, long-established methods of training were despised because of their insufficient knowledge.

By 1973 there was discontent with the levy-grant system and the 1973 Employment and Training Act changed the requirements to a levy-grant and exemption system, whereby if a company was training adequately to meet its own needs it would be exempted from the levy. The Act also provided for the MSC, a new independent body, through the Training Services Agency (TSA) to pay for the operating and administrative costs of the Training Boards, partly because levies were not normally to exceed 1% of pay-roll and small firms were to be exempt. Provisions had to be changed by 1976, as the arrangement was not working. Within a short space of time approximately 60% of employers in any industry were exempt from the levy and the ITBs were funding themselves out of existence. In June 1976 the MSC and Department of Employment proposed a system of collective funding which would exist alongside the levy-grant and exemption system (MSC 1976b). Collective funding would pay

for a large part of initial training in wider-based or transferable skills, although apprenticeships were still seen as the primary method of training for transferable skills. Lists of transferable skills needed by industry in the long-term as well as recruitment targets were to be established. If employers did not recruit sufficient numbers the ITBs could recruit and provide off-the-job training for one year, with employers taking over subsequent years. As the first year of training is the most unproductive for employers the public purse could pay for this either in its own skill centres or by letting industry use its workshop facilities. The division of the training cost between public and private was to be between 50/50 and 30/70 depending on the percentage of training costs to be reimbursed to the employer. As this idea was floated in a period of curtailing public expenditure fears that the public part of the money would not be available on a regular basis were justified and the programme was never properly implemented in the form described above. Instead the government decided that the principal responsibility for training lay with industry itself assisted by the ITBs. The MSC was to intervene in key areas where results would otherwise not be achieved i.e. training activities which were common to several occupations or training in skills which were important from a national viewpoint and where industries could not be expected to shoulder the burden themselves. Funding for special measures was to end with the 1978/79 intake and funding for consistent and permanent training in important skills was to be made available.

During the recession in the mid-1970s the ITBs had managed to save many apprentices from redundancy (BACIE Sept. 1981,73-4) and funded additional apprenticeships through group training centres with the financial help of the TSA. Without this interventionist action the number of apprenticeships would have declined far more steeply than was already the case. In fact an additional 25% of apprentices were thus permitted to start an apprenticeship between July 1975 and July 1977. Seven different measures were introduced to increase the number of skilled workers and at the same time combat the rising number of unemployed young people. These special measures ranged from supplementary grants for the construction industry to premium grants intended for employers who were recruiting additional apprentices for first year off-the-job training and related FE. So, although public

funding could not be secured on an equal basis many employers did in fact benefit from public money via the TSA and from their own ITB if they were carrying out sufficient good training which met the guidelines of the ITB.

It can be concluded that the apprenticeship system in Britain had difficulty even with government support of providing the skills industry needed. The training provided was in all likelihood good in the majority of cases even if standards were not controlled uniformly, but there was a lack in quantity, restrictive practices could not be totally abolished and the funding structure was inadequate to provide a greater number of young people with training. Furthermore:

"traditional apprenticeships, concerned with training for a single craft or sector, were seen as out of date for current industry needs not only because of the increasing need for cross-sectoral skills but also because they did not cover some of the skills in highest demand, notably electronics and optics." (Coopers & Lybrand Associates 1985,11)

The 1964 Industrial Training Act and its 1973 amendments did attempt to resolve some of the problems highlighted in Table 3.1, especially the latter two (state involvement through legislation and a fairer way of financing apprenticeships), but by the early 1980s many of the criticisms were still valid:

"I doubt whether any fundamental changes in apprenticeship will be allowed to surface and I believe that the issue of apprenticeship will be treated as the issue of how to provide some nation-wide system of skills testing service and that this will be grafted on to the archaic form of time-serving apprenticeship so as not to upset the vested interests, particularly those of the unions, thereby making the situation worse and not better." (ICT July 1981,219)

and not until the advent of YTS in September 1983 and probably only with the extension to two year YTS, which could be described as the modern apprenticeship, was a systematic industrial training system introduced in Britain.

The way apprenticeships operated made it impossible to extend them outside the craft sector and meant that many young people looking for employment in the service sector were left totally without training on starting work. Whether the skills taught were really transferable is

also questionable. With no uniform qualifications being awarded the apprenticeship still suffered from a lack of transferability of skills.

The parallel development of the FE system over the last twenty-five years will be studied to see why it did not provide a way of training young people entering employment, providing them with nationally accepted qualifications, as has been achieved in other countries, notably France.

### 3.3. Further Education: the Last Twenty-Five Years

FE comprises all institutions <sup>11</sup> providing post-school education within the sphere of responsibility of the Secretary of State for Education and Science (Higher Education 1963,317). <sup>12</sup>

Historically, FE provision is much younger than industrial training, dating from the industrial revolution. Its development has been closely linked to that of education in general, starting with evening classes for ambitious apprentices before 1945. It developed into a myriad of provision in different modes, catering for the educational needs of all young people leaving school at the minimum age, with evening study still featuring dominantly. Thus the traditional role of FE has been to provide vocational education for young people already at work, instructing them in the theoretical concepts, whereas the practical applications were covered at the work place and, to offer full-time courses to young people before they entered a career, again giving instruction of a vocational nature e.g. secretarial studies, teaching the skills of the job such as typing and shorthand. In other words, subjects which would be useful to a young person and to an employer when starting a specific career, thus contributing to the effectiveness of the young person in that occupation. By 1964 the main principles of its operation - voluntary, localised provision, varying levels of courses and good links to industry were in place.

### 3.3.1. Day-Release

During the last twenty-five years several government publications have influenced the courses of FE provision. The 1964 Henniker-Heaton Report (Day-release, 1964), having as its brief to suggest ways of raising day-release attendance for the under-18 age group to its maximum, recommended that the number of young employees released for day-release should roughly double by 1969-70 from under a quarter of a million students, involving average annual increases of 50,000 for the next five years. Effort was to be concentrated on occupational areas where industry and FE courses were already associated.

This Report, although well-intentioned was not implemented partly because it had not been in the committee's remit to discuss the principles of compulsory day-release which it was deemed would be too great a burden on buildings, staff and finance. The disruption it would cause to the working day of small companies was another major counter argument. However, as shown in West Germany compulsory day-release for the young worker and the employer is the only way of increasing the number of day-release students. The Report was further criticised for concentrating on provision for the more able youngster at the expense of general education for the less able. Resources were again concentrated on higher education recommended by the Robbins Report and deemed to be more important in an economic climate where industry was short of a skilled labour force.

The Industrial Training Act also had repercussions for FE through the establishment of the ITBs (cf 3.2.1.), improving relations between education and industry. In 1969 the Haslegrave Report (Report of the Committee on Technician Courses and Examinations), which had reviewed the provision of courses suitable for technicians at all levels and considered what changes were desirable in the then present structure of courses and examinations, recommended the introduction of a new national pattern of technician courses and the establishment of two new councils - the Technician Education Council (TEC) in 1973 and the Business Education Council (BEC) in 1974 - to administer and plan them. This would remove the two-fold structure of technician courses - the National Certificate Courses and the CGLI courses - and cater for the

changing need of industry and commerce and take into consideration the changing role of the technician in industry.

Provision was again concentrated on the more able youngsters and throughout the 1960s and early 1970s resources were used to expand either advanced further or higher education, whilst little was done to improve post-school provision for the majority of young people who received no opportunity for any kind of FE or training. In part this is a reflection of the traditional attitude in Britain that to advance in a vocational career the individual has to use his/her initiative, time and personal effort, often studying part-time, frequently in the evening and generally with little or no help from the government or the employer.

The establishment of the MSC in 1974 did have major implications for this group of young people who normally entered jobs with little or no systematic education or training (cf 3.4.).

### 3.3.2. Qualifications and Examining Boards

The courses offered by FE establishments are numerous and varied. Initially the CGLI craft courses dominated FE due to their link with craft apprenticeship schemes, but in 1980 CGLI examined 473,000 (Russell 1984,25) candidates in a very wide variety of schemes and occupational groups at various levels. It is still the largest and one of the oldest examining bodies in FE and since 1976/77 offers Foundation and Vocational Preparation Courses, catering for less academically orientated students with no specific career field in mind. <sup>13</sup>

TEC had over 92,000 (Russell 1984,25) registrations in 1981/82 and made about 44,000 awards of certificates and diplomas. BEC in the same period had about 59,000 registrations and made roughly 30,000 awards. In October 1983 these two councils merged to form one council: the Business & Technician Education Council (BTEC) and the same full range of subjects and awards will remain under a single BTEC title.

The mode of attendance for these courses as with some CGLI courses is either full- or part-time and flexibility exists in other aspects such as modular or unit based courses, strong central guidelines and designed elements but college detailed design and submission and college examination and external moderation. In 1984/85 about 190,000 people were registered as following BTEC courses and BTEC estimated that 20,000 of these related to YTS trainees (YTN, June 1986,18).

There are various other examining boards, specialising in a profession or occupational field such as the RSA (Royal Society of Arts) who examines several hundred candidates a year in commercial and office practice. Six regional examination bodies offer certificates in craft subjects which correspond with those courses provided by the CGLI. These are designed to meet local needs. Colleges of FE also offer courses leading to their own certificates and diplomas and acceptability of these awards depends largely on the status of the college offering them.

In addition Colleges also offer GCE O- and A- level courses which are often combined with RSA courses, thus doubling the provision of the secondary schools, sixth form colleges and tertiary colleges.

### 3.3.3. The Redistribution of FE Students

Over the last decade, not only has provision for the more able youngster, wanting to continue his or her education along a specific career path or to obtain academic qualifications as a prerequisite for higher education increased, but a provision of courses for Young Stayers On (YSOs) (Farley 1983,59) has grown, which is both confusing and confused.

In one respect FE had turned full circle because numbers of day-release students had declined and the colleges had spare capacity. The decline in day-release, never having been made compulsory as in West Germany, is due to the decline in apprenticeships, due in turn to the fact that in an economic recession employers are loathe to spend money on training and due to the decline in employment in the manufacturing sector which trains the majority of apprentices.

Table 3.2 illustrates this. Total enrolment figures have increased steadily between 1972 and 1984, rising from 1,517,000 in 1972 to 1,619,000 in 1984 with a drop in the early 1980s. This recent rise can be attributed in part to the increased take-up of YTS. Full-time and sandwich courses increased by 81% and day-release from employment decreased by 34%, but other part-time day courses expanded by 81% up to 1982.

TABLE 3.2

Enrolments on Non-Advanced Courses in Major Establishments Analysed by Mode of Attendance: November 1972 to 1984

<u>Year</u>	<u>England</u>						
	1972	1977	<u>Thousands</u>				1984
	1978	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	
Full-time & sandwich	196	277	288	296	328	355	337
Part-time day with re-release from employer	475	428	452	419	351	313	368
Other part-time day	135	157	173	166	216	241	272
All part-time day	610	585	625	585	566	554	640
Evening Only	711	625	660	573	573	596	642
-----							
Total	1,517	1,487	1,572	1,455	1,468	1,505	1,619

Note: NAFE courses are those whose academic level, measured in terms of standard qualifications, is at or below GCE A-level, the Ordinary National Diploma and their equivalents.

Source: Adapted from DES Statistical Bulletin 5/84, April 1984, and 5/86, March 1986.

This redistribution of FE students over the last ten to twenty years can be explained as follows. Firstly, the raising of the school leaving age to 16 in 1973 generally made FE more acceptable to young people and their parents, and at the same time the changing industrial demands and consequent adaptation and increase of courses suited to local and national industries needs further increased the number of students attending a college full-time or on a sandwich basis. On the other hand the bad employment situation for young people also increased the demand for full-time courses, with young people hoping to increase their employment chances by becoming more vocationally qualified.



Orthodox GCE A- and O-levels, mainly on a full-time basis, were offered in a more adult environment than school, thus attracting young people who either wished to take further GCEs or retake those they had failed or performed poorly in. Furthermore, the provision of short-term full-time courses for unemployed school leavers increased numbers as did the development of pre-vocational and foundation courses catering for a growing number of undecided, or in the eyes of the labour market "not capable" school leavers. Finally increased provision for unemployed adults also swelled numbers of attendance.

These changes have led to a new role for FE Colleges. No longer are they being asked to provide for the educational needs of the young worker, but they are now having to cater for the socially and academically disadvantaged, the unemployed, school leavers and adults, pensioners, the handicapped, ethnic minority groups and an increasing number of girls. Within this group fall all those young people who leave school to enter employment which gives little or no systematic training and no FE.

This change of role raises questions about the function of FE. Firstly agreement has to be reached about what should be provided in Colleges of FE and what should be offered by sixth forms in grammar schools or by Sixth Forms or Tertiary Colleges for the 16 to 19 age group. All the above offer GCE O-and A-level courses (now GCSE and A/S levels) and to a greater or lesser extent general or specific vocational courses. This either indicates a wasteful situation likely to lead to tension and rivalry or to multiple avenues of qualification for young people with many different educational and vocational opportunities. Bristow (1976,152) argued for a rationalisation and unification of the structure of post-16 education to provide a pattern of full-time education relevant to the social and individual needs of this age group, because then there were spaces in schools, and FE colleges were on the verge of having to turn potential students away due to lack of space. Later Farmer (1982,314) argued that the generally held distinction that FE is essentially 'technical' and concerned with 'vocation', whereas provision made by secondary schools is 'general' or

without vocational direction was becoming increasingly ill-founded. This view is further substantiated by the fact that many 'vocational' courses involve substantial elements of 'general' education and that the purpose of many of those following GCE courses is to use the qualification as a means of entry to particular forms of employment. This latter argument was reiterated by students on the CGLI Foundation Course at Sutton Coldfield College of Technology, many of whom still saw O-levels as the passport to employment. <sup>14</sup>

There is the possibility that the boundaries between secondary and further education have by necessity become more open. Farmer attributed the convergence of the two sectors during the 1970s to the following factors: the growing willingness of 16 to 19 year olds, for whom traditional GCE courses are not appropriate, to stay on in full-time education, thereby encouraging schools to make alternative provision of a more explicitly pre-vocational nature; the growing proportion of 16 to 19 year olds who have regarded FE as their first chance rather than their 'second chance' opportunity, with the result that colleges of FE have developed GCE courses for those who have preferred to transfer to the more adult environment of a college; the expansion of the NAFE sector and the changes in the client group for whom provision has been made.

One needs to add here the government-inspired programmes: the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) for 14-18 year olds and the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE) for 16 year olds. TVEI aims to prepare young people better for working life by making what they learn at school, and the way in which they learn it, more relevant to the world of work. Every LEA is now taking part in this programme and by the early 1990s all schools and colleges will be able to participate in it (Cmnd 540 December 1988). CPVE is a one-year certificate course for 16 year olds, where much of the work is practical and job-related, covering potentially more than one vocational area. <sup>15</sup> Not until the mid-1980s did the government intervene directly in the provision of school-based vocational programmes. Previously it had transferred 25% of funding for NATFE

from the LEAs to the MSC (Secretary of State for Employment 1984,16; Finn 1987,178), thereby limiting the scope of local colleges. More centralised and uniform control over this type of provision was, therefore, being aimed at.

In order to cater for the changing needs of school leavers it seems that a doubling of provision is necessary. Dean and Choppin (1977,40) mention a variety of studies carried out among students at FE Colleges and among pupils in Sixth Forms to discover which environment was preferable for the study of both A-levels and NAFE courses of a more vocational nature. The conclusions of the surveys were not unanimous and the authors themselves indicated that although the system at present is wasteful, individuals will always prefer one or the other for personal and practical reasons. They suggested that linked courses between schools and colleges of FE were perhaps the best answer for pupils who wanted the advantages of both school and college.

Problems can also be seen as coming from the need to provide educational facilities for socially and academically disadvantaged young people whether in or out of employment. The staff at most FE Colleges are used to working with motivated, fairly capable, educated young people, who have decided to come to college to further or start their career. Many of the students now attending colleges on a full or part-time basis are either on YTS and, therefore, have to spend a minimum of 13 weeks (20 weeks for YTS-2) at college or are on Foundation or Pre-Vocational Courses, because they could not find employment, refused YTS or had no clear idea of what career field to enter or lacked the CSE or O-level grades to participate in the course of their choice. Many of these students either see college as a social meeting place i.e. better than being at home or meeting in the shopping precinct; or attend the relevant courses, because YTS rules stipulate it, but are in the main unmotivated, cannot see the relevance of their course to the work they are doing the rest of the week or are just not interested (Welsh Office 1984b,20). Or they attend a Foundation Course, having been promised a place on a course of their choice on successful completion of this course and half-way through the course they learn that the promise is not being fulfilled, due to their own

that the promise is not being fulfilled, due to their own lack of qualifications or the lack of places. These youngsters then lose interest completely in a course which at the outset they looked upon with scepticism but had slowly grown to like. The staff on the other hand often expect these students to be no different to their traditional craft apprentice day-release students, who on the whole were eager to pass their CGLI certificate, even if they were not required to do so.

#### 3.3.4. Cooperation with Outside Bodies <sup>16</sup>

FE may formally appear to be about entry to a job or access to a qualified status, but in reality it is about competency and confidence; the development of skills which can be practised with reliability, imagination and confidence. This is the basis educationalists in FE have been working on for many years but it is now changing as the range of skills required of a student widen and the purpose of the skill broadens. In addition these skills may not only be confined to the world of work.

The problem FE has to face in the next decade are numerous and involve co-operation with a variety of outside bodies. Ways will have to be found to motivate the more disadvantaged young people; common aims of the youngsters and the staff will have to be developed so that neither group is disappointed; close co-operation and consultation with industry at a local and national level with possible secondments from either side are vital if off-the-job YTS provision is to be successful and relevant, otherwise there is no reason why industry should not tender the off-the-job part of YTS to private training agencies as is already happening in many cases. Furthermore, a partnership with the MSC needs to be developed, as it is charged with the responsibility for the country's training effort and is relying on FE as the main provider of education and training there is a danger that the divide between training and education could deepen further.

Finally, closer relations have to be developed between schools and colleges, so that the needs of the young people are best served. Young people need to be frequently consulted about their desires, needs and ideas on FE and training, not just when they reach sixteen years of age, but earlier if adequate provision for the future is going to be made. Unemployment paradoxically has increased the number of part-time and full-time students, the former under the DES dispensation of February 1980, whereby unemployed young people may attend school and college courses for 21 hours per week so long as they satisfy the relevant DHSS regulations.<sup>17</sup> These extra students must be accommodated in a manner suited to their needs, because just as YTS trainees will become more numerous and more demanding so will those school leavers wanting to study full- or part-time in an ever increasingly competitive employment market.

The influence of YTS on both industrial training in the form of apprenticeships and on the FE sector have been indicated in the two previous sections. How it has encroached on two separate sectors which could not really be described as a vocational training "system", almost inadvertently drawing the two sectors closer together and thus creating the beginnings of a vocational training system for Britain will be looked at below.

### 3.4. The Development of Youth Training Programmes

#### 3.4.1. Historical Overview

The ITBs, although increasing the quantity of training, attempting to divide the financial burden of training equitably among firms in its industry and trying to impose uniform standards did not influence the economy as a whole as far as training was concerned, only reaching a very small, strictly defined number of people. Measures outside the traditional industrial training system did not take precedence until the mid-1970s. Through the establishment of the MSC the government

took direct responsibility for training. Up until then there had not been a central body:

"to make such arrangements as it considers appropriate for the purpose of assisting persons to select, train for, obtain and retain employment suitable for their ages and capacities."  
(Employment and Training Act 1973,3)

Wellens argued that state intervention had been occurring in different forms in earlier decades:

"...the tendency (from 1950 onwards) had been to look to Government to make all sorts of decisions it wasn't in the least bit qualified or empowered to make: for example what reforms were needed in the form of apprenticeships.... Over the period 1945 to 1979 the basic philosophy was classic state interventionist." (ICT October 1983,303)

This is disputable because although the government issued White Papers before 1963 their effect was negligible and their commitment to change and its implementation do not seem very strong. However,

"Conservative governments have a tradition of seeking the solution to economic difficulties in labour market policy and have dominated each of the three periods of training policy reform (1964, 1973 and 1981-82)." (GLC 1983,3)

Wellens further believes that from the mid-seventies the government turned to "funding" for the solution and in the early 1980s to "commissioning", channeling cash to dependent training bodies such as the ITBs to spend on projects chosen and approved by the MSC. This is more plausible and can be documented by looking at the increase in the MSC's budget over this time period (£125 million in 1974 and £2.5 billion in 1986/87 (Finn 1987,4)) and its growth in size and stature. The MSC was originally intended as a central co-ordinating body of fifty staff <sup>19</sup> looking at long-term needs in the training field. By 1984 it had a staff of 1,600 at its headquarters in Sheffield alone (ICT March/April 1984,3) and on 1 April 1987 its staff had increased from 21,075 on 1 April 1986 to 23,953 <sup>19</sup> (MSC Annual Report 1986/87,20).

Its role was, however, almost immediately usurped by governmental instructions to plan and execute short-term emergency programmes arising from a situation of recession and acute youth unemployment. Many of the special training measures initiated by the MSC during the mid-1970s were varied and imaginative, but they tended to treat the symptoms rather than the causes. Each programme was intended for a specific group of disadvantaged job-seekers, be they young people without qualifications, girls or young people from ethnic minorities or older people who had been made redundant and whose skills were no longer needed.

Whereas by the 1970s and even before then West Germany had a well-established system of vocational training Britain lacked anything vaguely resembling this. Each year of the approximate half a million young people under eighteen who entered employment straight from school an estimated 300,000 received little or no training from their employer (MSC 1975,19). Although 30% of British 16 year olds in 1984 were receiving vocational training compared to 17% in 1974 and in Germany this proportion had dropped from 55% in 1970 to 26% in 1985, a much greater proportion of German 16 year olds were staying on in general education before embarking on vocational training (cf Table 1.33).

Most employers in the mid-1970s saw no need for any more training than was given already and some young people had little or no motivation to enter a formal course of training. Furthermore, for many occupations no suitable general training courses for young people existed. This is in stark contrast with the situation in West Germany (cf Chapter 2).

#### 3.4.2. The Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP)

The main area of concern, therefore, were not apprentices (although these faced their own problems as discussed earlier) but young people who received little or no training on entering employment and the growing number of unemployed school leavers (27,000 in 1974 and 86,000 by 1978). Since the active intervention of the government in training there have been a succession of measures introduced on the training

front, not necessarily initiated from a training motivated outlook but rather from a politically motivated one i.e. reducing the number of unemployed young people rather than improving the skills of the workforce (Finn 1987; Socialist Society's Education Group 1983,8). The MSC realised very early on that if it supplemented industry's own contribution to training by funding the initial parts of craft training employers would come to expect it and reduce their intake of trainees still further in bad years and even in better years (MSC 1975,18).

The major initiative affecting minimum-age school leavers entering employment was the Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP) scheme, intended as a broadly based programme of vocational preparation to facilitate the transfer from school to work and enable young people to make a more effective economic contribution at work. It was to provide both on- and off-the-job training for young people in occupations where they traditionally had received very little and was in the main run by the ITBs. This programme will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 as the retail sector was one of the most active promoters of this scheme.

The way of formulating training policy in Britain is in great contrast with the consensus-based approach adopted in West Germany, where the government of the day, the opposition, the trade unions and employers have an active input into the formulation of training policy and regulations both at national and local level. The normal policy approach of issuing White Papers was used in Britain. Most of the state initiated programmes since the mid-1970s were introduced to the public through White Papers, which outlined government policy. Interested parties were invited to comment in writing, but the deadlines given before a decision would be taken were very short. No centralised forum existed where government, trade unions and employers could meet to discuss the implications of the policies. The powers given to the MSC under the 1973 Act to make suitable arrangements for employment training for the population meant that no further legislation was needed. This meant that limited discussion on training occurred in the Houses of Parliament. Control over training provision



was, therefore, very much in the hands of a quango<sup>20</sup> - the MSC. Employers, who wished to benefit from state assistance in training had to use the MSC. School leavers equally had to turn to the MSC for help in determining training provision.

### 3.4.3. The Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP)

It can be argued that the British government was obliged to intervene more actively on the training front with programmes for the young unemployed because youth unemployment in Britain was much higher than in West Germany in the mid-1970s. A fact pointed out in several MSC reports (MSC 1982; NEDO/MSC 1984) and demonstrated by the figures in Table 1.33, showing the comparative activity rates between British and German 16 year olds.<sup>21</sup> This was no doubt partly due to the fact that there was no accepted national system of vocational training. The government finally acknowledged in October 1976 that the special measures so far taken by it and administered by the MSC and the Department of Employment were "piecemeal, temporary and confusing for young people". The MSC said:

"The greatest need is for current efforts to be brought together and developed on a continuing basis to meet the needs of young people." (MSC 1977a, 29).

and

"...first, training should lead to agreed standards wherever possible. ... Second, a balance needs to be struck between meeting the immediate requirements of the job and preparing individuals for a broader career." (MSC 1978b, 6)

This programme took four and a half years to develop, enlisting the co-operation of all the industrial partners - trade union and employer federation representatives, educationalists, employees and government representatives, resulting in several consultative and information documents,<sup>22</sup> before culminating in December 1981 in the White Paper: "A New Training Initiative: A Programme for Action". It recognised the fundamental faults of British vocational training: lengthy apprenticeships in a limited number of occupations, no outside body to

control uniform standards, no compulsory day-release, FE provision being established as and when required and not necessarily to complement the provision made by industry. It laid down a programme for action to remedy these faults by 1985.

During the intervening four and a half years youth unemployment did not recede and continued provision for the young unemployed was made under the broad umbrella of the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) launched on 1 April 1978. Appendix 6 gives details of the various types of "special measures" which continued throughout this period. The YOP programmes for unemployed young people can be divided into two main areas: courses of work preparation, namely Employment Induction Courses (EIC), lasting two to three weeks; Short Industrial Courses (SIC), 13 weeks long; Occupational Selection Courses (OSC), 2 to 18 weeks long and work experience, with the largest programme being Work Experience on Employers' Premises (WEPP), lasting six months; Training Workshops, six months to one year; Project-Based Work Experience, a minimum of six months, and finally Community Service, again a minimum of six months. All these schemes were intended to help young people find employment either through improving their personal skills or by making it easier and cheaper for employers to take them on in uncertain economic conditions. How various elements of YOP affected trainees in retailing will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. At this point it is just important to note that the numbers participating in YOP grew, with 25% of school leavers entering the scheme in 1980/81 (MSC 1981a,3), whereas it had been intended primarily for the underachievers at school (FEU 1979,53).

As the scheme grew it came under increasing criticism because fewer and fewer young people were able to use it as a stepping stone into employment (Allum & Quigley 1983,7).<sup>23</sup> It was partly the fault of the scheme (Finn 1983a,19) with employers using one set of trainees after another instead of keeping the original trainees on as employees. Partly it was the result of economic recession with an unprecedented height of youth unemployment and finally the changing nature of perception concerning the scheme (GLC 10.3.1983,2). YOP was not

particularly designed as a training scheme but by 1982, with YTS being planned, YOP was increasingly seen as inadequate in training terms. Mr Norman Tebbit, the then Secretary of State for Employment pointed out in 1982 that YTS was not a

"revamped YOP scheme with a bit of icing. YOP is a work experience scheme, YTS is first and foremost a training scheme." (ICT, April 1982,129),

thus attempting to present a new attitude and policy for training young people.

