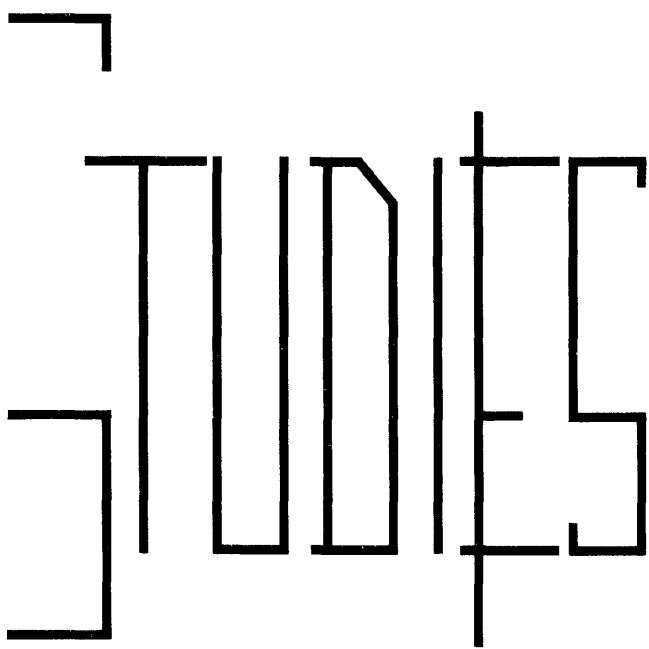


COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES



*Apprenticeships in Ireland*

Apprenticeship has been the topic of a considerable national debate in Ireland in recent years. The stimulus for this debate has been the publication of proposals for change in the apprenticeship system by AnCO — the Industrial Training Authority. The debate has incorporated consideration of the educational, training, industrial and political implications of change in the apprenticeship system.

The national debate on the issue was protracted and intense. Basic philosophical issues related to apprenticeship e.g. whether an apprentice is primarily a student or an employee were discussed and the implications for the organisation and structuring of apprentice training, with particular reference to educational content, were considered. The report covers the viewpoint of employers, trade unions, teachers and the state in the matter and underscores the issues. It deals with apprenticeship not just as a form of training but as part of an approach to National Manpower especially as it affects the country's industrial development programme.

The making of the report was facilitated by the recent appearance in Ireland of a discussion document on Apprenticeship and a subsequent report of decisions taken by the Council of AnCO.

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

## Apprenticeships in Ireland

*By*

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## HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

The origins of apprenticeship in Ireland were similar to those in the rest of Europe. Apprenticeship was part of a medieval guild system in Ireland which gradually became less capable of meeting its objectives. As in Europe, it extended to very many areas of training and had established around it, unions of workers and employers.

By the end of the last century, Ireland had become conscious of the problems of increased participation in education and training and economic and social pressures were building up in relation to training issues. As in other countries, the craft unions maintained their interest in apprenticeship as a training system. The training given to apprentices, was given on the job and under the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act 1898 (1) the powers of the government department, with reference to the provision of technical instruction, were limited to instruction in the principles of science and art applicable to industries, and did not include teaching the practice of any trade on industry or employment.

The Act obviously assumed adequate provision in the workshops of Ireland for the acquisition of skills in all the processes of a trade. Such an assumption was unfounded and on-the-job training received, in the circumstances of the day, was very unsatisfactory in many instances. The situation persisted to the early 1930's.

In 1926 the government established a Commission on Technical Training and the work of this Commission culminated in the passing of two acts, The Vocational Education Act 1930 (2) and The Apprenticeship Act 1931. (3)

Under the 1930 Vocational Education Act, authority was given to 38 Vocational Education Committees to provide facilities to meet the practical occupational requirements of students, including apprentices, and for thirty years approximately, within the framework of this act, courses of training were provided which catered for the growing needs of a country which had commenced to develop industrially. But while this act enabled Vocational Education Committees to provide training, it did not compel the use of the facilities. The weakness of the act was akin to the weakness of the 1931 Apprenticeship Act, in that it depended on employers and apprentices using facilities voluntarily. The problems associated with the use of compelling clauses are still present in apprenticeship in Ireland and will be returned to again at a later stage.

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(1) The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act 1898  
(Government Publications).

(2) The Vocational Education Act (1930) - (Government Publications).

(3) The Apprenticeship Act (1931) - (Government Publications).

The main features of the 1931 Apprenticeship Act were :

1. The establishment of Apprenticeship Districts and Committees answerable to the Minister for Industry and Commerce.
2. The making of rules by these committees relating to :
  - a) designation of apprenticeable employment
  - b) duration of apprenticeship
  - c) wage rates for apprentices
  - d) maximum working hours for apprentices.
3. Individual Apprenticeship Committees were empowered to make rules relating to :
  - a) entry qualifications of those entering apprenticeship in their district
  - b) age limits within which boys could enter apprenticeships in the district
  - c) the training of apprentices within the district
  - d) the number of apprentices employed with any employer (based on a ratio of skilled men to apprentices) within the district
  - e) apprenticeship fees/premiums. (The Committee could permit/prohibit the taking of fees or premiums)
  - f) attendance of apprentices without loss of pay at courses of technical instruction.

The Act failed because it left it optional to the Committees to make a rule requiring employers to train and instruct apprentices employed by them in a particular manner.

Both these Acts together improved the situation in relation to apprenticeship but there was great variation in the manner in which apprentices were catered for across the country. In some instances it was very good, but in some the situation remained as it had been at the turn of the century.

In 1959, The Apprenticeship Act 1959 (1) was enacted. Its objective was, as stated in the introduction to the Act,

"An Act to make better provision for the regulation of apprenticeship in certain trades and for that purpose to establish a body to be known as An Cheard Chomhairle and to define its powers and duties, to repeal the Apprenticeship Act 1931, and to provide for other matters connected with the matters aforesaid".

The policy of An Cheard Chomhairle (The Apprenticeship Board) was to ensure :

1. appropriate education standards for entry to apprenticeship
2. appropriate measures governing the recruitment of apprentices

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(1) The Apprenticeship Act 1959 -(Government Publications).

3. release of apprentices from work to attend technical college
4. on-the-job training to ensure that apprentices could acquire acceptable levels of skill
5. supervision of progress in apprenticeship particularly by a system of tests in the practice and theory of a trade during and at the end of the period of apprenticeship.
6. a review of both the theoretical and practical aspects of training.

In 1961, An Cheard Chomhairle (1) commented as follows on apprenticeship :

" With few exceptions, arrangements in Ireland for the recruitment and training of apprentices are haphazard. In general, little attempt has been made, on a national basis, to ensure that boys entering apprenticeship have a proper educational background, or to provide for the systematic training of apprentices in practical skills or for their release from work to attend appropriate technical school courses. The importance of testing the progress of apprentices by examinations during and towards the end of apprenticeship is not adequately recognised. In brief, the effectiveness of present arrangements for the recruitment and training of apprentices depends mainly on the outlook of individual employers and it is questionable whether sufficient employers adopt a progressive outlook on the subject".

In the same report, the policy which An Cheard Chomhairle considered essential for the development of a sound progressive system of apprenticeship was summarised as follows (2) :

1. to foster a spirit of co-operation between workers, employers and educationalists on the subject
2. to stimulate the formation of representative National Apprenticeship Committees and local Advisory Committees to help in regulating and controlling apprenticeship
3. to ensure, by promoting reasonable arrangements for the intake of apprentices and by requiring an educational qualification for entry, that sufficient numbers of suitably qualified young persons enter on apprenticeship in the craft trades
4. to ensure that apprentices are given not only an adequate opportunity to acquire the necessary practical skills and technical knowledge but also an opportunity for moral and cultural development
5. to supervise the progress of the apprentices by, inter alia, a system of examinations in trade practice and theory, during and at the end of apprenticeship
6. to ensure that there is adequate enforcement of rules laid down by An Cheard Chomhairle concerning apprenticeship.

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(1) An Cheard Chomhairle, First Annual Report 1961.

(2) Ibid. P. 4.



A pass standard was proposed in specified subjects in either the Day Group Certificate or Intermediate Certificate examinations for entry to apprenticeship. The programme as laid down by An Cheard Chomhairle also envisaged compulsory attendance at technical school courses during apprenticeship, and a system of examinations in trade practice and theory during and towards the end of apprenticeship. Through the 1960's An Cheard Chomhairle extended its scope in terms of the number of trades which it designated. The result of designation was the laying down of rules for individual trades and supervision of on-the-job training, which was the employers duty, under the rules, to provide.

Yet in a discussion document under the title Apprenticeship - A New Approach, AnCO, the Industrial Training Authority, had this to say in May 1973 :

" The Apprenticeship Act 1959 established An Cheard Chomhairle, the functions of which were largely regulatory. It was hoped under this Act to eliminate the hereditary recruitment system, to improve the educational standards of entrants to apprenticeship, to organise better release facilities to vocational schools, to improve on-the-job training and to regulate intake to ensure an adequate supply of craftsmen. All but the last two of these were successfully accomplished. The difficulty of organising and controlling effective on-the-job training in the modern workplace with its emphasis on production was becoming increasingly obvious. It was also apparent that a more positive and less haphazard approach to determining intake numbers was necessary if the needs of the new and expanding industries were to be met".

This comment did not only refer to the work of An Cheard Chomhairle, but also to the early years of the work of AnCO - the Industrial Training Authority which was established in 1967 with the passing of the Industrial Training Act (2).

This Act revoked the 1959 Act and the activities of An Cheard Chomhairle were absorbed into AnCO - the new training authority. Apprenticeship was one facet of the much broader interest AnCO had in training.

The preamble to the 1967 Act reads :

" An Act to make better provision for industrial and commercial training and for that purpose to establish a body to be known as An Chomhairle Oiliuna (AnCO) and to define its powers and duties, to provide for the imposition by An Chomhairle Oiliuna of levies for the promotion of industrial and commercial training, to repeal the Apprenticeship Act 1959, and to provide for other matters connected with the matters aforesaid".

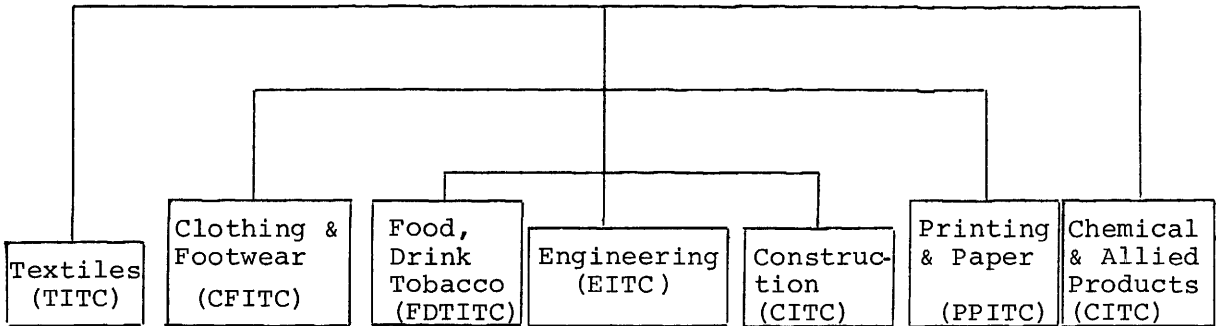
The Council of AnCO was given responsibility for promoting and providing training at all levels of industry and commerce. AnCO is directed by a Council made up of representatives from employers' organisations, trade unions, the educational sector and the Minister for Labour. The Council is appointed by the Minister for Labour. The Council makes industrial training policy. This policy operates under three main headings.

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- (1) Apprenticeship - A New Approach - AnCO Dublin May 1973.
  - (2) The Industrial Training Act 1967 -(Government Publications).

1. Training within industry.
2. Training centres and instructor training.
3. Apprenticeship training.

The Council of AnCO has a network of Industrial Training Committees which works to it and advises it.

COUNCIL



All these committees are representative of employer and worker organisations and educational interests. Each has an independent chairman.

The function of these committees is to advise and assist the Council of AnCO in the performance of its statutory functions in relation to the industrial sector concerned, and including apprenticeship.

AnCO, therefore, in consultation with the other interests involved has responsibility for apprenticeship. At present, seven trade groups are within the scope of the Act and these are listed in Annex 1 (1). There are over 15,000 apprentices from these trade groups registered with AnCO.

Annex 2 (2) shows the breakdown of this total by trade and year of apprenticeship. Annex 3 (3) shows the apprentice population by Trade Group, Block and Day Release Attendance and 1st Year Intake for the period 1970-1975.

To complete this historical retrospect and to set the scene for an evaluation of the current functioning of apprenticeship arrangements, it is appropriate to quote again from the first Annual Report of AnCO(4) a comment on the Irish Apprenticeship System :

"Apprenticeship will continue to be the backbone of industrial training for skilled workers in Ireland. The craftsmen who emerge from the full courses of apprenticeship training, i.e., those who have applied themselves with zeal to their trades on the workshop floor and in the technical schools and who have passed the trade tests of the Department of Education, compare favourably with the

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(1) Apprenticeship - A New Approach - AnCO Dublin May 1973.

(2) AnCO - Annual Report & Accounts 1975 - P. 10.

(3) Ibid P. 12.

(4) First Annual Report of AnCO - 1968 - P. 12 - AnCO Dublin.

craftsmen of any country. The kind of training given to the apprentice at his place of work determines to a large extent the degree of skill and craftsmanship which he will develop in his trade. The training provided off-the-job in technical schools adds to his skill and broadens the entire scope of his training. The technical school courses include subjects of general education and therefore add significantly to the individual during his apprenticeship".

#### LEGAL STATUS OF APPRENTICESHIP

Statutory apprenticeship schemes are administered by AnCO in seven designated trade groups (See Annex 1). The trade groups are construction, engineering, electrical, motor industry, furniture, printing, and dental technology. A suitable employer, having received the consent of AnCO, offers an apprenticeship to a young person, who if he is qualified as regards age and education, is then registered by AnCO. The subsequent education and training of an apprentice, which currently lasts five years, is organised and supervised by AnCO.

Neither the Industrial Training Act nor the AnCO Discussion and more recently published decisions of the Council of AnCO, (under the title The New Apprenticeship) (1) define apprenticeship.

An information document, published by AnCO, Apprentice Training in Ireland (2) poses the question "What is Apprenticeship?" The document goes on to answer as follows :

Apprenticeship is training for skilled crafts or trades that require a wide and diverse range of skills and knowledge, as well as maturity and independence of judgement.

In modern industry, apprenticeship is a training in which the young worker is given thorough instruction and experience, both on and off the job, in all practical and theoretical aspects of the trade.

As the apprentice progresses in his/her training, he/she acquires new skills and masters the application of those already learned.

Apprenticeship normally begins at the age of 15/16 and ends five years later.

In Ireland apprenticeship training is the responsibility of AnCO - The Industrial Training Authority. It covers the trade-groups of Construction, Engineering & Metal, Electrical, Motor, Furniture, Printing, and Dental Craftsman.

Apprentice training is carried out within firms and through day and block release courses provided by the Vocational Education Committee.

Failure to define apprenticeship may be due to the fact that a meaningful definition cannot be easily produced in a modern industrial

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(1) The New Apprenticeship - Decisions of Council of AnCO - October 1975.  
(2) Apprentice Training in Ireland - September 1975 - AnCO Dublin.

context. Also the term "apprenticeship" "does not hold the same meaning for everybody; lay persons, unions, employers, parents, apprentices all have their own idea of what the term means and react accordingly". (1)

One definition of apprenticeship is as follows :

" Apprenticeship is a special employment relationship which binds the employer to give or cause others to give the apprentice in his employment such instruction in the undertaking as will enable him to acquire technical proficiency which he must have in order to become a skilled worker while using the service of the apprentice in the undertaking". (2)

In Ireland a contract is deemed to exist between the employer and the apprentice under the Industrial Training Act. But it is difficult to know in what way this contract is special or different from other contracts of employment especially when compared with other employment agreements which bind the employer to teach and the employee to learn. Granted, the apprentices' contract specifies a duration of time in which training must be given and other contracts do not.

Also, the contract does not state how an employer is bound to fulfil his part of the agreement, and on the apprentice's side no specification of standard of proficiency is set down.

The legal status of apprenticeship will be evaluated more and more in the total training context and the conventions which govern it will more and more be those which govern training. Contractual obligation in this context has a doubtful future. However, the term apprenticeship has a very real meaning for craft unions and is enshrined in the Industrial Training Act so alternative systems will require to be proposed in which a new concept of apprenticeship will be defined.

#### THE ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM IN IRELAND

Before commenting upon the operation of the apprenticeship system in Ireland, it would be helpful to quote further from the document Apprentice Training in Ireland (Sept. 1975).

#### How to become an Apprentice

1. The responsibility for securing an apprenticeship rests with the person concerned or with the parents. The prospective apprentice or his/her parents should get in touch with suitable employers about vacancies.

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(1) Apprenticeship in Ireland - Towards a Structured System - an unpublished M.Ed. Thesis by G.C. Murphy, Trinity College, Dublin, 1974.

(2) Source unknown.

2. When the necessary educational qualifications for entry into apprenticeship have been obtained, he/she should register with the local office of the National Manpower Service, or with the Manager of the local Employment Exchange.
3. Eligible persons may not take up employment as apprentices until the prospective employer has received the consent of AnCO to employ an apprentice.
4. When an apprenticeship has been secured, with the consent of AnCO, the apprentice will be registered in the Register of Apprentices kept by AnCO on payment of 50p. An Apprentice Registration Card will then be issued.

Since competition is keen, all who wish to enter the skilled trades should make every effort to obtain a pass in the required educational subjects.

### Occupations

Young workers can become apprenticed to the following occupations within the seven trades for which AnCO has made statutory regulations.

### Construction

Carpenter/Joiner; Slater and Roof-tiler; Brick and Stonelayer; Glazier; Painter and Decorator; Plasterer; Stonecutter; Plumber.

### Furniture

Cabinetmaker; Wood Machinist; Upholsterer; Woodfinisher.

### Engineering

Fitter; Turner; Toolmaker; Brassfinisher; Sheet Metal Worker; Coppersmith; Metal Fabricator (Boilermaker, Construction Fitter, Plater, Shipbuilder, Blacksmith); Welder; Patternmaker; Foundry Craftsman (Moulder and Coremaker); Refrigeration Craftsman; Aircraft Mechanic; Instrument Mechanic.

### Electrical

Electrician (Installations Electrician; Industrial Maintenance Electrician, E.S.B. Electrician, Rewinding Electrician, Neon Sign Electrician, Lift Electrician).

### Motor

Motor Mechanic.

### Printing

Compositor; Letterpress Printer; Lithographic Printer; Bookbinder; Process Engraver; Stereotyper and Electrotyper; Lithographic and Photogravure Craftsman.

### Dental Craftsman

Dental Mechanic.

### Details of Training

As part of their training apprentices are required to attend day or block release courses at technical schools or regional colleges.

For day release the employer is required to release the apprentice from work for one day per week to attend at school.

For block release the apprentice is released by the employer for an extended period (normally 8 to 13 weeks) to attend at school. AnCO pays the apprentice's accommodation and travelling costs (if the apprentice is not attending from home). The employer pays the apprentice's wages while attending school.

The apprentice will be required to pay a maximum of £ 3 per week towards his accommodation, if accommodation costs are incurred. The balance of the accommodation fees will be paid by AnCO.

### EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

#### Day Group Certificates

The minimum standard required is Grade D in all subjects, with the exception of Woodwork and Metalwork, for which Grade C is required.

### ENGINEERING AND ELECTRICAL

#### Four Subjects :

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Mechanical Drawing
3. Irish or English
4. Mathematics or Art or Rural Science.