#### 3.4.4. Formulation of a Training Strategy

The New Training Initiative (NTI) was to be guided by the three major national objectives set out in the MSC's consultative document: "A New Training Initiative" in May 1981 and given overwhelming support by employers, unions and educational and training bodies. They are:

- a) to develop skill training including apprenticeships in such a way as to enable young people entering at different ages and with different educational attainments to acquire standards of skill appropriate to the jobs available and to provide them with a basis for progress through further learning;
- b) to move towards a position where all young people under the age of 18 have the opportunity either of continuing in full-time education or of entering a period of planned work experience combined with work-related training and education;
- c) to open widespread opportunities for adults, whether employed or returning to work, to acquire, increase or update their skills and knowledge during the course of their working lives.

Various observers saw these proposals as being the most far reaching for industrial training ever put before parliament (The Guardian 16.12.1981). The importance of a comprehensive training strategy as an integral part of Britain's overall strategy for economic recovery and

sustained growth was not questioned (MSC 1981c,4) and it was agreed that the time was right for action. Furthermore,

"... for the first time there is agreement amongst employers, unions, the education and training services and other interests that all young people entering employment need good quality basic training as a foundation for work and for further training or retraining, and acknowledgement too that, for the majority of young people, those needs are not currently being met." (MSC 1981c,7)

The MSC in its "A New Training Initiative: An Agenda for Action" proposed the setting up of a task group to report by April 1982 on the structure, scope and content of a general scheme of vocational preparation for young people, including how it should be funded, the timetable for introduction and the nature and level of participants' income. In the meantime YOP and UVP would serve as major testing grounds for this comprehensive scheme for all young people. YOP was to be developed into a programme providing upto one year of good quality training and/or planned work experience **combining work-related training and education**, for all young people not in full-time education or work. As many existing YOP projects as possible were to be converted to meet the new standards, so as to make such a programme available to all unemployed school leavers no later than September 1983. At the same time employers participating in UVP or running their own training schemes for young people in employment were to obtain expanded help from the MSC to continue their programmes. <sup>24</sup> These proposals (Youth Task Group Report 1982) were in general welcomed by the government, but in its White Paper "An Agenda for Action" (published at the same time) it disagreed with two of the Youth Task Group proposals. Firstly, that participation should be voluntary and that young people on YTS should receive allowances equivalent in real terms to those paid under YOP; and secondly, that YTS should have 460,000 places in its first full year.

It was, however, forced to agree to both in order for the scheme to get off the ground. The first proposal has since been modified more along government lines. Although participation in the scheme will remain voluntary:

"Any young person who unreasonably refuses an offer of a suitable opportunity under this scheme may have his or her benefit reduced in the same way as other young people and adults who refuse suitable employment or training opportunities." (Training for Jobs January 1984, §26)

and again in 1985 to :

"... a government instruction that youngsters who boycott the YTS should be reported to the Department of Health and Social Security and have their benefit chopped." (News and Telephone 29.8.1985,1)

This direct contradiction meant that YTS would in fact only be voluntary for employers but not for young people. In September 1988 new Department of Social Security Regulations came into force which implemented the Government's policy to withdraw from those under 18 the right to claim benefit, and, therefore, to ensure that "unemployment is no longer an option" for school leavers. There is evidence that this has not been totally effective. <sup>25</sup>

The second disagreement had serious implications for the quality of YTS, because by paying a YOP-level allowance to 460,000 young people instead of to 300,000 as proposed by the government, the amount left over to pay for the off-the-job training was very low, particularly in employer-based YTS places. The government's cash limit restrictions (£1 billion p.a.) meant that the training could not be high quality without additional funding from employers themselves. However, as only approximately 340,000 places were taken up this problem should not have arisen, but additional finance was not made available to the schemes which were running, so the issue of quality remained a major one.

It has been pointed out (Keep 1986,20) that the discussions regarding trainee allowances and the question of compulsion, although important to the individual trainees were essentially "non-training issues". Energy and time were being diverted from discussing the design of a high quality programme. There is no evidence that this type of discussion would ever have occurred in West Germany at this level. There it is very much the actual content of individual schemes which lead to long-drawn out disputes.

3.4.5. The Youth Training Programme (YTS)<sup>26</sup>

The original programme (September 1983 - September 1984)<sup>27</sup> was very large and complicated. It was to cater for 460,000 young people in its first year, a figure which was reduced to 360,000 young people every year, when statistics showed that more young people than anticipated were obtaining employment.<sup>28</sup>

YTS was initially designed for all young people, who had left full-time compulsory education at 16 for work, and at 17 and had become unemployed within the first year of leaving and disabled young people up to the age of 21. This embraces the majority of the minimum-age school leaver population, excluding those who start on full-time courses of FE of a general and/or vocational nature, those on pre-vocational courses, those going straight into unqualified employment and those starting apprenticeships not integrated into YTS.

By 1987 the Government had extended the scheme to two years and to all young people under 18, and Lord Young, the Employment Secretary stated:

"Each and every unemployed person under 18 is now guaranteed high quality training. For the first time, from this Easter, there need be no unemployment under 18 and anyone under that who remains unemployed will have chosen to remain unemployed." (The Guardian 29.1.1987,4)

YTS now guarantees all school leavers under 18 a one-year basic training course in one of the eleven occupational training families (OTFs) which were developed and subsequently replaced by training occupational categories (TOCs) (Appendix 7), followed by a year of more specialised training in a particular occupation.

Recruitment for places is through the Careers Service, who submit names of young people to managing agencies and sponsors. Employers and other sponsors, however, make the final decision dependant on their own

requirements and the suitability of the individual trainee. The operation of this will be discussed further in the case studies.

The MSC established certain basic criteria, which had to be met before a scheme would be accepted. The scheme had to provide opportunity for the trainee to learn in the following areas:

- a) basic skills and additional basic skills such as computer literacy/information technology;
- b) world of work;
- c) world of non-employment including trainee interaction with the community;
- d) job specific and broadly related skills;
- e) personal effectiveness, planning and problem solving;
- f) skill transfer, especially skill ownership and learning skills.

The eight following design elements need to be incorporated in any scheme: Induction; Assessment; Planned Work experience; Occupationally based training; Off-the job training; Recording and reviewing; Guidance and counselling.

The five core areas are: number and its application; communication language/equal opportunity; problem solving and planning; manipulative ability/dexterity and introduction to computer literacy and the new technologies.

At the outset many training officers had difficulties putting these objectives into practice and during the first years of YTS criticisms leveled at certain schemes were justified. Both case study companies, it will be seen, decided to wait for a year before embarking on YTS to give themselves time to adapt their in-house training to YTS. The translation of MSC scheme guidelines into practice will be looked at further in the case studies.

The scheme can be run by individual sponsors - employers, local authorities, LEAs, voluntary organisations, ITBs - under contract with

the MSC. The majority of opportunities are, however, provided by private and public sector employers. In many cases individual organisations provide and manage a total training programme, but in others managing agents act for a collection of small companies and these design and deliver the programmes. The MSC initially envisaged that the managing agents would in the majority of cases also be sponsors, providing all or part of the training. However, some companies set themselves up for the sole purpose of being a managing agent for the MSC. They are responsible for organising the off-the-job training for a minimum of 13 weeks, carrying out selection and assessment, and placing trainees with employer sponsors. There has been evidence that many managing agents were not vetted properly by the MSC before their schemes were approved and that they were breaking company law in various ways.<sup>29</sup>

Each scheme varies according to needs and circumstances of local areas, individuals and provision available, but all provide the young person with a minimum of 13 weeks off-the-job education/training, originally for the majority at a College of FE either in blocks of four weeks or more or on a day-release basis. The need for co-operation of all bodies involved is obviously essential for the scheme to work.

To prevent YTS being accused of job substitution an 'additionality' clause was introduced into the scheme whereby a sponsor took on a minimum of an additional three young people either as employees or trainees for every two that would have been taken into employment as part of a normal intake. In these circumstances, the MSC grant would be payable for all five. However, two workers may be replaced by five trainees and although three extra young people might receive training there was no guarantee of a job at the end for any of the five. It also increased the competition between youngsters and let the employer pick and chose those best suited to his needs. In effect he had five young people on an extended probationary period at little cost to himself (Cockburn 1987,21). This rule disappeared due to the difficulty of enforcing it particularly in the case of the growing number of private managing agents who would not have had any trainees



the previous year, having set up in business purely as a result of YTS, and quite naturally after the second year of operation of YTS. 30

The Area Manpower Boards (AMBs) were responsible for securing sufficient schemes in their areas and to approve schemes which met the required standards. They were comprised of employers, trade unions, local authorities and educational interests and possibly also voluntary organisations and ethnic minority representation. The AMBs effectively had responsibility for approving and monitoring YTS at local level. These were wound up in October 1988 and effectively remove an important element of local accountability and involvement, especially at a point in time when major changes in funding and allocation of places are being implemented. Their function has largely been given to the new local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), which are to be led by employers to plan and deliver training and to promote and support the development of small businesses and self-employment within their areas under contract to the government. With the abolition of all but seven ITBs and their demise imminent, control of training is very much in the hands of employers, without them having to pay for it. The monitoring function, which is performed by the Chambers of Commerce, Industry or Crafts in West Germany and which could have been performed by the AMBs has been removed in Britain. Monitoring of each programme is, therefore, an internal, localised function with no national overview.

#### 3.4.5.1. Financing the Youth Training Scheme

The MSC grant made a substantial contribution towards the costs of either a managing agent or a sponsor, but it did not completely cover them if the training was to be of the high standard desired by the MSC. The MSC, when calculating the amount of the grant, included an allowance for the costs the employer would have incurred in the normal intake of school leavers and the production benefits during work experience .

It was quite possible that sponsors, who were not also managing agents would receive no part of the grant because they would, in the majority

of cases, not be carrying out the off-the-job training elements and the rest of the grant was to provide for the trainee's allowance, a contribution to off-the-job training and managing agency administration costs.

Funding in turn depended on whether a Mode A or a Mode B1 or B2 <sup>31</sup> was being offered. Mode A, which was to involve 300,000 trainees was a programme organised by public and private employers, local authorities and voluntary organisations. The grant for a Mode A trainee was originally £185. As grants were also payable for every two young people of normal intake for whom three extra young people were trained, in practice this meant that the sponsor would receive £3,083 per extra young person (Local Government Training Board 1982,3) towards the cost of allowances or wages (depending upon their status) and the costs of designing, developing and managing the schemes and the off-the-job education/training and supervisory costs. In addition, a further £100 per trainee was payable if the sponsor also acted as a managing agent to cover administration costs. <sup>32</sup>

The division of YTS into Mode A and B meant that young people were divided into two categories:

- a) those who are employer-based:
  - in large companies with well-defined training programmes have a good chance of being kept on, and if not, have had the benefit of a good scheme;
  - in small companies where the training element is often reduced knowingly or unknowingly by the employer and the chance of not being kept on after the end of the scheme is greater because another trainee can be recruited more cheaply;
  - recruited by a private managing agent who places the youngsters with employers. This can lead to abuse of the system because as they are profit-making organisations and the subsidy from the MSC is supposed to be a contribution towards training there is no room for profit unless the quality of the training is reduced. This

apparently has occurred in several instances and these youngsters are at a disadvantage.

- b) those who are college-based or with a voluntary organisation: are more likely to be on a scheme where concern for the young people is greater but the youngster allocated to these schemes are often rejects from the Mode A schemes (often female or from ethnic minorities or educationally disadvantaged). The educational and caring element is much stronger and beneficial to these disadvantaged young people, but as they are often judged on the same basis as a Mode A scheme it is impossible for them to be as successful.

The MSC accepted these criticisms and just one unified scheme has been instituted with premium funding arrangements for the old Mode B places. However, a report in London (Guardian 26.1.1987,3) showed that although young blacks account for an estimated 17.4% of Ilea's secondary school population they took up 27.8% of basic and 35.3% of premium (for the specially disadvantaged) YTS places. The Colleges of FE have argued that no private managing agents should be allowed to operate and that they should take over the schemes of these agents and place youngsters with small local employers. This has not happened with Private Managing Agents (PTA) growing steadily and FE involvement diminishing.

In contrast with West Germany, where the employers pay for both the actual training and the trainees' allowance, British employers can contribute as much or as little as they like towards training costs.

#### 3.4.5.2. Control by Employers

Each young person, participating in the scheme has the status of a trainee and is paid an allowance and not a wage by the managing agent. This status is determined by a traineeship agreement - stating the length and general content of the individual's programme of training, their remuneration whilst in training, any additional opportunities open to them during the course of training and their access to support and advice. The employer has no obligation to offer full employment at

the end of the scheme, but can enter into a contract of employment with trainees at any time they choose - at the outset, during or at the end of the programme. Some critics (Bloxham 1983; Fiddy 1985; Cockburn 1987) state that YTS has been designed, not for the good of the trainee but to meet the needs of employers. They argue that employers are more interested in job substitution than in educating working class youth. Due to the fact that initially many large organisations did not become involved in YTS and thus small employers increasingly had to be used, this argument holds some truth. How can a newsagent, employing only a YTS trainee fail to exploit them? The newsagent only has to be ill and the YTS trainee is left to run the shop on their own. The trainee is, therefore, directly contributing to turnover and not being trained, even if the responsibility conferred on that trainee is welcomed by them. There is no guarantee against this potential problem of exploitation in small businesses.

The MSC and the government hoped that many employers would take some of the trainees on as employees from the outset of the scheme or a large proportion as full employees at the end of the scheme. Youthaïd (1985,15) state that only 14,000 young people on YTS had employee status in 1983/84 and Income Data Service (1986a,20) found that only about 4% of entrants onto one-year YTS had employee status on joining. <sup>33</sup> By 1987 the proportion of YTS trainees with employee status had increased from 8% in September 1985 to 11% in September 1987 (YTN January 1988,24), reaching 16% nationally in March 1988. <sup>34</sup> Even with this steady increase it is difficult to believe the argument that YTS is intended for all young people leaving school whether employed or unemployed, although young people do enter it immediately on leaving school and not like YOP after a period of being unemployed first.

Many firms have little incentive to employ young people when they can have trainees more cheaply. At the end of each year of YTS companies must ask themselves why they should keep on YTS trainees as employees if they can have more trainees free (Ainley 1988,99). One could argue that they may have been perfectly satisfied with the trainees and, therefore, want to keep them on. In that case they had the option of

keeping them on under the Young Workers Scheme (YWS), whereby if the company agreed to pay the trainee less than £50 per week he would receive a £15 a week subsidy from the government. As a result the youngster is never in proper employment and will be 'scheme-hopping' as long as possible, progressing from YWS to Community Industry to Employment Training (ET). At a certain age there will be no more schemes to hop onto; probably around the ages of 20 to 25 and all that will have happened is that the problem has been moved on several years (Guardian 22.2.1988,18). The argument that YTS is in fact an extra year or two of education 'through the backdoor' is, therefore, not too hard to accept. This is especially true in light of the development of YTS-2, where ministers have clearly stated that no young person under 18 now needs to be unemployed as quality training under YTS is available to all of them (The Christmas Undertaking). As in other European countries e.g. West Germany or France, the British government is removing the majority of 16-18 year olds from the labour market. In view of the need for more highly educated and trained staff being needed in almost all sectors of industry and commerce this is not a bad policy to adopt.

The youngster is now potentially better trained and hopefully more skilled than if s/he had not attended the schemes, but it is doubtful whether s/he will be more motivated (Willis 1985,210) if there are no real jobs at the end of the process. The scheme, therefore, relies entirely on the goodwill of the employers. However, with the shortage of school leavers in the 1990s this whole problem may disappear (Guardian 29.4.1988), or now that a training culture is starting to develop, to keep it, employers will need to be persuaded yet again of the value of training (Moore 1988,3).

#### 3.4.5.3. Education versus Training

YTS is seen by some (Finn 1983a, Willis 1984a) as an attack upon the working class, pushed into the bottom tier of a new three-tier education system - Higher Education, Further Education full-time and YTS. They argue that YTS is just preparing young people for the dole

and a life of intermittent semi-skilled labour. This is mirrored by the administrative division, whereby YTS is administered by the Department of Employment and the MSC and full-time further and higher education by the Department of Education and Science.

The difference in concept of main elements of the YTS between the MSC and the Further Education Unit (FEU) are analysed by Seale:

"The FEU exists to provide a lead in curriculum matters for FE colleges and it has been closely associated with developments in FE provision for MSC courses. With a history of major FE provision of Life and Social Skills elements it is perhaps inevitable that FEU documents often reflect the particular concerns of teaching such material, rather than the teaching of more occupationally specific material." (1984,4)

The MSC's emphasis on training rather than education is confirmed by its delegation of a rationale for occupationally specific content to the Institute of Manpower Studies (IMS), an organisation with its roots in training and not education and not to the FEU with its roots in education. It is not surprising that FE is suspicious of the MSC; it cannot, however, afford to be suspicious, jealous or admiring of the MSC as it needs to work in close collaboration with it in order to unify the arrangements for training and education and not just the educational provision for the 16 to 19 age group. From 1983/84 this has been occurring according to various educational sources (Welsh Office 1984; DES 1984), but more recent reports state that:

"Further Education Colleges now provide barely half the off-the-job training for YTS trainees." (Finn 1987,178)

indicating that co-operation has not worked very effectively and much of the off-the-job training is being undertaken either by employers themselves or by private training organisations. This is likely to mean that the general education aspect of YTS is not being carried out in a large number of cases or not by qualified staff. The importance of social and personal skills, which are transferable skills, is recognised by the designers of YTS, but combining these with occupational transferable skills is still an area needing further development, let alone turning them into recognised qualifications.

This continued divide between education and training has made Dennis Alderson <sup>35</sup> call for a joint Ministry of Education and Training, reflecting the view of many people in the education field. This would further appease those critics who argue that education in YTS is seen as a minor component. The MSC documents hardly mention it and the argument was intensified by the White Paper 'Training for Jobs', which authorised responsibility for a quarter of the £800 million spent each year by LEAs in England and Wales on work-related NAFE to be given to the MSC. The government argued that the MSC was in the best position to co-ordinate education and training, whereas the colleges saw themselves as far more capable of dealing with youngsters due to the vast experience they have had with them and due to the training of the FE staff. This dichotomy is similar to the situation in West Germany but there agreement has been reached through the consensus-based policy approach. Each party is clear about its responsibilities and authority.

The unification of training and education in a manner most beneficial to the young people remains a problem in Britain. YTS is seen as being aimed, less obviously than previous schemes, at 'troublesome youth' because it removes young people from the streets <sup>36</sup> and lowers the unemployment figures. Fiddy (1985,31) points out that the 1981 riots occurred between the publication of the MSC's consultative document and the government's White Paper, the first not mentioning the withdrawal of benefit but the second advocating it. Perhaps this is proof that the government was trying to remove young people from the streets! YTS may contain potentially rebellious youths but blaming YTS for this is simplistic; other questions need to be considered: why are young people potentially rebellious? Do they want to work in dead-end jobs with no future, rather than being trained in basic skills? Who is naive enough to believe that young people on schemes are really unemployable? Do employers really want a pliant workforce? What about motivation? Answering these questions, however, goes beyond the scope of this study.

#### 3.4.5.4. Developing a Training Culture

Since the the mid-1980s 74% of all 16 year olds leaving school join YTS and it is now the major route into skills training and vocational qualifications for those school leavers (YTN June 1988,25). Young people in schools are, nevertheless, still sceptical of YTS as a survey in Sheffield in 1988 discovered. When 16 year olds were asked how they felt about going on a YTS programme the following four replies reflect current thinking and are similar to the case study comments:

"Julie: 'It's a good idea to have training but at the end of the two years you still might not have a job.'  
Lee: 'I don't think it improves your prospects. You just go from one programme to another.'  
Trevor: 'If there wasn't YTS employers would still need people to work for them and we would have permanent jobs then.'  
Jackie: 'A lot of employers just take on trainees because it's cheap and then when the two years is up they get rid of you and take on another trainee. I'd like to have more money. It's just cheap labour, isn't it?'" (Hatton June 1988,13)

Motivation for joining the scheme is still determined primarily by employment opportunities. Although the first leaver sample found that 40% of trainees felt that YTS was very useful, the emphasis was still on getting a job with 52% stating that they had joined YTS because they thought it would help them find one and only 36% because they wanted to be trained. Of those leaving between April 1985 and March 1986 37% had wanted to be trained and 48% thought YTS would help them find a job.

In effect YTS removes the majority of 16- and 17-year olds from the labour market, preparing them, so it is said, to enter it at a later date with a better chance of obtaining full employment. Meanwhile the government has provided employers all over the country with a free pair of hands, welcomed without doubt by the majority of them in the present economic climate. YTS, the government argues, should not be seen only in terms of employment statistics:

"YTS needs to be judged on its overall contribution to the national training scene and how well it prepares young people for the world of work, not from placement figures into employment particularly in the short term. A place on YTS does not and cannot guarantee a job, nor can YTS itself generate employment.



As a training scheme its ultimate success must be judged by the effect it will have on vocational training and on people's perception of the need for training in their own lives and in industry in general." (YTN September 1984,vii)

In practice, however, five years later YTS is still criticised as not providing jobs (Guardian 29.1.1987; NATFE Journal Nov. 1986) or is measured in terms of how many young people have found jobs (YTN December 1986,17). The MSC's first 15% follow-up survey of July-September 1984 leavers found that 31% were in full-time work with the same employer and a further 28% in full-time work with a different employer (MSC 1985c,Table 3.1) five to six months after leaving. Youthaid (1985b) noted that the highest proportion of those finding work was in areas with relatively low rates of unemployment, women were more likely to be employed than men on completion of the scheme due to their concentration in administration/clerical, sales and personal service, and as Mode A schemes had been able to "cream off" the best qualified young people they showed better employment records than Mode B schemes. The first 100% follow-up survey of YTS leavers between April 1985 and January 1986 found that 57% of leavers were in employment three months after leaving their scheme. 27% were unemployed and only 3% had returned to full-time education or training (YTN September 1986,iv). From the April to December 1986 leaver survey it can be seen that 64% were in employment and only 22% were unemployed (YTN September 1987,vi). Thus it does look as if YTS is slowly becoming accepted as part of the normal training and recruitment programme of employers.

Public opinion in Britain has always believed that there is no point in training for the sake of training. Training must be geared to opportunities in the job market and if dead-end jobs can be enhanced by training that seems to be a worthwhile achievement as it also benefits the individual: a shop assistant who is knowledgeable about all the products in the shop is a better employee, improves customer relations and can hope to gain more personal fulfillment than if s/he were just able to operate a cash register, take money and be responsible for one section of a shop. However, employers should then not pretend that

only training takes place and pay the young people for the increased productivity they are contributing. One of the case study companies has recognised this fact and has introduced staggered pay levels for YTS trainees (cf 6.5.4.2.).

Nevertheless, the attitude to training is still very different to that in West Germany (where without qualified status one is not considered a full member of society), both on the part of the employer:

"The lack of interest shown by employers in the training of their own workers is one of the mysteries of our society." (Observer 12.4.1987,24) or

"The improvement in the economy may be leading some employers to turn their backs on YTS with its demands for day-release off-the-job training, in favour of simply using those available to get on with routine jobs and in so doing repeating the mistakes of the 1960s; squandering young malleable labour and talent." (Alderson July/August 1988,5)

and the trainee:

"Many young people look for what they understand as 'a proper job', settling for what could be described as a short-term gain and a long-term loss." (Rugg September 1987,2)

#### 3.4.5.5. Training for the Future

The other unresolved question is that of flexible training: YTS was supposed to provide broad-based foundation training and not necessarily specific skills for a specific job. Its success is measured, however, by how many young people are taken on by the scheme providers as employees and how useful they found their training on YTS. Continuing in the same job as in training will invariably mean that YTS was useful. Those going to other employers, into education or onto the dole found their training less useful, indicating that the transferable, flexible generic skills were not being imparted. A report by the ESRC:

"... suggests that the scheme has failed to provide school leavers with relevant qualifications. Rather than increasing the number of young people in 'new technology' jobs, it has tended merely to

intensify trends by increasing the proportion in industries where they were already established. (Guardian 21.11.1988,2)

In Britain the concept of flexibility seems to imply being able to move to another job in a related area. But there is no qualification to back up the acquired skill. The skills are, therefore, often company-specific rather than applicable on an industry-wide basis or further afield still. Although YTS is supposed to give young people social-communicative skills, how to relate outside and inside the world of work, as well as improve their numeracy and make them computer literate, these skills, if acquired are not tested systematically. It does mean that a trainee on a Retail YTS can be moved to window display should she show aptitude in this area. However, on leaving that scheme or job she will only have a record of achievement for a particular area, limiting her chances of obtaining other employment. The emphasis in Britain, therefore, is on transferable skills rather than on transferable qualifications. It means that without systematic testing those being trained will constantly rest at the semi-skilled level and will only be equipped to perform a job but not to initiate innovations themselves. The testing of skills implies an anticipation of future needs and changes within occupational fields and between them, which is what is happening in both Britain and West Germany. Measures alone will not remedy this state of affairs, but a change in policy should. YTS-2, if it leads to externally examined qualifications for all participants, has a chance of remedying this situation.

### 3.5. Conclusion

The 1964 Industrial Training Act was the first instance of direct government involvement, setting up an industry-by-industry structure for training, intended through the levy/grant system to set up a more rational trans-sectoral policy. This failed and Vickerstaff concluded:

"The 1964 Act showed that a limited neo-corporatist consensus could be achieved at meso- (industry) level but that this did not translate either to the level of the firm or to the level of

trans-sectoral needs. The meso-level focus of the policy tended to entrench rather than overcome sectoral interests." (1985,62)

Not until 1974 with the establishment of the MSC through the Employment and Training Act did an actual separate central body to co-ordinate low training come into being. This quango was to arrange training by the provision for employment under the "indirect" control of the Department of Employment until 1988, when the Employment Act reverted the power to:

"... make such arrangements as he considers appropriate for the purpose of assisting persons to select, train for, obtain and retain employment suitable for their ages and capacities." (1988 Employment Act, Section 2, Subsection 1)

to the Secretary of State for Employment.

During these fifteen years a tighter control on training emerged. The neo-corporatist voluntary consensus achieved by the 1964 Act in industry over the need to increase training and train for wider economic needs was thus centralised (Vickerstaff 1985). Any change in policy direction during this time was initiated either by the MSC in light of experience or by the Secretary of State for Employment. Either the MSC in the form of consultation documents or the Secretary of State in the form of White Papers would put forward their ideas.

During the 1970s, although the MSC as a macro-level neo-corporatist legitimating body was able of inspiring plans, had no means of ensuring that they were put into practice by industry. The current economic situation meant that the employers relied increasingly on the state for practical and financial support in training. Policy initiation finally moved in the early 1980s from the ITBs at the meso-level and the MSC at the macro-level to government at macro-level and collective bargaining at plant level. ITBs have almost all been abolished and voluntary bodies have taken their place.

YTS developed from the second objective of the NTI but the Government apparently always meant all three objectives to be linked together to form a coherent vocational training system (Secretary of State for

Employment 1984,16; Holland March 1982,104-8; YTN July/August 1983,9). In the early 1980s this was disputed in various quarters (Wellens February 1982,39-40; Finn 1983a; Socialist Society's Education Group 1983), which is not really surprising considering it was the first time that such an ambitious programme was being set up in Britain. By the mid- to late-1980s evidence was mounting that showed that the objectives were being turned into action (Keep 1986; Moore November 1988,3; Goulbourn July/August 1988,14-15). The major criticism to emerge is the lack of time for consultation and planning. This was repeated in the planning process for the two-year scheme. It is important to note that this hurried consultation process contrasts starkly with the long deliberate discussions in West Germany. In Britain, it could be argued, that this is due to the lack of a vocational training "system" being in place and that, therefore, an urgency to be seen to be doing something existed. The German system did not have to work under these pressures and could, therefore, devote time to developing the content of the training programmes.