### FURNITURE

#### Three Subjects

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Mechanical Drawing or Art
3. Any other subject.

MOTOR

Four Subjects :

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Mechanical Drawing or Art
3. Irish or English
4. Mathematics or Rural Science.

CONSTRUCTION

Carpenter Joiner, Slater and Rooftiler

Three Subjects :

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Irish or English
3. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing.

Brick and Stonelayer

Three Subjects :

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Irish or English
3. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing.

Glazier, Painter and Decorator, Plasterer, Stonecutter

Three Subjects :

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Irish or English
3. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing or Art.

Plumber

Three Subjects :

1. Woodwork or Metalwork
2. Irish or English
3. Mathematics or Rural Science or Mechanical Drawing

PRINTING

Compositor

Four Subjects :

1. Irish
2. English
3. Mathematics or a Science subject
4. Any other subject.

Trades other than Compositor

Four Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or a Science subject
3. 4. Any two other subjects.

DENTAL CRAFTSMAN

Four Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Rural Science
3. Mechanical Drawing or Art
4. Woodwork or Metalwork.

Intermediate Certificate

The minimum standard required is Grade D in all subjects.

ENGINEERING AND ELECTRICAL

Three Subjects :

1. Mathematics
2. Irish or English
3. Science (Syllabus A or B or E).

FURNITURE

Three Subjects :

1. Mathematics
2. Irish or English
3. Any other subject.

MOTOR

Four Subjects :

1. Mathematics
2. Irish or English
3. Science (Syllabus A or B or E)
4. Art or Mechanical Drawing.

CONSTRUCTION

Carpenter/Joiner, Slater and Rooftiler



Three Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing or Woodwork or Metalwork or Manual Training
3. Any other subject.

Brick and Stonelayer

Three Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing or Woodwork or Metalwork or Manual Training or Science
3. Any other subject.

Glazier, Painter and Decorator, Plasterer, Stonecutter

Three Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing or Woodwork or Metalwork or Manual Training or Science.
3. Any other subject

Three Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Mechanical Drawing or Woodwork or Metalwork or Manual Training or Science.
3. Any other subject.

PRINTING

Compositor

Four Subjects :

1. Irish
2. English
3. Mathematics or Science (Syllabus A or B or E)
4. Any other subject.

Trades other than Compositor

Four Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Science (Syllabus A or B or E)
3. 4. Any two other subjects.

## DENTAL CRAFTSMAN

### Four Subjects :

1. Irish or English
2. Mathematics or Science (Syllabus A or B or E)
3. 4. Any two other subjects.

The responsibility for ensuring that a sufficient number of craftsmen are trained for the immediate and for the remote future rests with individual employers. Employers recruit to meet immediate manpower requirements and take care not to over recruit because of the variations in the market place and because of the fear of developing technology. Unions for their part have maintained a protective stance and have insisted on ratios of craftsmen to apprentices. Neither of these two positions on recruitment are helpful to a country endeavouring to promote industrial development and this poses very real problems for AnCO and for The Industrial Development Authority. We will return to AnCO proposals to cope with this problem.

The granting of permission to employers to recruit apprentices poses other problems. What criteria are used in relation to standard of workshop, the range of craft skills to which the apprentice will be exposed, the capacity of the craftsman to whom the apprentice will be working to impart knowledge. Some small employers have been known to recruit more apprentices than craftsmen. Also it is difficult to see how the type of work which an apprentice should be asked to do in each year of his apprenticeship can be consistently controlled and programmed against such variation in workshop size and adequacy. The application of criteria to workshop facilities raises serious questions for the supervision of on-the-job training.

Since the introduction of educational standards for entry to apprenticeship by An Cheard Chomhairle in the 1960's great improvements have been effected in the standard of general education amongst apprentices, but one writer has studied the granting of exemptions from the standards by AnCO. P.J. O'Connor (1) has compiled a table showing the situation regarding exemptions in one county :

TRADE DESIGNATION	PERCENTAGE NOT QUALIFIED
Cabinet Makers	7
Motor Mechanics	32
Fitters	16
Toolmakers	9
Welders	66
Carpenter...Joiners	47
Painter Decorators	100
Plumbers	46
Bricklayer - Stonemasons	42
Plasterers	80
Wood Machinists	38

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(1) P.J. O'Connor, Traditional Apprenticeship and a Skilled Workforce (Unpublished M.B.A. dissertation, University College, Dublin 1972).

It is not known how typical this is of the country as a whole, but it would be atypical of the centres of greater population except in the wet trades area in the construction industry.

Employers are required to release apprentices to attend technical college on a Day Release or Block Release basis. The effectiveness of this system has been improving almost year by year but for some trades it is unsatisfactory. Under the Block Release System, apprentices attend full time at technical institute for 11 weeks per annum in each of the first four years of apprenticeship. Day Release apprentices attend one day each week during the academic year and three evenings per week for approximately two thirds of the year in each of the first years of apprenticeship. From AnCO's Sixth Annual Report (1) G.C. Murphy (2) was able to compute the percentage of apprentices not attending release courses for which their employers were required to release them :

Designation	% on Block Release Average for 1968-'73	% on Day Release Average for 1968-'73	% Not Released Average for 1968-'73
Construction	13.6	34.9	51.5
Furniture	14.9	30.1	55.0
Electrical	66.6	9.5	24.0
Engineering and Metal	40.6	22.7	36.7
Motor	6.9	72.6	20.5
Printing	47.0	0	53.0
Proportion of Apprentices in each Category	31.6	28.3	40.1

It is the opinion of staff in technical institutes that attendance at Block Release courses is very good and that absenteeism is due to genuine causes. On Day Release attendance is poorer and has always been so especially on the evening element of the programme.

As indicated earlier AnCO published a report on the operation of the apprenticeship system in Ireland in May 1973. They did so because they were conscious of many of the deficiencies referred to above, viz - intake of apprentices, entry qualifications, Day and Block Release, content of training programmes etc.. In fact, in 1970 the Council of AnCO appointed a special committee to review the existing system of apprenticeship. According to the Report, this committee decided to work through the Industrial Training Committees. Sub-committees were set up for the Engineering, Construction and Printing industries and each was asked to submit recommendations for changes which they considered necessary in apprenticeship training in their industries.

AnCO staff also carried out a Study of Apprenticeship in Ireland and in other European countries. The main finding of these four studies on the

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(1) Sixth Annual Report - AnCO Dublin - 1973.

(2) G.C. Murphy - unpublished M.Ed. Thesis - Apprenticeship in Ireland - T.C.D. 1974.

operation of the Apprenticeship System in Ireland and the suggestions made to make this training more effective and more relevant to present day needs, may be summarised as follows :

1. Summary of Recommendations of the Engineering Sub-Committee

- (a) Revise and liberalise the educational qualifications at entry and introduce in-school aptitude testing.
- (b) Entry to apprenticeship at any age.
- (c) Provide all apprentices with an initial basic training in approved Training Centres under a systematic programme of training with regular testing.
- (d) The equivalent of two days per week should be devoted to theoretical instruction which is fully integrated with the practical training.
- (e) The Training Centres should not be under-utilised if the demand for places is low at any time.
- (f) Schools providing technical education to apprentices should be improved by the introduction of programmed texts and discovery learning techniques, audio-visual aids, use of multi-choice question papers and standardised text books.
- (g) Trade education should consist of a three stage attendance under uniform time-tables and conditions in which teachers have adequate opportunity for preparatory work.
- (h) Some form of link course should ensure educational continuity.
- (i) Merely serving time is not enough to make a good craftsman - final certificate of competency is essential, and the test should be taken after three years, but progress from stage to stage during training should depend on merit, and progress should be recorded on the final certificate.
- (j) Certified skill status before full wages. Practical tests should be administered objectively by a tripartite board on the shop floor and confined strictly to work in which training was given, emphasising the need for quality of work performance.
- (k) Recognition as a skilled craftsman should depend on successfully passing the final test. The craftsman should not have the right to call himself a qualified man if he has not passed the final test.
- (l) All the training and education should be open-ended and to approved syllabi based on the identified training needs modern of industry.
- (m) Training in industry involves attachment to an employer and should take place in stages under controlled conditions and should be as systematic and as diversified as production allows.
- (n) A work book should be adopted containing provision for exercises by the trainee and assessment of his training and educational progress.
- (o) Subsequent to the first basic training stage in the Training Centre, on-the-job training should be supported by the necessary formal inputs of training required by the identified needs or particular specialities.

- (p) The period of apprenticeship should be reduced to four years, but the adult trainee should gain skilled craft status when skilled.
- (q) The number of trainees allowed in any situation should be decided by the quality of training being provided as well as the number of craftsmen available to provide it.
- (r) Employers should be induced to avail of Training Centre basic training, to have some craftsmen trained in instructional techniques to give due emphasis to the quality of the training they provide and to adopt the new system under AnCO Training Advisers' guidance.
- (s) Trade Unions should increase their interest in training and provide their own guidance to craftsmen members, and should encourage trainees.
- (t) The roles of the training partners should be re-defined and a team work approach cultivated.
- (u) Review the present list of designated trades and determine the training requirements status of each, and ascertain what fringe occupations require formal training.
- (v) The new system should be uniform, treat all craft training equally, be continuously reviewed, be flexible and capable of adapting to the changing needs of industry, and technological change.
- (w) Better advice on method of selection and recruitment should be provided, an explanatory booklet, and all vital syllabi, work books and training manuals should be made available in a standard form.

## 2. Summary of Recommendations of the Construction Industry Sub-Committee

- (a) That the educational qualifications for entry to construction trades should be a pass in any four subjects in the day group or intermediate certificate examination.
- (b) The craft status should be awarded to those who had either :
  - (i) completed a period of apprenticeship of five years under conditions approved by AnCO
  - OR
  - (ii) completed a period of apprenticeship of four years, under conditions approved by AnCO and in accordance with recommendations numbers 3 to 6 inclusive and passed the final apprenticeship test.
- (c) That all apprentices should receive their basic training and education in an off-the-job environment in a systematic matter.
- (d) That the formal off-the-job training should be concentrated in the first two years of apprenticeship.
- (e) That tests should be undertaken by each apprentice during and at the end of apprenticeship, these tests to be known as the "intermediate test" and "final test" and that a certificate be issued to those passing the final test.

- (f) That all concerned with apprenticeship viz. AnCO, Department of Education, Vocational Education Committees, employers' and workers' representatives should be involved in the preparation of the tests and in the promotion of the tests as an essential qualification of skilled status.
- (g) That the off-the-job training should be mainly on the current work of the trades, having regard to the foreseeable future needs.
- (h) That the education and off-the-job basic training should be given at appropriate technical establishments and AnCO approved centres. AnCO approved centres should include off-the-job training centres run by employers.
- (i) The aptitude tests should be available for all boys entering apprenticeship and that the relevance of aptitude tests to the construction industry in Ireland should be studied.
- (j) That active promotion of the highest standards of apprentice training should be regarded as of prime importance by all concerned with apprenticeship.
- (k) That employers be grant-aided for the provision of approved training.
- (l) That the following aspects of apprenticeship should be kept under continuous review : intake, organisation of training, testing and certification.
- (m) That these recommendations should be implemented in respect of all craft apprentices employed in the construction designation (including such crafts as electricians and fitters).

### 3. Summary of Recommendations of the Printing Industry Sub-Committee

- (a) That the aims of apprenticeship should be to equip a person with the range of skills and knowledge he requires in his practical craft.
- (b) For the purposes of considering craft training, a craftsman may be regarded as a skilled worker in a particular occupation who is able to apply a comprehensive range of skills and a high degree of knowledge with a minimum of direction and supervision. He requires practical and theoretical training which is normally combined with an apprentice course of technical education.
- (c) That apprenticeship is the most appropriate system of training for the printing trades.
- (d) That AnCO should incorporate further modules in the compositor workshop training programme to cater for the training needs of the newspaper industry.
- (e) That there be discussions with the Department of Education and the printing schools with a view to exploring the possibilities of re-viewing the compositor syllabus to cater for the needs of the newspaper industry.

- (f) That a simple system of planned job rotation, based on the firm's capabilities in type of work and equipment and taking into account the level of training reached on block release courses, is necessary. This should be one of the criteria, for consent to employ apprentices.
- (g) That some form of aptitude tests is desirable as an aid to selecting printing apprentices.
- (h) That a terminal test for competency is desirable.
- (i) That workshop training programmes and school syllabi be based on the type of work existing in industry.
- (j) Training in modern keyboard systems should be undertaken either as part of mechanical composition courses or at special courses.
- (k) Managers, foremen and union representatives should be actively interested in workshop training of apprentices.
- (l) Training of apprentices should be carried out by craftsmen acting as full- or part-time instructors.
- (m) That firms who wish to recruit apprentices should in future be obliged to submit a plan of training suitable to the firm's capacity.
- (n) That an appreciation course of all trades would be of benefit to an apprentice during his first year.
- (o) That the scope of the letterpress printer school syllabus be broadened to include instruction in operating small offset machines.
- (p) That the technical schools increase instruction time on cylinder machines.
- (q) That apprentices receive theoretical instruction in the principles of web rotary, during block release courses.
- (r) That the importance of recording and supervising the log-book be re-emphasised and that a firm be assessed on its commitment to such a system. This also should be one of the criteria for consent to employ apprentices.
- (s) That whosoever be delegated the responsibility for supervising the training of apprentices in any firm should have received tuition in instructing techniques on a suitable course.
- (t) That the technical schools increase the amount of teaching time in mechanical binding.
- (u) That apprentices receive a positive incentive to apply themselves diligently at Block Release Courses and to achieve maximum benefit from workshop training.
- (v) That the trades be reviewed at regular intervals.

4. Summary of Recommendations of the AnCO staff (contained in the Report - Apprenticeship/A New Approach)

- (a) All apprentices would undergo a period of off-the-job training in their first year (3.5). Additional training modules would be provided as required in the second and third years (3.7). The off-the-job training would take place in approved

industrial training centres (12.1 and 2).

- (b) This initial period of off-the-job training would be followed normally by two years on-the-job experience in employment under supervision provided by the employer (3.6).
- (c) The total period of apprenticeship training would be not more than three years (4.2).
- (d) Standard comprehensive national training syllabi, based on analyses of actual job requirements, would be compiled by AnCO staff and approved by representative Industrial Training Committees (5.2). These syllabi would have to be followed in all approved training centres (12.1).
- (e) The nature and amount of essential trade theory would be determined when the job was being analysed and would be included in the standard training syllabi (5.2). The learning of the skill content and the knowledge content of the craft would be integrated (6.3).
- (f) The amount and nature of related education to be given during apprenticeship would be assessed when a job was being analysed and would be agreed in discussion between all the interested parties (7.1).
- (g) Testing and certification would be introduced and all apprentices would be assessed by local representative boards on completion of their training period. National Certificates of Competency would be awarded by AnCO on the recommendations of these boards (8.3).
- (h) A ladder to higher levels should continue to exist for apprentices and craftsmen and AnCO would consider providing financial assistance in certain cases (3.8).
- (i) All young persons who had completed a Junior Cycle Course at Post Primary level, i.e. either the Group or Intermediate Certificate course, would be considered educationally qualified to undergo apprenticeship training (9.4). Applicants would be required to take the appropriate aptitude tests (9.5). The results of these tests would be used as an aid to selection for training.
- (j) AnCO would establish a manpower information unit, and in consultation with the Industrial Training Committees, would set annual intake quotas for each craft (10.4). These intake quotas would cater (i) for normal replacement and growth, and (ii) the requirements of new industries. Industry would be responsible for the wage costs at (i), the State, through AnCO, for the costs at (ii) (16.3).
- (k) Well equipped approved industrial-type training centres would be provided for off-the-job training for first year apprentices (12.2) :
  - (i) in the Vocational Education system;
  - (ii) in industry;
  - (iii) in AnCO Training Centres.

Provided that suitable arrangements could be agreed, it is considered that the bulk of apprentices could, with advantage, be trained in the Vocational Education system (12.3).



- (l) Adults would be given the opportunity to train for craft occupations (13.2). Discussions would take place with the interested parties with a view to extending an experiment, which has been commenced in Cork, to other areas (13.4).
- (m) Suitable training modules would be provided so that existing craftsmen could up-date their skills or extend their range of skills. AnCO would provide financial assistance for this in certain cases (14.2 and 3).
- (n) Discussions would be undertaken with the interests concerned to eliminate any discrimination which may exist against females interested in entering training for skilled occupations (15.2).
- (o) The need for training for skilled occupations other than statutory apprenticeship trades is fully recognised and AnCO would organise the provision of suitable training schemes for these occupations (1.7).
- (p) The cost of implementing the proposals in this document would be met jointly by the State and by Industry (16.2). In general, employers would bear the wage costs of apprentices to meet normal intake. The State would bear the wage costs of apprentices for new industries and all the other capital and operating costs (16.3 to 5).
- (q) The additional capital cost of providing and equipping the additional training places required should not exceed £3,000,000. The additional operating costs should not exceed £1,000,000 a year (16.10). There would be no extra cost to employers, loss of apprentices' service during off-the-job training should be more than off-set by increased productivity (16.12).
- (r) Every effort should be made to transfer completely to the new system within three years from 1st January, 1974 (17).

Following an extensive public debate on the issues raised in these recommendations, the Council of AnCO published in October 1975 (1) its decisions, which are summarised as follows showing a comparative analysis of the New System and the present system.

#### REVIEW OF APPRENTICESHIP

##### Summary Comparison of the New System and the Present System

###### NEW SYSTEM

1. All apprentices to do off-the-job training in the first year.

###### PRESENT SYSTEM

1. Excluding apprentices on off-the-job training in AnCO Centres (approx. 800) only about 10% of first year apprentices receive off-the-job training, mainly in State and Semi-State Bodies.

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(1) The New Apprenticeship - Decisions of the Council of AnCO October 1975.

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| 2. a) 4 year apprenticeship for normal intake (Group or Inter Cert. level)   | 2. 5 year apprenticeship for all apprentices.                            |
| b) 3 year apprenticeship for holders of Leaving Certificate qualifications.  |  |
| 3. Compulsory testing and Certification for all apprentices.   | 3. No compulsory testing or Certification. Trade examinations voluntary. |
| 4. Comprehensive training and educational curricula with built-in testing procedures under control of representative Curriculum Advisory Committee.              | 4. Examination syllabi for Department of Education examinations.         |
| 5. Minimum educational entry qualifications : Any three subjects at Group or Inter Cert.. Aptitude Tests and school assessments as additional aids to selection. | 5. Specific subjects at Group or Inter Cert. required for entry.         |
| 6. Formalised ladder to higher level.  | 6. No recognised ladder at present.                                      |
| 7. Apprentice training for girls.  | 7. No specific provision at present.                                     |
| 8. Craft training for adults in certain cases by agreement between employers and trade unions.   | 8. Very limited provision at present.                                    |
| 9. Incentives for existing craftsmen both employed and unemployed to improve their skills.   | 9. No special provision.   |
| 10. Specific provision for apprentice training for new industries.   | 10. No special provision.  |
| 11. State financial assistance to employers towards the equipment of in-company apprentice training centres in approved cases.                                   | 11. No provision at present except through levy/grant schemes.           |
| 12. Improved on-the-job supervision.   | 12. Present system in need of improvement.                               |
| 13. Provision for training for non-designated trades.  | 13. No specific provision at present.                                    |

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| 14. Annual apprentice intake to be related to projected skilled manpower requirements. | 14. At present, intake is determined mainly by decisions of individual employers and is not related to overall national needs. |
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#### EVALUATION OF DECISIONS

An evaluation of these decisions which come into operation in September 1976, is very relevant. In making this analysis, the elements in the plan of work for this study, proposed by the Directorate-General of Social Affairs of the Commission of the European Communities, are very much in mind.

DECISION NO. 1 All apprentices to do off-the-job training in the first year in approved apprentice training centres either within the educational system, within industry or in AnCO training centres. The length of the training period will vary with each craft and shall be determined when the curriculum is being designed. This proposal will mean a general improvement in the workshop facilities which apprentices will experience. It is also envisaged that it should lead to improved attendance of apprentices over that experienced on day and block release. Where industry co-operates in the provision of workshop facilities, it will mainly be State and Semi-State industry. Private industry will be helped financially to meet the criteria set if it opts to co-operate. Where this off-the-job training takes place outside the educational system, provision will be made to continue day and/or block release for educational purposes in this period.

The decisions (1) taken also cover other years of apprenticeship :

- " All apprentices, during the first three years of apprenticeship, shall attend without loss of pay, specified courses of instruction in Vocational Schools and Technical Colleges, these courses to cover some practical training and theoretical and related and general education as agreed between employer, trade union, educational and training interests. The duration of these courses shall be the equivalent of at least one day per week for the academic year of 36 weeks in each of the first three years of apprenticeship and the organisation of the courses shall be flexible to meet particular needs. It shall be mandatory for apprentices to attend these specified courses and the employer shall be obliged to release the apprentice without loss of pay".

This off-the-job training should ensure that apprentices will all experience work in a well equipped training area, instructors who are not just good at their craft but trained in imparting knowledge and who also are aware of the planning and organisation which an efficiently run firm demands, a controlled flow of work grades in the light of the apprentice's experience and governed not just by production requirements but by the demands of a well programmed training schedule. Some apprentices in both the public and private industrial sectors in Ireland, have had such an experience but it is a small minority. In contrast, the majority of Irish apprentices have experienced on-the-job training which is largely unplanned, unsystematic and uncontrolled and it is

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(1) Ibid p. 3.

difficult by any system of supervision by field officers to improve this. Production matters in the workshop and many apprentices are hired only to produce and not to be trained. It is very difficult especially in small work units to ensure a suitable flow of work. Apart from training requirements it is very difficult to ensure a broad exposure to the skills of a craft. Modern industry looks at the craftsman in terms of what he produces and not in terms of how he trains an apprentice. An apprentice who has just come from a structured school system experiences difficulty in coping with the tension inherent in this type of climate. AnCO have had this to say about some experimental work which they have undertaken with off-the-job training (1).

" Experiments with off-the-job training. The experiments, conducted by AnCO in its own Training Centres and also in co-operation with some V.E.C.'s and with C.I.E., of giving first year apprentices a period of full-time training off-the-job have been highly successful. It has been possible by systematic programmed training to bring young apprentices to a high level of skill in a short period. In many cases apprentices trained in this manner have competed successfully, both in examinations and on-the-job, with second and third year apprentices trained in the traditional way. It is, of course, recognised that apprentices trained by off-the-job methods require experience on-the-job to gain speed and stamina and to learn the disciplines imposed by production requirements. Up to now, 700 first year apprentices have been trained off-the-job and the majority of employers who have sponsored them or with whom they have been placed by AnCO, have said they were satisfied with the products of this form of training. Trade unions have also expressed satisfaction and, not least, the apprentices themselves have been pleased with their progress."

The objectives of this off-the-job training are stated (2) as :

- " a) induction to the work environment and the bridging of the gap between school and work
- b) learning of, and development of, essential craft skills
- c) learning of essential craft knowledge
- d) development of industrial discipline
- e) some stamina and speed development
- f) an agreed input of related education".

It is visualised that this off-the-job training would take place in the first year and that subsequently stamina, speed, good work habit, additional craft skills, would be acquired on-the-job. However, it is recognised that the limitations of the supervision of the on-the-job training remain, but the threshold of good work habit reached at the end of the off-the-job training is intended to be such that many of the former limitations which arose out of apprentice attitudes will not be there.

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(1) Apprenticeship - A New Approach - AnCO May 1973.  
(2) Ibid. p. 12.

DECISION No. 2 : This decision is in two parts :

- a) 4 year apprenticeship for normal intake
- b) 3 year apprenticeship for holders of Leaving Certificate qualification.

To date in Ireland, most boys entering apprenticeship do so at the end of compulsory attendance at school i.e. 15 years of age or during their fifteenth year. This coincides with the completion of the Intermediate Certificate examination for some and with the completion of the Group Certificate examination for others. Up to recent years, most apprentices would have taken the Group Certificate examination which was available only in Vocational Schools i.e. junior technical schools. This has changed however with a policy of comprehensivisation of school curricula so that the Intermediate Certificate does not now reflect the traditional grammar school type of curriculum which it did formerly. It is likely that most apprentices will continue to be recruited at this level of general education.

The second part of this decision i.e. recruitment of entrants to apprenticeship at Leaving Certificate level is leaving open an option to become apprentices to young people who decide at fifteen years of age to stay on at school for two further years. The Leaving Certificate is an examination which marks the end of second level education and it qualifies students for entry to various courses in third level education. It is appropriate that students would have this opportunity to re-think and reappraise their decision taken at 15 years not to enter apprenticeship. Probably the most important facet of this decision is the possibility of its opening up entry to apprenticeship so that it is in no way related to age. Many people would hope that this is the first step in that direction. In the public debate which has taken place on this particular decision, a certain level of disappointment has been expressed that apart from removing a restriction on an age and/or level of education base, some means should have been found whereby a certain level of post Intermediate or Group Certificate work experience could not have been equated with the two years of a Leaving Certificate Course. However, generally what is being attempted in this second part of this decision is accepted except by those who have a certain protective interest in the matter.

DECISION No. 3 A certain compulsory Testing and Certification for all apprentices. The discussion document - Apprenticeship - A New Approach (1) had this to say on existing trade examinations :

" There are, at present, no compulsory tests or examinations during or on completion of apprenticeship. While apprentices on block and day release courses are prepared for, and encouraged to take, the Junior and Senior Trade Certificate Examinations of the Department of Education, this is on a voluntary basis and quite a number of apprentices do not take any examinations. Completion of the apprenticeship period is all that is required for recognition of skilled status and membership of the appropriate union is deemed the hallmark of competency".

One interesting analysis of examination performance by one group of apprentices may be cited i.e. a study of the number of electrical apprentices who present themselves for examination in one college. This analysis is taken from an unpublished M. Ed. thesis (1) :

The following table is taken from "Analysis of Examination Results", Session 1970 - 1971, College of Technology, Kevin Street, Dublin. The results refer to the Department of Education National Examinations for electrical apprentices for Summer 1971.

Subject	Grade	No. Entered	No. Sat	No. Pass	% Pass
Electrical Craft Practice.	Junior	131	91	38	42
Technical Drawing.	Junior	66	49	36	74
Mathematics and Craft Calculations.	Junior	74	54	36	67
Electrical Science.	Junior	139	90	29	32
Electrical Installation Work. (Practical)	Junior	82	55	37	67
Electrical Craft Practice.	Senior	84	43	24	56
Mathematics and Craft Calculations.	Senior	23	6	3	50
Electrical Science.	Senior	78	36	14	39
Planning of Electrical Installations.	Senior	32	14	9	64
Electrical Installation Work. (Practical)	Senior	106	78	51	65

The figures have no real significance because they do not indicate the number of students who successfully qualified for either the full Junior or full Senior Trade Certificates. Obviously for the Senior Trade, the number is not greater than 14 (the number passing in Electrical Science) and for the Junior Trade not greater than 29 (again, the number passing in Electrical Science).

This table has a number of shortcomings. It does not tell us how many electrical apprentices were enrolled in classes and did not offer themselves for examination. We do not know what number of electrical apprentices should have been enrolled in the college in that year. Consequently, as a guideline it is limited but at the same time recruitment as an electrical apprentice in Ireland is much sought after and therefore all these apprentices would almost certainly have the required entry standards especially at Junior Trade Certificate level.

It is proposed, therefore, that a system of phase testing with a qualifying test(s) at the end of the appropriate period(s) of off-the-job training would be built into the training syllabi. On the completion

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(1) Apprenticeship in Ireland - Towards a Structured System. An unpublished M. Ed. Thesis 1974 T.C.D. by G.C. Murphy.

of training, the apprentice's performance over the entire period of training would be assessed by a suitable board. This board would be convened locally and would be representative of employer, trade union, educational and training interests. AnCO would issue Certificates of Competency on their recommendations and would lay down national guidelines, setting out procedures and standards for the award of certificates to ensure reasonably consistent assessment standards.

The Council of AnCO in announcing this decision about assessment and certification indicate that the suggestion in their earlier discussion document that testing and certification be introduced, was favourably received. There appears to be greater acceptance of continuous assessment and it is intended to make the matter of assessment a function of a Curriculum Advisory Committee as this will help to have assessment seen as part of a total training procedure and not just a disjointed something added on at the end. The ultimate objective is for AnCO in collaboration with the Department of Education to issue a National Craft Certificate.

This decision should help to improve standards of craftsmanship enormously but there is a limitation. However, before stating the limitation, it might be important to state that perhaps the pace of change inherent in the decision is wise. The limitation in the proposal is that there has recently been re-constituted in Ireland a National Council for Educational Awards. This Council has responsibility for co-ordinating and guaranteeing standards of educational awards in third level education except at degree level which is mainly the function of the Universities. It is, therefore, agreeable that a National Craft Certificate awarded outside the framework of other non University awards could lead an apprentice into an educational cul-de-sac instead of placing him on a ladder which could reasonably lead on to higher achievements. When decision no. 6 is being evaluated, this point will be returned to.

It is proposed that employers, trade unions, educational interests and AnCO would be involved on these local assessment committees and also that these same interests would be involved in the National Monitoring by being represented on the National Curriculum Advisory Committee. Some difficult issues lie ahead for this group but the achievement and maintenance of standards will contribute enormously to an improved system.

DECISION No. 4 Comprehensive training and educational curricula with built-in testing procedure under control of representative Curriculum Advisory Committee.

In the recommendations of the three Industrial Training Sub-Committees reported earlier in the document, and in the discussion document published by AnCO, there is reference to the need for both training and education to be job- and life-related respectively. There is an implication that existing syllabi do not reflect the skills required in modern industry and that the educational content of courses is not life-related. This question is not peculiar to apprentice education and raises many difficult questions of a philosophical nature, viz, Is apprenticeship primarily a period of employment or of training? To what extent has improvement in general education a place in apprenticeship training? To what depth should the theory of a craft be

pursued? To what extent should the related technology be pursued? There is no definitive answer to any of these questions but some of the people involved will have very different answers. Employers will want emphasis on what is job related. Educationists will look out for the formation of the young individual and will argue for a far less job specific orientation to the training. So a traditional long standing difficulty in apprenticeship remains. A number of broad general guidelines emerge from modern industrial experience i.e.

- 1) Openness to, and capacity to cope with technological and other change in industrial life is a function of level of education. Openness to change requires an investment in education.
- 2) Craft theory is important not just in the practice of a craft but also at the interface between, and in industrial technology generally.
- 3) If there is genuine concern about level of recruitment of apprentices, then training courses without an educational content will not be an attractive feature of apprenticeship.

It is hoped that relevance to industrial life will be a key feature and that the development of curricula will not be seen as a once and for job, but that it will be seen as something that requires to be on-going.

AnCO have intimated that :

- (i) it is proposed that training syllabi should reflect accurately the actual skill and knowledge requirements of the particular job. These requirements would be determined by analyses of actual jobs and these analyses would be conducted by AnCO staff
- (ii) comprehensive training syllabi, based on the analyses, would be drafted by AnCO's specialist staff
- (iii) these syllabi would form the standard training programmes for each craft and would have to be strictly adhered to wherever training is given
- (iv) the syllabi would be discussed in detail with all the interests concerned and would be subject to approval by the appropriate Industrial Training Committee.

Following the circulation of the discussion document on apprenticeship in May 1973, the most heated debate centred around a number of issues and one of these issues was the broad educational content of apprentice courses. It was contended "that both employers and apprentices were becoming more critical of the short-comings of the present system. It is often difficult to establish a meaningful relationship between what is being taught in the schools and the practical work which is being done on-the-job. As the employer is paying the apprentice his wages during the course, he is concerned with the costs involved, which can be considerable, particularly with third and fourth year apprentices. He is often anxious to ensure that the costs are matched by benefits, particularly since production schedules can be disrupted while apprentices are away. The school syllabi are geared towards examinations, the passing of which is not necessary to acquire craft status". (1)

It is proposed that when the job is being analysed, the relevant theory and other educational content should be examined as well as the skill content. In drawing up the syllabus, the training necessary to acquire

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(1) Apprenticeship - A New Approach p. 16.



the skill and learn the knowledge would be specified. The syllabus would also be designed so that the acquisition of skills and the knowledge relevant to the skills would tend to complement one another. In an off-the-job training situation, it would be possible to arrange the instruction so that this is achieved in practice.

Much of the recent debate in Ireland on apprenticeship concerned itself with definitions of education and training. This proved to be an emotive debate, perhaps because in Ireland since the turn of the century apprentices have received their formal education within the vocational education system. Within this system an observer can witness the full spectrum of the meaning of both education and training. Certain learning experiences within vocational education are closer to the educational end and other parts are closer to the training end of the continuum. In theory, it is possible to demarcate between education and training but it is in practice more often a question of seeing education and training as two extremities of a continuum of activity. Drawing boundaries to limit vocational training is to some extent therefore, a matter of judgement. At the institutional level, vocational education is funded from within the vote of the Minister for Education and the Minister's Officials have had responsibility for the administration of this system. But the 1969 Industrial Training Act which established AnCO as the Industrial Training Authority answerable to the Minister for Labour had the seeds of tension as Apprenticeship Training was one of AnCO's named responsibilities. So curriculum design and supervision, together with testing and certification are issues likely to cause controversy and to test the working relationship between two governmental departments. At another level, teachers who have worked with apprentices within the vocational education system have many years of experience of the operation of day and block release system run conjointly with on-the-job training schemes and their view is worthy of serious consideration. It is in this context that the efforts to design a new training scheme must be seen.

Despite the difficulties at institutional level, it should be easy to agree what it is we are talking about and greater clarity of definition of terms will help towards this end. Theobald (1) has offered the following definition of education :

"Education is the process of providing each individual with the capacity to develop his potential to the full. This requires that we enlarge the individual's perceptive ability by providing a sufficiently wide range of societal environments that the talents of all can be used".

Theobald proceeds to show that the difference between education and training has become so confused as to be meaningless. Theobald (2) continues :

"Education should be seen as the process of providing the individual with the skills to participate in the ongoing development of the activity with which he is concerned : in other words, he does not need to apply a rate set of rules but rather understands the principles underlying his activity. Training, on the other

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(1) Robert Theobald, "Freedom in Education : The Internal and External Crises" in the University & Revolution by G.R. Wearer & J.H. Wearer-Prentice Hall 1969.

(2) Ibid.

hand, provides a set of hard and fast rules which can be applied to a given range of situations but which do not permit further development of skills. An individual who is "educated" in an area is therefore able to adapt to change : an individual who is "trained" will find his knowledge becoming obsolete with change".

Essentially what is being spoken about is the acquisition of the skill of learning how to learn and the cultivation of problem solving and problem finding techniques. With the design of a curriculum with that as objective many of the other difficulties will disappear. To achieve this, the Council of AnCO (1) has decided that :

"Curricula should ensure that the apprentice would be trained and educated in the broad range of skills and knowledge associated with the craft, and that a well researched and relevant programme of general education would contribute to the development of the apprentice both as a worker and as a member of society. All curricula should be regularly reviewed to take account of new skills, techniques and knowledge. However, it was also felt that traditional craft practices, which are not now in widespread use, should not be neglected. It was essential that the major interests concerned should be involved in the design of these curricula.

The Council has decided that : ,

- a) An Advisory Curriculum Committee under the joint auspices of AnCO and the Department of Education and representative of employer, trade union, educational and training interests shall be set up to formulate the outline syllabi of training and education and to approve detailed curricula in respect of each craft; this committee to be assisted as required by expert working parties.
- b) A unit shall be set up within the Curriculum Development Section of AnCO, with participation from the Department of Education, this unit to have the responsibility for the design and updating, in accordance with the outline syllabi of the Curriculum Committee, of national standard training and educational curricula for apprenticeship, these curricula to include testing procedures.
- c) All training and educational curricula shall be subject to general approval by the Council of AnCO on the advice of the appropriate Statutory Industrial Training Committee and also by the Minister for Education in relation to their use in institutions under his control".

It appears that what is intended by the Council of AnCO will constitute a major improvement in the experience of apprenticeship. But there remains the great challenge of improving the on-the-job training experience. An Cheard Chomhairle - the apprenticeship authority which preceeded AnCO - and AnCO have made very great efforts to introduce a system of field supervision of on-the-job training and have also introduced Training Log Books in each trade area, but despite this, the staff of AnCO (2) were forced to conclude in 1973 that :

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(1) The New Apprenticeship - AnCO Dublin October 1975.

(2) Apprenticeship - A New Approach - AnCO Dublin 1973.

"The result of this is that on-the-job training of apprentices is largely unplanned, unsystematic and uncontrolled, and it is practically impossible for any external agency to bring about an improvement even by closely supervising what is happening on-the-job".

In the preamble to the Training Log Book issued to all Apprentice Fitters, the following notice appears :

1. This Log Book is the property of AnCO, The Industrial Training Authority, until apprenticeship is completed. It must be kept in the custody of the employer and must be made available to the AnCO Training Officer/Supervisors when required.
2. Alterations, or additions, to the information recorded in this book must not be made except by a Training Officer/Supervisor.
3. The Log Book will become the property of the apprentice at the end of his apprenticeship. It will be a valuable record of his apprenticeship and should therefore be preserved in good condition.
4. The programme of training is divided into three stages. The junior stage covers the first and second years of apprenticeship; the senior stage, the third and fourth years; and the advanced stage, the fifth year.

The minimum training prescribed for the junior and senior stages is shown on pages 15 to 46, and according as the apprentice is trained in each of the processes, he should place a tick in the box provided. When the Training Officer/Supervisor is satisfied that the apprentice has been trained in the appropriate processes he will initial each item and sign the certificate at the end of the section.

No specific processes are prescribed for the advanced stage.

5. If experience is gained in any other processes above the minimum, including drawing office, inspection and testing, these should also be ticked and certified by the Training Officer/Supervisor.
6. The minimum times recommended to be spent on the various processes are set out on pages 47-48.
7. A special supplementary work book is available at a small charge, in which the apprentice may make drawings of jobs he has worked on. If an apprentice does not normally work from drawings, he should make additional use of the work book for sketching.

He should also make notes for future reference in the work book of special procedures for the care of equipment, the carrying out of special tasks, and of settings, conversions, etc..

The Training Officer/Supervisor will give any guidance necessary on these matters.

8. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that his apprentices are fully instructed in accordance with the training rules.

It is the duty of the apprentice to co-operate fully with this instruction. He must serve his employer diligently and make every effort to learn his trade. He should pay particular attention to works rules regarding time keeping, tidiness, safety procedures and the safeguarding of his employer's property.

The apprentice should have a tool kit appropriate to his workshop situation. A recommended list of tools is given on page 12.

9. The apprentice will be required to attend prescribed courses of technical instruction and will be expected to pass appropriate trade examinations. He should have all prescribed text books, etc.. He should also attend appropriate evening classes and lectures and read such trade journals as will advance his knowledge and skill.