The fundamental value of YTS is questioned in relatively few quarters (Wellens 1982,1) and praise from some of its staunchest critics is coming into the open (Johnson 1984,7; Cross 12.4.1988,27). Although critical of the government's implementation of YTS even the TUC/Labour Party (Plan for Training, August 1984) does not fundamentally disagree with it (Ainley 1988,104-5). Most of their demands - a two year scheme, certification, technical education for 14 and 15 year olds within a broad and balanced curriculum, commitment to voluntary participation in training with a wide range of choice and flexibility have already been met. Others - equal opportunities for girls and disadvantaged minorities and a safe and healthy work environment for all trainees are being tackled. <sup>37</sup> Trainee allowances are still low, the role of AMBs has not been expanded (in fact they have been wound down, removing local trade union input); the YWS has been abolished but replaced with a similar scheme and there is no legal duty on employers to train all young workers to a required standard. YTS is the first coherent programme for young people leaving school and it seems that Britain should be proud of what it has achieved considering its

starting point. That is not to say that there is room for complacency - far too few employers still train, expenditure on training is minimal compared to foreign competitors, the government is funding most of the training and is having difficulty persuading employers to take over, vocational qualifications are still not the norm on completion of training nor are they fully accepted by employers. However, on this last point much progress has been made with the establishment of the NCVQ.<sup>38</sup> The importance of actually training the country's workforce, for whatever political reason, seems to have finally been accepted as of the utmost importance in principle.

But can one really talk about a vocational training system in Britain? The government seems to think so (Secretary of State for Employment 1988). However, the criticisms of ten years ago still seem to be prevalent: a plethora of provision - YTS, CPVE, TVEI, JTS, ET (Guardian 19.1.1988 and 29.9.1988) and now further new initiatives (Secretary of State for Employment 1988). The government has been active, there is no doubt about that, and concerned about being seen to be doing something - it has invested £4,000 million in training since 1983 and over the next four years proposes to spend a further £7,000 million (Observer 12.4.1987), but is this leading to a coherent and flexible vocational training system? The CBI seems to think that Britain is getting there:

"... with YTS we have a more flexible and responsive system of training than a lot of our competitors. ... YTS has been one of the biggest - if not the biggest, significant vehicle to change attitudes towards training in the United Kingdom." (Moore November 1988,3)

Attitudes may slowly be changing but lip service is paid to the concept of transferable skills and artificial training modules are designed around them. The fact that young people are not being trained for the jobs of the future but continue to be concentrated in the sectors in which they have always been will be looked at again in the context of retailing. At the individual level this may not actually matter if in fact the training they are receiving enables them to perform their jobs better. However, on a global level it does imply that Britain is still training more people in low level skills and not high level skills

orientated to new technology. If, as was explained in Chapter 1, these are the jobs of the future, then although a training system of sorts may now exist in Britain it is not necessarily geared to the future. Compared to West Germany there still seems a very long way to go.

... training centres'. These culminated in 'Employment Centres', later 'Employment Centres'. A further step was made in 1974 when the 'Employment Centres' were re-named 'Employment Centres'.

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- <sup>1</sup> Appendix 5 provides an easy reference to the developments of the apprenticeship system and the Further Education sector.
- <sup>2</sup> David Richards: "How Britain lags behind in training", a reader's letter in The Guardian 16.8.1988,16.
- <sup>3</sup> These were as follows: from November 1918 until 1939 seven attempts were made to set up 'training centres'. These culminated in 1930 in the creation of 'Juvenile Unemployment Centres', later renamed 'Juvenile Instruction Centres'. Attendance was made compulsory for all unemployed youth under 18 in 1934. These provided 'social and life skills' as well as 'the development of manual dexterity' rather than specific job skills in a similar fashion to YOP. In 1928 the industrial transference programme within Britain was started. Under this young people especially were encouraged to move out of Special Areas to where there was work. Previously schemes of transference and resettlement-in-the-Empire were tried and subsequently 'continuation classes' in schools.
- <sup>4</sup> Their subsequent decline from 1987 to 1993 will only be discussed as a problem to be aware of for the future.
- <sup>5</sup> Now more commonly referred to as sandwich courses and graduate apprenticeships now more usually called graduate traineeships.
- <sup>6</sup> A detailed study by Patricia A Dutton "The impact of YTS on Engineering Apprenticeship: A Local Labour Market Study" IER, 1985/86 looks at how apprenticeship numbers are decided, and how this decision is affected by YTS; the content and quality of the engineering YTS; the number of trainees getting jobs within the firms after YTS, and of what kind; companies' perception of skill shortages; the reasons why companies became involved in YTS; and their major training concerns.
- <sup>7</sup> Construction News No.72, July 1984 figures indicate that 96% of the CITB trainees will be taken on as apprentices.
- <sup>8</sup> This was the case for gas fitters, mining engineering craftsmen, hospital cooks, heating and ventilating fitters, welders and electrical installation. The ITBs for agriculture and horticulture, foundry and hotel and catering instituted similar requirements and in the case of motor vehicle repair an optional arrangement was started after 1964.
- <sup>9</sup> At the time of writing £29.60 per week for the first year and £35 per week for the second year.
- <sup>10</sup> In the construction industry the rates are as follows: 1st year 43% (representing £37.24 per week (Wellens June 1982,190) compared to a £25 per week allowance on YTS in 1983; 2nd year 70%; 3rd year 90% (Lewis 1981,39).
- <sup>11</sup> Other than universities, Colleges of Education and those which fall within Adult Education.
- <sup>12</sup> This definition does include polytechnics, but as these cater for more advanced studies, normally accepting students of 18 years of age, they will not be mentioned in detail here.
- <sup>13</sup> Further details about examining bodies can be found in: Russell 1984,22-27 among others.
- <sup>14</sup> Visited in 1985 as part of the pilot study.
- <sup>15</sup> Basic skills in science, technology, English and mathematics as well as problem-solving and personal relations elements are



covered. All CPVE courses contain at least 15 days work experience and many are incorporated into TVEI or YTS. Certificate holders continuing onto YTS are, however, only eligible for the second year (Cross 19.1.1988,13). The FEU already pointed out the potential difficulty in linking CPVE and YTS in 1986 (YTN Dec. 1987,6) and proposed dialogue between Managing Agents and CPVE scheme co-ordinators.

16 Changes after the relegation of the MSC to the Training Commission in April 1988 have not been covered here.

17 Administrative Memorandum 3/84 10 July 1984 DES Further Education for unemployed young people under the "21 hours rule".

18 This is refuted by T R Clendon, Chief Training Advisor to the MSC (Wellens April 1983,113).

19 Its subsequent "relegation" to the Training Commission (TC) in April 1988 and now the Training Agency (TA) since October 1988 within the Department of Employment (for details see Cmnd 540 December 1988,31) will not be discussed here. However, the TA will employ the staff who previously reported to the TC and its Head Office will continue to be in Sheffield.

20 Quango: quasi-autonomous non-government organisation. An independent body set up by the government but having its own separate legal powers in a particular area of activity.

21 The growing discontent among young people and the subsequent riots increased the pressure on the government to act, with the economic situation being the other catalyst.

22 See for example "Training for Skills" 1977, "Training for Skills Questions and Answers" 1978 or "A Framework for the Future" July 1981 all published by the MSC.

23 Although the size, both in numbers and proportional terms was important, YOP will only be discussed further here in as far as it links to the establishment of the YTS, as this study is not primarily concerned with the provisions of schemes for young unemployed people.

24 For details of all schemes see pages 26-27 of the Youth Task Group Report 1982, MSC.

25 Wolverhampton Council reports that 250 school leavers were still unemployed in 1988 and receiving no benefit (Committee Paper 10.2.1989).

26 Since April 1986 YTS has been extended to 2 year YTS (YTS-2). As only partial analysis of its operation has taken place and the case studies were conducted when only one-year YTS was operating YTS-2 has not been incorporated into this study to any large extent. However, if criticisms arising out of one-year YTS have been remedied by YTS-2 reference will be made to this.

27 YTS only started properly in September 1983 and plans sometimes refer to 'scheme years' running from September to September. However, generally it seems to be taken to run from 1 April - 31 March and that convention will generally be followed.

28 For the development of the numbers of young people participating in youth training schemes see Table 1.26. "Department of Employment figures show that 16% more young people than expected obtained jobs between May and October." (Santinelli 9.12.1983,13)

29 NATFE (1983,6) found examples of misuse in Birmingham and

- Solihull, but in London one company was charging employers £10 a week for every trainee it supplied under YTS (New Society 17.10.1983). Charges may not be illegal but they are entirely contrary to the spirit of the scheme. These private training agencies also have the potential of making a profit and, therefore, saving on the off-the-job training (Interview with Geoff Hide, Matthew Boulton College 21.5.1984). With the new funding arrangements whereby only filled places are funded many managing agents disappeared.
- <sup>30</sup> Discussions to replace it were recommended in September 1984 by the Youth Training Board (YTN September 1984,3); Fiddy (1985,35) questions the future effectiveness of the "additionality" principle and the MSC in "Development of the Youth Training Scheme. A Report" July 1985,29 recommended that it should be phased out with the start of YTS-2.
- <sup>31</sup> Mode B had two variants but the MSC acted as managing agent for both. For Mode B1 the MSC arranged with a sponsor to provide a complete programme for individuals through training workshops or community projects; for B2 the MSC subcontracted out some or all of the elements. The funding for Mode B1 was £3500 per trainee as there was no employer-based work experience, this being carried out in the training workshop. For Mode B2 the MSC paid everything including the allowance to the trainees. Sub-contractors providing the off-the-job training/education, received nationally agreed rates and there was no payment to the sponsor for offering work experience.
- <sup>32</sup> New funding arrangements have come into force since with only filled places on schemes being funded. This did mean that some small managing agents went bankrupt after the first or second year of operation. Details of the most up-to-date funding arrangements can be found in YTN May 1988,9-10; YTN June 1988,6; YTN July/August 1988,5 and YTN November 1988,6-8.
- <sup>33</sup> It is assumed that this applies to trainees on the scheme in 1984/85.
- <sup>34</sup> Regional variance is very marked, however, ranging from 5% in Wales in 1987 to 19% in London.
- <sup>35</sup> Training Manager, Derby and Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (YTN July/August 1988,4).
- <sup>36</sup> Young people themselves have dubbed YTS "Young Teenage Slavery" or "Young Thick and Stupid" (Guardian 23.11.1988,25) and YOP "Youth Off Pavements" (Fiddy 1985,31).
- <sup>37</sup> For reports on what is being done in this area see the following articles in YTN: November 1986,19; July/August 1988,14-15; February 1987,24; April 1988,15; January 1988,7-10.
- <sup>38</sup> YTN 1987/88 gives details of where certification has been reached e.g November 1988, Issue 50,25.

TABLE 3.1

Facts and Criticisms of the Apprenticeship System in 1963 and their Attempted Solutions

<u>Fact</u>	<u>Criticism</u>	<u>Solution</u>
Time serving of five years	No educational or technical justification as different skills take a different number of years to master.	Conversion of many apprenticeships into 1 or 2 year YTS with remaining ones set to four years.
Restrictive age limits of entry (16) and exit (21).	Offers no second chance to young people who have no clear concept of which occupation to take up at 16.	YTS available for all 16-year olds or unemployed 17 year olds and disabled young people up to 21.
Restrictive demarcation lines between related trades	Promotes slow workmanship and restricts full use of resources	YTS offers 1 year of broad based training with specialisation in the second year.
No outside body to supervise training and no test of competence at the end of the training	Makes level of skill acquired by apprentice totally dependent on good or bad workmanship of the instructor	MSC guidelines have been instituted and profile of student is provided at the end of training and progress monitored by the log book.
Little provision for actual instruction at the place of work except in large companies	Majority of apprentices watch and copy, not learning the most efficient and correct way of accomplishing the task in hand.	Special training courses and vetting procedures for trainers have been instituted by the MSC.
Day-release to College is not compulsory. Only 30% of apprentices are estimated to be attending.	Lack of theoretical knowledge being transmitted to apprentices hinders their promotion prospects.	Compulsory off-the-job training at College or at an approved training institution under YTS.

<u>Fact</u>	<u>Criticism</u>	<u>Solution</u>
Instructors do not have to have pedagogical training	Hinders ideal transmission of theoretical and practical knowledge to the apprentices.	Courses for instructors have been instituted by the MSC.
Only small number of apprentices reach the intermediate standard of CGLI courses & smaller proportion still pass the final exams.	Theoretical curriculum is not geared to the skill to be acquired nor the intellectual level of the apprentice.	Closer contact between employers and educationalists and ITBs, especially the EITB working closely on curriculum design.
Apprentices receive remuneration according to age and not just a token wage.	Small companies have to pay relatively high wages for a four-day week and increased specialisation often makes it impossible to provide comprehensive experience.	Under YTS trainees receive an allowance paid by the state which can be topped up by the company
Financial burden of training falls entirely on companies who take their complement of apprentices.	Stops many companies training in periods of recession and encourages poaching.	Levy system introduced under ITBs and later government subsidy under YTS.
The state takes no responsibility for the training of young people through legislation or representative bodies.	If young people are not trained the national economy is affected by ending up with a lack of skilled workers.	The establishment of the MSC and the passing of three Acts of Parliament.

## PART II

Training provision in each country has developed differently, due in part to the nature of the policy-making process and the attitude of all social partners to training. The nature of the training system in Britain and West Germany means that provision in each country is able to meet the need of young people in retailing to different degrees. The main points to emerge from Part I are that the uniform German system is better adapted to cope with the changes in occupational structure than the ad hoc provision of the British system. More young people are trained to specific levels, measurable in terms of the qualifications obtained. These qualifications have a value attached to them as does training in general. The British system leaves more room for experimentation and an individualised approach. It does not, however, ensure that the majority of trainees in a specific sector are trained to the same standard and can easily transfer their skills to other areas. Qualifications are not valued to the same degree and the personality factor has a greater role to play.

Part II will concentrate on one sector of the economy: the distributive industry and specifically retailing. This sector has been chosen because it is a large employer of young people; it experimented and participated in many early forms of youth training in Britain, and in West Germany its training has recently undergone significant transformation. As an industry it has changed rapidly in line with consumer demands and needs and it is a stable sector of the economy, showing steady employment and turnover figures. The composition of the workforce and the structure of retail outlets has, however, changed significantly over recent years. Finally, as a member of the growing service sector it has been surprisingly under-represented in academic research.

Training in the service sector has never attracted as much attention as traditional training in manufacturing industry, where it is assumed that a manual skill has to be transmitted in a systematic fashion i.e. in the form of apprenticeships. With the growing importance of the service sector in economic terms in both Britain and West Germany (cf

Chapter 1) a study of training in a significant part of this sector is important for the future employment of young people. Furthermore, there are many generally held assumptions about the work of a shop assistant: anyone can do it because all it requires is a friendly face and the will to serve customers and stack shelves. It is not seen as a technical occupation and the need to study to be able to work in a shop is not perceived. I will show that, in fact, the job of shop assistant is under-valued, that in order to be a good shop assistant many skills are needed and that off-the-job theoretical instruction is as important for a shop assistant as it is for a fitter or baker.

Part II will, therefore, analyse whether the main traits to emerge from looking at the training systems as a whole are evident in a specific sector. I will look first at the way in which the structure and organisation of the distributive industry has changed and the subsequent effect on employment to put the role of training in this sector into context. Secondly, the development of new technology in retailing and the implications for training will be studied because as changes occur at the workplace training ought to adapt. In retailing there has been a technological 'revolution', but the training implications have not necessarily been foreseen. These two areas will be considered jointly for both countries as the developments are very similar. How the training policies and regulations relating to them have changed and which adjustments have been undertaken or needed to be undertaken in the light of the structural and organisational developments will be studied separately for each country. This will enable me to look specifically at how individual companies put these into operation.

It will be shown that the measure-driven approach to training with its lack of measurable success is as evident in British retailing as in other sectors and equally that the policy-determined regularised approach to training is prevalent in German retailing. The fact that due to the nature of shop work the whole issue of what constitutes suitable training for shop assistants is equally undetermined in both countries will be explored in the case studies. Are qualifications in this industry important or is it the attitude towards training which determines the status of the industry and those who work in it? The

lack of emphasis placed on socio-communicative skills and product knowledge will be shown to be determining factors.

### Structural Changes in the Distributive Industry and their Effect on Employment

In Britain wholesaling and retailing together make up the distributive industry, employing about 3 million people (approximately 2.5 million in retailing and 0.5 million in wholesaling in 1982). Commerce (Handel) in West Germany is divided into wholesale (Großhandel), commercial agencies (Handelsvermittlung) and retail (Einzelhandel), with the latter representing approximately 60% in terms of employment (1.67 million in 1987). The term Warenkaufleute (retail traders) encompasses wholesalers, retail trade merchants, buyers, sales assistants, publishing agents, booksellers, chemists, pharmacy assistants, petrol station attendants, commercial agents, travelling salesmen and door-to-door salesmen. I will concentrate in this study on retailing and specifically the training of the sales assistant, as this is the occupation which the majority of young people in retailing enter.

The distributive trades are labour-intensive, using almost twice as many employees to produce the same amount of value-added as manufacturing. The industry is characterised by far-reaching structural and organisational changes over the last fifty years in both Britain and West Germany. Changes in consumer behaviour, due to changes in society, technological developments and economic policies have led retailers to adapt their trading practice accordingly. These, in turn, have influenced the size and composition of the labour force and the training provision.

Hill (1966,9) stated that before 1914 there was a sharp definition between trades in Britain, and, that although poaching was not unknown, it was considered ungentlemanly. Pressures from both manufacturers and wholesalers tended to bend, if not actually break, the lines of demarcation between trades. In West Germany the demarcation lines are still more evident.

In contrast with Britain, besides the occupation of sales assistant and retail trade merchant specific training regulations exist for the following specialist occupations: Book dealer (Buchhändler); Chemist (Drogist); Florist (Florist); Music dealer (Musikalienhändler); Window dresser (Schaufenstergestalter); Petrol Station attendant (Tankwart); Pharmacist's assistant (Apothekenhelfer).

In addition there is also a special category for the shop assistant selling food (Verkäufer/in im Nahrungsmittelhandwerk), including for example the selling of bread in bakeries and meat in butcher shops. This occupation comes under the craft rather than the industrial and commercial sector and trainees are administered and examined by a different Chamber i.e. the Craft Chamber (Handwerkskammer).

The main category, however, is that of shop assistant which is subdivided according to the product sold - there are more than thirty subdivisions at present - thus affording further specialisation (Appendix 8). This level of specialisation is not prevalent in Britain in such a structured form.

With the advent of pre-packaging (the first skill thus being removed) many shop assistants feared for their jobs but job losses were not as great as anticipated. During the 1920s department stores flourished and a whole new concept of shopping developed. Department stores were different from other shops because the customer could see the full range of goods, clearly labelled in comfortable surroundings and all under one roof. Everything was directed towards the convenience and pleasure of the customer. <sup>1</sup>

In between the wars the growth of multiples was most apparent in Britain e.g. Dorothy Perkins, Halfords and Boots which led to lower prices due to their greater purchasing power. The Second World War put a stop to their growth, but after 1945 the new development was self-service. It first appeared in Britain in 1942 and by the 1950s it was well under way, although at first there was opposition even from the retailers. Lord Sainsbury:



"(we)...had no right to expect the customer to do the work that the assistant had done in the past." (BBC 1986)

The reasons for the development of self-service are described in detail elsewhere (Hill 1966), but it resulted in an air of despondency among the shop workers because it made much of their training redundant (Ehrke 1981,48). Up to the 1960s the main changes were: the advent of pre-packaging, the introduction of self-service, the development of department stores and the growth of multiples. These had implications for training: no longer was there a perceived need for six-year apprenticeships, product knowledge declined in importance as customers chose their own goods and the skill of serving the customer and the giving of advice was no longer universally required. Thus the status attached to working in a shop had started to diminish. Changes in the structure of retailing in the last 25 years have made an even greater impact on the perceived skills needed in this industry.

"It is also relevant that the advent of pre-packaging, self-service, electronic cash registers, point-of-sale systems, etc., has combined to make shop assistants relatively interchangeable in their duties, so that, by and large, they do not require any specialist skills." (Brodie 1986,187-88)

There are certain sectors of the British Distributive Trades which are more buoyant than others. Between 1971 and 1982 employment in smaller grocery retail businesses was halved, whereas employment in specialist off-licences increased by a fifth (Business Monitor SDA25, SD025). However, most sectors have remained relatively steady. Between 1970 and 1976 there was an increase in West Germany in the number of employees in shops selling variety goods, textiles and shoes, metal wares, furniture and furnishings, household goods and shops selling electrical and optical equipment. There was a reduction in employees during the same period in the following sectors: food and confectionery, coal and mineral products and vehicles, machines and office equipment (IAB 1978,8).

This had changed quite markedly ten years later: antiques, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, sewing and craft materials, haberdashery and food, flowers and plants showed increases in employment and textiles, shoes and clothing, furs and skins, leather goods, metal wares, paint, furnishings, household goods (especially electrotechnical

goods) and fuel, bicycles and accessories, musical instruments showed a distinct decrease compared to the retail sector as a whole (Vademecum 1986,42-3).<sup>2</sup>

By 1989 furniture, jewellery and high value added consumer goods as well as textiles and shoes were showing high turnover figures, whereas food shops and chemists (Drogerien) were stagnating or actually showing a reduction in turnover (Süddeutsche Zeitung 13-15 May 1989). This does not necessarily imply an increase or decrease in selling staff, but it does show how difficult it is to predict the prospering sectors within retailing for the coming years. Each sector seems to be affected by the recession in a different way and for a variable time period. This evidently affects the number of training places offered for each category.

Employment prospects are not only determined by the type of goods sold but also by the type of outlet. Thus, whereas multiples have increased their share of total UK retail sales from 27.5% in 1961 to 42.2% in 1978, department stores have lost market share: a decline from 5.3% in 1961 to 4.9% in 1978.<sup>3</sup> Employment has also recently declined in this sector from 153,000 in 1979 to 116,000 in 1982. Nearly half of all employees in distribution in 1980 were employed in large multiples, who had less than a quarter of all outlets and presented less than 1% of all businesses, but accounted for more than half of the total distributive trades' turnover and for 70% of net capital expenditure. This trend has not yet spread to household goods, drink, confectionery and tobacco and other non-food goods to the same extent, where wide product range and level of service are still valued, but it is predicted that specialist multiples are moving into these areas.<sup>4</sup> Levels of productivity vary greatly between sectors and there is, therefore, a variable need for employees for a given level of retail sales. Food retailing had the largest share of total retailing employment in 1982 with 36.5% and miscellaneous non-food retailers had the smallest with 9.5%. Generally, sales per head are greatest in sectors trading in high-value products or in a great volume e.g. grocery retailing. The division of the British retail labour force in 1980 was 60% of employees working for the 200 largest companies and approximately 85% of employers having less than 10 people, representing

just under one million employees in total (Lewis 1983,3). In 1981 450,000 of those working in distribution were self-employed.

The employment structure in West Germany is similar with 37.5% of all retail staff working in shops employing less than ten in 1979. These 311,741 companies represented 90% of all retail companies (Vademecum 1982,29). In contrast the 3,591 companies employing 50 employees or more accounted for 48% of the German retail trades' turnover. The great importance of the small to medium sized companies, but especially the small ones, in German retailing becomes apparent when it can be shown that more than 50% of both shop assistants and retail trade merchants worked in companies with less than nine employees (Clauß et al 1983 ). In West Germany department stores still play a greater role than in Britain, both in terms of employment and turnover. This is mainly due to the fact that multiples as such have not become an established part of the retail scene in West Germany.

Employment opportunities, therefore, vary within the retail sector depending on the size of the shop and on the product range. Large hypermarkets and supermarkets show an increasing trend towards employing fewer qualified staff, recruiting more unqualified or semi-qualified personnel and training a very small number of apprentices in relation to the size of the selling surface. On the other hand specialist shops (Fachgeschäfte), concentrating on one range of goods are in need of more trained personnel as are department stores to a lesser extent, who, in order to recapture market shares from the self service hypermarket sector are concentrating on customer service. As a result training opportunities and later employment are favourable in this type of enterprise.

This change in employment prospects can be explained by various factors: the increase in car ownership; the increased purchase of consumer durable items such as deep-freezers and colour televisions; increased affluence amongst the population in general over the last two decades and especially among younger consumers. These factors have influenced the development of discount trading and out-of-town superstores and hypermarkets, leading to the loss of market shares in department stores and independents. As a result the type of employee

in retailing has also changed and with this the training needs of retail companies.

Two major kinds of changes have affected employment in retailing. The first is of an organisational nature i.e. a change in the type of outlet including refurbishment; the size of the firm and of the individual outlet; the selling techniques employed and more recently investment in information technology. This type of change has been led by economic considerations: a constant strive for more effective and productive trading to increase profit margins. Larger, more capital-intensive, lower unit cost shops and warehouses increase net margins; greater profitability releases more money for further investment especially in new technology. Increased productivity, although increasing sales volume has not led to an increase in permanent full-time employment. The smaller shops have gone out of business, being unable to compete with the retail giants and the retail giants are competing more and more aggressively with each other to obtain a larger market share. To operate cost-effectively cuts in staff and in some cases in level of service as well as investment in information technology, most notably the electronic point of sales (EPOS) have been over-riding considerations for retailers in Britain.

The following figures illustrate the concentration of the distributive industry between 1950 and 1980 in the UK:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No of UK Retail Outlets (A)</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of UK Retail Outlets (B)</u>
1961	542,000	1950	623 000
1971	473,000	1961	581 000
1976	385,000	1966	541 000
1980	350,000	1971	508 000
		1976	391 000
		1980	348 000

Sources: Figures (A) from Brodie 1986,154 and figures (B) from Parkinson 1985,5. <sup>5</sup>

The number of retail outlets in the UK has almost halved in thirty years. At the same time total UK selling space has increased from 300 million square feet in 1961 to 333 million square feet in 1975 and the average shop size from 554 square feet to 870 square feet over the same period. This concentration of retail businesses again has training

implications. Instead of the narrowly trained single product range shop assistant, a more versatile, flexible employee is needed.

The following figures illustrate the concentration which has occurred in German retailing over the last twenty years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of retail firms</u> (liable for tax)
1962	445,186
1968	402,530
1970	382,482
1972	366,319
1974	345,963
1976	344,752
1978	336,700
1980	353,914
1982	359,684
1984	373,439

Source: Bargmann et al 1981,44 and Vademecum 1984 and 1986.

Although German retailing did not concentrate to the same extent as Britain between 1960 and 1980 (a reduction of only 91,272 outlets compared to Britain's 192,000) both countries had approximately 350,000 outlets in 1980. German figures show a contrary trend since 1980 with approximately 20,000 new firms opening between 1980 and 1984. However, as in Britain the total West German selling space has increased from 26.09 million square meters in 1962 to 45.16 million square meters in 1977 (Bargmann et al 1981,48). Concentration and a move to capital rather than human investment is as prevalent in West Germany as it is in Britain, leading to employment opportunities for less skilled personnel to fulfil shelf-filling and cashier functions at the expense of selling and product knowledge.

The other major changes are those more directly affecting the employed manpower: longer opening hours, increased use of unskilled labour, differentials of pay and allocation of working time. Both sets of changes are interlinked because ultimately they both have the aim of ensuring the most viable means of operation of the retail trade. The first set of changes affect the number of people employed in retailing and the second set the type of people. Longer opening hours, for example, mean that even a full-time employee cannot be present for a complete opening week.