The preamble quoted illustrates that it is almost impossible for AnCO in relation to on-the-job training to do more than exhort and encourage. P.J. O'Connor (1) quotes a comment from the report of The Engineering Industrial Training Committee :

"Our general view of the Training Rules is that they are illustrative in character; as statutory instruments they are quite unenforceable and do not allow the capacity of the company to train adequately to be measured - one of the factors which determine whether a company is eligible to receive consent to employ apprentices. In general, the quality of training is heavily dependent upon the competency of the craftsman and the motivation of the apprentice to learn. We detected a certain unevenness of interpretation of the training rules on the part of AnCO staff during the discussions and we consider this arises from the defects outlined above".

It is likely that the improvements which it is hoped will be detected in apprentice training schemes of the future will be more directly attributable to improved off-the-job training where the factors effecting efficiency are more subject to control, than to improvements in on-the-job training. The diagram in annex 4 shows the important place this feature of apprentice training will continue to play in it in the future. This issue will be returned to later when Decision No. 12 of the Council of AnCO is being discussed.

DECISION No. 5 Minimum educational entry qualifications. Any three subjects at Group or Intermediate Certificate. Aptitude tests and school assessments as additional aids to selection.

When the AnCO Review Report was published in 1973, the qualifications for entry to apprenticeship were as follows :

- (i) be at least 15 years of age
- (ii) have attained at least Grade D in three or four subjects depending on the craft, at Intermediate or Group Certificate level (at Woodwork or Metalwork Grade C is required) or have been granted an exemption
- (iii) have secured employment with an employer to whom AnCO has given consent to employ an apprentice
- (iv) have paid a registration fee of 50p.

Although there is no upper age limit for entry to apprenticeship, it is often difficult to be employed as an adult apprentice, because of tradition and regulations of some craft unions. There were many defects in the operation of these qualifications. The Review Document

(1) P.J. O'Connor - Traditional Apprenticeship and a Skilled Workforce. (Unpublished M.B.A. dissertation, U.C.D. 1972. p. 68).

questioned the validity of the examinations as a basis upon which to allow students to enter apprenticeship; the suitability of these examinations as predictors was being questioned. These examinations are taken at 15/16 years of age. How valid the vocational choice of a 15/16 year old boy is, has been open to question for a long time. These and other considerations cast doubts in peoples' minds. As indicated earlier, exemptions from the present educational qualifications are granted by AnCO where there is a shortage of suitably qualified applicants and such exemptions are sought in various crafts and in various parts of the country. The Review Document itself stated that in some trades exemptions were given to as many as 72% entrants but that only 17% of apprentices in all trades were granted exemptions. The document proposed that a young person who has completed a Junior Cycle Course at Post Primary level i.e. either the Group or Intermediate Certificate Course should be considered educationally qualified to commence training for a craft. This would really mean completing the last three years of compulsory schooling. However, it was argued that the educational background would need to be supported by aptitude testing. It was proposed that in relation to registration with AnCO for apprenticeship, that it be confined to those educationally qualified, who had undergone appropriate aptitude testing and who had been accepted by an employer or by AnCO for training as apprentices.

These proposals were debated and were criticised by those who had seen the specification of definite educational standards for entry to a craft help to break down a hereditary entry system, and opposition from these people was strong and vigorous. While aptitude testing offers the prospect of a more valid selection and prediction system, too much may be expected from it. If it was expected to differentiate between aptitudes for various apprenticeships expectation was too high, but it is not clear that this was intended. Most people generally supported the notion of discontinuing confining entry to a specific age.

Following the debate, the Council decided that :

- the minimum entry requirements should be sufficiently high to ensure that the apprentice would be of the calibre required to complete the apprenticeship successfully. On the other hand, they should not be so high or so inflexible as to deny the opportunity of apprenticeships to young people who, while possessing many of the attributes necessary to a good craftsman, are nevertheless not good performers at terminal type examinations. The Council decided that: (1)
- a) The minimum educational requirements for entry to apprenticeship shall be Grade D in any three subjects in either the Group or Intermediate Certificate examination, or in any examination adjudged by the Council of AnCO to be at least the equivalent.
- b) In respect of each craft particular subjects and grades shall be recommended as desirable and the use of school assessments and aptitude tests as additional aids to selection shall be encouraged.
- c) Exemption from the minimum educational requirements shall be granted by AnCO where an applicant without these qualifications has been offered an apprenticeship for which no suitably qualified applicant has applied; such exemption to depend on a satisfactory school report and aptitude test.

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(1) The New Apprenticeship - Decisions of the Council of AnCO October 1975.

- d) That the provision of 4 (b) shall apply in respect of apprentices who having followed a two year Senior Cycle Course of Secondary education, have obtained at least Grade D in any four subjects in the Leaving Certificate examination or in any examination adjudged by the Council of AnCO to be at least the equivalent. (This refers to a reduction in the period of apprenticeship).

#### Notes

- i) The Council recognises the obligation under the Industrial Training Act, 1967, to consult with the Department of Education in regard to educational and other qualifications for entry to apprenticeship. The Council would also wish to avail of the facilities of the Careers Counselling Service of the Department of Education regarding (b) above (aptitude testing and school assessments) and consultation on this will also take place.
- ii) The minimum educational requirements may have to be reviewed depending on developments in relation to the Intermediate and Group Certificate examinations.

It will be noted that the Council of AnCO is anxious to recognise the need to work in harmony with the Department of Education and with the Vocational Education System. Note (ii) above refers to a recent report on the Intermediate Certificate Examination (1) which calls for a more objective means of assessing the achievement of pupils and for the use of examinations/tests much more dependent upon multiple choice type questions. These tests to be more under the control of educators. It is unlikely that all the recommendations of the Intermediate Certification Examination Report be accepted and it is likely that the use of aptitude testing done by the Schools Psychological Service of the Department of Education for the purpose of guidance and counselling will be used for any purpose save that.

#### DECISION No. 6 Formalised ladder to higher level

This is presented as a decision of the Council of AnCO but entry to all facets of education - higher and lower - is a matter for the Minister for Education and in the context of Apprenticeship for the Authorities in Vocational Education.

The Council of AnCO reports (2) that :

"The existence of such a ladder was considered by all interests to be an essential requirement in any new apprenticeship system.

The Council has decided that :

- (1) AnCO shall consult with the Department of Education and the National Council for Educational Awards to develop a detailed scheme on this proposal.
- (2) That the scheme so developed shall be outlined in a special AnCO brochure for general circulation".

It is important that this aspiration of the Council of AnCO would be realised for a number of reasons. Apprenticeship should not have any

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(1) The I.C.E. Report - Government Publications Dublin - September 1974.  
(2) The New Apprenticeship - Decisions of the Council of AnCO. p. 8.

form of ceiling imposed upon it. Under the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee, a very excellent system of education of apprentices was developed through the 1940's. One of its major features was the opportunity it afforded to apprentices to advance their education. Unfortunately, due to deficiencies in the country's own examination structures, which were administered by the Department of Education, it was necessary to depend upon the General Certificate of Education examinations operated by British Examining Boards. These had certain disadvantages but hundreds of apprentices used this ladder and advanced to full professional, and many more to technician level, qualifications. It would represent an excellent advance if AnCO could cause a more adequate scheme to be developed.

Also continuous education will be a feature of the lives of present day apprentices. While there is no scheme of continuous education in Ireland at present, many reports (1) have advocated the development of such a scheme. Use of these schemes by apprentices and by workers generally throughout Europe has been an artifact of their standard of general education. It is important, therefore, that apprentices would be afforded opportunity for improving their standard of general education so that they will be motivated in turn to enjoy maximum benefit from this likely feature of adult education in the future.

#### DECISION No. 7 : Apprentice training for girls

In its Review Document, the staff of AnCO had this to say about skilled training for women and girls :

"The Present Position. In general, girls do not become apprentices or skilled workers in the crafts trades. The reasons for this are partly traditional, partly practical. It has not been customary for girls to be apprenticed to most craft trades. Consequently, many employers have not even considered the training of women to skilled level as a practical proposition. It is believed that the rules of many craft unions do not provide for such an eventuality. On the practical side, the nature of the work involved makes many of the skilled trades unattractive to women, and therefore there has not been, up to now, any serious demand for a change.

There is, of course, no statutory bar on women training for skilled occupations, and if a qualified girl persuaded an employer to take her on as an apprentice, AnCO would register her and promote her training.

Future Developments. It is extremely unlikely that many girls will wish to become apprentices in many of the skilled trades because of the nature of the work. It is wrong, nevertheless, that there should be any discrimination against women in this field of employment and AnCO would propose to discuss with the employer's organisations and the trade unions concerned, how any such discrimination that may exist could be removed in respect of the few girls likely to be interested".

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(1) Adult Education in Ireland - Report to the Minister for Education-Government Publications - November 1973.

Subsequent to the publication of the Review Document in March 1973, AnCO established a Working Party on Girl Apprentices. The setting up of this working party was partially in response to the Report of the Commission on the Status of Women. In March 1975, the Report and Recommendations of the Working Party contained the following summary of views :

"In the discussions which preceded consideration of the first Draft Action Plan, the views expressed by the various members of the Working Party could be summarised as follows :

- a) Some positive action such as a pilot course specifically geared towards the recruitment of girl apprentices was essential to determine, in the first instance, whether or not girls generally were interested in becoming apprenticed to the craft trades. Elimination of discrimination against girls entering the skilled trades would remain a pious aspiration unless some positive action was taken.
- b) There was as yet no evidence to suggest that there was a demand from girls to become apprentices and it would be wrong to set out deliberately to create a need that did not exist. The policy should be to let developments occur in the normal way and not to force them to happen. If changes happened in the normal course of things there would be no adverse reaction from trade unionists but if the pace was forced the result could be counter productive with strong resistance from craft workers. A pilot scheme specifically aimed at girls would not be acceptable but if girls were recruited in the normal way in competition with boys, then there would be no adverse reaction.
- c) There were thousands of well qualified boys who were being disappointed every year because they could not get apprenticeships, and creating a need amongst girls which did not now exist only made the problem worse. There were far more job opportunities for girl school leavers than for boys and consequently it was important to retain as many job opportunities for boys as possible. There was some evidence to suggest that girls were interested in craft apprenticeships but this was not conclusive. They were certainly interested in acquiring some of the skills associated with the crafts but this did not mean that they wanted to earn their living as craft workers.
- d) A gradual approach should be adopted, preferably through the careers counsellors in the schools, aimed at getting information to girls that if they wanted to become apprentices to the craft trades there were no reasons why they should not apply and be considered, but they would have to compete with boys for vacancies. If they did not apply then they could not be considered. Undue publicity should be avoided. Further research was necessary to determine the attitudes of girl school leavers to apprenticeships, and AnCO and the VEC should co-operate on this.
- e) Employers would fully support the elimination of any discrimination against girls entering the craft trades and a pilot scheme to train a small number of girl apprentices would be acceptable. It was not anticipated that there would be any



great difficulty in placing such a small number with suitable employers particularly if they came off a special pilot course run by AnCO.

- f) The problem was not really a training one, a girl could be trained as easily as a boy, it was essentially one of changing attitudes. At present girls are probably unaware that they can be considered for apprenticeships. They (and the public) must be assured that they can apply, that they will be considered on their merits by employers and that there will be no objection to their taking up employment. The changes needed to bring about this will not happen, some form of "pump priming", even positive discrimination in their favour, would be necessary if progress was to be made. A special pilot course should be organised for a limited number of girl apprentices, vacancies should be advertised and on completion of training the girls should be placed with employers willing to employ them so that they could complete their apprenticeships.

Consensus : There was full consensus that there should be no discrimination against girls entering apprenticeships. There was also full consensus that girls should be informed that they could apply, and would be considered for employment as apprentices and that, for girls who secured apprenticeships in the normal way, there would be no support at official trade union level for any discriminatory action against such female workers. There was also fair consensus that because of the present unemployment situation, a gradual approach would be best at this stage, and therefore, any form of publicity campaign should not be considered. A special pilot scheme aimed specifically at recruiting a limited number of girl apprentices by means of public advertisement had not the agreement of all the members. However, there was agreement that if a number of girls secured apprenticeships in the normal way either with firms or at AnCO Training Centres there would be no objection to their training being specially monitored by AnCO".

The debate reflected a certain unease which exists in Ireland in relation to the right of a female to become an apprentice if she wishes and the limitation on the number of apprenticeships available because of the economic constraints. Many more boys wish to become apprentices than there are vacancies for. At present, very few girls would wish to become apprentices. For the 3,000 apprenticeships which are available annually, there could be up to 16,000 young persons who are eligible to apply and of this number 11,000 could be boys and 5,000 could be girls. A further 12,000 young persons who left school prior to taking the Group or Intermediate Examinations would not be eligible to apply unless they were granted exemptions. Apart from changes which would be required in approach to the education of girls, a change in the attitude of Irish Society would require to be effected, especially amongst employers, trade unionists, teachers, parents and females themselves. The Council of AnCO decided that although there was general agreement in principle that females should not be discriminated against in apprenticeships, there was no great commitment to the concept and that unless positive action was taken it would remain a pious aspiration.

The Council, therefore, having considered the recommendations in the Report of the Working Party (1) on Girl Apprentices, has made decisions in relation to the training of women and girls which are now being implemented. A number of places are available in AnCO Centres in 1975/1976 for qualified girls who wish to become apprentices. Already some girl apprentices have been recruited and are now undergoing off-the-job courses in some trades at AnCO Centres.

DECISION No.8 Craft Training for Adults, in certain cases by agreement between employers and trade unions.

In the 1973 Review Document on Apprenticeship the case for adult apprentices (2) was made by AnCO as follows in section 13 of that Report :

- 1) General Considerations. Under the present system, only a very limited number of adults can hope to attain craft status. It can be argued that, in a democratic society, it is wrong that anyone should be denied the right of pursuing an occupation of his choice, in which he is qualified or can become qualified. At present, unless a person decides at a very early age to take up an apprenticeship, he may be debarred forever from attaining skilled status. There are many people who make the wrong choice when they are young; there are others who find themselves in dead-end jobs; there will be increasing numbers whose skilled jobs will disappear because of technological and other changes. It can be argued that any adult who has the willingness and the capacity to avail himself of training in a skilled occupation should not be denied the opportunity of doing so.
- 2) Practical Reasons. Apart from this argument, there is a strong practical case for the training of adults to skilled level. Educational facilities for the young are expanding all the time. These facilities will continue to improve until a stage is reached where any young person of ability, irrespective of means, will be able to aspire to the highest educational levels. Increasing numbers of young people will, at least, complete their full Post Primary education course. The number showing an interest in apprenticeship as a career will decline. This is already happening in other European countries. Indeed, in some trades here, it has already become increasingly difficult to recruit boys with a reasonable standard of education or aptitude. In other European countries there are mounting pressures from skilled people whose trades have become obsolete to be allowed to be trained for other skilled jobs. The same is likely to happen here.

It is easy to envisage, though less easy to anticipate, circumstances arising which would result in localised shortages of skilled workers. A period of rapid industrial expansion or the establishment of new industries in areas with no previous industrial tradition could create such shortages. The reluctance of skilled workers to move to new locations could be a contributory factor. The normal apprenticeship training, which takes a number of years to complete, may be too inflexible to meet such situations.

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- (1) Report of the Working Party on Girl Apprentices - AnCO Dublin March 1975.
  - (2) Apprenticeship - A New Approach - AnCO Dublin March 1973.

For these reasons, it is considered that the time has come to make a start on the training of adults to skilled level.

- 3) Cork Pilot Scheme. In consultation with trade union, employer and educational interests in Cork, AnCO has undertaken a pilot course in the Cork Training Centre whereby a number of specially selected adults over 21 years of age are receiving training aimed at achieving skilled status in three years in the Engineering trades. Special wages have been negotiated for these adults during their training period. Further details of this scheme are given in Annex 4.
- 4) Further Developments. AnCO believes that the bulk of entrants to training for craft occupations will continue to be school leavers taking up the new type of apprenticeship. However, there is a need, now, to spread the Cork experiment to other areas and AnCO proposes to enter into discussions with trade union, employer and other interests for an arrangement under which in each skilled trade an agreed number of adults, preferably with related work experience, would receive special training to enable them to acquire a Certificate of Competency.

Reference is made as follows by AnCO to the Pilot Training Scheme (1) in the following terms :

"Accelerated training programmes for 27 adult Maintenance Fitter Apprentices were started at the Sligo and Gweedore Training Centres.

The adult apprentice programme in Cork continued for Maintenance Fitters and was extended to include 12 Fitter Turners; 21 adults completed this training through the year".

In the national debate which followed the publication of the discussion document, many contributors welcomed the idea of adults being afforded a training opportunity through apprenticeship. Many saw the recruitment of apprentices at Leaving Certificate level as also being an extension upwards of the age of recruitment and welcomed it. At least one, General Workers' Union, regretted that this extension upwards on an age basis had a higher level of educational achievement associated with it, and would have welcomed some effort at equating the work experience of young workers in relevant employments to a certain academic achievement and thereby entitling the young person to be eligible for entry to apprenticeship. But generally it was conceded that progress on this front required to be made slowly and AnCO are to be praised for this gesture.

In relation to adult apprentices, the Council of AnCO decided as follows :

"Although there was general acceptance both on social and manpower grounds by employers, educationalists and by one general union that this form of training was both desirable and necessary, the Council recognises that the craft unions would see the general application of this form of training as a threat to the jobs and job security of their members and possibly as an attempt to dilute the standards of their crafts. On the other hand, the Council is confident that the craft unions would adopt a

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(1) Annual Report 1975 - AnCO Dublin - p. 6.

constructive and flexible approach where critical shortages of craftsmen would tend to hinder industrial development.

The Council has decided that :

In areas where there is rapid industrial growth and a shortage of craftsmen, AnCO, in co-operation with the National Manpower Service, shall take positive action and initiate discussions with trade union and employer interests aimed at establishing craft courses for adults in approved training centres in these areas".

It is expected that experience gained on the basis of this decision, supported by research in the behavioural sciences, will support a spirit of greater adventure in the matter of age of recruitment. Essentially, what reservations as are there on this issue are there due to the insecurity which a history of poor economic and industrial development breeds. Greater success in developing more permanent employment opportunities will help to dispel the feelings of insecurity which breed protective attitudes. Current levels of unemployment do nothing to generate the confidence in an economy which is required for experimentation and the opening up of new opportunities. While monitored progress and objective research helps both together, even they are no substitute for economic progress in generating confidence.

DECISION No. 9 Incentives for existing craftsmen, both employed and unemployed, to improve their skills.

One of the more critical statistics to apply to apprentice training in Ireland is one related to the number of apprentices who take their Trade Theory and Trade Practice examinations. Of the total number of apprentices the number taking their examinations is small. It has always been, except in one or two larger centres of population where facilities existed. In some instances apprentices took examinations in complementary subjects and even in general subjects. In overall terms the number was small and the opportunity to take these examinations was not distributed evenly in a geographical sense. In an effort to stimulate debate on the issue of craftsmen taking additional training, AnCO had this to say in 1973 :

"General. Many firms release employees at management, professional or supervisory level to attend appropriate training courses. Probably because, up to now, there has been a shortage of suitable training facilities, craft and other workers have not, generally, been given similar opportunities. Technological and other developments will continue to have a major influence on the work normally done by craftsmen and these, and other workers, may be concerned that little is being done to equip them to cope with these developments. Indeed, a major reform of the apprenticeship system might reinforce this concern in the case of existing craftsmen.

In the more advanced European countries suitable facilities are provided whereby workers can attend, without loss of pay, courses considered to be of benefit to them. In its existing Training Centres, AnCO has reserved a number of places to provide up-dating training for skilled men sponsored by their firms. A number of firms have availed of these facilities and the experiment has proved successful. However, the number of places available for this purpose is limited.