The Retail System

This in turn leads to considerations about the maximum beneficial use of staff hours. To make sure that, on the one hand, an adequate level of service is offered to customers and low labour costs incurred by the employer on the other, a variety of working patterns are used in retailing, ranging from a permanent core group of full-time employees working together with part-timers, Saturday staff, night shelf fillers and cashiers. The number employed in each category and the mix of staff is determined by the type of outlet, with department stores not using shelf-fillers and cashiers only to a small extent, but supermarkets relying heavily on night-crews and part-time cashiers to cover chief trading periods.

The most recent discussion in West Germany as in Britain has been the extension of opening hours. The Ladenschlußgesetz (shop opening hours Act) is more strictly enforced in West Germany than in Britain. It has been argued that in fact specialised shops in inner city areas would benefit from an extension to late night opening one night per week (Schmalen 1988,29) rather than out-of-town hypermarkets due to the clientele which is being attracted. External factors, examples of which are a change in consumer demand influenced by more leisure time, new housing developments and higher car ownership also tend to pull in the direction of customer satisfaction and convenience, with more discerning customers wishing to be served and advised expertly for the specialised goods being purchased.

Employment opportunities in the retail sector are predicted to decline at a slower rate than between 1978 and 1982 (1.6% for 1983 to 1987 compared to 5%). The retail sector has not lost its position in the economy, still employing approximately the same proportion of employees as ten years ago and productivity has not declined significantly either. Technological developments in retailing in the 1990s may affect retail employment more than previous changes.

## Technological Developments in the Retail Trades

When talking about new technology in the retail sector for the late 1980s and 1990s, what is almost always meant are two related developments: EPOS - Electronic Point of Sale (elektronische Datenkassen) and EFTPOS -Electronic Fund Transfer at the Point of Sale, the latter seeming to be more advanced in Britain than in West Germany. However, these are only the latest developments and the most likely to involve shop assistants directly, because both involve cash registers. Each sector of the retail trade has different needs and, therefore, employs a variety of computer-aided methods to run its businesses. This means that the definition "New Technology" applied to retailing has to basically encompass any use of a computer for whatever purpose. <sup>6</sup>

The widespread availability of affordable microprocessors means that even small businesses can use these to prepare management accounts, and institute a system of notional gross profit control; calculate and reconcile VAT liability; maintain personnel records and calculate wages; reconcile invoices and delivery notes etc.. The micro-computer and financial management systems make it possible for turnover, wages, delays in delivery and supplies etc. to be calculated at the touch of a button, reducing routine, menial tasks. One common development throughout the industry has been the automation at the point of sale. Among smaller businesses this may be limited to the introduction of an electronic cash register, replacing an electric one, but for larger businesses the integration of stock management, item price marking, stock security and in-store marketing through EPOS systems have been occurring to a greater or lesser extent depending on how easily each of the elements can be combined. The level of integration is determined by the sector i.e. the range and type of products sold and the size of the business.

The German food retailers had already started introducing EPOS in 1977 pursued by department stores and DIY stores. Inputting into an EPOS system varies from manual input to scanning. All systems are, however, based on an allocation of a code number for each article. The most sophisticated method is that of laser scanning whereby barcodes applied

to the product by the manufacturer are read at the checkout by a scanner, which is linked through the till to a computer. It has been estimated <sup>Distributive Trades</sup> (EDC 1982b,7) that between 1986 and 1990 1,000 stores in the UK will be scanning; that scanning will be the norm by 1990 and that growth will reach saturation levels by 1995. <sup>7</sup> There were 1,280 scanner installations in West Germany in October 1983, involving approximately 170 stores, with about half of these being smaller stores, with 1-5 terminals (Arthur Anderson & Co. 1984). These were predicted to have doubled in the following year. The major retailers involved were Karstadt, DM-Markt and Tengelmann. Some department stores were using OCR codes, but generally both EPOS and integrated stock control systems were at the pilot stage.

Efficiency at the checkout is thus obviously improved in supermarkets, not so much because of the faster through-put of goods (although this is also achieved because the cashier no longer needs to ask for a price to be checked if the price sticker is missing from a product; the PLU now serves this purpose) but as a result of the reduction in cashiers' errors when inputting information. And if the EPOS system is integrated with a stock control system (Warenwirtschaftssystem) then automatic reordering can take place, whether the computer is linked to an in-company warehouse or to a wholesaler. The need for manual stocktaking and reordering is thus vastly reduced.

Supermarkets have been the forerunners in the use of integrated EPOS systems, because the advantages to be gained from improved efficiency at the checkout coupled with detailed analyses of performance per outlet were easily apparent. At the same time the performance of the cashier is monitored in as far as it can be seen when she is needed at the checkout point, when there is a break in the flow of customers and when there are dead periods.

Due to the great variety of goods sold in department stores barcoding at source is difficult. However, some department stores, multiples and variety chain stores are experimenting with their own coding system. Coded tickets are then read by a wand at the cash point. The EDC Working Party did not believe that barcoding was going to become widespread in this sector. Other methods of coding products and



reading codes are, however, being employed e.g. magnetic strip tickets or optical character recognition (OCR) and these are expected to be widely used by the 1990s.<sup>8</sup> Depending on their level of sophistication, these systems can also be linked to a stock control system and not just be used for sales record purposes. Whichever system is used electronic pricing will, for cash point operation, reduce the need for marking individual items with prices. However, greater attention to fixture marking will have to take place instead.

The effect of these two systems can be seen by looking at Diagram 4.1, the Work Process Model, illustrating the sale of an article in stages before and after the introduction of EPOS and micro-computers. For the sales assistant the number of tasks are reduced from eighteen to four and for the administrative clerk from seven to two. The trade unions argue that this is not just a reduction of tasks but dequalification, because the tasks which remain are the menial ones (Solidarität 1979,5-6).

The latest development in retail technology is that of EFTPOS:

"The introduction of a plastic card with a microchip, known as a smartcard, to provide instant electronic debiting of bank accounts, still looks a long way off especially in Britain."<sup>9</sup>

But more recently reports describe trials of EFTPOS in various parts of the country.<sup>10</sup> Basically, the technology to enable funds to be transferred electronically is already in use in auto-teller machines (ATMs) i.e. cash dispensing machines in banks. The same technology can be installed in equipment at the point of sale. The customer would insert a plastic card with a coded magnetic strip or with a small microchip into a card reading machine and key in a personal identification number. Depending on whether the system is off-line or on-line the amount to be paid would be debited from the card which would have an authorised credit limit or directly from the account of the shopper at his/her bank. Views vary as to whether EFTPOS will disrupt the checkout operation, but it is evident that not only will staff need to be trained in the system but also consumers.

Although retailing has already changed radically over the last twenty years further changes are expected. Following the almost completed

phase of rationalisation measures in the sales area (self-service, pre-selection etc.) and a general restructuring of the whole distributive trades (new types of companies, extension of the branch system, concentration in product lines and areas) fundamental changes are still expected in the administration area. The "blanket cover" introduction of new electronic cash register systems with the closely connected change in accountancy, statistics and disposition etc. onto computers could lead to the fear that in large companies at least, important disposition tasks of the sales staff and middle management will be eroded.

However, researchers in West Germany (Grünwald/Koch 1981a, 11) argued that in fact there were two trends running counter to each other. On the one hand the introduction of computerised information systems meant that the repetitive tasks are rationalised and the more complex tasks (disposition and analysis) remain, and on the other hand work processes are standardised; and so while the automatic process raises the level of skills needed the standardisation process has the opposite effect, reducing the level of skills demanded. This is, however, mainly applicable to staff employed in the administration side of retailing and not so much to the sales staff on the shop floor. This is also where the loss of jobs through the introduction of new technology is expected to hit hardest, in addition to the reduction in the number of cashiers, due to scanner tills. It is not so much a question of redundancies as a matter of non-replacement of natural wastage.

Thus it can be argued that, on the one hand, computerised information systems have made analytical tasks easier and quicker, leading to higher productivity and leaving staff free to concentrate on marketing and store management. On the other hand, it has had a dramatic effect on the working conditions in retailing through a system known as PEP (Personaleinsatzplanung) personnel organisational planning, whereby the opening hours of the store are brought into unison with the working hours of the employees, thus keeping personnel costs as low as possible. KAPOVAZ (kapazitätsorientierte variable Arbeitszeit) capacity orientated variable working time is a refinement of this, whereby the retail staff's hours are determined by the customer frequency, which is anchored to a pre-calculated minimum turnover per

employee. This implies replacing full-time employees with an increasing number of part-time employees and arranging their working time for those hours when the most customers are expected in the shop. In order to achieve this, employees are rewarded by turnover premiums, because the stress is obviously greater when working without a break. This system is supplemented by temporary workers on hourly contracts who have to be available within a certain time (e.g. 1/2 hour) once they have been rung up at home (Rudolph et al 1981, 204-11).

KAPOVAZ is obviously not used in this extreme form in all shops but certain aspects are widely adopted, especially in super- and hypermarkets. If this type of work pattern is adopted to any great extent then there is little room for full-time staff or training. It could be argued that more jobs will be created through this system, but it would seem not at a skilled level, because the controlling functions will still be carried out by full-timers, of which there will be fewer.

#### Implications of the New Technologies for Training

For the training of retail staff it is important to know what the effects of the various technologies will be on work organisation, the present qualifications of the staff and the future content of the training syllabus, the organisation of training and the way information is transmitted and where to. No recent study has looked at the effect of modern information systems and the problems and possibilities for training, although suggestions and warnings have been given.<sup>11</sup> Studies in Britain and West Germany have identified training implications as a result of the recent technological developments. Koch (1984, 157-8) indicated the following trends as being relevant:

- skills directly involved in the selling process will not be changed fundamentally through computerisation; but the breadth and level of skills depend decidedly on the distribution of tasks (integration versus separation of selling, till operation and disposition);

- with the introduction of computerised stock control systems staff will need to think more in terms of profit rather than turnover. The skills needed to understand the implications and capabilities of the computerised system will increase and instead of knowledge acquired by experience (e.g. the popularity of certain goods) ways of analysing and obtaining information will become more important;
- centralised buying will reduce skills at branch level, not because the decision-taking process will be removed, but because more information will be available about the market, turnover etc. and more interpretation and judgement skills will be needed.

The DITB's Environmental Scan (DITB 1981a) identified the following as having high priority training implications attached to them in the short, medium and long term as well as having a high probability rating:

- 1) As POS terminals which relay information to mini computers become generally used the checkout operator will need training in the entirety of the system. Less numeracy but greater discipline will be required in the operations of POS equipment. Training in the use of terminals and mini computers as well as data processing will be required. Checkout operators and supervisors will need to be retrained in keyboard skills and new and up-dated computer appreciation systems and procedures training for sales staff, office staff and management will be required. Attitudes as opposed to skill will cause the most problems, particularly with older staff.
- 2) POS terminals will lead to a 5% reduction in the number of employees. The remaining staff will need to be retrained in affected areas e.g. stock control, because less manual checking and form filling will be needed, but time spent will be transferred to selling etc..

The remaining staff will be highly paid and specialist staff. This specialisation will require a lot of training to ensure

efficiency and job enrichment and show the company's commitment to employees.

- 3) With article numbering devices becoming generally used all staff will need training in procedures and security and in the instructing of consumers. Basic training will become more technical.
- 4) As microprocessors replace people in clerical, quality control and routine jobs more technical ability is needed at all levels. Data processing information will be 'in-put' by sales personnel, so training for these in hardware handling and awareness of its role in the system is needed.
- 5) The increased number of new products based on microprocessors will require extensive training for those handling, selling and servicing these. Product knowledge training for sales staff and training technicians for after sales service will be needed. Fundamental training programmes to understand the function of the microchip are required.
- 6) Finally, the growth of Viewdata (Prestel etc.), data banks and microfilm means that the role of sales assistants becomes more complicated and technical - the need to maintain a balanced outlook and concern for customers as well as understanding technical apparatus is required.

These training implications are the most relevant to sales assistants, but senior management and clerical staff in retailing will in fact be mainly affected by the introduction of new technology. Senior management will need to know how to use increasing quantities of information. Management must be trained to discriminate between critical and superfluous data and systems design must be of such a standard as to minimise the generation of surplus non-essential data. As direct computer-to-computer data transfer is used by most multiple chain stores and most manufacturers for interfirm transactions clerical skills will need to change from form-filling to the use of VDUs, data processing and keyboard applications.

For the training of retail staff this implies that the apprentice has to be trained in all sections of the retail trade, coming into contact with the relevant technology as and when required. Although the trade unions are in favour of this concept the employers prefer a company orientated approach, where the apprentice would just come into contact with the technology in the training company, even if this is out-dated or not very advanced. Koch suggests the creation of a mobile computerised stock control simulation studio, so that all apprentices could gain experience of the latest systems.

Cashiers will have to be trained on new checkouts and some sales assistants in supermarkets will be expected to use hand-held mini-computers known as Portable Data Capture Units (PDCs) or Sales Unit Terminals (SUTs) to count stock levels. There are strong arguments for increasing the knowledge of all retail employees in the effects of computerised stock control on their jobs and one recent study <sup>12</sup> states that the acquisition of a "systems" knowledge by all staff is of particular importance because of the interchangeability expected of employees across formerly specialised jobs. How this information is transmitted is especially important and, as will be seen in the British case studies, the trivialisation of the introduction of EPOS as "more modern" cash registers disregarded the cognitive gap between performing a single, highly routinised task formerly carried out by operatives, and the knowledge of an abstract "system" when moving between equally routinised, but highly specialised functions in the new flexible mode of working.

It can, therefore, be concluded that actual training in the use of new equipment is not likely to be the difficulty, but the way the new system is introduced and explained both to new trainees and to the workforce as a whole. A detailed analysis of qualification demands is needed now so that when the computerised systems are more widely spread the qualified staff is already available to use the systems. Young people will need to be instructed on the wider implications of EPOS and the importance of accuracy. Basic mathematical skills will still be needed, as coupons and discounts are widely used in retailing. If sales assistants want to progress into retail management more advanced

mathematics becomes essential to be able understand and interpret the data which the computers generate. At present YTS has a compulsory off-the-job element on computer literacy and this can be adapted to suit retailing. It is, however, important for the content of this training module to be regularly updated. Only by being aware of the extent of information technology outside their own sphere of work can trainees have the possibility of moving up the career ladder in retailing.

In Britain and West Germany the structural, organisational and technical changes in the retail industry have been radical. The super- and hypermarket has largely replaced the corner shop grocer, the product range has expanded, requiring more technical competence at one end of the spectrum and less at the other as customers increasingly self-select the majority of products. Various categories of retail staff will be needed in the future: unskilled labour to stock shelves in super- and hypermarkets, semi-skilled staff to work as cashiers and qualified sales staff who can serve and advise customers. The latter must be knowledgeable about the product range in the shop, understand the technological changes and be able to adapt with them. Sales assistants will have to be versatile, able to switch from serving to inputting complex information into a computer.

Whether the training policies and regulations have kept pace with the changing requirements demanded of the retail work force will be studied separately, first for West Germany and then for Britain.

- <sup>1</sup> e.g. a tray of tea was offered to customers in the department in which they happened to be shopping or a pair of gloves would be delivered for a certain time if that was required.
- <sup>2</sup> A more detailed analysis can be found in Pusse L and Ruppert W: *Mittelfristige Entwicklung der Arbeitsproduktivität im Handel: Tendenzen und betriebliche Maßnahmen*, MittAB 3/1983, 283.
- <sup>3</sup> "Vademecum" is used as the reference in Part II for the publication by the *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Mittel- und Grossbetriebe des Einzelhandels*.
- <sup>4</sup> Figures 3.10a,b and c in Brodie 1986, 177-79 confirm the general growth in the 1980s of large multiples, both in terms of turnover and investment but also in terms of employment.
- <sup>5</sup> Both the Retail Co-operative Societies and the Independents have lost market share, from 11.9% in 1961 to 6.9% in 1978 and 53.9% in 1961 to 41% in 1978 respectively due to the expansion of the multiples (Brodie 1986, 170).
- <sup>6</sup> The 1980 figure (A) includes 198,000 single outlet businesses.
- <sup>7</sup> The best examples of the nature and application of various technologies in the British retail sector are contained in two publications by the Distributive Trades EDC: a) "Technology in the distributive trades: the experience of small and medium-sized businesses" and b) "Technology. The Issues for the distributive Trades" both published by NEDO, London 1982. Individual sectors are covered separately in the first publication, whereas the second concentrates on the nature of technological change within the trade and its implications.
- <sup>8</sup> Brown, Malcolm: "High-street suppliers hit ti-tech ruin." in Sunday Times 20.7.86, 66. As of September 1984 the UK had 155 stores with scanners (Arthur Anderson & Co. International Trends in Retailing Autumn 1984, Vol 1, No 2, Illinois, USA).
- <sup>9</sup> A visit to a variety of multiples and department stores would prove this e.g. Lewis's, BHS, Boots.
- <sup>10</sup> Pearson, Wendy: "The politics behind a card that's smart." in The Times 10.12.85, 4.
- <sup>11</sup> Collins, Rosemary: "Banks on line to ring up the changes." in The Guardian 6.12.86, 23.
- <sup>12</sup> Most studies have been concerned with the effect of technical organisational changes in the retail sector, but one study, due to start by mid-1985 and be published by mid-1987 concerns itself with the input and consequences of modern information systems in the distributive trades, using computerised stock control systems as described above as an example for suggestions for the formation of training measures. It will look mainly at the consequences for commercial retail employees, but plans to estimate the extent of these computerised stock control systems, analyse the organisational possibilities through the use of these systems and use its results to suggest consequences for training distributive trade employees.
- <sup>13</sup> As yet unpublished Chapter 8 *New Technology in Department Stores and Supermarkets* by Ray Loveridge and John Child.



DIAGRAM 4.1

Work Process Model

Example: Sale of an Article

Previous Model

Selling and Cashier level

1. talk with customer
2. sale of article
3. issuing of receipt
4. forwarding to till
5. wrapping of article
6. calculation of purchase price
7. taking money
8. calculation of change to be given
9. giving of change
10. handing over the purchase
11. entering the purchase price according to the goods group on the record sheet
12. adding up the sums on the record sheet
13. identification of the cash balance
14. counting the cash register contents
15. taking out the till roll
16. checking cash register contents against record sheet and cash balance
17. writing the turnover report
18. transmission of report, till roll and funds to the main cash register

New Model

(customer credit card)  
talk with customer

wrapping of article

handing over the purchase

transmission of the computer cards and receipts to the till.

Administration level

19. mathematical verification of record sheet
20. transfer of individual goods groups to the total turnover report
21. calculation of total turnover of the store
22. transfer of the goods turnover to the goods record sheets
23. identification of stock in hand
24. reporting the total turnover figure to the management
25. turnover and stock in hand report to Head Office.

transmission of total turnover

transmission of stock in hand

Source: Solidarität: Die Auswirkungen der Rationalisierung und Technisierung am Beispiel der Beschäftigten im Einzelhandel, 1979 Vol.30, No.5-6,15.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Training in the Retail Trades in West Germany

In this chapter the operation of the West German training system in the retail sector will be analysed. Firstly, a look at the historical development of retail training will be taken, as this is central to the current changes in the training regulations. Secondly, the composition of the workforce will be studied, as this equally determines training provision today. Thirdly, the developments leading to the new training regulations for shop assistants (Verkäufer/in) and retail trade merchants (Einzelhandelskaufmann/frau) in line with changes in retail practices which have involved lengthy discussions, started over fifteen years ago and intensified over the last ten, will be studied by looking at the policy-making process. Finally, the appropriateness of the new training regulations for future employment, the question of flexible, generic skills linked to the developments of new technology and the changing structure of the industry will be looked at.

#### 4.1. The Development of the Training of Sales Assistants and Retail Trade Merchants

As early as the 1930s there was a choice in the retail sector between the training occupation of retail trade merchant and the semi-skilled job of sales assistant solely orientated towards selling. After the Second World War this latter narrow training found few takers with only 3,197 contracts as sales assistants registered with the Chambers of Commerce in comparison to 86,250 for retail trade merchants.

However, from the mid-1960s onwards the Chamber of Commerce in Essen offered a two-year training occupation for sales assistants with qualifying examinations. Although only 20% of the trainees took advantage of this training course in 1965 the erosion of the standard three-year course had begun (Kiesau & Simon 1979,142). It was a cheaper way of training and getting semi-skilled workers. Many employers seemed to believe that young women especially only wanted

short training to then be able to earn money more quickly. More and more retail organisations began offering this non-recognised two-year apprenticeship. The content was limited to selling, advice and product knowledge and the majority of the trainees were girls, who thus did not obtain a qualified apprenticeship.

In 1968, to put a stop to this unorganised proliferation, the Minister of the Economy promulgated new regulations for the training of sales assistants and retail trade merchants, whereby both became state recognised training occupations. At about the same time the electrical and engineering trades were discussing a two-tier training structure (Stufenausbildung) for their occupations, based on an initial broad general basic qualification to be extended by the various specialisations. This concept was, however, not adopted in quite the same way by the retail sector. Here the initial two-year training as a sales assistant already presents a limited specialised occupation in its own right and only by extension through a third year's training to become a retail trade merchant is more job mobility and flexibility afforded, because the more widely used skills of commercial practice, commercial arithmetic, legal rights and commercial accountancy are learned to a sufficiently high standard.

#### 4.1.1. The Development of Trainee Numbers

Between the mid-1970s and 1980 the number of retail apprentices increased by approximately 50% - for shop assistants selling food the number more than doubled (Table 4.1). From 1980 to 1982 there was, however, an overall reduction of almost 20,000 trainees, only reaching the 1980 level again in 1985. This can be explained on the one hand by the rise in school leavers looking for apprenticeship places in the late 1970s and again in the mid-1980s and on the other by the increase in the offer of apprenticeship places by the retail trade, which is typical for economic sectors with a large proportion of small companies. Apprentices in retailing now represent just under 10% of all apprenticeship places in West Germany and have done so since the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>1</sup> This is comparable with the proportion retail employees represent as a part of the total workforce: 9.3% in 1980 and 9.6% in 1985 (Vademecum 1986,8).

Since 1987 the numbers training as retail trade merchants has increased markedly (plus 7,733 compared to 1986) with a comparative drop in numbers training as sales assistants (minus 13,530 compared to 1986). Whereas in 1986 sales assistants represented almost 47% of all retail trainees this had dropped to 38% by 1987 with retail trade merchants increasing proportionally from 26% in 1986 to 32% in 1987 (Table 4.2). This change in emphasis can be explained by the introduction of the new training regulation on 1.8.1987.

#### 4.2. Composition of the Workforce

The composition of the retail workforce is not typical of the economy as a whole when classified by age and gender, being younger and predominantly female. The proportion of female employees in 1970 was already 67.1% (Bargmann et al 1981,103) and although predicted to increase, has in fact stayed relatively steady: 65.1% in 1978 and 66.7% in 1985. <sup>2</sup> Compared to 40% for all sectors of the economy it is, however, a remarkably high proportion (Vademecum 1986,9).

Out of the 1,688,000 retail employees in 1979 90% of shop assistants were female, whereas for retail trade merchants a more equitable relationship between the sexes existed (48% male, 52% female). In spite of the increase in the number of shop assistant apprenticeship places only 38% of all employed sales assistants had completed an apprenticeship as a sales assistant; for retail trade merchants the proportion was almost 50% (Clauß et al 1983).

The number of part-time employees increased considerably at the expense of the number of full-time employees. <sup>3</sup> From 1978 to 1985 the proportion of part-time employees in retailing increased from 17% to 21% of all retail employees. Nearly all of these were women - 96% in 1978 and 97% in 1985 (Vademecum 1986,9). By 1987 the proportion of part-time employees in retailing was 22%.

The retail work force is young when compared to the workforce as a whole. This is due in part to the high proportion of apprentices (the

ratio was 106 trainees to 1,000 employees in 1970 in the retail trades, whereas for the economy as a whole it was 52 to 1,000 employees (Fritz 1977,18)). By 1987 the ratios were 126 trainees to 1,000 employees in retailing and 95 to 1,000 for the economy as a whole. <sup>4</sup> This in turn is linked to the structure of the retail industry, which is still dominated by small companies - more than 80% of retail apprentices are trained in small to medium sized companies (Clauß et al 1983,9). 37.2% of all those employed in the retail sector in 1970 were under 25 compared with 23.5% for the economy as a whole (Bargmann et al 1981,104). By 1984 this had dropped to 30.5% compared with 22.7% for the whole economy (Vademecum 1986,9). The propensity of women to retire early or to leave the working population temporarily for child bearing/rearing reasons contributes to the fact that those working in the retail trades are relatively young when compared with the economy as a whole.

However, it still seems necessary to question this high ratio of trainees to employees. There does not seem to be a way of proving in how far this high proportion is due to a strong tradition based more on emotion than logic, or due to specific gains which the trade can already make during the training period (Fritz 1977,18). This is a point which will be considered in the case studies, having to rely on the trainees' and ex-trainees' views on the matter.

Studying the relationship between the number of trained retail workers and the qualifications of those employed in the retail sector in more detail produced the following picture. In theory over 80% of the job positions in retailing can be covered by skilled retail workers (i.e. those who have completed and passed an apprenticeship in one of the retail trades). However, the situation for sales assistants and retail trade merchants is not the same. In 1979 there were 858,000 trained retail merchants in the workforce, but there were only 553,000 jobs as retail trade merchants available. This over-provision of trained personnel can be explained by the fact that until 1968 there was no separate shorter training programme for shop assistants and all retail staff trained as retail trade merchants.

In contrast there were only 438,000 trained sales assistants to 1,125,000 sales assistants actually in employment - a stark under-provision of qualified staff at this level. There was not even a balancing-out effect between the over- and under-provided retail jobs; on the contrary it could be seen that almost 50% of trained retail staff changed to other occupations and a corresponding proportion from other occupations (often from the handicraft sector) or people without an apprenticeship, i.e. unskilled workers or housewives returning to employment after several years at home (Mauer 1984,3) were recruited to the retail trade. (38% of working sales assistants have not completed an apprenticeship of any kind. These tend to be mainly older employees working in small family-run shops.)

Between 1974 and 1980 the number of registered unemployed sales assistants and retail trade merchants rose from 41,169 to 65,653 (Table 4.3). Women were particularly hard hit with 85% of the registered unemployed sales assistants in 1985 being female, which is not surprising considering the composition of the retail workforce. For the distributive sector as a whole (Warenkaufleute) almost 200,000 were unemployed in 1985 with a reduction occurring thereafter. The number of retail workers seeking employment has risen steadily from 1979 to 1981 and doubled by 1985, reflecting the general rise in German unemployment over this time. Whereas employment increased by 40,000 in distribution between 1980 and 1985 unemployment increased by 123,600 during this time.

Nevertheless, 64% of trained sales assistants practice their profession, whereas only 28% of retail trade merchants stay faithful to their trade. On the one hand, this implies a greater flexibility for the retail trade merchant to change professions (or having to due to the under-provision of available jobs) often into (related) office jobs, but on the other hand highlights the limited opportunities for the sales assistant, due to a more limited shorter training.

The retail work force is, therefore, predominantly female, younger than the workforce as whole and increasingly staffed by part-timers. This composition has come about as a result of the structural changes in retailing, the increasing number of women seeking both full-time and

part-time work, the growing number of girls who wish to become qualified and the increasing opportunities offered by the industry. Equally, as the workforce has become predominantly female the industry has lost some of its status. It is now trying to regain this to a certain extent through training.

#### 4.3. Developments Leading to the New Training Regulations for Retail Trade Merchants

The difference in the job opportunities of the two occupations discriminates against women on the one hand and lowers the status of the occupation of sales assistant generally, while profiting the employer possibly at the expense of the trainee. To analyse this dilemma one needs to look closely at what is actually laid down in the training regulation (Ausbildungsordnung or Berufsbild) for the two occupations.

According to the training regulation, which lays down binding training contents for the training company a sales assistant should learn the following skills in conjunction with a specialised product training plan (Fachlicher Ausbildungsplan), detailing product knowledge for one branch.

1. Introduction to business relationships as well as to tasks, structure and types of selling/marketing in retailing.
2. The goods of one branch (consumer and goods group).
3. Receipt and control of goods, warehousing and care of goods.
4. Machine, fixtures, measures and weights common to the branch.
5. Preparation of goods for sale, pricing of goods.
6. Display of goods and simple decoration tasks on the shop floor.
7. Sales and advice talk to customers, presentation of goods, vocabulary and communication skills, sales psychology, the organisational management of the selling process.
8. Special cases relevant to selling, returns and exchange of goods.
9. Price settlement of goods when selling; operation of cash register system.

10. Wrapping and delivery.
11. Introduction to the most important legal regulations for selling practice.
12. Commercial mathematics.
13. Basic knowledge about the composition of prices.
14. Introduction to commercial accountancy.
15. Introduction to the clearing system.
16. Simple written work.
17. Prevention of accidents.

The sales assistant training is, therefore, limited to the very localised operation of preparing goods for sale (5 & 6), some elementary selling skills (7 & 8), product knowledge (2) and operation of the cash register (9). However, there is no indication of how much time should be spent on each element; this is left to the discretion of the employer, who only has to guarantee that all areas have been covered but not at what level. In contrast with British schemes (before YTS) commercial mathematics (12) and simple written work (16) are included in the training regulations.

According to the training regulation (Blätter zur Berufskunde 1970,7) all retail trainees have the right to continue to complete the third year on successful completion of the two year training i.e. having passed the written and oral examinations. If the company in which they are being trained cannot offer this third year, due to lack of relevant administration and buying departments, often the case in branches of large companies where the buying and various administration functions are handled centrally, the employer is responsible in conjunction with the employment exchange, the Chamber of Commerce and the Retail Trade Organisation for that branch for finding the apprentice a different training company.

In practice, however, 80% of contracts are signed for the two year period and only on successful completion of the first stage are trainees given the opportunity, provided they have fulfilled certain criteria, of continuing to the third year. The proportion continuing to the second stage has increased over the years from only 11% at the beginning of the 1970s to 25% by 1976/77 (Bargmann et al 1981,111).



Table 4.4 shows the steady rise continuing to the third year and estimates of the transparency quota for the mid-1980s lie at 40%.<sup>5</sup>

Although, in theory it is the trainee who decides whether to continue to the second stage, in practice it is invariably the employer who makes the decision. Researchers<sup>6</sup> in the field support this claim, which is also often made on the part of the trade unions. Employers tend to deny it and the reasons put forward especially by the food retailers for this low transparency quota are that many apprentices are not capable of completing a three year apprenticeship, due to their low educational attainment. However, only 3% of retail trainees (taking sales assistants and retail trade merchants together) in 1982 had no school leaving certificate (HSA), whereas 22.2% had a higher school leaving certificate (Realschulabschluß) and the majority (56.5%) had a school leaving certificate (Table 4.5). By 1986 31.8% had the Realschulabschluß and 42.4% the HSA. Furthermore, it is not the length of the training of which the apprentices are perhaps not capable but the content.

Young people, the employers argued, want to earn money quickly and, therefore, consider two years training to be enough. As the wages in the retail trades are among the lowest of all trades and trained sales assistants often earn less than unskilled workers in industry (Bargmann et al 1981,189) this argument sounds hollow. Only in higher positions is the salary nearer the average of the total workforce.

Finally, the employers stated that as the majority of sales assistants are female and they tend to marry sooner or later two years training is adequate. However, the chance of a two-year recognised apprenticeship is one of the reasons why girls opt for this occupation, which is otherwise not rated highly (Goldman and Müller 1986). One of the main reasons, however, is the lack of alternatives. Unfavourable working hours, below average pay and a considerably greater offer of attractive training opportunities for male apprentices leads the occupation of sales assistant to be dominated by women. Out of all female apprentices 28% in 1980, 24% in 1985 and 23% in 1987 trained in the retail sector.<sup>7</sup> For all apprentices the proportion was 14% for all

years. Furthermore, it is not only women who get married sooner or later!

Young people, especially young girls were being "forced" by pressure from employers to obtain the minimum vocational training possible. The training is narrow in content and, therefore, lacks transferability of skills to other occupations. Young people, if given the chance, wish to continue to the third year of training to widen their knowledge and many young women are now as career conscious as young men. With the increase in educational attainment young people are consciously aiming higher than in the past.

The retail trade merchant apprentices add the following knowledge and skills to their repertoire during the third year:

18. Extension of product knowledge.
19. Basic knowledge of the market and the buying of goods.
20. Basic knowledge of customer complaints procedures and delivery and acceptance of goods and the payment process.
21. Basic knowledge of warehouse administration.
22. Sending goods by post, train and other modes of transport.
23. Basic knowledge of price establishment, costs and calculations.
24. Basic knowledge of statistics, inventory, stock turnover, limit calculations and profitability.
25. Business correspondence, receipt and sending of mail.
26. Introduction to office organisation, basic knowledge of registry, filing and the system of forward purchasing
27. Basic knowledge of commercial accountancy.
28. Basic knowledge of the clearing system including cheques, bills of exchange and credit arrangements.
29. Introduction to taxes and insurance.
30. Basic knowledge of salary and wages calculations as well as social security contributions.
31. Introduction to advertising material and its areas of use in retailing.
32. Introduction to the legal rights of a trader.

Thus only in the third year are more transferable skills transmitted e.g. business correspondence (25), stock control (24), price establishment (23). The fundamental skills of a sales assistant are not repeated: selling and social-communicative skills. Product knowledge is extended, but again no timeframe is indicated for this.

The present training regulation is based on the skills needed to become a self-employed retail trader and although this might seem redundant (in fact 26% of people employed in retailing are self-employed or helping in a family business) this orientation should remain to cover all potential tasks which might arise. This is only of value if there is a single three-year apprenticeship. If the companies cannot fulfil all the requirements due to the centralisation of administration and buying tasks, the use of skill centres should be considered.

The sales assistant and retail trade merchant will spend eight to ten hours per week (one to two days per week, depending on the Land) at a Berufsschule for day-release to supplement the practical learning in the company by theoretical background knowledge including product knowledge, as well as Commercial Mathematics, Sport, Religion and German Language and Social Skills. The balance between general and vocational education is maintained because the contents of the Berufsschule syllabus is the responsibility of the Kultusministerium in each Land (Ministry of Culture) (cf Chap.2), whereas the content of the training regulations is ultimately subject to the Bundesminister für Arbeit und Sozialordnung (Department of Employment) via the Chambers of Trade and Industry. This ensures that the syllabus is not too company-specific.

As all apprentices, retail trainees keep a log book (Berichtsheft) in which they record what they have learned and the tasks they have carried out each week. How these inter-relate in practice will be studied in the case studies. Written and oral examinations are taken at the end of one and three-quarter years as follows:

### Written Examination

1. Company Practice  
Several questions relating to products and sales as well as the company process 90-120 minutes
2. Retail related mathematics  
Several questions 90-120 minutes

### Oral Examination

The examination is to be related to practice and the log book used in conjunction. Special emphasis should be put on testing whether the trainees have sufficient knowledge about the products in their specialised area and know how to apply this knowledge. Oral competency is to be established and judged.

National examinations in retailing ensure that not only company-related information is covered in the day-to-day operation of the training but also that the uniform syllabus is adapted to local circumstances. The basic knowledge acquired by a shop assistant will be the same all over West Germany as all trainees have to sit the same examination at the same time.

The retail trade merchant apprentices have the option of specialising in one of two areas in their third year in addition to the subjects listed above: either "Buying, Selling and Warehousing" or "Commercial Accountancy for the retail trade" and they will have to pass examinations in the chosen subjects as well as the others listed below:

### Written Examinations

1. Essay from a choice of topics. Trainees should show that they can treat a subject logically, write coherently with no spelling or grammatical errors and be factually accurate.  
90-120 minutes
2. Company Practice  
Several questions relating to commercial practice and the writing of a business letter based on a given practice-related situation.  
90-120 minutes

3. Retail related mathematics and accounting  
Solving simple mathematical and accounting problems.  
60-90 minutes
4. Options: either
  - a) Buying, Selling and Warehousing  
Solving more difficult problems in the above areas.  
120 minutes or
  - b) Commercial Accountancy  
Solving more difficult problems in the above area.  
120 minutes

#### Oral Examination

Practically orientated, using the log book, emphasising the optional subject.

It can be seen from the content of the training regulations and the examinations that the retail trade merchant receives a much wider training than the sales assistant. The actual operation of implementing the training regulation will be studied more closely in the case studies using the material from the companies.

As this training regulation has been in operation since 1968 all parties concerned (employers, trade unions, teachers and government officials) came to the conclusion that a new orientation was needed.

The retail trade federations, representing shops selling specialised goods had realised that the two-year training would not be to their advantage, having recognised the change in consumer demand and awareness. They would in fact need highly qualified sales staff to advise customers and be able to operate the more complex and technical stock control systems of the future (cf Part II). Together with them the trade unions and educational representatives put forward the following arguments for a uniform three-year training occupation of retail trade merchant with an orientation more directed towards selling than in the past. In no other occupational area are young people expected to make a choice of whether to continue their training or not after two years. This lowers the status of the occupation of sales

assistant and often youngsters are blinded by short-term advantages in their decision to stop training after two years. Job mobility and promotion opportunities are restricted as a result of a narrow sales training, leading to dead end jobs, mainly for girls and a higher rate of unemployment (cf Table 4.3). A two-year training time in fact only lasts one and three quarter years because the last quarter is taken up with examinations and preparation for these. If future sales assistants, so it is argued, are only to be employed as cashiers and shelf-fillers a two-year training period is too long and an abuse of both the spirit of training in the dual system and of the apprentice occurs - unskilled temporary staff can be used for shelf-filling and semi-skilled staff as cashiers. Furthermore, the training in the two years is so narrow and there is much more room for abuse than in the three-year training occupation; there is no time for the personal development of the trainee, an intellectual understanding of the retail trade and its function in society, and if the training company sells a wide product range there is hardly time to learn in depth about the products to then be able to advise customers adequately and professionally. Also, once a young person has started working their development stagnates and only by longer training is it possible to raise the educational standard of a greater proportion of the population. <sup>8</sup>

Various studies were undertaken by the BIBB or on its behalf to determine whether in fact what retail trainees were learning was really what they required in their working lives. The fact that these studies were commissioned demonstrates that training policy and changes in practice are undertaken on the basis of research in West Germany. However, neither of the two major studies actually looked at apprentices in the retail trade to see whether they were learning what was laid down in the training regulation. It was assumed that this was the case, due to the trust there is in the training system. This present study will, however, look at precisely this area, because even if the the training regulations are well designed and there is an inherent trust in the well-functioning of the system, actual practice may vary.

Bargmann et al (1981) studied retail employees through observation and interviews in different sized companies selling different product ranges in various forms to not only supply information about the currently occurring typical qualification requirements but also to provide evidence about changes in job tasks and developing tendencies in job demands. They came to the conclusion that due to the increasing adoption of rational work organisation and selling forms the employment opportunities of semi-skilled and unskilled workers in the retail trades was increasing and those with a retail apprenticeship were in fact being qualified for occupations which they would never be able to practice. Thus they were acquiring skills and knowledge which they would not be able to use in their intended career. This was especially applicable to those sales assistant apprentices who were not given the opportunity of continuing to the second stage to become a retail trade merchant.

Clauß et al (1983) analysed the answers to questionnaires given to a representative sample of 30,000 people in employment in 1979. They used the relevant data to provide information regarding the renewal of the training regulation of retail occupations. Their conclusions emphasised the need for one uniform retail qualification as they found that trained retail trade merchants were able to use their acquired skills to a much greater extent when they changed jobs than sales assistants, 60% compared to 36% when changing to an unrelated job and 62% and 54% respectively when changing to a related job. Furthermore, a cluster analysis of work place characteristics for both sales assistants and retail trade merchants showed that a stringent categorisation of the two occupations was not possible. People employed in the two occupations could be divided into six different types according to their work place. However, a considerable accumulation of sales assistants were found in the two types demanding the least skills.

Nearly every second trained sales assistant, but only every fourth retail trade merchant was of the opinion that their job activity could be practised by someone with a lower qualification than their own. Although a large proportion (64%) of trained sales assistants stay faithful to their occupation this is countered by a below average

income, limited promotion opportunities and a low personal job evaluation, limited job satisfaction and an above average job loss risk. This implies that in fact many sales assistants are lacking those skills which could improve their occupational situation and job satisfaction, i.e. especially knowledge in business administration as well as in buying, accountancy and personnel.

These studies recommended that the new training regulation should be determined by the highest demands expected of the observed sales staff and not by the most frequently observed demands as this would limit job flexibility and mobility. It was felt that uniform training should be aimed at and not a splintering into sales assistants for special branches e.g. furniture sales assistant or textiles sales assistant etc.. Although product knowledge is essential, the study found that there were no fundamental differences between branches as far as the demands on the sales assistants were concerned. More importantly they advocated that social competence should be the corner stone of the training. Recognition of this skill is already implied in the present training regulation as a side line under "vocabulary, communication skills and sales psychology". However, it needs to be given central status, because selling is the core skill of a sales assistant with all its complexities of analysing customer requirements, role reversals and empathy with the customer, patience with difficult customers and learning when is the right moment to clinch a sale and other sales tactics and strategies. This particular point will be expanded further in the case studies. In order to enable young people to acquire these competences successfully precedence has to be given to the intellectual penetration of all tasks rather than the mere acquisition of knowledge and skills based on learning by doing. All aspects of retail trading have to be put into context with one another.

The job requirements of various retail employees are different, not because of the products sold by their employer but by the selling method employed - whether this is self-service, pre-selection or customer service - and by the size of the company in respect of selling space and number of employees. However, as the employees of the future are expected to be flexible and mobile these differences do not really



matter greatly if training to the highest demands encountered in any branch, size or selling form is adopted.

All training regulations, including the one for sales assistants need to be flexible to cope with the technical organisational changes and future job demands (cf Part II). The effect of information technology has played a very significant part in the discussions, because fundamentally the selling process and the skills associated with that will remain the central focal point. However, the influence of technology must be given greater emphasis. It would be problematic if the new training regulation was orientated too much towards a certain form of selling or a certain product range, because in this way the companies would lack the future innovation potential in their staff, and the employees would be hindered in adapting themselves to future demands which might be made of them. It is thus not sufficient just to add a subject "Information technology" to the syllabus and convey basic knowledge about computers. The computerised stock control system enables the retail companies to make informed decisions based on facts rather than guesswork and assessment, and this requires a change in attitudes and thinking on behalf of the staff (profit rather than turnover thinking and understanding the functioning of the whole company rather than just the department). As basic training is also a socialisation process the training regulation must not solely concern itself with factual competences but also with attitudes e.g. the willingness and capability of coping rationally with conflicts and being able to take responsibility. Ways have to be found of giving trainees responsibility early on in their training as they must feel motivated to continue their training.

As will be seen in the case studies the skills young people feel they need to be a good sales assistant are product knowledge, customer relation skills and general social-communicative skills. However, it is the simpler tasks of preparing goods for sales and operating a cash register on which much of their time is spent.

What, however, does become clear from the studies and which was echoed by the experts at the BIBB, was the need for a uniform three-year apprenticeship for the retail trades. The two-step training regulation

which has been in force since 1968, therefore, relegates the occupation of sales assistant to one of low status, attracting a preponderance of female trainees, as it is seen as an extension of home life. The qualities needed, physically, emotionally and intellectually are not fully valued and the regulations lend themselves to abuse.

The arguments put forward by the food retailers have been shown to be unfounded: young people are more qualified, keener to gain recognisable skills which can be used for promotion or transfer to a related occupation and although some trainees are interested in earning money quickly before starting a family, if a three-year apprenticeship was the norm as for other occupations this idea would not even surface. If the training is geared to selling skills, product knowledge and social-communicative skills with background information for book-keeping and personnel matters, the image of the sales assistant would rise. On the one hand retailing, unless it becomes totally automated, will need unskilled labour to stock shelves and cashiers to take payment for goods. On the other it will need a, perhaps reduced, group of people, willing and able to advise customers, knowledgeable about the products on sale and capable of using the increasing amount of information available through technology. The fact that two types of retail employee will be needed in the future would mean that the training was for the qualified job.

#### 4.4. The New Training Regulation

Discussions have now been in progress for more than ten years between the employers, unions and government officials on the abolition of the two-year training for a sales assistant and a more up-to-date training regulation for the retail trade merchant. Agreement has been reached on the content of the three-year apprenticeship, but especially the food retailers are still pressing for a two-year apprenticeship.

It was hoped that an official promulgation would mean that the new syllabus could be used by the end of 1986. In fact agreement was reached by the end of 1986 and the decree was passed on 14.1.1987. New

training contracts signed on or after 1.8.1987 for the three-year retail trade merchant are governed by the new regulations.

It has taken this long for a decision on the content to be reached, because the trade unions (in this case HBV - Handel, Banken und Versicherungen) felt tricked in 1968 when the two-stage training regulation was promulgated. They had only agreed to the two-stage training (Stufenausbildung) on the condition that the three-year training occupation of retail trade merchant would remain the norm and the two-year training occupation of sales assistant the exception. When the opposite occurred they immediately protested, but because it is the employers who train, they have the political power. <sup>9</sup>

The stage was reached where the employers agreed to a new regulation for the three-year training occupation of retail trade merchant as long as the two-year training for sales assistants remained. The difference to the previous training regulation, at present still in force until 1989 for those who started their apprenticeship before 1.8.1987, lies in the fact that less managerial and industrial economics are taught in the third year; instead the sales and product knowledge acquired in the first two years is extended and only basic knowledge about administrative tasks, especially accountancy and personnel management will be taught, because the other administrative functions and tasks are often centralised or subcontracted out to specialised firms e.g. advertising and salary and wage calculations.

Most retail trade federations (Einzelhandelsverbände), the federal states, the trade unions and teacher organisations favour the uniform three-year training occupation of retail trade merchant, whereas the large shops, supermarkets, hypermarkets, DIY stores, food retailers and co-operatives favour the two-year training occupation of sales assistant to be continued alongside the three-year training occupation of retail trade merchant. Trainers and officials seem to join the fringes of either persuasion.

It is the food retailers, who are mainly in favour of keeping the two-year sales assistant training occupation. The only new argument, in addition to the ones they had originally rehearsed, was that for

standardised goods (problemlose Waren) two years training was sufficient time to train young people in the skills needed.

The retail trade federations agreed that for food sold in supermarkets perhaps two years training was sufficient, as the level of product knowledge does not need to be developed too deeply and direct selling skills are not called upon very often. However, it is not only for the job in-hand that training should be undertaken, but for the benefit of the industry and more generally for the economy as a whole. Therefore, the wider based knowledge acquired in the third year enables a young person to be more flexible on the labour market.

Various experts <sup>10</sup> now seemed to be of the opinion that perhaps the three-year training could be made acceptable to all but the food retailers, where it might be necessary to retain the two and three-year training occupations. However, the product knowledge plans have been conceived in such a way that it is almost impossible to adapt them to suit a two-year training syllabus. Furthermore, a pilot study (Hirsch 1984) in a supermarket chain in West Berlin has shown that even young people of low educational ability (in this case young Turks) can be trained to become retail trade merchants if there is good training material and great commitment on the part of the company and the trainers.

Taking all the arguments together - the declining employment chances, especially for narrowly trained sales assistants; the likely demands new technology will make on the sales staff of the future and the implications this has for working conditions, especially for women and the conclusions reached by experts in the field as far as changes in consumer behaviour, demand and attitude are concerned leads to the conclusion that a three-year training period, with sales techniques combined with detailed product knowledge as the central focal point offers the most promising chances not only for the trainees, but also for the companies, who are thus raising the status of the jobs in retailing, ensuring that they have well trained staff for the demands technology makes and providing consumers with a more attractive environment in which to make their purchases, which in all likelihood will lead to increased sales and happier, more committed customers.

All new training regulations in recent years in West Germany have been inspired by the recognition that following orders and carrying out tasks according to predetermined guidelines, although still needed, would not equip the workforce of the future to work to full capacity. Trainees need to understand why they are doing certain things in a specific way within a broad framework. For example, restocking is not a very difficult task and can be learned relatively quickly. Having pride in doing this well, quickly and efficiently is not so easy to teach. Involving trainees in learning objectives, so that the wider implications of each task are understood are important. Clean, well-laid out, well-stocked, accurately labeled shelves encourages consumers to purchase from a particular store. If customers are continually disappointed in these basic expectations they will turn to a competitor. Understanding why customers purchase certain goods, the influence of advertising, in and out of the store, the concept of loss-leaders etc. enables trainees to take decisions, adapt to new work processes and innovate. Almost subconsciously, while restocking a certain product range, trainees may become aware of a new line, but without being given further product information, knowing whether an active advertising campaign is being conducted at that moment, they will not understand the full impact of a product launch and its effect on the shop. Nor will they be able to advise the customer appropriately.

Training regulations have been adapted to transmit this wider knowledge. However, it is not so much a matter of teaching young people better ways of doing things, but instilling in them an attitude of mind. This can be achieved by learning objectives, which are put into practice by specific wording in the training regulations. Trainees are not, as previously, just expected to recognise and learn by heart the various concepts such as FOB, but to be able to present, describe, explain, recommend and compare various aspects of the retail operation e.g. 1.7.a) Present the flow of goods and data in the training company.

In addition the product knowledge plans are formulated along the same lines, linking product knowledge very closely to the framework plan, e.g.

3. Advice and Sales for Textiles and Clothing:

- a) The effect of colours, style, pattern and product range
- aa) advise customers, based on specialist knowledge and appropriate to the type of customer on the effect of current colour combinations, styles and patterns.

There is no comparable product range plan for any line of goods in Britain, which has to be taught systematically to all trainees in all clothing and retail outlets in this instance (cf Chapter 5).

Although both trade unions and employers finally agreed on the new training regulation for the three-year sales assistant in retailing interpretation of what has been achieved varies quite considerably. Looking at the two sets of training regulations the following changes can be ascertained:

1. Instead of listing subject areas which have to be covered the new training regulation sets out 132 learning objectives under six main headings: training company, purchasing, storage, sales, personnel and accountancy (See Appendix 8 for more detail).
2. Companies are now obliged by law to establish an internal training plan based on the training framework, which instead of years is divided into half-yearly blocks.
3. Although specialised product plans existed before these had an advisory function rather than being legally binding. The new training regulations reduce the specialised areas from over 30 to 20, broadening the product knowledge range. Product knowledge now has to be covered in the companies and cannot be replaced by lessons in the BS.
4. The administrative content, previously limited to the third year (i.e. to the retail trade merchant) is spread more evenly throughout the three years, giving a better foundation training, and the content is more geared to product management rather than administrative functions, delimiting the training of the retail trade merchant from that of an office clerk. This means less

competition within companies for training places for these two occupations.

5. Product management is related to the new integrated stock control systems where these are in place and environmental issues are included among the learning objectives.
6. The function of training, promotion and further training forms a separate topic in the training regulations and working conditions are also discussed in a wider context.

The new training regulations for a retail trade merchant, therefore, emphasise the central role of selling and product knowledge and the responsibility of the company in transmitting these skills and knowledge. The training plan is more structured and more detailed than before and companies are legally obliged to provide a tighter timeframe for each of the learning objectives. The point of learning objectives, however, also implies a certain amount of initiative on the part of the trainee once the initial induction period is over. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the company to make sure that the trainee reaches the required standard needed to pass the examination at the end of the training period. Officially educational entry requirements cannot be set but training can be shortened or, exceptionally, lengthened to accommodate a trainee with learning difficulties.

The role of the BS is increased by more contact hours being instituted - two full days of classes. Its aim is not to transmit ideologies which are those needed according to employers but to complement these. It orientates itself according to the interests of the trainees and the principles of a social and welfare state. Data-processing, with only an allocation of forty hours, is also to be used in other subjects. Book-keeping is to lose in importance to differentiate the sales assistant's occupation from "office jobs", but it is retained to enable transfer to these jobs should this be desired. The BS continues to teach Social Studies, which will aid the social-communicative skill development process of the sales assistant as well as Politics, Religious Education, Mathematics, German and Sport. The fundamental content of the training regulations has, therefore, been updated and adapted to the changing face of retailing with an emphasis on selling and product knowledge, orientated to serving the customer. This means

that there is a greater focus on professional and independent working and decision-making: the transferable skills of the future, compared to the more rigid following-of-orders approach inherent in the old regulations. A change of attitude is, therefore, being aimed for rather than a fundamental change in content.

The trade unions would have liked to have seen more explicit wording in the section on new technology and in the product knowledge plans. They also wanted trainees to have their oral examination questions two weeks in advance of the actual examination so that the trainees could prepare adequately. Finally they wanted the two-year training for sales assistants to be abolished straightaway.<sup>11</sup>

The employers on the other hand, initially the food retailers, as mentioned and then the department stores wanted to keep the two-year sales assistant training. They wanted to limit the new technology content to what existed in each company and product knowledge to be acquired as before on the shop floor and in the BS.<sup>12</sup> Neither side was prepared to give very much and although the BIBB had prepared the new training regulations by 1985 further revisions were needed. Final compromise was reached on 29 September 1986. The two-year apprenticeship would only be abolished if, after analysis by independent experts under the supervision of the Ministry for Education and Science, it was found not to be needed in the retail trade as a whole or by one specific branch of retailing.<sup>13</sup> The consensus-based policy-making approach was, therefore, very much at the forefront in the updating of the retail training regulations.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

In West Germany the major issue in retail training has been that of reaching a common decision on how to update the training regulations. Faced with a strongly legalised system and a tradition of consultation among the social partners this process has been extremely long but consensus-based (Katzenstein 1986). Whereas Britain, as will be seen in the next Chapter, introduced changes within a year in Germany it has taken ten. The German situation has meant that during the time of the



discussions over half a million young people in retailing have been trained according to out-of-date training regulations. This cannot have enhanced the image of retailing among young people, nor served the customer. Many female trainees were only trained for two years and the dramatic change in the number now registering for the three year training (an increase of 85% from 1986 to 1987) shows that young people were always willing to continue their training if the opportunity was made available to them.

However, the changes put forward in the new training regulations are a definite improvement and will equip Germany's retail sales force of the future with the skills to serve the consumer. A tightening of the regulations has meant that if abuse was occurring this will now be easier to spot in monitoring visits by the IHK and through the success rate in examinations. Although, compared to British shop assistants German ones have always been very knowledgeable about their products, this was perhaps not an industry-wide characteristic, but fed off the good reputation of some companies. Many more young women will be given the chance to train in an occupation, which for the foreseeable future still offers employment. The image of retailing should also be raised by removing the two-tier qualification structure of the past.