Use of Additional Training Facilities. The expansion of training facilities in industrial-type training centres to cater for off-the-job training for apprentices would make it possible to provide for a greatly increased number of short intensive training modules for existing craftsmen. These workers may require training :

- a) to make up for lack of opportunities or equipment during their own apprenticeship
- b) to reinforce or extend the range of their existing skills
- c) to keep up to date with new techniques and developments
- d) to provide opportunities for advancement either in the supervisory or technical fields.

Suitable courses in a well-equipped and staffed training environment would improve the technical competence of the skilled worker. They would also enable him to keep pace with up-to-date developments in the skills acquired by apprentices trained under the new system.

Release for Training. As the expanded facilities become available, it is expected that increasing numbers of employers would, in the interests of their businesses, be prepared to release their craftsmen to attend courses of further training. In addition, AnCO would be prepared in suitable cases, to give financial support to skilled men who might wish, of their own accord, to improve their skills and knowledge by attending such courses".

There was general agreement that such opportunity should be provided. In addition, in many modern industries e.g. in electronics and in aeronautical engineering, the acquisition of additional skills to cope with new developments is a very common experience. While craftsmen in more traditional industries have witnessed this, it is hoped that they will be motivated by the experience of their fellows e.g. in metal fabrication, who have met the challenge of technological development and who have developed their skills along new lines.

Following the debate the Council of AnCO decided that the proposal was fully accepted and that all interests would welcome the scheme. It was decided (1) that :

- a) AnCO shall bear the training costs of craftsmen who are released by their employers on full pay for suitable training courses for craftsmen in approved centres.
- b) Where craftsmen wish to improve their skill and have to leave their employment in order to do so, AnCO shall bear the training costs and pay the pay, the basic craft wages rate, during the period of the training course in approved centres. Suitable safeguards will be built in to ensure that abuses do not occur.
- c) In so far as training capacity in approved training centres will allow, and provided suitable courses are available, AnCO shall provide training courses for craftsmen and apprentices who are temporarily unemployed under the same conditions as in (b).
- d) A suitable information brochure shall be designed and circulated by AnCO, setting out details of this scheme.

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(1) The New Apprenticeship - Decisions of the Council of AnCO - October 1975.

DECISION No. 10 : Specific provision for Apprentice Training for new industries and

DECISION No. 14 : Annual apprentice intake to be related to projected skilled manpower requirements.

These two decisions will be taken together. As stated previously, it was the responsibility of industry to establish the number of vacancies existing annually for apprentices. For a whole host of reasons, most employers played very safe and recruited for the needs of the immediate future. Few were forward seeing and planned for development. This was the picture as AnCO saw it in March 1973. In that section of its Review under the title Determining Intake Numbers, it states :

"Training is part of an overall manpower system, the main aims of which are to ensure that a workforce of the right quality and quantity is available when and where needed, and that individuals are given reasonable opportunities for self-advancement. The system must take into account the replacement and the growth needs of existing firms, the expansion needs arising from the establishment of new firms, and the personal needs of individuals whose jobs are affected by change.

Intake in Traditional Apprenticeship. In the traditional apprenticeship system, trade unions attempted to regulate supply and demand by means of the ratio system which laid down the number of apprentices per craftsman in a firm. In some trades the ratio was as low as one apprentice to nine craftsmen, although the general ratio was one apprentice to three or four craftsmen. AnCO has never recognised this as an acceptable system of regulating intake; it has based its decisions regarding registration of apprentices on the ability of the firm to train reasonably effectively. This is now generally accepted by trade unions but there are still firms where attempts are made to enforce the ratio system at shop floor level.

Drawback of the present system. Up to the present no real attempt has been made to organise the intake of apprentices on the basis of the likely future requirements for skilled men in the various trades. Apprentice intake has tended to fall when there has been a slackness in the economy and, consequently, in the demand for labour, and this could adversely affect the supply of skilled men four to five years later when the economy might be booming. In some trades unrealistic restrictions are imposed on intake and this can create skill shortages. Apart from the additional apprentices recruited by some semi-state bodies such as the ESB, Bord na Mona, CIE, and apprentices recruited into AnCO and other Training Centres, there has been little effort to cater for the growth needs of existing firms or for likely needs of new firms. This could prove to be serious in view of the need to create more jobs by attracting firms to set up new industries here. Shortages of skilled men can inhibit industrial expansion and contribute to inflationary wage pressures. Arrangements are necessary to minimise the likelihood of this happening in the future. The shorter apprenticeship period should, of course, make it easier to relate intake to need.

Proposed Manpower Information Unit. Manpower information in regard to the skilled trades has not, up to now, been available to AnCO on anything other than a limited and haphazard basis. If correct decisions are to be made, information which is timely and reasonable accurate is essential. The difficulties and pit-falls inherent in endeavouring to make reliable manpower projections are fully realised. These, however, cannot be accepted as reasons for not attempting to work on the best information that can be obtained. It is proposed to establish a manpower information unit in AnCO to collect, collate, assess and make available information on manpower requirements so that its training policies, priorities and activities can more accurately reflect national needs. The National Manpower Service, The Industrial Development Authority, trade union and employer organisations, individual employers and other appropriate interests would be consulted with a view to obtaining the necessary information. Studies would also be made of developments and trends in other European countries. AnCO would then, in consultation with its representative Industrial Training Committees, establish intake quotas for all crafts to ensure, as far as possible, that neither shortages nor over-supply would occur. These quotas would, of course, have to take account of the effects of the proposed shortening of the apprenticeship period.

Filling of Intake Quotas. Employers would be expected, as heretofore, to be responsible for apprentice recruitment to meet their own replacement and normal growth needs. AnCO would undertake responsibility for recruiting and paying the additional apprentices needed to meet the requirements of new industries. The full commitment and co-operation of industry and the trade unions would be required to work this system. If employers as a body failed to recruit sufficient apprentices to meet their normal replacement and growth needs, AnCO would have to recruit to meet the shortfall. In such an eventuality the wage costs of these apprentices would have to be recovered from industry levy funds".

This is obviously a very serious problem for a country making a massive investment in industrial development. Following the debate the Council of AnCO had this to say :

"The Council is aware that the present unplanned approach to apprentice recruitment has resulted in critical shortages of some categories of craftsmen in certain areas and that this could have an adverse effect on industrial development. The Council also appreciates the legitimate fears of the craft unions for the job security of their members and recognises that due regard should be given to the views of craft unions when intake numbers are being determined. It is essential, therefore, to develop a system whereby, through the Statutory Industrial Training Committees, both craft unions and employers are fully informed of the basis on which manpower projections are made and that there is full consultation before decisions are taken on intake numbers.

The Council has decided that :

- a) A unit shall be set up within the Research and Planning Division of AnCO, responsible for the provision and interpretation of information on manpower training needs to aid the Statutory Industrial Training Committees in advising AnCO on the annual intake of apprentices.

- b) This unit shall develop a system on a pilot basis for a number of crafts showing how annual intake numbers would be determined, the aim being to give the Committees the opportunity of advising AnCO on the suitability of the system as a means of regulating apprentice intake.
- c) Where there is failure to reach agreement on intake numbers, the matter shall be referred to the Council of AnCO for a decision".

In the 1975 Annual Report of AnCO, there is evidence of the seriousness of the intent with which AnCO is pursuing this problem. The Report reads :

"First year off-the-job courses for apprentices continued at AnCO Training Centres. A total of 826 apprentices, of whom 340 were sponsored by industry, completed these courses in 1975. 716 apprentices were recruited during the year and further courses are due to start early in 1976. Although it was difficult to attract out-of-work apprentices, 343 of them took short courses.

In addition, 24 apprentices were trained for AnCO by the VECs. As in previous years, AnCO arranged for 56 apprentices in various trades to do first year off-the-job training in the CIE Training Centre at Inchicore, Dublin. The ESB, in conjunction with AnCO and the IDA, recruited 50 apprentices in excess of their own needs. These will be trained both on and off-the-job by the ESB for their full apprenticeship".

From the figures given AnCO sponsored 486 apprentices in 1975 in contrast to industries' 316. This is a significant number and may obviously be expected to grow. The recruitment of supernumary apprentices is likely to be watched very closely by craft unions and people with a protective purpose. Already there is evidence of redundant apprentices and also evidence of the difficulty of impressing upon unemployed apprentices how important it is to maintain levels of skill by attendance at training courses. AnCO have not been able to cause all unemployed apprentices to respond to their invitations to maintain their level of competence. Investment in initial training will to some extent be wasted if this pattern is to continue. On the other hand the need for industrial expansion in terms of the development of existing industries and in terms of attracting new industries must be met and it would be unreasonable not to face up to some losses. Irish society will however be asking Irish craftsmen to work in an over supplied market as far as their skills are concerned and everything that can be done to reduce the apprehensions this will give rise to, should be done.

DECISION No. 11 : State financial assistance to employers towards the equipment of in-company apprentice training centres in approved cases.

In promoting debate on the physical requirements of in-company apprentice training centres, AnCO expressed the view that initial off-the-job training should take place in conditions as closely related as possible to those of a well-managed and well-equipped industrial firm. Industrial conditions relating to hours of work, time-keeping, holidays, use of protective clothing, safety and hygiene standards etc. should be applied. Unapproved absences and unpunctuality should involve pay deductions, and the apprentice should understand that poor application or misconduct could lead to dismissal.



An adequate range of up-to-date equipment should be available to ensure that each apprentice is properly trained and fully occupied during training, either learning or developing his skills. Well-equipped classrooms with modern teaching aids would be needed so that theory and other classroom subjects could be effectively taught.

Highly motivated, well-trained and experienced instructors with a sound knowledge of the training needs of industry would be required if training is to be really effective and correct work attitudes developed. These instructors would work to the approved training syllabi and would carry out the phased testing procedure.

Inspection by Assessment Boards. The conditions outlined above would have to be met before a centre would be approved for the off-the-job training of apprentices. To ensure that buildings, equipment and instruction were being maintained to the required standards, it is proposed that representatives of the local assessment boards should inspect the off-the-job centres on a regular basis.

Facilities. Suitable off-the-job training facilities exist in all AnCO Training Centres and in some of the larger industrial firms. They are also being developed in certain Regional Colleges and Vocational Schools. It is estimated, however, that about 2,000 additional industrial-type training places would be needed to cater for the annual intake of apprentices. Some of the larger industrial firms may wish to provide their own off-the-job training facilities and approval would be granted if the required conditions were met. However, only a small number of apprentices could be catered for in this way and for the majority there would be two main alternatives :

- a) development of the Vocational Education system to provide industrial-type training for apprentices, or
- b) expansion of the existing facilities in AnCO Industrial Training Centres with day release to Vocational schools or possibly with vocational teachers taking some classes in the Centres.

In the long term (a) would probably be the better solution because with technological development, knowledge and diagnostic type skills will tend to become more important than manual skills. In addition, it would facilitate the full integration of the practical training, the trade theory and the agreed educational elements of the courses. Apprentices at Regional Colleges would also be aware of, and interested in, any additional courses of general education or higher level training available. It is likely, too, that recreational facilities and the extra-curricular activities in these Colleges would be superior to those in the normal industrial-type training centre.

Implications for Vocational Education. A decision to develop the Vocational Education system would involve it in training for the needs of industry in addition to its role of educating the individual. This would be a challenging task demanding fresh thinking and new structures. It would be necessary to develop side by side with the present educational facilities, industrial-type training areas with a new atmosphere, new equipment and a new type of instructor.

The introduction of an industrial-type environment and industrial working conditions into Vocational schools, while it might create problems, would be necessary if the training undertaken was to be

effective and if all concerned were to have confidence in the new system.

If satisfactory arrangements could be arrived at under which the bulk of off-the-job training could be undertaken within the Vocational Education system, AnCO would propose to undertake a limited amount of off-the-job training itself. This, together with training centres operated by individual firms, would provide a useful means of monitoring the performance of the various methods so that improvements, new techniques and new approaches could be circulated throughout the system as a whole.

The Council of AnCO (1) had this to say on the issue following discussion :

"Since off-the-job training is meant to substitute for on-the-job training, it should, in the opinion of the Council, take place in conditions which simulate as closely as is practicable an industrial environment and where industrial disciplines would apply, including industrial working hours and the normal working year. A memorandum has, therefore, been drawn up setting out the requirements for a simulated industrial environment for off-the-job training for apprentices and the Council is confident that these requirements will be acceptable to all the interests concerned.

There was full agreement that, irrespective of where the apprentices received their practical off-the-job training, there should be full co-operation to ensure that the practical training, technical instruction and general education would be integrated.

The Council has decided that :

- a) Sufficient training places shall be provided in approved apprentice training centres, (which shall include AnCO Training Centres and Regional and other Colleges and Technical Schools where suitable arrangements can be made, and in-company training centres operated by employers), to provide off-the-job training for the majority of apprentices in their first year.
- b) Employers who set up their own in-company training centres, including group training centres, shall be given a grant towards the cost of equipping these centres. Where the setting up of such a centre has been approved by AnCO a grant of half the certified cost, subject to an agreed maximum, shall be made in respect of each training place equipped. In addition, where spare capacity in these centres is availed of by AnCO to train apprentices, AnCO shall pay the wages of each apprentice it has sponsored and shall contribute a sum equal to 50% of such wages towards the cost of operating the centre. To qualify for approval each centre shall be required to have at least 14 training places, to be equipped to standards laid down by AnCO, to follow the approved training curricula including release for courses in Vocational Schools and Colleges and to be staffed with trained instructors".

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(1) Ibid p. 10, 11.

The Council of AnCO has in fact given a detailed outline of the requirements for a simulated industrial environment for off-the-job industrial training for apprentices. This is the specification :

1. General

- a) While there are other important objectives such as broad based training (to facilitate mobility) and general education to be considered, the main objective of apprenticeship is to train a young person to perform effectively the functions of a skilled craftsman. Apprentices shall be considered young workers and their employee status shall be recognised.
- b) Irrespective of where apprentices received their off-the-job training, it is essential that their general conditions of service shall be broadly similar and that these shall conform as closely as possible in the circumstances to the conditions obtaining in well-managed industrial concerns.

2. Conditions of Service

- a) Apprentices shall be paid the rates of pay negotiated between employer organisations and trade unions.
- b) Apprentices shall be insured for all Social Welfare benefits if over 16 years of age. (Those under 16 are automatically insured for Occupational Injury benefits only).
- c) Apprentices shall attend at an approved centre for a 40 hour, 5 day week.
- d) Apprentices shall receive the agreed amount of industrial annual holidays and statutory holidays and the normal industrial special leave and sick leave entitlements.
- e) Unless absences (other than holidays and special or sick leave entitlements) are approved by the employer, an apprentice will be paid only for hours of attendance.

3. Industrial Routine

- a) Apprentices shall be required to sign in and out or clock in and out, each day at the beginning and the end of the working period or otherwise have their attendance recorded.
- b) Apprentices who are late starting or who leave before finishing time shall not be paid for time lost in this way.
- c) Persistent "lates" and absences shall be subject to the agreed industrial disciplinary procedures.
- d) Appropriate industrial disciplines in relation to misconduct, insubordination, wilful damage, gross negligence, etc. shall apply.
- e) Appropriate industrial documentation procedures shall be used, i.e. stores requisitions, loan book, time sheets, job cards etc..
- f) Lunch breaks and tea breaks as applicable in industry shall apply.

#### 4. Safety

- a) Clean overalls shall be worn while on practical work.
- b) Protective clothing, gloves, goggles, helmets, caps or hair nets shall be worn as appropriate.
- c) Correct safety code and accident procedure shall be enforced including display of safety posters. General Register and Accident Register shall be maintained.
- d) Safety Committees shall be set up with apprentice representation.
- e) Factories Act Extracts and other statutory notices shall be displayed.
- f) Safe workshops layout with proper fencing of machines, walk ways, scaffolding etc. shall apply.

#### 5. Welfare

- a) Suitable canteen facilities shall be provided.
- b) Wash up facilities and locker facilities shall be provided.
- c) Provision shall be made for initial medical examination, first aid facilities with medical aid on call.
- d) Arrangements for listing and inspecting accommodation for apprentices living away from home with application of standardised charges shall apply.

#### 6. General Matters

The following shall apply :

- a) The creation of learning opportunities and the simulation of suitable projects for skill and personal development.
- b) Provision of production or project work where appropriate.
- c) Facilities for visits by employers and trade union officials.
- d) The setting up of a Centre Advisory Committee.
- e) Regular progress reports on apprentices' performance to be forwarded to employers.
- f) Submission by instructional staff of periodic reports for review of curricula.

Much of what has been specified to improve the off-the-job training of the apprentice refer to factors extrinsic to his job e.g. conditions of his employment and social welfare and not to intrinsic factors which bear directly on his training e.g. the content of his job which in fact determines his training exercises. There will be required a statement of the basic exercises to which an apprentice should be exposed at a given time and all or some of these exercises shall be designated essential so that if they do not arise out of the ordinary work flow, AnCO will make sure that such training elements will be provided for the apprentice. It seems also that where there is approval given for the recruitment of an apprentice and where this approval holds for a number of years, renewal of approval should be subject to the

Master Craftsman having qualified himself to act as Master to an apprentice in accordance with a training programme devised by AnCO. It is difficult for a system of field supervision to guarantee the uniformity of off-the-job training and it is only where definite specification about the training of the Master as Master and about the apprentice training programme as a training programme are set down that uniformly high and acceptable standards can be reached. Assessment of quality on a one day visit is a very limited technique and it is only more pervading techniques which will give the consistency everyone desires. The real guarantee to the quality of off-the-job training lies in the apprentice having a high standard, and also a high expectation from himself, and it is the success (i) of the programme of inculcating good work habits in the apprentice and (ii) of AnCO genuinely acting as guarantor of such standards that will ensure such standards.

DECISION No. 12    Improved on-the-job supervision.

The Council of AnCO (1) had this to say on the question of on-the-job supervision :

"This component in apprenticeship was fully recognised as necessary to ensure that the apprentice gains real work experience, and develops maturity, confidence and judgement, speed and stamina and other attributes essential to a craftsman.

The Council, therefore, has decided that :

- a) All apprentices shall, after their period of off-the-job training, undergo a period of on-the-job experience, the duration of which shall be determined by the total length of the apprenticeship period.
- b) AnCO shall operate through its Training Advisory Service an effective monitoring system for this on-the-job period based on a combination of visits to firms, a pre-paid post card system, an improved apprentice centred log book, short courses in apprentice supervision for craftsmen and supervisors, and trade union and employer assistance. The pre-paid post card shall be issued to all apprentices and shall enable them to seek the services of AnCO Advisory Staff specifically allocated for this work. The short courses in apprentice supervision shall be available to those craftsmen and supervisors responsible in their firms for the supervision of apprentices".

This is one of the areas of greatest possible weakness in what is proposed. No one can expect a change of attitude to on-the-job training overnight so it becomes all important. Many employers employ apprentices only to get work out of them without any thought of obligation to train. Supervision alone will not change attitudes but the attitudes will be helped to change by the more constructive attitudes being taken towards industrial training generally. These more positive attitudes are being helped by the operation of the levy/grant scheme and by the raising of consciousness of training in industry by the general work of AnCO. There remains the great difficulty of on-the-job training being

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(1) Ibid. p. 4.

unplanned, unsystematic and uncontrolled and it is only by a continuing development of more positive attitudes, which will enable the on-the-job supervision to be seen primarily as of assistance rather than of inspection, which will render it worthwhile trainingwise. At least the difficulty is recognised and it is hoped that with more favourable attitudes towards his training on the apprentice's part that its real effectiveness will be realised.

DECISION No. 13    Provision for training for non-designated trades.