- <sup>1</sup> In 1960 19% of all apprentices were being trained in retail occupations (Bargmann et al 1981,110).
- <sup>2</sup> Figures are based only on those employees registered as paying social security contributions with the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (Beschäftigte as compared to Erwerbstätige).
- <sup>3</sup> For further discussion see Entwicklungs- und Beschäftigungstendenzen im Einzelhandel - eine statistische Analyse, MatAB 3/1978, 6-7.
- <sup>4</sup> Own calculations from Statistisches Jahrbuch 1988,107.
- <sup>5</sup> Interview with H-J Walter-Letzius at the BIBB, Berlin on 22.3.1985.
- <sup>6</sup> Interview with H-J Walter-Letzius at the BIBB, Berlin, 22.3.1985 and with A Hirsch at Bolle, Berlin on 26.3.1985.
- <sup>7</sup> Calculated from Grund- und Strukturdaten 1988/89,98-99.
- <sup>8</sup> Interview with A Hirsch at Bolle, Berlin, 26.3.1985.
- <sup>9</sup> Ordentlicher Gewerkschaftstag der Gewerkschaft HBV 1976 in Saarbrücken, Antrag 228 published in Informationen zur Bildungspolitik "Für eine Qualifizierte Ausbildung im Einzelhandel" HBV,n.d.,40.
- <sup>10</sup> Interviews with H-J Walter-Letzius, BIBB, Berlin 22.3.1985; T Adler, BIBB, Berlin 18.3.1985; A Hirsch, Bolle, Berlin 26.3.1985.
- <sup>11</sup> For a more detailed discussion see a joint publication by the Gewerkschaft Handel, Banken und Versicherungen and the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung Kaufmann/Kauffrau im Einzelhandel Verordnungstext, Rahmenlehrplan, Kommentar n.d.
- <sup>12</sup> For further details on the employer position see among others Léonard "Neue Ausbildung im Einzelhandel" in Hessischer Einzelhandel 3/87,3-7 and Lebensmittel Praxis 3/87 giving the views of employers, experts at the BIBB, food retailers and the trade unions.
- <sup>13</sup> The commission of experts was due to report its findings in 1989. These have not been considered in this study.

TABLE 4.1

Apprentices in the Occupations of Sales Assistants, Sales Assistant  
Selling Food and Retail Trade Merchant, 1965-87

No. of Apprentices - absolute-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Retail Trade Merchants</u>	<u>Sales Assistants</u>	<u>Sales Assistants selling food</u>	<u>Total</u>
1965	176,168	-	15,345	191,513
1970	54,502	67,542	14,083	136,127
1972	36,261	79,542	13,801	129,604
1974	30,605	71,556	17,050	119,211
1976	32,812	69,983	26,060	128,855
1977	38,442	84,820	38,906	161,168
1980	44,301	92,239	44,011	180,551
1982	41,871	76,674	42,852	161,397
1983	40,396	78,782	45,419	164,597
1985	44,773	82,231	50,207	177,211
1986	45,660	77,341	50,123	173,124
1987	53,506	63,811	49,220	166,537

Source: Qualifikation und Erwerbstätigkeit in den Einzelhandelsberufen, Berichte zur beruflichen Bildung, Heft 56, 1983, 8.  
and Grund- und Strukturdaten 1983/84, 1984/85, 1986/87, 1987/88, 1988/89 Bundesminister für Bildung und Wissenschaft, various pages and own calculations.

TABLE 4.2

Newly Signed Apprenticeship Contracts for Sales Assistants and Retail  
Trade Merchants 1976-87 (30 September)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sales</u>	<u>Retail Trade</u>	<u>Change to</u>		<u>Change to 1976</u>	
	<u>Assistant</u>	<u>Merchant</u>	<u>previous year</u>		<u>(%)</u>	
	-Numbers-		(%)			
			S.A.	R.T.M.	S.A.	R.T.M.
1976	36,189	16,206	-	-	-	-
1977	42,525	10,354	17.5	-36.1	17.5	-36.1
1978	46,226	11,294	8.7	9.1	27.7	-30.3
1979	50,089	11,512	8.4	1.9	38.4	-29.0
1980	48,177	10,846	- 3.8	- 5.8	18.6	-33.1
1981	41,044	9,449	-14.8	-12.9	13.4	-41.7
1982	40,942	9,721	- 0.2	2.9	13.1	-40.0
1983	42,969	10,423	5.0	7.2	18.7	-35.7
1984	46,106	11,022	7.3	5.7	27.4	-32.0
1985	44,676	10,348	- 3.1	- 6.1	23.5	-36.1
1986	42,368	10,808	- 5.2	4.4	17.1	-33.3
1987	31,935	19,951	-24.6	84.6	-11.8	23.1

S.A.= Sales Assistant; R.T.M.= Retail Trade Merchant

Source: Berufsbildungsbericht 1980 to 1988, Tabelle 1/3 or similar and own calculations.

TABLE 4.3

Registered Unemployed Wholesalers, Buyers, Retail Trade Merchants and  
Sales Assistants 1974-1985

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Unemployed</u>		
	<u>Wholesalers, Buyers Retail Trade Merchants</u>	<u>Sales Assistants</u>	<u>Retail Trade* Employees (Total)</u>
1974	6,174	34,995	n/a
1975	12,238	57,197	n/a
1976	12,703	59,432	n/a
1977	12,434	61,221	86,700
1978	11,317	58,211	81,000
1979	10,112	50,750	70,500
1980	11,347	54,306	75,900
1981	16,514	74,605	105,400
1982	25,800	104,500	150,000
1983	32,000	129,500	185,100
1984	32,800	131,600	189,200
1985	35,100 (47.8% female)	138,600 (85% female)	199,500
1986	n/a	n/a	195,508+
1987	n/a	n/a	192,469+

\* Refers to Warenkaufleute and not just to Einzelhandel employees.

+ Figure from Statistisches Jahrbuch 1987 and 1988.

Source: Qualifikation und Erwerbstätigkeit in den Einzelhandelsberufen, Berichte zur beruflichen Bildung, Heft 56 1983,9 and Vademecum 1986,12.

TABLE 4.4

Transparency of the Stepwise Training in the Retail Trade

Training Year	Number of apprentices					
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Retail Trade merchant 2nd training year	8,830	8,373	8,229	9,421	8,611	
Retail Trade Merchant 3rd training year		14,588	15,178	15,909	18,503	19,220
Difference = no. of salespersons who follow with a training for retail trade merchant transparency quota		5,758	6,805	7,680	9,082	10,608
Salesperson 2nd training year	39,840	37,976	34,409	36,213	35,688	

Source: Mauer K W : Vocational Training in German Retail Trade.  
Lecture at the meeting of the Retail Consortium on  
14.11.1984, London.

TABLE 4.5

Apprentices in Retailing According to their Educational Attainment 1982\*

<u>Training Occupation</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>without HSA</u>	<u>with HSA</u>	<u>Higher school leaving certif.</u>	<u>qualified for university</u>	<u>BGJ/ BVJ</u>	<u>Others</u>	
Sales Assistant	No. 70,684 %	2,704 3.8	44,832 63.4	12,315 17.4	756 1.1	3,021 4.3	7,056 10.0	
Retail Trade Merchant	No. 38,152 %	851 2.2	18,543 49.6	10,279 26.9	1,578 4.1	852 2.2	5,692 15.8	
Total	%	100	3.0	56.5	22.2	2.6	3.3	12.5

\* These figures are the latest complete published set in this format. Later Berufsbildungsberichte do not publish the qualification level of trainees for individual apprenticeship categories unless sales assistant and/or retail trade merchant figures as one of the ten most popular training occupations per qualification level. See text for further details.

HSA = Hauptschulabschluß

BGJ = Berufsgrundbildungsjahr

BVJ = Berufsvorbereitungsjahr

Source: own calculations from the Berufsbildungsbericht 1984, Bundesminister für Bildung und Wissenschaft, 125.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Training in the Retail Trades in Britain

In this chapter an attempt is made to analyse the training situation in British retailing. Firstly, a look at the historical development of retail training and the changing image of working in the retail trade will be taken, as these developments are fundamental to the current attitude towards shopwork. Secondly, the changing composition of the workforce is studied, as this has an effect on training provision today. Thirdly, the fundamental role played by the Distributive Industry Training Board (DITB) and the lesser role of the FE sector will be discussed to see why neither body was able to provide systematic and extensive training for the large number of young people entering the industry. In the fourth section the development of training schemes and particularly YTS in this sector is analysed.<sup>1</sup> The information presented in this chapter will be contrasted where relevant with the developments in German retail training. The case studies in the subsequent chapters will then serve as an illustration and look more specifically at the difference in attitude to training.

#### 5.1. The Historical Development of Retail Training

Training in the retail sector in Britain is documented in a different way to West Germany. This is in part due to the lack of a common training policy in all sectors of British industry but also because the distributive industry is one of the most disparate industries:

"Training in the Distributive Industry is currently not documented in any comprehensive form so there is no positive statistical information as to how it is being undertaken; what form it is taking, or as to its ultimate objective." (Phillips 1985,1)

and

"It is very difficult in a sector of the economy which is so diverse, to evaluate the quality and quantity of training being undertaken in relation to the need for that training." (NRTC 1984,2)

To establish how sales assistants were trained in the past, both distant and recent has meant largely relying on a television documentary programme <sup>2</sup> for the former and documentation published or commissioned in various forms by the DITB (Distributive Industry Training Board) for the latter.

Before and just after the First World War most stores were run by the families who owned them and butchers, bakers, green grocers and provisioners would compete on equal terms. Being employed in the retail sector was seen as an honour:

"If you were a shop assistant you never wanted to be a factory girl. ... if you had a job in a department store you were really one up and if you worked in an ordinary shop and you got taken on in a department store you felt as if you had lifted yourself a little bit." (Rita Greendale, Hull Shop Assistant in All Our Working Lives BBC2 1986)

Each shop had its special skills, and to become a fully fledged assistant in the hardware, grocery or drapery trade took a six year apprenticeship. The tasks were described as follows:

"You first of all started off on the grocery side and got to know the ins and outs of all your commodities, weights, countries of origin and where this is grown and where this is packed etc. From there you moved over to the provisions side which involved boning and rolling of bacon, weighing up for lard and butter." (Roland Bennett, Hull Shop Assistant in All Our Working Lives BBC2 1986)

or

"I wasn't allowed to serve anybody for about a year. I had to observe the correct way of serving people but in the meantime you did all the dirty, menial jobs." (Rita Greendale, Hull Shop Assistant in All Our Working Lives BBC2 1986)

The image of working in the retail trade as portrayed by the shop assistants above is very different to its image today. The main changes are well illustrated in the following quotation from a former shop assistant:

"... jobs more repetitive. Less direct contact with the customer. You've lost that individual service. You see the men and the managers and all they seem to be doing is filling up the shelves and then the customer comes along, helps themselves with a basket and then the manager has to make sure that they get through the checking-out point. He doesn't tell the customer which colour face powder a girl wants or what colour lipstick would suit a girl. We used to do that. But not today." (All Our Working Lives BBC2 1986)



These statements need to be compared later to those made by the trainees interviewed in the case study in the British supermarket. Obviously the changes occurring in trading practice influenced the job content of a sales assistant and Denny correctly stated:

"Retailing has retained this essentially individualistic character...essentially distribution is fragmented and discrete; a hundred and fifty years of phenomenal growth produced no syllabus of retail training, evolved no scheme of apprenticeship, and reached no understanding that the principles of distribution could be codified and taught, as weaving or mechanical engineering are taught." (1970,16)

Whether this still holds true in Britain twenty years later is disputable: on the one hand, attempts have been made to develop training schemes but on the other these are still not universally used. It is relevant, therefore, to look next at the composition of the retailing workforce and how this has changed over the years, influenced by the factors discussed above.

## 5.2. Composition of the Workforce

It has been argued that due to the nature of the changes in retailing the number of women employed in the distributive trades increased and, that as a result the status of the industry as a whole has declined. Whether this is true is hard to prove. It would appear that a combination of factors contributed to the increase in the number of female employees working in retailing - the effect of the Second World War and the lack of male labour being one major factor, women's growing sense of independence and the need to earn money at certain points in their lives being equally important and the actual job content being another.

However, since the 1950s there have always been more women of all ages employed in retailing than men: 50.2% in 1951 and 59.1% in 1981 (Table 5.1). When looked at by individual age groups the largest proportion of females were to be found among the 18-19 year olds - almost 86% in 1951. For the under 18 year olds and 20-24 year olds the proportions are substantially lower - almost 70% and 66.5% respectively. On

comparing the figures in Table 5.1 for 1951 and 1981 a significant change can be ascertained. Although the proportion of women of all ages in retailing increased from 50% to 59% the proportion of females under 24 decreased noticeably to 61% for 16-17 year olds and 18-19 year olds, and to 57% for 20-24 year olds. In total this meant a decrease from 38% females under 24 working in retailing in 1951 to 24% in 1981. In addition, the proportion of all young people (under 24) working in retailing decreased from 27% in 1951 to 24% in 1981.

It can be ascertained that in 1951 84.6% of all male employees in retailing were over 24, whereas for female employees the figure was 62.3% (Table 5.1). This situation had changed noticeably by 1981 when the proportion of male employees over 24 had dropped to 75.9% and that for female employees had increased to 75.8%. Over a period of thirty years, the composition of the labour force in retail distribution in Britain has undergone a significant change away from the employment of young girls towards the employment of older women and younger men. This state of affairs is confirmed for the late 1960s (Table 5.2) when comparing employment in the distributive trades with manufacturing one sees that in 1968 16% of male employees in distribution were under 20 compared to 24% females in the same age group.

The proportion of these older female employees working part-time has risen steadily from 21% in 1974 (DITB 1974,5) to 38.3% in March 1985, an increase of 17.3% over eleven years, partly at the expense of females working full-time, a reduction of 3.7% over seven years and males working both full-and part-time, a reduction of 1.3% over the same period (Table 5.3).

The long-term trend in British retailing is towards widespread employment of older part-time women but at the same time to a continued use of young people, especially young men. The part-time women are used to fill trading peaks and are employed mainly as cashiers and shelf-fillers in contrast with the young people who it is hoped will in significant numbers follow a career in retailing. In 1974 48% of employees were in selling occupations, 16% in managerial or supervisory occupations, 14% in clerical occupations and the remaining 22% were in professional posts, management traineeships or miscellaneous

occupations (DITB 1974,5). Although no recent figures were available at the time of undertaking this study, there is no evidence to suppose that the proportions have changed markedly. As the dominant occupation is that of sales assistant, this is the one which will be concentrated upon in this study.

### 5.3. Training under the Distributive Industry Training Board (DITB)

Before the establishment of the DITB in July 1968 and its subsequent reconstitutions the larger multiples and department stores were providing young people with acceptable training as seen by outside observers, but the great majority of retail companies, especially the independents and the smaller multiples offered very little if any training. Retailing figured as the second lowest training provider measured by expenditure on training of the different sectors of the economy at the time. Retailing, since the demise of apprenticeships, had become a typical "industry" that trained on-the-job and only for the job in hand.

It was this disparity which the DITB had to combat through implementation of the 1964 Act. The DITB was one of the last training boards to be formed, because it took longer to define its scope: people who were importing, retailing and wholesaling (including industrial wholesalers) but excluding exporters, fresh produce selling agents and butchers. Its stated main objectives were:

- to develop and encourage a systematic approach to analyse and satisfy training needs;
- to increase the amount of management and supervisory training;
- to increase the use of trained Training Officers and Instructors;
- to support the National Distributive Certificate Courses in Colleges of FE as one means of establishing an identifiable career structure in the Industry. (DITB 1974,9)

Furthermore

"... The Board is conscious of the social needs of employees in the industry, particularly young people and of training needs, which are industry-wide or specific to particular occupations."  
(DITB 1979b,17)

Its main role was to provide advice on training in the industry and with the help of the levy/grant system to ensure that suitable and adequate training was carried out. No body had previously been granted such powers and some retailers did not relish the intervention. The Board, with its head office in Manchester, operated through four regional and sixteen area offices, spread throughout Britain, employing 455 staff in 1977 (Hart 1978,17). Almost half its staff were training advisers in the field, emphasising the DITB's appreciation of the need for close personal contact in such a dispersed industry, dominated by small units. Its main staff were appointed by the Minister of State for Employment through recommendation. Chart 5.1 shows the training actions undertaken by the DITB in relation to young people in sales positions. The main points will be discussed below.

Sharing the cost of training more evenly was achieved by a levy/grant mechanism which empowered the DITB to raise a levy of 0.7% of the annual payroll from all firms in its industry who did not train and who had ten employees or more or emoluments of more than £30,000 (1981/82) and to give a grant to all those who did. At this level 10,500 companies with just over 1.5 million employees were retained within the Board's leviable scope (MSC 1981b,15). Appendix 10 shows the sort of training activities which were eligible for funding. From these it can be seen that a large proportion of the grants was intended for tuition fees for off-the-job courses to encourage the industry to make use of the courses available for their staff. This was precisely the kind of training the retail trade had not made much use of in the past.

When the ITBs were first set up the three main aims of the 1964 Act were kept uppermost. However, the levy system was the one which gained the most emphasis. It was extremely bureaucratic and longwinded. There were not enough measures of effective control nor were the standards of quality set at high enough a level. Until the beginning of the 1980s employers could gain remission of 45% of levy simply by having an acceptable training plan, with a further 25% remission if it could be proved that the plans were being implemented (MSC 1981b,15). Thus it is not surprising that Hutt and Atkinson (RDM March/April 1975,29) defined training as "anything which employers seriously considered to be 'training'". Using this definition they found that

three-quarters of all the firms visited were undertaking training. This still meant a quarter of firms did not even carry out the most basic of training. These were mainly small firms with less than ten employees. This is to be expected, as they were excluded from the levy/grant system and, therefore, the motivation to train was limited. Small firms also often have family members working in them and do not officially train, i.e. pay levy.

The most frequently cited training by all but the smallest firms was on-the-job training. This can again be subdivided as illustrated in Table 5.4, showing that the most common form of "training" in small firms was personal supervision and in large firms formal training was the predominant form with supervision of new recruits not playing a great role in either.

When these figures are compared to West German ones, it must be noted that in order to qualify for the term "Ausbildung" (training) the training would have to be of the formal kind. The interesting fact then is that the majority of apprentices (83%) were in fact trained in the small (up to 9 employees) and medium (10 to 49 employees) size firm (Table 5.5). Even when all types of training, not just off-the-job training are taken into consideration it is still the large companies in Britain that carry out more training than the small ones (Table 5.6).

However, the conclusion to be drawn is not as straightforward as it might appear, because the figures from the IMS survey quoted in Table 5.6 relate to training of all occupational groups in retailing, not just sales assistants and to all age groups and not just school leavers. In addition, although a clear relationship between the proportion of firms undertaking training of all kinds and the size of the firm exists, this does not necessarily mean that larger firms are training a higher proportion of their employees than are small firms. It simply shows that training in Britain is more clearly identified in larger firms. One would need more detailed information on the actual number of staff involved in training in each company as well as a breakdown of their age and position.

A final point covered in the IMS survey "People and Jobs in Distribution" was the attitude of employers to training. This was verified by seeing how many firms had a written company training plan; an assessment of training needs; a senior executive responsible for training and a training officer. Overall only 7% of firms had a written training plan, which is surprising considering remission of 45% of levy could be gained simply for having one. 12% had an assessment of training needs, 14% had appointed a senior executive responsible for training and only 4% had a training officer (Hutt & Atkinson 1975,32).

All German companies who carry out training are required to have a qualified trainer on the premises, which means for example, that every supermarket manager has to have taken the Ausbildereignungsprüfung (trainer's suitability examination) before being allowed to have apprentices in his branch. In most large companies one would expect a specific person to be in charge of training. This may be a training officer in larger companies, the personnel officer in smaller companies, and in small companies one has to suppose that training is part of the manager's or proprietor's duties. Considering again that many firms in the survey were small and perhaps could not see the need or afford all the four actions named above, even among the firms employing 251-500 staff over half had no training officer and 20% of those with 501 plus staff had not employed one. Hart (1978,31) found that the number of qualified training officers and instructors (i.e. those who had been on a DITB recognised training course for grant purposes) had increased from 10,000 in 1969 to 55,000 in 1975. It would be interesting to know what the figures for the 1980s were, to see if in the last ten years at least there had been a change in attitude. This information, however, is not available as no comparable survey has been carried out since the IMS one.

A most striking fact is that already in 1976 the DITB itself reported (DITB Statistical Report 1975/76,4) that as a result of previously unpublished data from the IMS Survey 73% of companies questioned stated that there had been no change in their training policy as a result of the creation of the DITB in 1968. Hart (1978,31), on the other hand, concluded that there appeared to have been an increase in training following the establishment of the DITB, at least as far as systems

were concerned. It does seem to be generally agreed<sup>3</sup> that the training boards' existence gave a 'once-for-all' impetus to training. More training is in process than might have been thought but it is highly varied and complex. Typically retailers rely on personality and personal enterprise for success rather than statutory training arrangements as these may offer advantages to rival companies.

To try and assess what training implications there might be over the next fifteen years as a result of political, social, economic and technological developments related to the distributive trades the DITB Strategic Planning Group published three major surveys between 1980 and 1982.<sup>4</sup> These were intended to provide a guide to the Board in making its plans to assist the Industry with its training and then for the Industry and its Associations as guidelines for future action. The principal purpose of the predictions which arose from the Environmental Scan was to ensure that trained people and appropriate training facilities were available when they were needed.<sup>5</sup>

The second survey (DITB 1981) sought to identify issues which would have training implications in regard to which actions should be taken in the near future, even though people with the identified skills and knowledge may not be needed for five years or more. The main issue was the identification of the level of skills needed rather than the number of people with these skills.

The training implications which arose out of the following fourteen issues (from 315) were deemed to be of high priority by the people questioned. The probability of the issues arising in the short (by 1985), medium (by 1990) and long (by 1995) term was also considered to be high in the majority of cases. This implies that if these surveys were used by the industry a possible change in training policy and practice should be observable in hindsight.

1) **Rationalisation of the Distributive Industry in the UK.**

The number of small shops will decline and the average size of each business will increase with a polarisation towards large mixed businesses and smaller specialist ones.

As a result there will be an increasing need for managerial and technical levels of skills calling for the re-training and re-deployment of staff as certain functions and jobs are phased out. There will be a need for fewer but more highly trained staff, with special emphasis being put on the quality of staff dealing with the public. These will need to be trained to assist customers without actually providing personal service.

- 2) **Shoplifting will be a continuing problem and, therefore, more sophisticated security systems will be needed.**  
Shop assistants will require instructions on company policy on shop lifters and procedures to be used. Training will be needed on the legal aspects of theft, citizens arrest and self-defence as well as attitude training to security systems.
- 3) **Total consumer spending will remain static in real terms.**  
Sales staff will need to be more skilled in merchandising, display, layout and customer service. Product knowledge and after sales service become important as does closer contact between buyers and manufacturers on quality control. As customers become more discerning, staff need to be concerned to a higher degree about presentation, marketing and the sales approach. The service element becomes more important than ever and managers will need to be trained in training skills.  
  
The probability of this event occurring was considered to be high in the short term and low in the medium and long term.
- 4) **Consumers will be looking for value for money.**  
Sales staff will need reminding of the company's good value and after sales service. There will be increased emphasis on sales promotion techniques.
- 5) **Pressure to increase productivity.**  
Training packages will need to be transmitted to staff at lower levels to make them aware of the importance of efficiency. More efficient staff will require a much higher degree of training. Flexibility of staff will become an important asset and this will



need to be nurtured through good training. There will be changes in systems, particularly in selling and warehouse procedures.

- 6) **Increased need for social skills at work.** ~~occurring is predicted to~~  
More emphasis will need to be put on social skills training at school and in vocational training, both "on" and "off" the job.
- 7) **Convincing employees of need for a change.**  
There will need to be more personal contact between senior management and staff. Employees will need to be satisfied that job security, rewards and career progression are being looked after. Organisation changes must be carefully thought through implying major education and training demands.

The probability of the following three issues occurring is considered to be medium in the short term, but high in the medium and long term.

- 8) **Need for job satisfaction and enrichment at all levels.**  
This needs to be part of all training plans, particularly as jobs become less skilled. This need already exists but is not fully understood and implies training for radical changes in management attitudes, leading to participatory management styles.
- 9) **Experiment with new management styles.**  
Management needs to be more flexible in outlook and encouraged to train staff to maximise their contribution. Off-the-job workshops to allow skills development in a non-threatening situation followed by on-the-job coaching is suggested. The problem of persuading top management that they need training arises.
- 10) **Increase in the number of 16 - 19 year olds finding it difficult to obtain first time employment.**  
An increase in youth opportunities and work experience schemes is predicted with significant implications for training managers and staff to make these effective and meaningful for the young people and the company. The Distributive Industry would need to become involved in providing courses in appropriate skills for unemployed

school leavers or work experience packages with Day-release at FE colleges.

The probability of the following four issues occurring is predicted to grow with time.

11) **Increased vocational preparation for school leavers.**

The Industry needs to capitalize on this and maintain the impact and commitment from the individual through a planned programme of training and development. Industry will have to accept the social responsibility (time and money) for helping young people to understand what business is and introduce them to the realities of work. More intercommunication between employers and educationalists will be needed, but it should produce a more motivated group of career entrants to distribution.

12) **The ITB to put greater pressure on Colleges to institute appropriate training and FE for all levels.**

The best likelihood of success lies in cooperative development with colleges or sponsoring regional centres. Firms need to provide line-managers and training staff to lecture on trade-related courses. New courses must take industry's needs into account in content and training.

13) **Increased vocational preparation for career change.**

Closer links between training staff and FE Colleges need to be forged. Work experience schemes need to be designed in liaison with the careers service, schools and employment agencies. Firms will be required to carry out in-company promotion training as an alternative to external recruitment.

14) **Increased emphasis on personal service and competence of staff.**

All sales staff will require full training in personal service skills (e.g. effective communication). Recruitment will have to be adjusted to obtain better quality staff, who in turn will need more interesting training programmes. A higher training standard, especially at sales assistant level will be required to maintain

customer loyalty and service. The training needed will be twofold:

- a) product knowledge of a high order and
- b) personal, social and communication skills as well as customer relationships. Staff must understand the impact their behaviour has on customers' views of the shop.

Strangely enough, the probability of this issue occurring was considered to be low in the short term but high in the medium and long term, although one would have thought that it would have been of paramount importance even in the past. It illustrates clearly the attitude to retailing prevalent among those questioned.

This latter point will be explored more fully later in this chapter and in the case studies, as I believe it is a critical reason for the lack of coherent training provision in British retailing.

Although a follow-up report to test the validity of the predictions has not been carried out, due to the disbanding of the DITB<sup>6</sup>, it is possible to see that in fact many of the predictions are proving to be valid e.g. the increased vocational preparation for school leavers with the distributive industry taking almost 20% of all young people onto YTS (cf 5.6.) or the need for change and flexibility among employees linked to their job satisfaction. The probability rating given to the events occurring in the short, medium and long term was not always correct, i.e. the distributive industry had rationalised extensively by 1985 and changes to 1995 would not have the same impact. Consumer spending did not remain static between 1985 and 1990 but increased. The survey was not intended to be accurate in this respect but to serve as a guide to the industry.<sup>7</sup> The training implications which are of most relevance for this study are those relating to the increased emphasis on personal service and competence of staff, the need for social skills at work, the increased vocational preparation for young people and for career change and the institution of appropriate training and FE at all levels. In how far the training suggestions from the survey have been taken up in the retail YTS will be discussed subsequently (cf 5.6.).

Although the DITB achieved an increase in the amount of training being carried out in the distributive trades and had increased firms' awareness of the value of planned training by 1981 certain of the large retailers (under their umbrella organisation, the Retail Consortium), who were doing their own training very effectively, felt that after nearly fifteen years the Board had outlived its usefulness (MSC, 1981b, 16). The main shopworkers union (USDAW) remained convinced of the value of the Board's past contribution to training in the sector and advocated the retention of the Board on a statutory basis. It was, however, decided to disband the DITB in 1982 and replace it with voluntary training provision. This is in contrast with West Germany where companies have a statutory obligation to train.

In Britain, since the introduction of self-service stores and a decline in the smaller sales units, where the seven-year apprenticeship was the norm, the training of sales staff has become less unified on a national basis. Brown (1982, 9) talking about "the internal and external training schemes available" in the Introduction to her book on "Careers in Retailing" reinforces this point. For each type of retail outlet from department store to independent she illustrates by examples the great variety of training offered not only to school leavers but also to older employees. These descriptions further prove the point that at the beginning of the 1980s one could not talk about uniform retail training let alone a universally accepted retail qualification, although both training and qualifications were available at various levels and of varying quality and usefulness as will be seen in the next section.

#### 5.4 The role of FE in Retail Training

No single national body has been involved in the development of educational programmes for the distributive industry. Up to 1974 a simple three-tier system existed for employees seeking part-time training at Junior (Retail Trade Junior Certificate), Middle (National Retail Distribution Certificate) and Higher Level (Certificate in Retail Management Principles). Since then various foundation courses

at pre-vocational level together with BEC courses were established first under the auspices of the DITB and later the MSC.<sup>9</sup>

Since the demise of the DITB in 1982 the role of the FE sector in retail distribution has become more important. Table 5.7 presents a useful summary of events affecting retail education since 1945. It is not necessary for this study to explain each of the events in detail, but to concentrate on the more recent developments.<sup>9</sup>

The first certificate in Distribution was offered in 1948. Until the mid-1980s the various examination bodies (BEC/later BTEC, CGLI, RSA and Pitmans) devised courses which they deemed to be relevant for students or trainees at various levels in the industry. Each course was apparently devised and developed in conjunction with commerce and industry, the education service and in some cases either the DITB or the MSC.<sup>10</sup> From the mid-1980s the FEU, BTEC and the Distributive EDC were involved in a review of retail qualifications, leading eventually to the uniform exemplary retail qualification designed as part of the YTS in 1987.

Although qualifications were being developed there was little coordination until the late 1980s. In any case the number of trainees taking the qualifications, or even being given the chance or the encouragement to follow courses was very limited. To compare the figures from the Hutt and Atkinson (1975) survey with those of West Germany the percentage using FE courses or Day-release needs to be looked at. 75% of employers with 501 or more employees use FE courses (Table 5.6). However, only one in ten of all firms doing any training were using Day-release courses at the time of the survey, although 20% of firms doing training said that it was their policy to offer Day-release to their employees. Of those companies who used Day-release approximately 40% used it for their trainees. As Day-release is a compulsory part of vocational training in West Germany all German retail firms engaged in training sales assistants would be using the facilities of a Berufsschule.

Table 5.8 gives an overview of all the courses related to distribution which were available mainly through FE colleges to trainees in

1982.<sup>11</sup> The most important courses, both numerically and through acceptance by the industry are: BTEC General, BTEC National Certificate, CGLI Foundation Course in Distribution, RSA Vocational Preparation (Distribution) and Pitmans Retail and Distribution Level 1 and 2. These are, therefore, the ones to compare to German qualifications. As figures for numbers of students are not given for the same year in each case, it is only possible to give an approximation of the number of students registered for these courses per year during the period 1982 to 1985. This figure is approximately 5,300. If all the courses listed are taken into consideration this number increases to approximately 5,550. Compared to the figures quoted by Prais and Wagner (1985,61-62) for all BEC General, National and Higher Certificates and Diplomas passed in 1980 of just under 1,800 this represents a considerable increase. However, the figure of 5,300 refers to the number of trainees registered and not to those who have obtained the relevant qualifications. At this stage the trainees would not be studying for qualifications but would be on approved courses. Furthermore, the majority of the 5,300 students would be YTS trainees, but not all of them. In addition, in January 1985 46,232 trainees<sup>12</sup> had actually started a YTS in personal service and selling during that financial year. So, although it does seem valid to consider all courses offering a qualification in distribution and not just the BTEC qualifications, in comparison to the number of trainees in West Germany who obtain a qualification in distribution, one has to agree with Prais and Wagner's conclusion:

"...that the very much larger proportion of the German workforce attaining vocational qualifications has done so at standards which are generally as high, and on the whole higher than, those attained by the smaller proportion in Britain. ....For each hundred trained and qualified as shop assistants and other distributive activities in Britain, the Germans train and qualify not a thousand - but nearer ten thousand." (1985,62-3)

I would argue that the only way of measuring the quantity of training which is occurring is by seeing how many people obtain recognised qualifications. Recognised qualifications are those which enable people to practise their profession anywhere in the country and ultimately anywhere in the world. It does not mean that they have to be the same in every country, but that they are accepted as giving professional status at whatever level by the relevant industry and

society at large. The number of trainees qualifying as shop workers quoted for West Germany in 1981 is 100,000, including 40,000 at the Verkäufer/in level and 36,000 at the Einzelhandelskaufmann/frau level. This figure is roughly equal to the number of newly-signed apprenticeship contracts in the distributive trades for 1983.<sup>13</sup> One could, therefore, assume that the failure rate is not very high per year. Assuming that this is also the case in Britain it does mean that, whereas approximately 100,000 trainees obtain a recognised qualification in distribution in West Germany every year, only a fraction, 5.3% do so in Britain.

The quality of the training may vary between sections of the retail trade in both countries but those young people with a qualification have an advantage over those who do not. The move in Britain to universally recognised qualification has only recently taken place in policy terms and may still take a long time to put into practice. The reasons for this low level of formal qualification in Britain are both historical and attitudinal:

"(Retail traders)...typically rely on entrepreneurial flair and self-help for success and are hostile to the idea of co-operating in statutory training arrangements which may offer advantages to rival firms." (MSC 1981b,15)

This comment explains in part why retailers are not inclined to send their staff on courses to obtain qualifications. It does not, however, mean that no training occurs, as demonstrated earlier in the IMS survey. Because of the competitive nature of retailing when training is carried out, it is often in-house, especially among the larger retailers. What is clear, nevertheless, is that the extent and length of training is very much less than it is in West Germany. Furthermore, very few retail employees have gained a recognised transferable qualification.

#### 5.5. The Development of Training Schemes in Retailing

Since the establishment of the MSC in 1974 various ways of promoting training in all sectors were devised. The stated objectives of the MSC were to raise training quality and quantity to meet skill shortages and

to make British industry competitive on world markets. The latter is a difficult objective to obtain in the distributive industry as it does not trade with other countries as do industries in the manufacturing sector. It seemed clear to the MSC in 1981 that the most common need was for basic training of sales staff and for management training. They felt that the sector required relatively few transferable skills which would necessitate long periods of off-the-job training. The latter is not a conclusion I would agree with as will be shown in the case studies.

Careers Service statistics compiled in 1974 (MSC 1975,4 and 10), although stated not to be totally reliable, had shown up the large number of young people allocated to the category "employment with less than eight weeks training". In 1972 47% of those leaving school at what was then the minimum school leaving age and 37% of the total of entrants into employment between the ages of 15 and 17 went into this category of employment. Distribution <sup>14</sup> accounted for 33% of boys and 52% of girls (MSC 1975,11). A large proportion of these young people only received minimal training beyond an initial induction period. Where they did receive training it was brief and limited to practical instruction in the work they did. Release for FE was rare. Out of the 66,317 girls who entered employment in the distributive trades in 1972 69% were in the above category. For boys the figure was slightly more favourable - 65% out of a total of 47,640 new entrants (MSC 1975,33 and 35). The following programmes were intended to remedy the dearth of training in the retail industry.

#### 5.5.1. Premium Grants

Premium grants were one early cost incentive to industry by the MSC to protect industry's long-term requirements for skilled labour. However, although stated to be in response to "skill shortages", they were politically and not training motivated i.e. to reduce youth unemployment.

Employers could receive a maximum grant for twelve months off-the-job training of £1,750 in 1974/75 and £2,000 in 1975/76 for each trainee recruited in excess of the normal intake as agreed with the ITB, as



long as the total training period was not less than two years. The initial training must include off-the-job training and associated FE. A grant of £850 was also available to employers under the same conditions as above except that the total training period only had to be one year or more and the training carried out was using traditional on-the-job methods. The latter were more likely to be used in the distributive trades for sales assistants. These grants enabled young people to attend distribution courses in FE colleges, with a resultant increase in attendance between 1975 and 1977. Numbers are not available in a published form for each sector but it was estimated that in total 19,980 young people were benefiting from premium grants in 1976/77 (MSC 1977a,54).<sup>15</sup>

#### 5.5.2. Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP)

Since 1976 the experimental pilot programme of Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP) sought to test new approaches to providing a foundation of training and related FE for young people in jobs where little or no training would otherwise have been available. These schemes were mainly run by Colleges of FE but the DITB made a substantial contribution to the UVP programme. From Autumn 1978 to Autumn 1979 187 schemes had actually run and over 2,000 young people had completed the programme (DITB 1980a,4). By the end of the pilot stage of the programme (in mid-1981) it had organised approximately 350 schemes involving nearly 5,000 young people. This represented nearly half the total number of schemes organised under the national pilot programme. It was estimated that at the end of the 1981/82 schemes a total of over 6,500 trainees would have completed the programme in 750 schemes (DITB 1982b,16).

Completion of the programme did not imply taking examinations or being tested for a specific qualification. The time was too short: schemes ran over a suggested period of 13 weeks but this could be increased to 16. The teaching approach employed was participatory learning and case study work which was a noticeable change from the learning by example employed in apprenticeships and the learning by rote usual for school examinations.

The scheme was originally designed to assist young people entering the Distributive Trades with few academic qualifications and 71% of the trainees had three CSEs or less with another 12% having four CSEs or more (maximum nine). Only 3% had four or more O-levels.

The average number of trainees per scheme was eleven<sup>16</sup> and twice as many females as males took part (69.2% female and 39.8% male as of 30 April 1982) (DITB 1982b, 27). More girls than boys were engaged in sales occupations and more boys than girls were already attending traditional day-release courses. 75% of participants were 16 or 17 years old on starting a scheme and 82% of all trainees were employed within the selling function. Over half of the firms participating in UVP employed above 1,000 employees, which again meant that training resources were being concentrated on large shops. The two sectors training the majority of trainees were grocery and clothing and textiles.<sup>17</sup>

Early conclusions reached were that in order for a scheme to be successful and for the trainee to gain maximum benefit, each element had to be interrelated and not taught in isolation. The four basic integrated elements were:

- 1) Distribution Input
- 2) Social and Life Skills Input
- 3) Residential Experience
- 4) Job Training.

The Distributive Input was based on a case study, which lead trainees to build up all relevant business details of an imaginary organisation. Wherever possible this should be linked to the trainees' own company. Social and Life Skills covered School to Work Transition, Self Awareness and Working with Others. The purpose of the Residential Experience was to enable trainees to appreciate the meaning of responsibility and to be able to relate to people, both in the work situation and in their leisure time. The problematic area was the integration of on- and off-the-job training i.e. the on-the-job elements were not developed in the off-the-job sessions and vice versa. With hindsight this is not surprising, as it is still the most common criticism made of training schemes:

"Part of the difficulty is that each group expects more of the other than can be delivered. The retailing educators want greatly expanded support, in money, in executive time, and in encouragement, but without interference. The merchants want the schools to deliver a very large supply of highly competent people who are fully prepared for both immediate and further productivity, but who will not soon become restless and start reading the employment ads. (However,) ... the retailer-educator quarrels are a sort of intra-family bickering, normal, and by no means fatal." (Hollander 1978,4-5)

However, the UVP Pilot Schemes run by the DITB were deemed a success by both the DITB and the MSC who were sponsoring them. This was confirmed by the then Chairman of the MSC, Richard O'Brien on 9 March 1979 at a meeting with the DITB:

"The DITB's contribution to the development of U.V.P. is outstanding and you are to be commended." (DITB 1980b,3)

There was little systematic feedback on the views of trainees, industry or education. One is, therefore, obliged to accept the view of the MSC and DITB, especially as there was nothing else of similar magnitude before or for young people in these type of jobs. That is not to say that it was sufficient, but starting with a very negative attitude to training, the fact that employers participated to such a large extent in this scheme augured well for the future.

Nationally the Programme had targets of 18,000 entrants in 1982/83, 30,000 in 1983/84 and 50,000 in 1984/85 (MSC 1982,27). With the demise of the DITB, it was envisaged that the future thrust of UVP activities would be by MSC staff, Voluntary Training Organisations and Colleges of FE. UVP schemes together with government initiatives for unemployed young people e.g. WEEP and YOP explained below, led to the development of full-blown training schemes for young people, whether employed or not.

#### 5.5.3. The Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP)

By the late 1970s the government was concerned not only with the lack of training which young people received when entering employment, but also with the large number of young people who actually failed to obtain a job. To combat a situation of rising youth unemployment

(270,500 16 and 17 year olds in 1979; 410,000 in 1980, peaking at 584,400 in 1982 (MSC 1982,23), YOP, with its main subsidiary WEEP was created (cf 3.4.3.).

For several years, up to the winter of 1981/82 the DITB sponsored WEEP schemes in central Liverpool, encouraging a number of employers in its sector to accommodate unemployed young people as WEEP trainees. The fundamental, strategic objectives of WEEP were:

1. Opportunities for all trainees to receive induction training, planned work experience, opportunities for further education and/or training, personal advice and support;
2. The recruitment of trainees to a scheme does not replace a sponsor's normal training and recruitment patterns, and the scheme does not displace people who might otherwise fill permanent jobs;
3. The scheme is for all round work experience and not a "cheap labour" operation. (Markall 1983,3-4)

A detailed analysis of these schemes was carried out between October 1981 and January 1982 and published in February 1983. The results obtained, although overtaken by events, still serve a useful purpose in looking at future retail training schemes. <sup>18</sup> 51 trainees and their employers were interviewed in twenty different retail outlets. The results of this research must be considered in light of the political discussions on Special Programmes for young unemployed people prevalent at the time. In general, employers used WEEP as a subsidised recruitment measure, some openly stating that they would select among the trainees on completion of the scheme, others actually not providing training but using trainees to carry out low-level, menial tasks. <sup>19</sup> Day-release, which was compulsory, as was keeping a training diary and profiling visits from DITB-WEEP coordinators proved unpopular and sometimes counter-productive. Young people preferred to stay at work, where they felt they could best impress the employer, especially if he was also not convinced by the benefits of day-release. The training diary was only viewed positively by 14 out of 51 trainees, smacking too much of school, proving repetitive and demanding, with no proof that it

would enhance their employment prospects for the others. Seven out of twenty employers would consult it if recruiting a DITB-WEEP graduate, with intuition playing a greater role in recruiting practice than a diary which had no traditionally recognised stamp of authority.

In my view, based on the example of the German system, recommending that employers need to be trained equally in profiling and assessment schemes seems valid, but making day-release voluntary rather than compulsory is perhaps a short-sighted recommendation. Ensuring the quality of provision on Special Programmes through statutory involvement e.g. an inspectorate, is a recommendation which has been taken up to a certain extent.

Following the disturbances in Liverpool in the summer of 1981, the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Heseltine, assumed special responsibility for coordinating and developing Government policy for Merseyside, which included a major emphasis on a new 52-week YOP traineeship, building upon the 26-week WEEP scheme discussed above. A DITB Manager was appointed to work with Mr Heseltine full-time on the Merseyside initiative in 1982 until the summer of 1983, developing pre-YTS 52-week traineeships. The DITB had actually already been very active in developing a 52-week sponsored youth opportunities traineeship for young unemployed people on Merseyside, with a draft document, detailing how to set up a scheme published internally, even before the research described above was undertaken (DITB 1981b).<sup>20</sup> The scheme in many ways was identical in coverage to later ones, published by institutes such as the Institute of Grocery Distribution (September 1985), the RSA, BTEC and CGLI and even similar to detailed guidelines laid down by the MSC (Basic Distribution Skills. A Trainer's Guide 1984) and the Illustrative Scheme of 1985.

It covered the general concepts of induction including Health and Safety; initiation into the various work areas of a retail company; FE sessions to cover the distribution industry in general and social skills and counselling. Newer versions do, however, put more emphasis on customer contact or communication in general, numeracy and literacy than just specific work skills.

It, therefore, seems surprising that a body which was so obviously committed to training young people for its industry should be disbanded. It has been said that for the DITB training became an end in itself <sup>21</sup> and this ran contrary to the voluntary approach preferred by the industry.

In late 1982 NACDET (National Association of Colleges for Distributive Education and Training) was formed by six colleges specialising in distribution e.g. Casio College, Solihull College of Technology and the College for Distributive Trades (CDT) in London. <sup>22</sup> This was the only body in 1983/84 apart from the MSC and the National Economic Development Council (NEDC) who had a national overview of training activity in the distributive trades. The MSC and NEDC often only had a limited view because only one member of their staff was actually assigned to retailing and NACDET had a mainly educational perspective. The lack of national coordination on training in distribution in particular since the demise of the DITB is echoed by Phillips:

"In distribution the tradition is for individual employers to determine the pattern of training, with the Government, MSC, Further Education and ITBs acting at the margin in support of the employers' perceptions of needs. This method can not only be economically dysfunctional but can also deprive many people from developing their talents throughout the industry ranging from the excellent to the mediocre." (1985,3)

The following section will attempt to explain how, not necessarily through policy decisions, national coordination was reached again.

#### 5.6. From One Year YTS via the Illustrative Scheme to Two Year YTS

Out of the total 460,000 YTS places 50,000 to 100,000 <sup>23</sup> was the MSC's target for the distributive trades (USDAW 1983a,1) which squares approximately with the 63,000 entrants for 1983/84 (NEDO 1985,51). Determining exactly how many trainees participated in a Distributive YTS each year is difficult as the classifications employed by the MSC changed between 1983 and 1988. <sup>24</sup> The original concept of the

Occupational Training Family (OTF) with OTF No. 9 covering Selling and Personal Service gives the figure of 69,712 approved places for 1985/86 (YTN September 1986,iii). For 1986/87 on YTS-2 and continuations 67,100 contracted places in selling/storage were given (YTN September 1987,II) and by March 1988 42,800 trainees were in selling and storage (YTN November 1988,14). Actually defining which trainees were being trained as shop assistants is, therefore, impossible. However, between 17% and 18% of all YTS trainees train in the above categories with only the category "Administration, Clerical and Office" representing a larger proportion. <sup>25</sup>

The distributive trade was quick to respond to the government's request for a non-statutory body to replace the DITB and the National Retail Training Council (NRTC) met for the first time on 17 September 1982 (RCB December 1982,5) having been set up in May 1982 by the Retail Consortium. It was a tripartite body <sup>26</sup> intended to play a coordinating role for all those concerned with training in retailing. Its role was to educate retailers in the pursuit of relevant and cost effective training, but the actual responsibility for training remained and is devolved to trade associations (who were to form education and training committees if they did not already exist) and retail companies. Nevertheless, it looked as if the NRTC would play an active role in training fully supporting YTS and concerned that no retail representative had been a member of the Task Group when the retail sector was expected to provide nearly a quarter of all YTS places. Three years later the NRTC was seen as totally ineffective by its Chairman, William Rees, it being a voluntary body with no resources. The unions had refused to sit on it because they disagreed with the disbanding of the DITB and the educationalists were on the verge of leaving in 1985 when the two largest trade associations pushed for a purely employer-led organisation i.e. the Retail Consortium to negotiate with the MSC in respect of YTS-2. <sup>27</sup>

The development of YTS in retailing was a very individual affair with companies and managing agents having their schemes approved by the Youth Training Board or by the Large Companies Unit as there was no single body in the industry controlling the quality of schemes in 1983-84. There was an enormous hiatus with various bodies setting up

schemes: small-and medium-sized businesses in the retail sector were encouraged to work together with managing agencies e.g. LINK and Key Training, some of which had been set up by ex-DITB members, who then used previous material to design the schemes. NACDET and other colleges used BTEC and CGLI to design courses, or if an ex-DITB member joined a college DITB material would be adapted. Some companies used their own experience to produce schemes e.g. Sainsbury's, Marks & Spencer and Burtons, or ex-DITB members acted as consultants to trade associations or to individual companies. The industry was encouraged to identify the skills, attitudes and abilities relevant to the industry and especially the transferable skills as young people would perhaps only be spending part of their careers in distribution. This decision is a typical example of the policy-making approach of experimentation. There was no referral back to the results of the 1981/2 DITB survey and this extensive research seems to have been largely wasted in contrast with West Germany, where policy decisions were based on the results of lengthy pieces of research.

The MSC through its Occupational Policy Branch (QS4) tried between 1983 and 1985 to influence the industry because neither NACDET, NEDO or the NRTC as non-executive bodies had any influence on training and its quality. The MSC published "Basic Skills in Distribution: A Trainer's Guide" in 1984, covering twelve basic distributive off-the-job skills modules e.g. "Dealing with the customer" or "Handling Mail" and thirteen Business Communication modules dealing with message taking, punctuation, proof-reading and other oral and written communication skills related to retail topics. Its use was voluntary and there was no monitoring as to whether it was being used or not. <sup>28</sup>

Throughout these two years many advisory groups were set up: e.g. the Distributive Trades Economic Development Council (EDC), BTEC Working Party, NRTC (Study Group on Training for Distribution July 1985, 6-7) and often the same people sat on the committees, but nothing was being done with the information which was gathered. The summer of 1985 proved to be the turning point because behind the scenes the MSC set up an organisational structure with a retail expert. The NRTC, under a new Chairman, pushed for recognition as an executive body and by 1987 it had become semi-executive. The FEU, NACDET and NEDO were all



starting to pull the threads together with cross-representation creating a pattern of linked initiatives. Without the intervention of the MSC and the veiled threat that the DITB would be brought back if the voluntary group approach did not work nothing would have happened. Although there is still no body with executive responsibility the statement by the Chairman of the NRTC, Peter Morley in 1987:

"We want to make a new start." <sup>29</sup>

reflects the will of the industry to work together on training.

Retail training in Britain has had to rely very much on the willingness of some key individuals to bring forward a new surge in the industry. Without a formalised system of consultation and negotiation as is in existence in West Germany, Britain, nevertheless, arrived at consensus and in a very short space of time. Within a year (1985-86) the Retail Consortium Training Working Group produced the Illustrative Scheme in conjunction with the MSC and the trade. At this stage there was no input from educationalists nor the trade unions. As in West Germany the employers took the lead, but in contrast with the consultative system in operation in Germany the design of the scheme in Britain was left totally in the hands of employers with the trade unions and the education sector fitting in at a later date with the basic concept. Although research projects were conducted concerning the content of training schemes and the scale of training (e.g. FEU 1985; BEC/DITB 1982) these were short-term projects involving few people in contrast with the more lengthy projects (Bargmann et al 1981, Clauß et al 1983, Fritz 1981 and Ehrke 1981) commissioned in West Germany. Whether the product is any worse as a result of the shorter, more ad hoc consulting process will be looked at next.

#### 5.6.1. YTS

The main difference to previous government schemes was that YTS was not intended to create jobs, nor was it to provide work experience only for unemployed young people. It was intended as "a permanent bridge from school to work" (MSC 1982,7) offering school leavers the opportunity of a year's integrated programme of training, education and work experience.

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contents. The Illustrative Scheme (The Training Information Base for the Industry Agreed Training Provision - TIB) was launched on 1 July 1986 and its final format with nine main competence objectives divided into 22 foundation and 26 optional modules with integrated educational guidelines per competence were available in 1987. It led in January 1988 to the Certificate of Retail Competence Development Programme (CORC), developed by NACDET in conjunction with employer representatives, staff trainers, trade union representatives and lecturers from colleges of FE. The MSC provided the funding. Qualifications as recommended by the Review of Vocational Qualifications (RVQ) were to be based on employer-led standards of competence, because the majority of employees and employers perceive no clear links between skills and competences required in the industry and vocational qualifications currently offered (De Ville 1986,51). They were to record not only knowledge but also the application of skill and knowledge (YTN July 1987,19). It established three levels of competence and CORC covers the first two levels over the two year YTS period. <sup>32</sup>

Although this scheme is as work-related as previous schemes discussed above it does attempt to integrate the transferable skills with the occupational skills. For example in Competence Objective 1.002 "Receive and direct: customers, expected visitors and unexpected visitors" the importance of oral and written information giving is emphasised as well as the specific security procedures of the store where the trainee may be learning this competence. However, the wider application of the transferable skills only becomes obvious in the related off-the-job parts designed by NACDET, where for this competence objective possible core skills are given e.g. decision making: choosing between courses of action, interpreting numerical and related information, recognising cost and value (Appendix 12 gives the full content of Competence Objective 1.002).

But even before YTS retailers (Super Marketing Nov 2/3 1983,23-4) identified that training must cope with the effects of change in two main areas: high technology and individual and interpersonal skills. As in the new West German retail training regulation (cf 4.4) new technology is not singled out as a specific activity. Computer

training per se is not included either. Both are incorporated under stock-control and cash handling. No guidelines on timing or length of individual modules are indicated, which as in West Germany would suit the employers, but it was heralded as a major achievement by the unions that a timeframe was imposed in the new German retail training regulation. The off-the-job elements are very much more vocationally orientated than previous 'social and life' skills elements. General current affairs, politics and knowledge of both the immediate and wider environment are not mentioned in the syllabus. This contrasts starkly with the general education content of the German Berufsschule syllabus. Youth training providers in Britain seem to appreciate this fact:

"In my experience, one of the main criticisms of trainees on work placement is not that they are lacking in occupational skills but that their 'world view' is too limited." (TES 5.8.1988,12)

Other researchers (Chapman & Tooze 1987,60) found that employers stressed that nine months was more than sufficient for training in retail related areas for skills at this level. One, therefore, has to ask again what it is that is being sought in the training of a shop assistant, when it has been shown that larger, more efficient but impersonal stores with a declining number of shop assistants seem to be the trend of the 1990s.

The Environmental Scan predicted that certain areas in retail training would require specific attention: special emphasis on the quality of staff dealing with the public, legal aspects of shoplifting, emphasis on the company's good value and after sales service, flexibility and efficiency becoming key words, job satisfaction becoming increasingly important for individuals, but most importantly product knowledge of a high order and personal, social and communication skills as well as customer relationships being the requirements of the new breed of shop assistants. This is borne out by various recent studies:

"...the most memorable shopping experience...a proper dress shop run by real individuals who know exactly what suits you..." <sup>33</sup>

And, the CIL research team <sup>34</sup> found sloppy and indifferent service, general disinterest and a lack of product knowledge the worst traits observed among store staff in London and six cities in the provinces including Birmingham. In three Oxford Street stores, they found almost

a total lack of knowledge of various different product ranges, including computers, fragrances, garment sizing and other key details. Jarvis and Prais (1989,72) quote examples of only one in six assistants being able to measure a sleeve alteration or leading department store assistants being unable to tell the difference between two types of fluorescent lamps.