The Council of AnCO had this to say in its document announcing decisions :

"The Council recognises that anomalies exist between trades which are catered for by formal apprenticeships, others which have informal apprenticeships, and still others which have no formal system of training. It also recognises that this is a sensitive area as it involves elements of tradition, status, demarcation and wage rates. The Council considers that AnCO policy in this regard should be based on the premise that where training is needed it should be provided irrespective of whether the occupation is designated or not.

The Council has decided that :

AnCO's future policy in relation to the designation of trades and other occupations shall have regard to :

- a) Flexibility of approach which will allow for the inclusion in formal training schemes of existing trades and newly developing occupations which have a high skill content.
- b) Emphasising formal training as a vital requirement for the attainment of proficiency in skilled occupations and de-emphasising the traditional time serving concept in apprenticeship as a form of training.
- c) Likely developments in the Common Vocational Training Policy of the E.E.C".

The schedule of designated employments has been given earlier. Designation has afforded to the training for some skilled occupations an aura and standing which somehow formally recognises relativities of varying sorts. It does not mean that non-designated skilled employments do not have a formal training programme; in most non-designated skilled employments there is less reference to a specific period of time and in many non-designated areas, though not all, there has been less formal arrangements for attendance at technical college. Many non-designated skilled employments have as part of their training programme formal arrangements in relation to attendance at technical college and local Vocational Education Committees have expended large capital sums to accommodate these training courses. There are many major industries e.g. retail distribution, and hotel and catering, which are not designated but which have formal training programmes.

This particular decision of the Council of AnCO is seen as an enabling decision and many commentators would criticise An Cheard Chomhairle and AnCO for having given priority to the improvement of the operation of one scheme of apprenticeship against the wishes of many of the

parties to that scheme, instead of developing more adaptable training schemes in other industrial areas where the intervention would have been more welcome. It seems to be that the designation of some crafts has put the seal on setting them apart, and other skills, which with the development of technology have an equal, if not greater, contribution to make, are by implication formally regarded as inferior.

The decisions of AnCO continue to give greater formal recognition to some forms of training e.g. in industrial training generally designated apprenticeships have a definite standard of education specified for entry. But some non-designated employments also have a specified standard of education for entry and it is at least equal to that specified for entry to a designated apprenticeship. It must be said that AnCO were at least prepared to do away with educational standards for entry but some people have reservations about other possible consequences. AnCO have in fact made the educational standard required for entry to each designated trade the same and in many instances at a lower level than they were formerly. So this is at least a move towards equalising the situation between formally designated trades and skilled employments which are not designated. It appears that this enabling clause will require to be tested for acceptability by employers in a programme of training with an inherent day or block release element, and specifications about on-the-job training before comment can be made on its merit. Perhaps in some modern industry, an initial off-the-job training programme followed by other elements of training, with a definite specification of the workshop experiences required from the training point of view could be designed, and its merits as a training procedure monitored. It is not an extension to other industrial training areas of current patterns of apprenticeship which is required, but rather an efficient approach to a training period which is more suited to modern industry. It is essential to proceed with legislation acknowledging entitlement of the individual to a certain minimum education and training experience in his lifetime. It would be important to emphasise minimum education and training experience, as technological development with consequent obsolescence of some skills might mean that a worker would require more than the minimum. It may be necessary to specify that at some stage of industrial life e.g. at entry or at change of job, some of this training entitlement would require to be used. It will not be possible or desirable to equalise the training period for all jobs, but it is important that the training required for jobs in industry other than the designated crafts be planned and be recognised in relation to their skill content. Equally it is important that the arguments relating to the broader education of the apprentice to a designated craft would be applied to industrial trainees generally, so that they too can be exposed to a study of the economic, social and political issues of the day. Many modern industries e.g. electronics and aeronautics, have schemes of training based on a modular system and within which the training programme is phased in with technological advancement. One of the criticisms which could be offered (more pertinently to the early stages of the training programmes) is that they are very job specific and contain no broader learning experience.

These decisions of the Council of AnCO form the basis of a new apprenticeship scheme which comes into operation on 1st September 1976.

## FINANCING OF THE APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

In promoting debate on the financial implications of the proposal for the new apprenticeship scheme, AnCO made the following points (1). This occurred in May 1973 and the monies mentioned should be seen in that context:

"At present, while the employer pays the apprentice his wages and bears the costs of training within the company, he receives the benefit of the apprentice's production and he may recoup some of his costs from levy funds. The State, either through the Local Authorities, the Department of Education or AnCO pay for off-the-job apprentice training courses and for block and day release classes, including transport, accommodation subsidy, and general administrative costs.

Porposal. It is proposed that under the new scheme this broad sharing of costs between public authorities and industry should continue, with industry bearing the wage cost for its own apprentices, and public authorities bearing all the other costs.

Wage Costs. Apprentice intake would consist of two components, the normal intake by industry to cater for its own needs and the additional intake sponsored by AnCO to meet the needs of new industries. The employer would be responsible for the wage costs, including Social Welfare Insurance, of the apprentices employed by him during off-the-job training, and employers generally would, through levy funds, be responsible for the wage costs of apprentices recruited by AnCO to make up any shortfall in normal apprentice intake. The State, through AnCO, would bear the wage costs, including Social Welfare Insurance, of those apprentices recruited to meet the needs of new industries, while they are being trained off-the-job.

Accommodation and Travelling Costs. Some apprentices while on off-the-job training may have to live away from home, while others may have to commute daily between their homes and the training centre. It is proposed that the State through AnCO should continue to contribute towards the cost involved.

Capital and Operational Costs of Full-Time Training Facilities. The capital and operational costs of Vocational Schools and Colleges and of AnCO Training Centres are borne by public authorities at present, and it is proposed that these costs in the new system for apprentice training should also be borne by public authorities.

Financial Assistance to Firms. The State should consider making, through AnCO, a contribution towards the capital costs of providing and equipping training centres in those firms who may wish to train their own apprentices and other workers. The facilities provided would have to be approved by AnCO and the standard training syllabi would have to be followed. Spare training capacity in such centres could possibly be used by AnCO, from time to time, to supplement its own training.

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(1) Apprenticeship - A New Approach p. 35, 36, 37.



Calculation of Costs - General. Some of the information necessary for a detailed costing of the proposed new system is not at present available, and the following is the best estimate that can be made at present of the likely maximum additional capital and operating costs which would be involved.

Capital Costs of Training Places. It has been estimated that an additional 2,000 places would be needed to cater for off-the-job training for all first year apprentices and to provide for additional modules of training for some second and third year apprentices. The average capital cost of building and equipping a training place is estimated at £1,500, made up of building costs £750 and equipment costs £750. The maximum additional capital costs therefore, would likely be approximately £3,000,000.

In practice however, if existing facilities, both in buildings and equipment in Regional Colleges, Vocational Schools and some of the bigger industries could be utilised, or if suitable buildings could be leased, this figure would be substantially reduced.

Additional Annual Operating Costs. These would be composed mainly of instructors' salaries, consumable materials, accommodation and transport costs. These maximum additional operating costs have been estimated as follows:

Instructors' Salaries etc. ....	£0.50 M.
Consumable Materials .....	0.20 M.
Apprentice Accommodation Costs .....	0.27 M.
Total maximum additional annual operating costs .....	1.00 M.

However, if it were possible to utilise to the full existing teaching resources there could be a considerable reduction under the heading, "Instructors".

Contribution by the State. The maximum additional costs could be summarised as follows:

Capital.....	£3.00 M.
Annual Operating .....	1.00 M.

This would represent the contribution by the State.

Facilities not Estimated For. It may be necessary to provide similar training facilities for occupations which are not within the statutory system but which have a high skill content. The above estimates do not take account of the cost of providing and operating these facilities.

Contribution by Industry. As employers pay the apprentices' wages under the present system, the proposed scheme would not involve them in additional expenditure. There would, of course, be no production from apprentices during periods of off-the-job training but this should be more than off-set by increased productivity in the second and subsequent years as a result of more effective training.

AnCO Staffing Requirements. Implementation of the proposals outlined in this document would require a re-organisation and a strengthening of that section of AnCO which deals with apprenticeship. A considerable amount of work would be involved

in setting up the new scheme, in supervising its implementation and in carrying out a continuous review of its operation. It might be desirable to decentralise some of the administration of the scheme by organising its operation on a regional basis".

The discussion in relation to finance did not consider the financing of apprentice training in isolation from other areas of industrial training. Traditionally, apprentice training has enjoyed a privileged position in relation to finance in contrast to many other forms of training.

Traditionally most technical colleges and vocational schools in Ireland, from the latter half of the last century, have provided workshop, drawing office, laboratory and general classroom facilities for apprentice education and training. This has all been paid for out of taxes and/or local rates. Very few other forms of training, especially industrial training, have enjoyed anything like the same level of capital investment. AnCO rightly acknowledge that industry has paid the apprentice wages and suffered production loss in his training time. It is right that they should, seeing that they acknowledge apprenticeship as a training period. The main area of debate centred around the continuation of the levy/grant scheme.

The levy/grant scheme is a scheme which operates in all those industrial areas where there is an industrial training committee. The purpose of the scheme is to administer a sum of money which is gathered by AnCO from industry in terms of a levy based on a percentage of a firm's wages bill. This levy may be returned to a firm in a grant, to cover the cost of a training programme, which meets criteria set down by AnCO at a certain time. Cost of apprentice training may be included when applying for this grant. There is a specified percentage within which AnCO must administer the fund and the remainder is returned in terms of grants. This is a compelling device to promote training to a certain standard. At time intervals the standards are raised. Many employers do not like this scheme but others approve of it and the history of attitudes to industrial training in Ireland suggest that at least in the foreseeable future its retention is necessary. If a firm fails to train or fails to cause personnel to be trained they forfeit the sum of money gathered in levy. AnCO have had their right to impose this levy recognised in court and also their interpretation of how they assess the wage bill upon which the levy is based. It has been decided by the Council of AnCO to retain the levy/grant scheme. The decisions of the Council of AnCO on Finance were as follows:

"The principle that the State and industry should both contribute to the costs of apprentice training is, in the view of the Council, soundly based and should continue. The Council however, recognises that it would be unfair if existing industry had to bear the manpower training costs of new industries established here as a result of Government policy and, in such cases, the total costs should be borne by the State. The Council considers that, where possible, because of the particular circumstances in Ireland, assistance from the E.S.F. should be sought to help finance off-the-job training of apprentices.

The Council has decided that :

- a) In the case of apprentices being trained for the needs of existing industry, the wage costs of apprentices during off-the-job training in their first year or on block or day release courses, in subsequent years shall be borne by industry. The State shall bear all the other capital and operating costs with assistance from the European Social Fund (E.S.F.) where this is available.
- b) In the case of apprentices being trained to meet the demands of new industries, AnCO, through State grants, shall bear the wage costs of these apprentices during off-the-job training in the first year on the understanding that recoupment of portion of the costs involved would be sought from the E.S.F.. In this case, also, the State shall bear all other capital and operating costs with assistance from the E.S.F. where this is available.
- c) In the case of smaller firms, AnCO shall endeavour to meet their needs by placing with them unsponsored apprentices who have completed their first year off-the-job training in approved training centres, where such an arrangement is possible and in the interests of the apprentices.

#### Provision of Finance

The additional costs of fully implementing the new system have been calculated in respect of expenditure by the Department of Education and by AnCO. Building up to an annual intake of 3,500 apprentices over the period 1976 to 1981 these costs, at 1975 prices, would be of the following order of magnitude:

Capital .....	£1.8 M.
Annual Operating .....	2.2 M.

The additional capital costs would be incurred over the period 1976 to 1981 and the extra annual operating costs would rise over the same period to £2.2 M.

The speed at which the new system can be developed between 1976 and 1981 will, of course, depend on the necessary funds being available".

This decision acknowledges a third source of finance viz., European Social Fund to assist in providing training related to industrial development or the expansion of existing industry.

It is difficult to compute a figure on the cost to the country of the industrial apprentice training scheme. Part of the expenditure is covered in monies voted by Parliament to the Minister for Labour (subsequently channelled through AnCO) while portion of it comes through monies voted to the Minister for Education (subsequently channelled through the Vocational Education Committees) and the remainder, which is a relatively small fraction of total expenditure, comes from local authority rates (subsequently channelled through the Vocational Education Committees). It is also difficult to abstract from the financial returns available for each industrial area in which on the levy/grant scheme operates, the expenditures appropriate to apprenticeship training. Similarly in the statement of expenditures made by the Department of Education it is very difficult to apportion

within expenditures on teacher training an appropriate sum in relation to teacher service rendered to apprentices. In the annual report of AnCO for 1975, the following schedule (1) appears:

Cost of Apprenticeship Training		
	9 Months to 31/12/74	Year to 31/12/75
	£	£
Staff Salaries	58,180 - 24	112,098 - 43
Staff Superannuation - Employer's Contribution	3,061 - 97	5,043 - 81
Staff Travel and Subsistence	8,050 - 01	11,579 - 48
Expenses of Block Release and Day Release Courses	114,737 - 20	207,961 - 56
TOTAL	184,029 - 42	336,683 - 28

It should be noted that on the 1st January 1975, the financial year was made to coincide with the calendar year.

It should also be noted that these are costs borne by AnCO. The same difficulty arises in relation to apprenticeships which do not come under the Authority of AnCO e.g. Hotel, Catering and Tourism Training and the Farm Apprenticeship Scheme. All monies expended on all these schemes do not come through one Government Department and it is difficult as a result to compute the total figure expended. These latter schemes will be referred to later.

The debate relating to the amount of training costs to be paid by industry, while the matter of money is important in itself, is part of a greater debate about the usefulness of compulsion and compelling devices in the whole area of training. It is accepted that the important advance to be made is the generation of more favourable attitudes to training and greater openness in debate about it. This is accepted but the view is held in Ireland that semi-state industry has more than played its part in making a skilled work force available and that in the private sector, while many employers have done excellent work over many years and while some industries have strong traditions of training many in private sector have been remiss and require compelling devices. For this reason encouragement of more positive approaches will continue but simultaneously compelling clauses will be applied where necessary.

In final comment on financial considerations it should be noted that from 1st September '76 a Curriculum Advisory Committee under the joint auspices of the Department of Education and AnCO will operate. It will be funded on a 50/50 basis i.e. half its costs will be borne by each of these two bodies. It will be serviced by an executive from within AnCO. The receipts and expenditures of this committee will be more easily computed and it is hoped that its operation will make information related to total expenditures more accessible.

(1) Annual Report of AnCO 1975, p. 22.

### NON-DESIGNATED APPRENTICESHIPS

There is a vast area of training activity which is more commonly spoken about as traineeship, some of it is spoken about as apprenticeship and everyone related to the trades or occupations regard it as an apprenticeship. In some instances industrial agreements registered with Joint Industrial Councils have clauses which deal with conditions of employment while in training. This means that very formal recognition of these apprenticeships exist. In, forexample, the drapery, bar, and meat trade, formal apprenticeships, which are non-designated, exist.

In some industries bodies formally established by order of the relevant Minister for State have responsibility for training e.g. CERT - The Council for the Education, Recruitment and Training for the Hotel, Catering and Tourism industry. CERT offers training courses at all levels for the industry but in relation to chefs and waiters the appellation apprenticeship is commonly applied and accepted. Similarly there is a Farm Apprenticeship Scheme operated under the aegis of the Department of Agriculture. These are examples of non-designated but formally (one could say officially) recognised apprenticeship schemes.

In some industries e.g. in the food processing industry and in the electronics industry there is an acceptance of a period of training without the use of the term apprentice. In other industries stages in this traineeship are recognised by the use of terms such as improver which connote a degree of skill. There is also a confusion arising in the related use of the terms technician and apprentice e.g. dental technician is often used and its use often questioned. This is representative of the confusion which exists. Further there is an appellation, professional apprenticeship, often applied in areas like surveying, accountancy (though in this area the term articled clerk is very commonly used) auctioneering and law, but with changes in mode of training the notion of apprenticeship in these areas has declined greatly. However articled clerkship has many connotations of master and learner and of obligation to train which are at the heart of apprenticeship.

When the differences between the designated and the non-designated apprenticeships are refined it appears that :

- i) in the designated trades there is greater uniformity of duration of apprenticeship
- ii) there is not a uniformly specified standard of education for entry in the non-designated trades but many areas in practice would have equivalent standards
- iii) in many non designated areas there is the same recognition within the industry (i.e. amongst employers and unions) of the apprenticeship and in many instances local authorities have put their seal on this by providing facilities for education, training and certification of apprentices while central government or its agents have registered industrial agreements referring to training but AnCO (or An Cheard Chomhairle) failed to designate these training schemes
- iv) same variation in attitude to apprenticeship in the non-designated areas amongst employers and apprentices but in some

instances the less overt presence of AnCO has made both sides of industry more conscious of the need for positive attitudes

- v) there is the same variation in practice related to the taking of examinations and the consequent certification of standards of competence.

It is appropriate to look in greater detail at some of these schemes of training:

1. Hotel, Catering and Tourism Industry

The Council for Education, Recruitment and Training for the Hotel and Catering Industry (CERT) is a special body which provides and promotes training for the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Industry. The members of CERT, which is representative of management, unions and other relevant interests, are appointed by the Minister for Labour in consultation with the Tourist Board. The Council receives an annual grant from the Department of Labour which covers 58% of its expenditure. The remainder of its finance is derived from affiliation and other fees. For some of its activity it receives E.S.F. funding.

CERT's main activities include

- a) the recruitment of personnel for training courses and careers in the hotel and catering industry
- b) the co-ordination of training in formal training centres and of in-service training
- c) the operation of a placement service for trainees on completion of training
- d) the provision of training courses for personnel in the tourist business.

The following table gives the breakdown of numbers in training in those areas of training where an apprenticeship is deemed to exist if such can be deduced by the common application of a term.

Numbers in Training on Formal Non-Designated Apprentice Courses Organised by CERT.				
School	Chefs	Cooks	Waiters	Waitresses
Athlone	20	5		
Cork		27		
Dublin	29	83		
Galway	49	47	16	76
Killybegs	15	21		29
Limerick	10	2		
Rockwell	85		18	
Shannon				
Sligo	8	1		
Waterford	14	8		
TOTALS	230	194	34	105

In the year 1975 CERT received and expended £500,000 (approx.); £290,000 in direct grant from the Department of Labour and £199,055 (approx.) from E.S.F.. It is not possible to say how much of these expenditures were made on training schemes to which the above table refers.

## 2. Farm Apprenticeship Scheme (1)

### Introduction

The aim of the Farm Apprenticeship Scheme is to give practical and theoretical training in farming to young men with the object of enabling them to put this training into practice either in farming or in allied agricultural pursuits.

In the design of training a scheme has been drafted which can operate within the existing framework of education and farming practice. Since the social implications of the scheme are as important as its economic aims, the services of the Voluntary Organisations of rural Ireland have been enlisted. It is hoped that the apprentice will be a leader in the social life of his community as well as making a contribution to its economic prosperity. This intention is in harmony with the intention of the Government as is reflected in the composition of the Farm Apprenticeship Board.

### Administration

The scheme will be administred by a private limited liability company, "The Farm Apprenticeship Board". This company will be recognised as

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- (1) Farm Apprenticeship Scheme - published by Farm Apprenticeship Board, Dublin - April 1974.

charitable in its objects. The Voluntary Organisations represented on the Board of the Company will be Bantracht na Tuaithe, Federation of Rural Workers, Macra Na Feirme and the Irish Farmers' Association.

The Farm Apprenticeship Board will be recognised by the Government which will use its facilities for sponsoring courses and classes. The Government will contribute to the cost of administering the Scheme.