It does seem reasonable to conclude then that although training in the retail sector has become more coordinated in objectives and training contents, training an increasing number of young people every year in the rudiments of retailing for one to two years, the training is still dominated by company-specific details, selling skills are an optional module in the TIB, product knowledge is assumed rather than required and no external testing takes place unless trainees are registered for CGLI, RSA etc.. Even then in CGLI 9441 Certificate in Retail Distribution Skills the practical test on product knowledge is optional. <sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, the aim of YTS is a much broader one than simply making young people capable of operating in a retail outlet, even if this is what the employers, supported by the MSC, ideally want:

"We are not preparing people to work at Bloggs's corner shop, we are preparing them to work in retail, and part of that process is to offer them a certificate that demonstrates they have competence in that sector." (Bryan Nicholson at Retail Consortium Press Launch 1.7.1986)

It is the change towards training the whole person, rather than just the employee which needs a change in attitude by employers. The social skills part of the curriculum cannot just be ignored but has to be integrated into the year long (now two years) training package. A more confident informed and able young person would obviously be of benefit to the retailer because these attributes are the ones employers often cite as those needed to make a good retail employee. In the past employers have not seen it as their role to develop these skills in their trainees, being afraid that unless they trained in very specific internal company practices (Clark 1983,36), trained sales assistants would leave for a higher paying competitor. <sup>36</sup>

## 5.7. Conclusion

The changes in the distributive industry over the last century have led to a change in the demands placed on shop assistants. There is no longer a requirement for a six year long apprenticeship, where serving the customer was not allowed for the first year. However, young people entering the retail trade still need instruction in how to serve customers, product knowledge of a more extensive kind than is being given at the present time and a continual awareness of the image they are creating by their behaviour as the customer becomes more discerning. The British view since the introduction of self-service and the increasing number of part-time female employees working in an increasingly competitive environment has been to conduct only as much training as is necessary to make the sales person operative. It is, therefore, not surprising that Jarvis and Prais (1989) continued to find staff turnover rates of 200 or 300% in some West End stores. One of the main findings of the Environmental Scan was the increasing need to pay attention to employee satisfaction and vocational preparation for career change. This does not seem to have been put widely into effect with the general training view of the industry still being:

"The philosophy behind training within the retail sector is that it should not be an end in itself but should be one means of improving productivity, efficiency and competition within the industry to the benefit of its customers." (NRTC November 1984,7)

The DITB, it was felt, had seen training as a function which could be imposed on an industry. However, on the one hand the Retail Consortium takes the view that companies which do not train will go out of business and that it will then be entirely their fault because the importance of training has been reiterated to them so many times. On the other hand, it believes there is no way to force employers to train just as they cannot be forced to change their method of merchandising. <sup>37</sup>

With this view still predominant, especially among smaller shop owners, the fact that by 1986 the industry itself had taken the initiative and produced its own employer-led scheme, quickly supported by education and the trade unions is all the more surprising. The subsequent

production of a jointly accepted qualification at the beginning of 1988 for YTS-2 marked something of a milestone of cooperation in the retail sector. However, although strongly encouraged to use CORC for the off-the-job training it is in no way prescriptive (MSC 1986,1) allowing individualistic and creative scheme design to suit local circumstances.

In some cases employers could also not see the relevance of training, using shop assistants as shelf fillers and cashiers. Many of the large retailers are definitely now seeing the advantages of training and are using YTS not as a "free" training service, but as a conscious recruiting system for initially lower, but potentially higher management positions. <sup>38</sup>

The British method of training, compared to the West German one still has room for a more individualistic approach e.g. Glasgow Retail Training Association Ltd. is developing its own new retail and distribution qualification (YTN Nov. 1988,31). There is more scope for inventiveness in the content of schemes as the only official guidelines are those laid down by the MSC in its "Guide to Scheme Content and Quality". One could argue that it is, therefore, easier to motivate young people and still enlarge their horizons e.g. by visits to the local magistrate's court and Outward Bound or residential courses, something totally lacking in the German system.

What is still missing, however, is a measure of performance against set criteria. Young people in retailing can now gain an industry-recognised qualification (CORC), but the competences achieved in that qualification are not monitored by an outside body as in West Germany or as previously by BTEC or RSA. It is the employers who satisfy themselves that the appropriate level of competence in their store has been reached. Not every trainee is expected to obtain every module, this depending on their educational qualifications on starting. The YTS trainee in a chain store will be able to work in any branch across the country and probably throughout the industry, but by permitting individual organisations to continue developing qualifications (even with the approval of Examination Bodies) the problem of having a plethora of different qualifications in admittedly a very disparate

industry starts all over again with FE not knowing how to respond to the perceived needs of industry. A recent study<sup>39</sup> found that the key explanation of long-term youth unemployment in the 80s was the lack of properly certified qualifications with YTS providing little more than a certificate of attendance.

Finally, the extension of the young person's general knowledge is not catered for in this new retailing programme. The areas so strongly advocated by the MSC: number, communication, problem solving, practical skills and computer literacy are in general covered by the retailing programme but in how far the trainee sees these as transferable is difficult to judge. In fact, one can argue that the programme is even more work-related than previously, but seemingly lacking some of the basic tools of the trade: product knowledge and compulsory selling skills. The qualification may measure the outputs and make statements about the competences of the trainees but is it making the young people able to think for themselves and adapt to new circumstances if the the company does not keep them on after training? The two YTS Follow-Up Surveys of 1984 and 1985 found that 81 and 80% respectively of trainees who stayed with the employer who had carried out the training found YTS a useful preparation for what they were doing now. This dropped to 44 and 47% respectively for those changing to another employer. However, 50 and 51% respectively found YTS a useful preparation for returning to full-time education or FE (Gray and King 1986,32). This would corroborate my argument that the skills young people are learning are firstly company-specific, secondly industry-specific and there is little evidence of transferable skills. As only 40% of all YTS leavers had obtained a qualification between 1983 and 1986 and the proportion in retailing as shown above is much lower than this, it is questionable whether young people are obtaining transferable qualifications even if potentially they are becoming better retail employees. It is too early to evaluate the success or failure of CORC, as no trainees have yet graduated from this programme, but the case studies will give an indication of the effect of and attitude to YTS in retailing.



- <sup>1</sup> Data was initially obtained by interviewing the Chairman of the National Retail Training Council, the Secretary of the Retail Consortium, a Trade Union Research Officer and the Ex-Head of Research at the DITB. Documentation from NEDO, the DITB and the MSC, trade journals and books on retailing and training were used to obtain information on the various aspects to be analysed.
- <sup>2</sup> Now published as a book: Pagnamenta, Peter and Overy, Richard: All Our Working Lives 1984, BBC, London.
- <sup>3</sup> Hart 1978,32-3 refers to several sources: Lees,D and Chiplin, B (1970): "The Economics of Industrial Training" in Lloyds Bank Review 96,29-41; Woodhall,M (1974): "Investment in Industrial Training" in British Journal of Industrial Relations, 12.1., 71-90 and Woodward,N (1976): "Some Notes on the Quantity Objective of the British Industrial Training Act in International Journal of Social Economics, 3.1.,2-13.
- <sup>4</sup> a) "Political, Social, Economic and Technological Issues and their Probable Effects on the U.K. Distributive Industry 1980-1995 (Environmental Scan)", 1980.  
 b) "A Survey of the Training Implications for the U.K. Distributive Industry", First Draft Report 1981.  
 c) "Political, Social, Economic and Technological Issues and their Influences on the Distributive Industry 1982-1997", Draft 1982.
- <sup>5</sup> Not only members of the Industry itself, but also academics, trade union members and people from other Institutions or Commercial and Industrial Organisations were questioned.
- <sup>6</sup> Hill and others have applied to the Distributive Industries Training Trust for funding to undertake a follow-up survey looking at slightly different issues, but this had not taken place by the time this research was completed.
- <sup>7</sup> Tony Parkinson Associates were asked to carry out an analysis of the survey to distil a set of generalised training implications. This list is reproduced in Appendix 11. It shows that the training implications arising from the fourteen issues identified above are almost identical to the generalised list.
- <sup>8</sup> For further details see Denny 1970,258.
- <sup>9</sup> The historical significance of the various events and further details can be found in Tony Parkinson Associates: "Review of Distributive Industry Education and Training Needs" FEU RP 245, 1985.
- <sup>10</sup> Commerce and industry referring to managers, training officers, employers or representatives of trade associations and the education service ranging from teachers to careers officers and local authorities' representatives.
- <sup>11</sup> Table 5.8 gives a more detailed description of some of the courses mentioned in Table 5.7. These have been cross referenced where possible by asterisks.
- <sup>12</sup> Letter from the MSC 10.1.1985.
- <sup>13</sup> Berufsbildungsbericht 1984, BMBW, figures from Tabelle 1/3,122.
- <sup>14</sup> which for this purpose is wider than the coverage of the DITB.
- <sup>15</sup> It is estimated that between 2 or 3,000 or even 4 or 5,000 of these grants were awarded by the DITB during 1975 and 1977. The annual reports will have detailed figures (Interview with Tony Parkinson in December 1987).
- <sup>16</sup> maximum fifteen, minimum eight.
- <sup>17</sup> 987 and 668 trainees respectively out of a total of 2,418 trainees

which enabled them to keep trained staff (IDS Report 543 April 1989,2).

<sup>37</sup> Interview with Michael Wilsey, Secretary of the Retail Consortium on 13.9.1985 in London.

<sup>38</sup> See the reasons given by B&Q for participating in YTS (YTN June 1987,5).

<sup>39</sup> Michael White and Susan McRae: "Young Adults and Long Term Unemployment" Policy Studies Institute 1989 discussed in The Guardian 15.6.1989,12.

TABLE 5.1

OPCS Estimates of the Employment of Young People in Retail Distribution by Gender in 1951 and 1981 (in percentages)

<u>Age</u> (years)	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	1951	1981	1951	1981	1951	1981
15	30.6	0	69.4	0	3.3	0
16-17	29.9	38.5	70.1	61.5	6.9	5.3
18-19	14.1	39.3	85.9	60.7	4.7	6.8
20-24	33.5	42.6	66.5	57.4	11.7	12.1
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
25+	84.6	75.9	62.3	75.8	73.4	75.8
All ages	49.8	40.9	50.2	59.1	100.0	100.0

Source: Own calculations using Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (1984) and General Register Office (1957) in NIESR Report 1986,56 (cf Table 1.7)

TABLE 5.2

Analysis of Persons Employed by Age 1968 (in percentages)

Distributive trades compared with manufacturing

<u>Age</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Manuf.</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Manuf</u>
Under 20	16	8	24	17
20-59	72	82	69	78
60-64	7	8	( 7	( 5
65+	5	2	(	(
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	100	100	100	100

Source: D.E.P. Gazette, June 1968 quoted in Brodie 1985,

TABLE 5.3

The Department of Employment Estimates of the Composition of the Employee Labour Force in Retail Distribution in Britain 1978 - 1985

Not seasonally adjusted

		<u>Females</u> <u>part-time</u>	<u>Females</u> <u>full-time</u>	<u>Males full</u> <u>&amp; part-time</u>
		%	%	%
June*	1978	33.3	28.4	38.3
June	1979	34.0	28.3	37.7
June	1980	33.8	28.6	37.6
June	1981	34.1	28.5	37.4
March	1982	34.8	27.4	37.8
March	1983	35.1	26.9	38.0
March	1984	36.9	25.4	37.7
March	1985	38.3	24.7	37.0

Note: \* The March figures are not published on a disaggregated basis for 1978-81, so the June figures published for these years have been substituted.

Source: Department of Employment (1985) Employment Gazette, Table 1.4, July and Historical Supplement Table 1.4, April in NIESR Report 1986, 49.

TABLE 5.4

On-the-job Training by Size of Company in the British Distributive Trades

	<u>Size of firm (number of employees)</u>						
	0-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501+
	Percentages						
Supervision of new recruits	11	9	7	7	2	3	2
General Supervision	19	21	21	21	25	8	11
Personal Supervision	68	62	56	49	35	23	13
Formal Training	2	9	16	24	38	66	75

Source: Hutt, R & Atkinson, A: "Training in Distribution: How much is being done?" in RDM, March/April 1975, 29

TABLE 5.5

Apprentice Sales Assistants and Retail Trade Merchants According to the  
Size of the Training Firm

Proportion of the apprentices per  
classification size of the training firms

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Classification size of the training firms</u>			<u>Total</u>	
	<u>up to 9 employees</u>	<u>10 to 49 employees</u>	<u>50 plus employees</u>	absolute	%
	- in percentages -				
Sales Assistant	59	24	17	438,000	100
Retail Trade Merchant	51	31	18	858,000	100

Source: Qualifikation und Erwerbstätigkeit in den Einzelhandelsberufen, Berichte zur beruflichen Bildung, Heft 56 1983,9.

TABLE 5.6

All Types of Training in the Distributive Trades

<u>Type of Training</u>	<u>Number of Employees per Firms</u>							All Firms
	1-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501+	
	Percentages							
On the job	58	87	96	94	96	98	98	70
Off the job	9	29	45	54	69	91	95	21
External courses	8	42	53	58	63	71	87	29
FE courses	6	14	23	33	46	54	75	12

Source: Hutt, R & Atkinson, A: "Training in Distribution: How much is being done?" RDM, March/April 1975,31

TABLE 5.7

Brief Post War History of Education (and Training) in the Distributive Trades

Pre 1945	Little formalised training available beyond a few trade associations.
1946	Retail Distributors Association formed and promoted training under F.W. Lowe.
1948	National Retail Distribution Certificate offered as 3 year course.
1950	Retail Trade Junior Certificate recognises lower ability intake.
1956	NRDC course revised to 2 year PT.  Retail Trade Education Council formed for all retailers and associations.  RTEC promotes 3 tier system - junior, middle and higher
1960	RTEC develop Certificate in Retail Management Principles 2 year PT.
1966	Retail Studentship Scheme launched at Cassio College 3 days FT.
1969	Elements of Distribution added to Ordinary National Diploma (Business Studies).
1970	General Certificate of Distribution offered as correspondence course 2 year PT
1971	Higher Certificate renamed Certificate in Distribution Management Principles.
1974	BEC takes over joint committees and certificates offered by RTEC and CGLI.
1977	MSC introduces grants for unified vocational preparation.  DITB developed the Basic Training Modular Scheme.
* 1978	BEC introduces 'National' (intermediate) and 'Higher' (replacing CDMP).
** 1979	CGLI offers Foundation Certificate (Distribution). 16-18's in Scotland: The First Two Years of Post Compulsory Education -Consultative Paper.
*** 1980	RSA Vocational Preparation (Distribution) introduced. BTEC takes over CGLI Distribution Examinations.

1981 CGLI General Vocational Preparation Programme introduced - 'A Basis for Choice in Action'. Pitman Examination Institute introduces Pre-Vocational Programme (Distribution). MSC/DE publish 'A New Training Initiative - Agenda for Action'.

1983 DITB is disbanded. National Retail Training Council takes over as voluntary body.

+ Foundation Certificate in Retail Management offered by the National Assoc. Colleges in Distributive Education and Training (NACDET).

Conference: Youth Training Scheme & Distribution.  
RSA Vocational Preparation Programme available to 14-16 year olds.

YTS Distribution established in many centres  
16-18's in Scotland - An Action Plan published.

1984 BTEC Policies and Practices into the 1990s published.

'Training for Jobs' White Paper.

Open Tech (Distribution) Proposal submitted to MSC by Steering Group of employers, trade associations, institutes and colleges.

Contract signed Dec. 1984. NACDET and DTETC merge.

BTEC review of Distribution courses.

Scot BEC publish modules for Distributive Education.

1985 FEU publish "Review of Distributive Education and Training Needs".

Distributive EDC consider "Youth Training".

NRTC and NACDET start discussing content of 2 Year YTS in Retailing.

Conference: Training Today for Tomorrow: The new two year YTS and its relevance to the wholesale and retail sector.

1986 Retail Consortium Training Working Group set up.

Conference: 2 Year Youth Training Scheme Retail - Agreed Training Programme.

NACDET/NRTC/MSC Industry Agreed Scheme for Retail Shops (YTS) published.

1987 National Council for Vocational Qualifications to produce exemplary Retail qualification.  
Retail Consortium Working Group handing work over to NRTC.

Source: Tony Parkinson Associates: "Review of Distributive Industry Education and Training Needs", FEU RP 245, 1985, 19-20 and own additions and update.

TABLE 5.8

Course	IMDC General	IMDC National (Distribution)	Foundation Certificate in Retail Management (IMDC validated)	CGI Foundation Course in Distribution 692	CGI Stock Minn and Handling 918	CGI Retail Distribution Skills 9441	CGI Specific Skills 700	Vocational Preparation (Distribution)	ISA Diploma in Distribution (Planned)	Planned Retail and Distribution Level 2	CGI (Distribution)	
Vocational Objectives	To provide foundation education for a range of careers, giving range of routes for study	To provide educational foundation for a career in distribution	Specialized vocational education for workers in distribution	To educate through a vocational area	For trainees working in this area (originally vehicle parts - now extended to other areas)	To develop student's ability as Sales Assistant	To enable candidate to fulfil curricula-entirely and efficiently in specified distribution area	To provide broad-based integrated course or programme in distribution context	To provide progression after YTS and for YTS trainees of higher ability working in distribution	To provide students/trainees with basic knowledge and skills necessary to carry out a job in a retail environment at an acceptable level of performance	To help students/trainees acquire understanding of nature of distribution and develop further their knowledge and skills	Pre-Vocational course
Target Group(s)	Young people aged 16 with few academic qualifications who hope to enter or have recently entered	Young people aged at least 16 wanting vocational education relevant to range of careers in distribution industry	Young management trainees	Young people in final year of full-time general education	Trainees in Parts Distribution industry	Sales Assistants	Assistant in specialist area, e.g. French food, French food wholesale, Multivac off-licence	Those who up to the age of 16 have not been officially motivated to achieve academic success	YTS graduates, higher YTS ability YTS trainees	Students/trainees with or few formal qualifications and who require a greater degree of challenge in their training	Those who may already hold some formal qualifications and who require a greater degree of challenge in their training	Students will normally begin studies immediately after compulsory compulsory secondary education
Location	Usually FE College	College	FE College (Members of WCDST) (25 + 3 centres)	School, College, or Link	College (day or block release)	Not stated	Normally workplace	College, School, industry, training organisations	Probably college	Mostly college-based (some private training organisations)	College or school	College or school
Approval Procedure	Via IMDC	Centre approved by UPEC	UPEC validated	Registration and Exam Centre by CGI	Application to CGI	Registration Centre with CGI	Approval by Scheme Adviser	Registration of centre after approval of integrated scheme of work	-	Centre registration with UPEC submitting particulars and probable members	Registration by Joint Board of Individual colleges, or consortia,	Registration by Joint Board of Individual colleges, or consortia,

COMPARISON OF COURSE ORGANISATION



Course	ITSEC General	ITSEC National (Distribution)	Foundation Certificate in Retail Management (ITSEC validated)	COLI Foundation Course in Distribution (90%)	COLI Stock Admin and Handling 918	COLI Retail Distribution Skills 9441	COLI Specific Skills '90	COLI Specific Skills '90	USA Vocational Preparation (Distribution)	USA Diploma in Distribution (Planned)	Plasma Retail and Distribution Level 1	Plasma Retail and Distribution Level 2	CIVE (Distribution)
Aspect A	At least 16 years of age (post school) and competent in English	Credit in ITSEC General, 4 'O' levels or equivalent accepted by ITSEC	Relevant work	"About average ability"	-	None	None	None	None	YTS	None	"Appropriate qualification", Level 1, or at Centre's discretion	Having completed compulsory education
Additional Qualifications taken during course	None	Options may be concerned with exemptions from professional bodies' requirements	None	Possible depending on exact format of course	-	None	None	None	None	-	Plasma's Single Subject Certificate	-	Possible v "additional studies"
Course Origins	To provide wide choice of routes of study for vocational courses	To provide educational foundation for Distribution for more able students or junior staff	Demand for highly job-specific courses for peripatetic junior managers in distribution	Non-academic youngsters - vocationally uncommitted using motivation of vocational work	Need to meet requirements in this area for many industries	Need for skills training used for YTS	In recognition of need for progressive training programmes for job limited range of specialized skills	Developed by vnc prep committee representing all interested parties	Response to need for progression beyond YTS; increased specialization	Perceived need for systematic planning and execution of training. Consultation with retail organizations, colleges, IHJ, ASC	-	-	Need to rationalize pre-vocational education system
Student/Trainee Numbers	1982/83 1705	1983/84 Cert. 209 Dip. 104	1984/85: 80 (in 5 centres)	1983/84: 778 (Foundation Total 1982/3 24,252)	1982/83 10	1982/83 50	2000 1984/85	500 (1984/85)	-	-	-	-	Pilot scheme, under way.
Student Destinations	1) Employment	2) Further Student/Trainee Training	Promotion into management post	High rate of entry into employment-related arena	1) Fulltime employment in a variety of industries	Senior Analysts	Senior Associates	Employment in more specialized area	Employment in more specialized area	Employment on Sales Assistant	Employment on Sales Assistant	Employment on Sales Assistant	Junior positions
			Possible exemption towards ITSEC Higher (Dist'n)	Oliver good start on more advanced courses	2) More specialist training or vehicle parts	-	-	-	ITSEC General ISA Group Awards	-	Level 2	-	None specifically mentioned sources (academic)

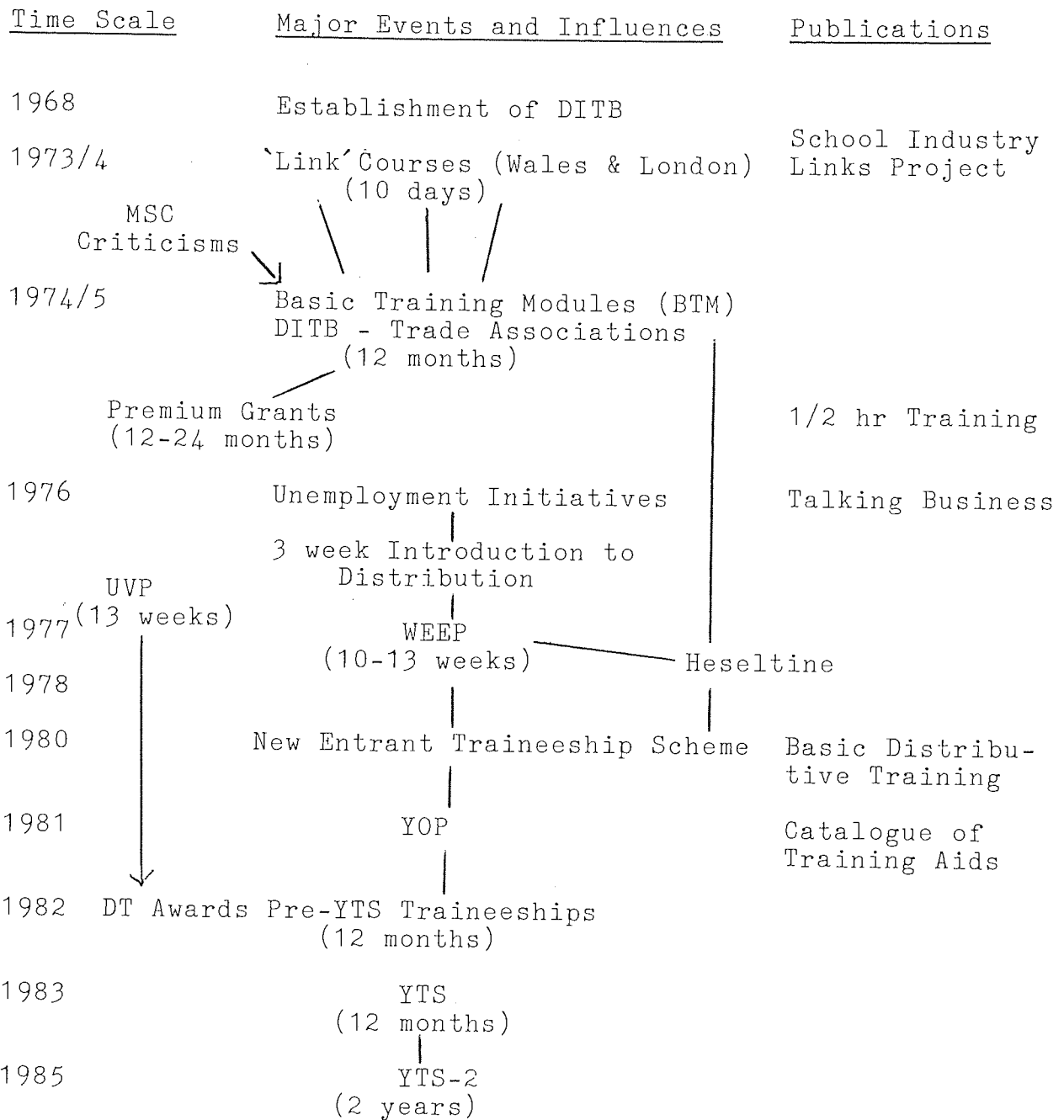




Courses	IBEC General	IBEC National	Foundation Certificate in Retail Manage- ment (RFX; validated)	CCLL Stock Admin and Handling 918	CCLL Metal Distrib- tion Skills 944	CCLL Specific Skills 700	RSA Vocational Preparation (Distrib- tion)	RCA Diploma in Distrib- tion (Planned)	Pitman Retail and Distrib- tion (Level 1)	Pitman Retail and Distrib- tion (Level 2)	CIVE (Distrib- tion)
Aspects											
Options	Wide range to give more spe- cific skills or knowledge or in par- ticular sector, or give broader business understan- ding	Wide range of more spe- cialized options	In trade areas, eg textiles, food, footwear, an appropriate	Supplemen- tary studies, eg managem- ent ship	-	An appro- priate to sector (eg off- licences)	Some option- al objec- tives as appropriate	Possible	Food or Non-Food	Food or Non-Food	Core is compul- sory, vocational- At studio in 5 main catego- ries, additional studied optional.
Special Features	To be sub- sided under CIVE from Sept- ember 1985 Wide range of routes has given flexibi- lity.	Full or part- time route to Diploma, part- time for Certificate. Cross-Modular Assignments emphasize integration. Two years minimum, for either Diploma or Certificate. Assessment partly by examination, emphasis on student activity.	Produced at re- quest of trade by concertion of colleges (Members of NACBET). Course materials common to all col- leges. geared to fit trade year. Still in pilot stage. Projects employer-based. Meant to cater for mobility management train- ees in the industry.	Scheme originally in Motor Vehicle Industry being ex- tended to other areas.	Mainly based in workplace suitable for small units. Very spe- cific areas with more gene- ral back- ground knowledge. Centre to devise own training programme. Awards nor- mally by employer.	Suitable for wide range of organisa- tion, no exam, built- in flexibi- lity. Particular emphasis on work expe- rience core- fully inte- grated with education- ally based course. RUC Project for YTS scheme, to develop national com- petency-based standards.	Tackles problems of progres- sion for YTS groups etc.	1) Integration 2) Cross-Unit Assignments 3) Final assessment set by Pitman ON DEPAUD by Centre (not pre- sented) given greater flexibility. Skill Attainment in- cludes "Attri- butes" and notes Attendance, Late Arrival and Work Experience. 5) Intended as "strategic frame- work" on which variety of courses can be built. 6) NOT included in CIVE. 7) Level 3 for Junior Management will be developed if de- mand becomes apparent.	Activity based learning. Integration of core and voca- tional areas with emphasis on core being underpinned through the vocational students. The following relevant prep- aration in modules are in preparation:- Selling, merchand- ising, wholesal- ing, stock control, altering stock handling & security, buy- ing, display & presentation.		

CHART 5.1

Training Young People in the Distributive Trades 1968-1985



Source: Interview with Tony Parkinson, Ex-Head of Research at the DITB (1985) and own additions.