### Awards

The Government undertakes to provide up to thirty awards each year valued at £500 each. To qualify for these awards, candidates must be citizens or sons/daughters of citizens of the State and must reach Special Merit level in the First Farm Management Certificate Examination. Candidates who register as apprentices while under twenty one years of age will be eligible to compete for awards at the end of their training period. Candidates over twenty one years of age shall be admitted for registration at the discretion of the Farm Apprenticeship Board. These candidates shall not be eligible for awards at the end of their Apprenticeship Training.

### Preliminary Training

All candidates for registration shall have the following qualifications:

- 1) National Certificate in Agriculture from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries obtainable on passing the examination consequent on a year spent at a recognised Agricultural College.
- 2) Rural Science Group Certificate from a Vocational School

or

Intermediate Certificate from the Department of Education.

Where neither of the Certificates mentioned at (2) above has been obtained, the Farm Apprenticeship Board will assess a candidate to determine if he is of the required educational standard.

### Registration

Registration shall take place subsequent to the year spent at an approved Agricultural College.

In the selection of candidates, health, character, general suitability and a report from the Superior of the Agricultural College attended, will be taken into consideration.

### Apprenticeship

The Farm Apprenticeship Board shall act as a co-ordinating body in the placing of the apprentices.

The Apprenticeship shall extend for a working period of four years. Apprentices who attain the age of twenty one years by the time they have completed three years practical apprenticeship may sit for the next available First Farm Management Certificate Examination.

The Apprentice shall normally work on at least two farms. In cases where it is evident that one farm can provide a sufficiently wide range of enterprises and experience, the Farm Apprenticeship Board may consider allowing the apprentice to remain on that farm.



The Apprentice shall not be permitted to serve in apprenticeship on his own home farm.

The apprentice shall work for the master farmer for the agreed period unless his service is terminated by agreement with the farmer and by arrangement with the Farm Apprenticeship Board. Notice must be given to the Farm Apprenticeship Board of discontinuance or interruption of apprenticeship. An apprentice who fails to notify the Board, at least seven days in advance of his intention to leave the farm on which he is apprenticed, shall forfeit the right to further training with the Scheme.

#### Individual Enterprise Apprenticeship

Candidates wishing to do so may apply for apprenticeship in one particular branch of agriculture.

The Board will provide such apprenticeship provided the Board:

- a) is satisfied that the candidate is suitable for such apprenticeship
- b) that proper facilities for such apprenticeship are available
- c) that the candidate has already satisfactorily completed one year in general apprenticeship under the Board's supervision.

#### Probation

During the first six months of apprenticeship, which shall be regarded as a probationary period, the suitability and conduct of the apprentice will be assessed.

#### Supervision

During the whole term of apprenticeship there shall be supervision by the Farm Apprenticeship Board, the manner and method of this supervision to be decided by the Board. At the end of the first year of apprenticeship the Board will review the apprentice's progress with a view to determining whether he should continue in apprenticeship.

#### Master farmers

The Farm Apprenticeship Board will compile a list of competent master farmers willing to train apprentices. Such master farmers will be required to fulfill the following conditions.

1. Understand and accept the spirit and objects of the Farm Apprenticeship Scheme.
2. Be a good farm manager, farming at a high level of technical and economic efficiency. His farm records and accounts of the previous year will be used in assessing his standard of farming.
3. Be capable of good human relations and be prepared to impart information to the apprentice serving with him.
4. Keep farm records and accounts while he has an apprentice and allow the apprentice to assist in this work.
5. Allow the apprentice to obtain adequate working experience of all branches of agriculture practised on his farm.

6. Enable and assist the apprentice to obtain the necessary experience in buying and selling.
7. Allow the apprentice adequate facilities for study.
8. Encourage the apprentice to study, to read regularly agricultural literature and to engage in Macra na Feirme activities.
9. Provide suitable living conditions.

### Relationships

The Apprentice's relations with the farmer with whom he is engaged should be, as far as possible, a relationship of teacher and pupil rather than master and servant. In order to get the maximum benefit from the Scheme, the apprentice should reside on the farm and preference will be given to those master farmers who can provide accommodation for apprentices. The apprentice and master farmer shall make suitable arrangements between them regarding board and lodging.

While the Farm Apprenticeship Board cannot guarantee continuity of apprentices on any farm, every effort will be made to do so.

Any master farmer who fails to give at least seven days notice to the Board of his intention to terminate the services of an apprentice serving with him shall have his name removed from the register of master farmers.

Each master farmer shall be assessed before entry to the register of master farmers and during the first six months in which he is training his first apprentice.

### Wages and Conditions

During the apprenticeship period, apprentices shall be paid at rates not less than the minimum rates laid down by the Agricultural Wages Act. Hours of work, time off and holidays will be similarly governed.

Apprentices shall be regarded as workmen and insured fully under the Social Welfare and Occupational Injuries Acts.

### Courses

Where possible apprentices should attend local agricultural classes and discussion groups.

Each year there shall be a special course of at least two weeks in farm management, including farm accounts and other important aspects of farming which will be provided by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Farmers will release apprentices in order to attend this course. The farmers will not be obliged to pay wages to apprentices while they are attending the courses. Scholarships to cover approved travelling expenses and fees for courses will be provided by the Government.

### Certification

At the conclusion of apprenticeship, apprentices shall undergo written, oral and practical tests in order to obtain the First Farm Management Certificate and may continue on register for advanced Certificates.

An apprentice will not be awarded the First Farm Management Certificates unless he is of good character. The Board will require evidence of good conduct and general fitness. Reports shall be requested from the farmers with whom the apprentice served his time.

Both master farmer and apprentice can appeal to the Farm Apprenticeship Board on matters relating to the terms and conditions of apprenticeship. In cases of differences between apprentices and master farmers the matter shall be referred to the Farm Apprenticeship Board.

The Department of Agriculture provides a grant of £27,500 per annum to the Apprenticeship Board which is an independent Board and which is also obliged to raise funds from other non-state sources. The Board's scheme caters for 180 (approx.) apprentices and has a field supervision service. The funding of the scheme has been a source of conflict between the Department of Agriculture and the Board for some time.

#### Farriery Apprenticeship Scheme and Equitation Training

Bord na gCapall (Irish Horse Board) was established in 1971 under the Horse Industry Act 1970. Its main functions are to advise the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries in relation to horse breeding, to establish and to operate a national centre for equitation training, to administer a scheme of apprenticeship in farriery and in various ways to promote the horse industry and its training requirements.

The Board has responsibility for a farriery apprentice scheme.

#### The Farriery Apprentice Scheme:

This scheme was initiated in Autumn 1971 when ten farriery apprentices were recruited and placed with master farriers. The apprenticeship lasts for three years and there is a period of off-the-job training in each year of apprenticeship. There is a formal agreement between the apprentice and the master farrier and there is an agreed basis for payment with the Board, paying a weekly sum to the apprentice and the master farrier also pays him according to a schedule which takes cognisance of year of apprenticeship. There is a formal assessment of proficiency at the end of each year and at the end of the apprenticeship. The scheme has developed to its overall objective of 30 apprentices (10 in each year) and cost £19,551 to administer.(1)

#### Equitation Training:

In 1972 there was instituted an apprentice Jockey Education and Welfare Trust the executive committee of which operates an Apprentice Centre for Education and Training. The objective was and is to endeavour to introduce and develop improved standards of training amongst jockeys, and in the light of the very rigorous physical characteristics to which the jockey must conform, to broaden the training so that it fits him for other employment in the horse industry also. To date about 35 apprentices have or are passing through the centre and in accordance with the objectives of the centre better selection procedures are being

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(1) Fourth Annual Report - Bord Na gCapall - 1974.

initiated. The executive committee are representative of the various interests in the horse industry. To date, apart from capital outlay, £35,000 (approx) has been expended.

These schemes describe the variation on the theme of apprenticeship present in Ireland. The latter two schemes are very job-specific in their training objectives but in hotel and catering and in the farm apprenticeship scheme the programme is more broadly set. The annual reports of the Boards responsible for these various schemes all show a pattern of development and expansion.

The Army authorities in Ireland also operate an apprenticeship scheme which has the approval of both sides of industry and which enables a person on leaving the Army to be accredited with craftsman's status in various trades e.g. Motor Mechanic, Fitter/Turner, Electrician, Carpenter/Joiner etc.. The number of apprentices recruited each year is 50/60 and the conditions relating to entry and the servicing of the apprenticeship are normally as set down by AnCO except where they require to be modified in relation to other standards normally used by the Army authorities.

#### GUIDANCE OF THE APPRENTICE

Up to five years ago almost all apprentices in Ireland were selected from pupils of the Vocational (or Junior technical) schools. This was mainly due to the orientation of the programmes in these schools which were very technically and practically orientated. However with a movement towards more comprehensive programmes in all schools apprentices are now being recruited from both Secondary and Vocational schools. It is estimated that there are 271,000 (approx) pupils in 1000 (approx) post primary schools in Ireland. In relation to services for vocational guidance of pupils in these schools the situation is that the Department of Education initiated a national service with the expansion of education which took place in the 1960's. The introduction of free education in 1967 and the raising of the school leaving age in 1972 heightened the already much felt need for such services.

At present, some 70/90 vocational guidance teachers are qualified per annum and if all of these could find employment in vocational guidance, the service would extend to most schools in about six years.

In September 1974, there were 287 guidance teachers working in Post Primary Schools as follows:

TOTAL	Secondary/Academic Schools	Secondary/Vocational Schools	Comprehensive/ Community Schools
287	197	69	21

It is estimated by the Department of Education that the schools referred to above, enrol pupils as follows:

Boys	Girls	Co-Educational	Total
42,564	45,510	35,164	123,238

This total is approximately 51% of pupils in second level education. Authoritative opinion would also suggest that girls' schools were better served in their guidance function than boys' schools.

#### Co-ordination of Guidance Services

The work of the guidance teachers in the schools is monitored and co-ordinated by 20 psychologists working in the Department of Education (a ratio of 1 psychologist to 13 teachers) and by 4 psychologists working under the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee. (A ratio of 1 psychologist to 6 teachers.) All schools are expected to provide a guidance suite and all new schools being built include such a suite. Schools are refunded approximately 75% of the cost of purchasing test materials.

Only every second boy and girl at school have a recognised source of information and advice regarding their careers. In relation to careers through apprenticeship very few of the personnel giving the guidance would themselves have this experience. However the National Manpower Service is a further source of information which is available in most major towns and cities in Ireland. In some major employments an Apprentice Supervisor is employed who can guide and help the apprentice through his training. Also training managers, instructors and teachers help to counsel the apprentice who may be doubting the wisdom of his choice of career. However none of these people would likely have any particular expertise in guidance or counselling. In relation to information about apprenticeship there is an excellent supply of printed material made available through AnCO, CERT, the Department of Labour etc.. Many firms also make literature on the topic available so that in relation to information it is readily and freely available. The difficulty is that there are many more applicants than vacancies in most apprenticeships especially some of the industrial apprenticeships, and this poses very serious problems of selection. This arises especially in the State and semi-State sector where 1,500 applications could be received for 60 vacancies, a ratio of 25 : 1. Many firms faced with such a problem of selection use aptitude tests to short list candidates for final interview. This situation reflects not so much the popularity of apprenticeship (exemption statistics show this in some trade areas) but the very unfavourable job availability situation for the school leaver and the unemployed. Despite this situation many people who find themselves in apprenticeships are unhappy in them and are questioning their choices. While all of them may not be so unhappy as to leave apprenticeship they require a qualified counsellor to speak to otherwise they proceed in doubt which militates against their standard of achievement. The correction of a poor vocational choice in Ireland is difficult in the current economic situation but a guidance service would certainly help.

Apart from a general guidance facility which would help apprentices it would appear from the author's experience that an efficiently operated guidance service should constitute an integrated part of the ladder to higher qualifications. It is always a matter of surprise the number of people in apprenticeships which traditionally have been used as stepping stones e.g. apprenticeship as a fitter as a step towards the drawing office and design work, an apprenticeship as a carpenter towards clerk of works or site manager, and that very meritorious young apprentices would not know this. Industry also loses in that the full capacity of the young person would not be utilised in apprenticeship or in craft work. It would appear that the absence of guidance services is a serious deficiency.

In the new scheme of apprenticeship the Council of AnCO has decided that action shall be taken to implement the following:

- a) the provision of an Information Booklet for Apprentices
- b) the provision of a Guide to the Selection, Employment, Induction and Training of Apprentices
- c) the provision of pre-paid post cards to help apprentices seek assistance from a Training Adviser
- d) the provision of courses for craftsmen and supervisors in Apprenticeship Supervision
- e) the initiation of discussions with the National Manpower Service for special arrangements for apprentice recruitment
- f) the provision, in co-operation with the other agencies concerned, of some form of general advisory and welfare service for young apprentices who may have to live away from home, possibly for the first time, while undergoing off-the-job training.

#### THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

On pages 30 to 35, in debating Decision No.4 of the Council of AnCO, viz. comprehensive training and educational curricula with built in testing procedures under the control of a representative Curriculum Advisory Committee some discussion took place on the scope of a training programme. It is now appropriate to look at how such a programme could be designed. The Curriculum Advisory Committee is to be established under the joint auspices of the Department of Education and AnCO. The basic function of the committee shall be to advise the Department of Education and the Council of AnCO on all aspects of the training, education and certification of apprentices including:

- a) advice as to policy and priorities in relation to curriculum provision
- b) the nomination of the members of, and the direction of, the work of the Expert Working Parties set up to advise the Committee as necessary
- c) responsibility for the formulation of outline syllabi of training and education for apprentices
- d) recommending the period of training and education to be undertaken by apprentices in particular trades in accordance with the decisions

of the Council of AnCO as outlined in paragraph 2 of "The New Apprenticeship", viz. Annex 5

- e) formulating and setting up a system of testing and certification for apprentices
- f) recommending the steps to be taken to ensure that the training of instructors and teachers is harmonised with developments in the design and implementation of curricula
- g) arranging for the periodic review of all curricula for the training and education of apprentices.

Expert working parties will operate in various areas of apprenticeship. The composition of the working parties shall be determined by the Committee having regard to its function and purpose and will include trade union and employer representatives. The working parties will develop outline syllabi and will submit them to the Curriculum Advisory Committee for approval. The outline syllabi will then go to a Curriculum Development Unit for development into full training and education curricula in manual form for each trade. The Curriculum Development Unit will install and validate approved curricula. The validation of curricula will require to be an on-going activity and will involve course designers, expert working parties, project leaders and instructors. Curriculum development for apprentice courses is a particularly difficult issue and many of the more elementary issues remain unresolved. There are many specific difficulties which remain viz.

- (i) the education/training issue
- (ii) the nature of a formation programme which is a bridge between work and school
- (iii) the nature of the educational content
- (iv) the place of an examination of a philosophy of work in such a programme and more pragmatic issues like the compatibility and comparability of the programme with other educational programmes to which the apprentice may wish to move.

If aspirations in this area of programme design are realised it should result in very improved training experiences being designed. There is a considerable amount of work to be done on a statement of the objectives of apprenticeship and a much firmer commitment is required to keep training programmes under on-going review. Much research has been done on learning theory but it is difficult to see any application of this research in teaching manuals. Such a divorce between research and practice must be ended.

#### TRAINING OF STAFF

The implementation of any training programme requires major resources of finance, personnel and accommodation. AnCO has outlined the financial implications of the implementation of the New Apprenticeship. These have been commented upon. In the capital sums of money mentioned the physical provision which requires to be made has been set down. The other dimension i.e. the training of the personnel required has not been described in any detail.

In one account of its achievements to-date AnCO informs us that a total of 2,748 instructors have been trained by the Instructor Training Centre in Ballyfermot (to 31st March 1975). In the year ending 31st March 1975 a total of 772 instructors were trained and it was planned to train 850 during the remainder of the year 1975. These instructors are trained to meet the training needs of Irish industry, not just the training needs of apprentices in Ireland. In 1974 AnCO had this to say (1) on the provision of instructors in the context of planning to meet requirements between 1974/78:

"AnCO has established an instructor training centre of 50 places to cater for their own needs and to provide industry with the instructors necessary to carry out a programme of systematic training. Trainees at the centre are sponsored by industry and have been well received by industry in their new roles. Instructor training courses have also been run in provincial centres to meet local needs. The demand for places has been satisfactory and since the permanent centre opened in 1969, 1,607 training instructors have graduated".

Apprenticeship has its own particular training problems at staff level. Training is required at many levels, viz. instructor/teacher, field supervisor, master craftsman, apprentice supervisor. These personnel have very immediate functions in relation to apprentices. Each has different training needs. The difficulty is compounded at the teacher/instructor level by virtue of the fact that within the vocational education system no teacher training course is provided for teachers who work at third level including those who work on apprentice courses.

There is required an assessment of the training needs of teachers/instructors who are recruited to teach craft apprentices. These personnel are normally recruited on the basis of their experience in the craft and on the basis of formal attainment in craft examinations - both theory and practice. But they have no training in teaching method, nor knowledge of teaching principles or related subjects. If they do have such knowledge it is rare and mainly accidental. Some teachers, but very few, who teach apprentices within the Vocational system may have taken a Woodwork or Metalwork Teachers' Training Course but the graduates of these courses teach in very large part in second level education. One of the great needs is a pre-service training course for all teachers, including craft and graduate teachers, who teach apprentices. This course requires an orientation in the methods of teaching section orientated towards the teaching of a craft to young adults. Equally graduate teachers who may have followed a course leading to a basic qualification as a teacher will be unlikely to have studied the patterns of learning of young adults or to have studied teaching methods appropriate to this age group. The training in pedagogies which would best meet the needs of teachers working in this situation requires to be set down. This applies equally, if not more, to the complementary studies section of the course for apprentices. Formal lecture method is as off-putting as is the content and while curriculum studies will suggest content it is very important that method also be planned and that a Teachers' Manual would also be prepared.

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(1) Training for Individuals - Expansion Programme 1974/8 p. 6-12 - AnCO Dublin 1974.



This question of method requires a lot of original work. Methods appropriate to laboratory work, workshop studies, drawing office studies and general class rooms require to be investigated. Reference has been made in the debate on the certification of the achievement of apprentices to on-going assessment but how to proceed in the making of on-going assessment requires to be clarified. How to assess projects requires outlining and the question of assessment in apprenticeship wants study and proposals for action research. All of these areas are questions related to techniques which the teacher/instructor requires to know and at which he should have a definite competence.

The training required would likely best be given in terms of pre-service training and in-service training. The pre-service training would be a basic training course in methods, principles and ancillary subjects e.g. psychology and sociology. This would cover very basic teaching and examination techniques but would also include training of the teacher as a promoter of learning. The in-service training courses would be concerned with refinements of the basic teaching course and would include areas like in-depth study of assessment, guidance, project work. In relation to in-service training it is important to note that for AnCO it necessitates an extension outwards to teachers/instructors of a principle of staff development which is accepted for administrative staff. A staff development programme must concern itself with

- (i) maintaining the level and type of skill staff require to execute the task for which they were recruited
- and
- (ii) developing the level of competence of a staff from the level at which they were recruited. This may mean acquiring new skills to match technological advancement.

Both teachers/instructors who teach in the off-the-job situation require to be aware of the foundation which is required so that the apprentice may derive optimum benefit from his next off-the-job training session.

Equally it is important that his supervisor in the on-the-job training situation knows what has been studied at the AnCO training centre or technical college. But the supervisor is also responsible for a programme of graded exercises which should be worked to definite standards and which should be brought to the apprentice in a graded fashion with the presentation of these exercises paced by the progress of the apprentice. Meantime he is also required to ensure that the apprentice's level of skill and output improves and that he develop stamina and good work habit. So the supervisor of the on-the-job training requires to be more than a master craftsman. He requires many of the skills of the tutor, and he requires many of the skills of the supervisor. It appears that unless training is given which is very specifically geared towards this very important function that the function will only be inadequately performed. The giving of training to the on-the-job supervisor of training would also help to ensure that the training function would be given more attention on the workshop floor.

The on-the-job training will also be assisted by improving the supervisory skills of the field supervisors. They will require to know what to expect of both the apprentice and his immediate supervisor and

so he must be capable of assessing both the learning and the teaching difficulties.

In particular he should be able to assess the limitations in training terms of a production schedule and to make proposals so that either within the workshop or at an AnCO, or other industrial training centre he can have a supplementary training. The field supervisor requires to be capable of projecting his role as an assistant to, rather than an assessor of, the on-the-job supervisor. The co-ordination of all the work of teacher, supervisor, field supervisor and in the larger firm the person with the overall responsibility for all apprentices requires to be undertaken so that feelings of mutual sympathy and support can be generated.

The Curriculum Advisory Committee requires to look at the training problem in the staff area. There is much that can be said in favour of this in the light of the great multiplier effect. It is unfortunate that much of what requires to be examined has been neglected for so long but a well designed training programme would effect major improvement especially if it is monitored and amended in the light of experience. It may be difficult for AnCO to be assisted with as the fine tradition of the Teacher Training Colleges in relation to method is inappropriate due to age factors and the University Education Departments have not directed study in this direction either. One saving feature in this question is that in the craft area it has always been possible to attract more applicants than there were vacancies for. This favourable selection ratio is a good and beneficial starting point.

#### THE CERTIFYING AUTHORITY

The Curriculum Advisory Committee has been asked to advise AnCO on the final certification of apprentices. This committee could proceed by appointing expert working parties in each trade area with all the interested parties, including the Department of Education, represented. These expert parties could, as is proposed, appoint local or regional groups to fulfil this function and the expert working party would ensure consistency of standard in its own trade or discipline. Two points of broad principle are worth debating here:

- (i) Whether AnCO and its Curriculum Advisory Committee would be advised for the purposes of final validation to ask a body which is external to it to undertake the validation. This would introduce a greater image of objectivity into the exercise and it would mean an external view would be taken of the whole question of curriculum design, the teaching and the supervision of that curriculum. It would mean an external audit in the full sense of the term by a group of experts whose function would be to protect standards.
- (ii) Whether the final assessment of apprentices or assessment at any stage of apprenticeship should not be linked to a national scheme of certification so as to assist the moving into or out of apprenticeship as the apprentice wishes. In other words there should be an effort to establish a system of equivalents and exemptions between apprenticeship and other schemes of training

e.g. technician training so as to ensure that those who want to leave may leave and those who want to opt in may come in irrespective of age but not of qualifications.

It appears particularly apt in Ireland that the question of certification and validation of apprentices would be discussed with the National Council for Educational Awards so that all the merits and demerits of bringing apprenticeship into a national grid could be explored. The latter possibility would also meet the points made earlier in relation to external validation. It is likely that this question will be debated at length by AnCO and by all the parties represented on AnCO over the course of the coming years. There are many of these people who would hold opposing views on this issue but it would give to the country a more integrated sector of non-university third level education, with apprenticeship as an integral part without necessarily reducing the essential industrial overtone of it.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The intention to consolidate the training in the off-the-job training period coupled with a better organised on-the-job training should improve considerably the learning experience of apprentices. These moves, together with the stated intention (and indeed already well executed decision) to recruit numbers of apprentices so that the future manpower needs of new and expanding industries, will be catered for. It is hoped that AnCO can continue to have agreement on the number of apprentices which AnCO can sponsor in any one year so that this number will be adequate not just to meet immediate needs but longer term needs. There is evidence of a significant drop in the number of apprentices recruited by private industry in the current year - a drop almost of one third. This may be due to the economic recession. It is hoped that it is not due to the fact that AnCO are now sponsoring apprentices so that the private sector can take its responsibilities more lightly. This would add considerably to AnCO's expenditure on apprentice training which, as indicated, stood at £300,000 in 1975 excluding allowances paid to those apprentices which AnCO sponsored. (Expenditures on these allowances together with expenses related to block and day release accruing to AnCO amounted to £1m plus). These developments together with a schedule of training allowances payable to apprentices sponsored by AnCO (and indeed to all trainees at AnCO training centres) offer great hope for apprenticeship in the future. These allowances are described in the AnCO literature as follows:

#### Training Allowances

A weekly allowance for a 40 hour week is paid to trainees undergoing training at the Centres. For trainees who must live away from home during training, accommodation is subsidised. Travelling allowances are paid in certain cases and Social Welfare credits are provided.

Allowances paid to trainees during training are as follows:

MALES AND FEMALES	
With No Dependants	Allowances
Age 16 years	£ 9.50
Age 17 years	£10.50
Age 18 years	£15.00
Age 19 years	£17.00
Age 20 years	£19.00
Age 21 to 35 years	£23.00
Age 35 and Over	£25.00
With Adult Dependants For each Adult Dependand	£ 5.00
With Child Dependants For each Child Dependand	£ 1.00

Notes:

- a) Adult Dependants: This includes wife or husband of trainee or any adult totally dependent on the trainee and not in receipt of any Social Welfare Benefits.
  - b) Children: A child under 18 years of age who is living with and wholly or mainly maintained by the trainee.
  - c) Accommodation: Where a trainee has to live away from home while undergoing training AnCO will pay approved lodgings and deduct from the allowance £3 per week in the case of a person without dependants and £1 per week in the case of a person with dependants.
  - d) Travelling: Where a trainee lives more than 2 miles from the Training Centre, daily travelling expenses will be paid at public transport rates.
  - e) Income Tax: These training allowances are not subject to Income Tax deductions.
  - f) Social Insurance: Trainees will be given free credits for Social Insurances while training and they are insured for occupational injuries.
  - g) Pay Related Social Welfare Benefit: The Department of Social Welfare does not give Pay Related Benefit to AnCO trainees. Instead AnCO pays the training allowances above, or, where Pay Related Benefit is greater, a training allowance equal to the amount of benefit.
  - h) Redundancy Payments: Where a trainee is entitled to a Redundancy Payment under the Redundancy Payments Act, 1967-1971, this payment may continue to be claimed in addition to the appropriate training allowance.
-



ANNEX 1

List of the Occupations in the Trades Designated by AnCO

THE FURNITURE TRADE

Woodfinisher  
Cabinetmaker  
Woodmachinist  
Upholsterer

THE PRINTING TRADE

Compositor  
Letterpress Printer  
Lithographic Printer & Platemaker  
Bookbinder/Ruler/Cutter  
Process Engraver  
Stereotyper and Electrotyper  
Photolithography Craftsman  
Photogravure Craftsman

THE TRADE OF ELECTRICIAN

Electrician (includes  
Installations Electrician;  
Industrial Maintenance  
Electrician;  
E.S.B. Electrician; Rewinding  
Electrician ; Neon Sign  
Electrician;  
Lift Electrician)

THE TRADE OF MOTOR  
MECHANIC

Motor Mechanic

THE ENGINEERING TRADE

Fitter  
Turner  
Toolmaker  
Brassfinisher  
Sheet Metal Worker  
Coppersmith  
Metal Fabricator (includes  
Boiler Maker; Construction Fitter;  
Plater; Shipbuilder and  
Blacksmith)  
Welder  
Patternmaker  
Foundry Craftsman (includes  
Moulder and Coremaker)  
Refrigeration Craftsman  
Aircraft Mechanic  
Instrument Mechanic

THE CONSTRUCTION TRADE

Carpenter/joiner  
Slater and Rooftiler  
Brick and Stonelayer  
Glazier  
Painter and Decorator  
Plasterer  
Stonecutter  
Plumber

THE TRADE OF DENTAL  
CRAFTSMAN

Dental Mechanic

ANNEX 2

Number of apprentices by year and trade

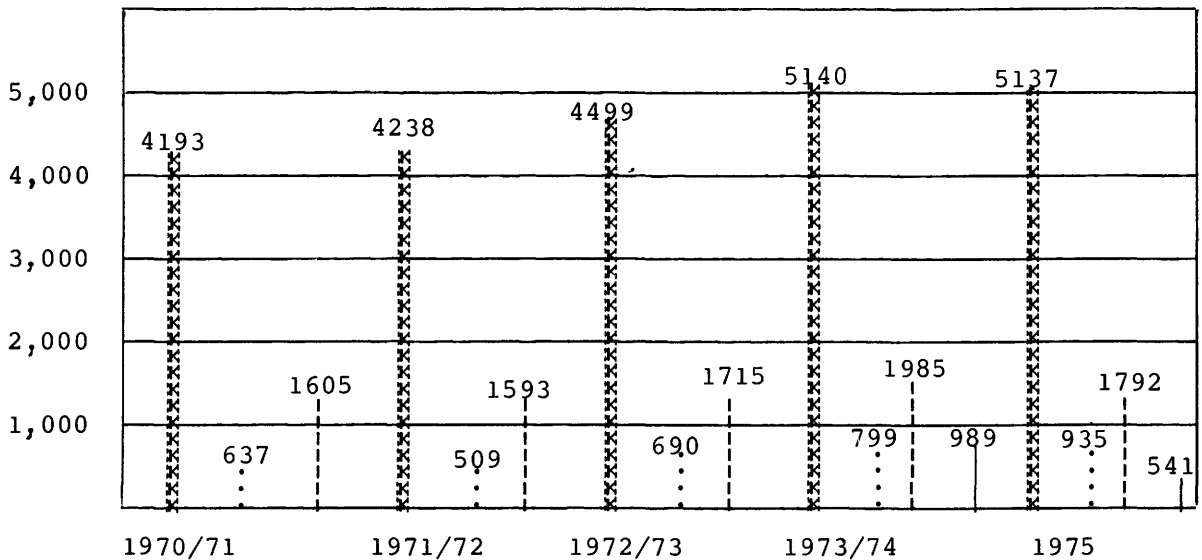
TRADE	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Furniture	35	54	103	85	99	376
Printing	18	107	95	85	98	403
Electrical	379	681	645	447	638	2,790
Motor	301	631	826	829	746	3,333
Engineering	459	814	802	637	636	3,348
Building	541	1,028	1,419	1,127	1,022	5,137
Dental	1	4	6	7	7	25
TOTAL	1,734	3,319	3,896	3,217	3,246	15,412

ANNEX 3

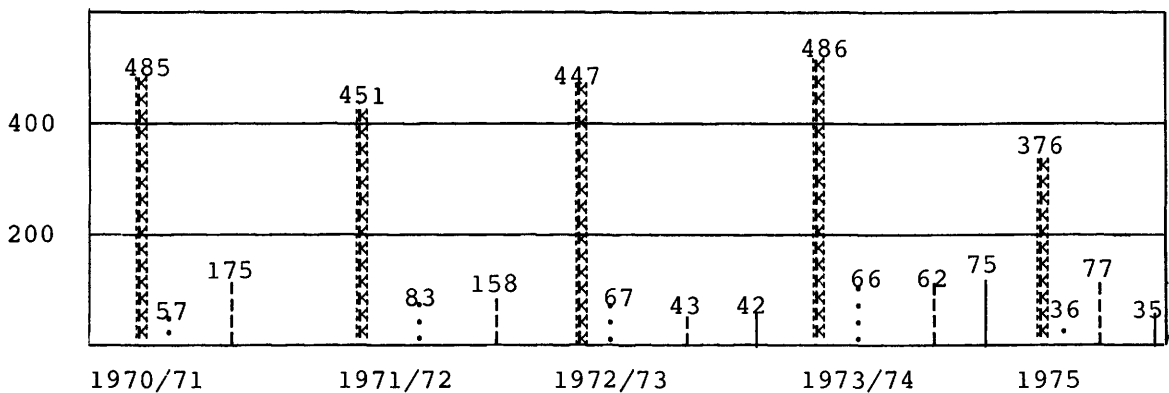
Apprentice population, Block Release and Day Release attendance, and 1st Year Intake for the period 1970-1975.

x Registered apprentices  
 : Block Release attendance  
 | Day Release attendance  
 | 1st Year intake

CONSTRUCTION



FURNITURE

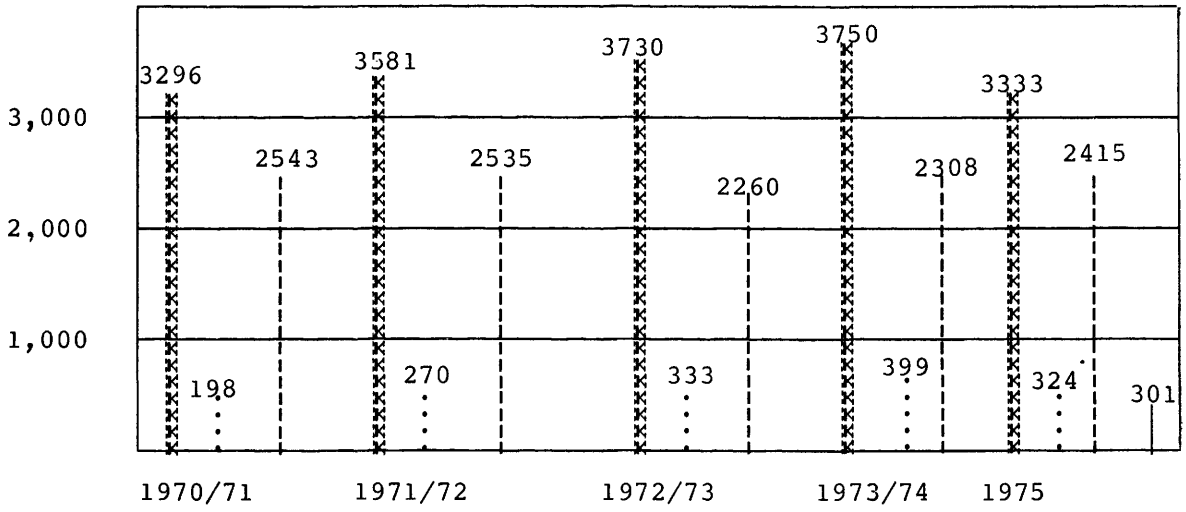




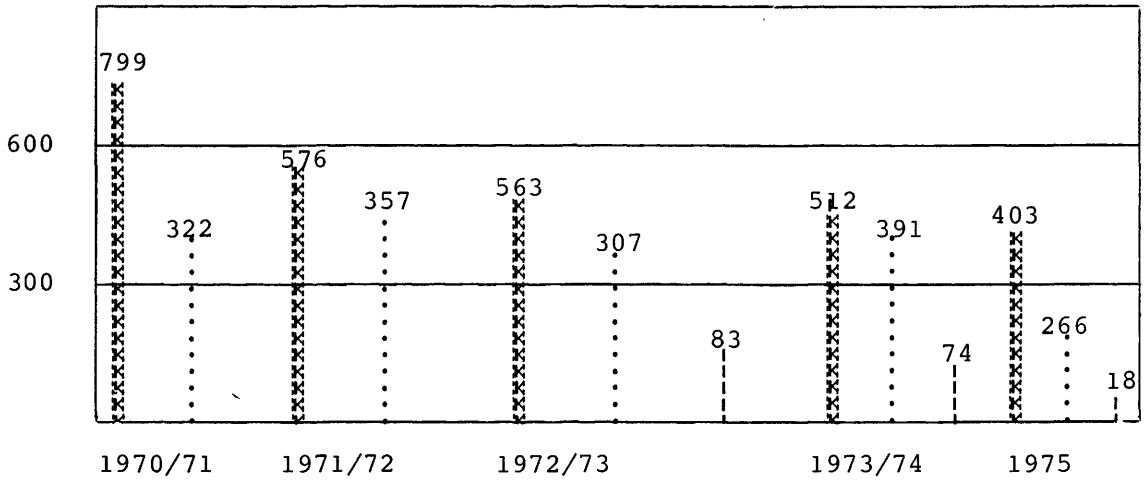
ANNEX 3

Contd.

MOTOR MECHANIC



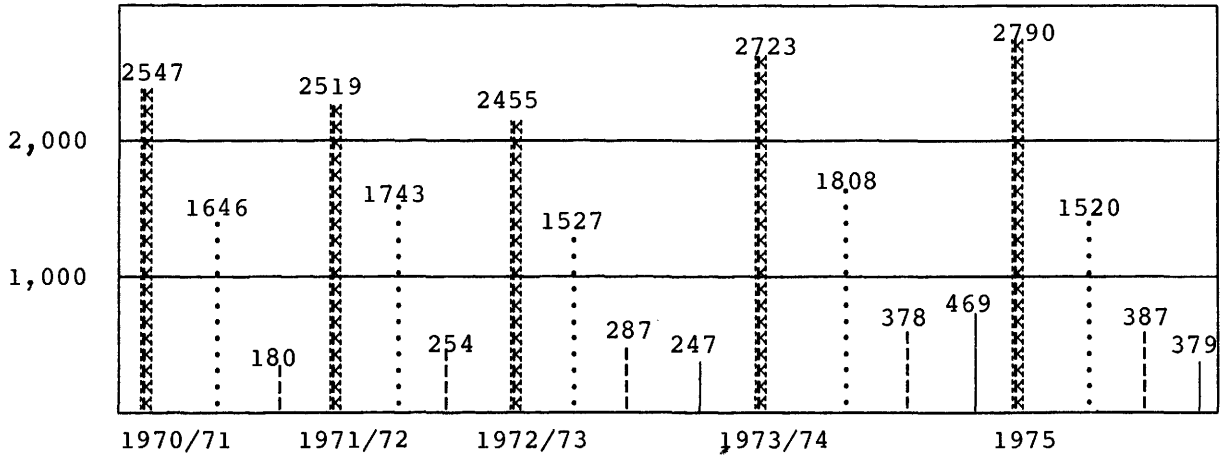
PRINTING



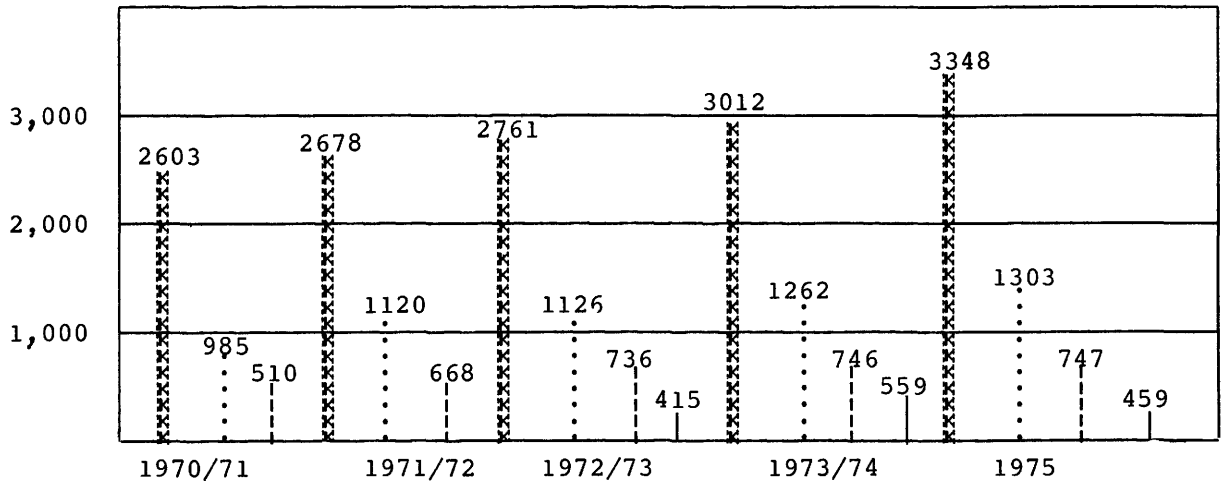
ANNEX 3

Contd.

ELECTRICAL

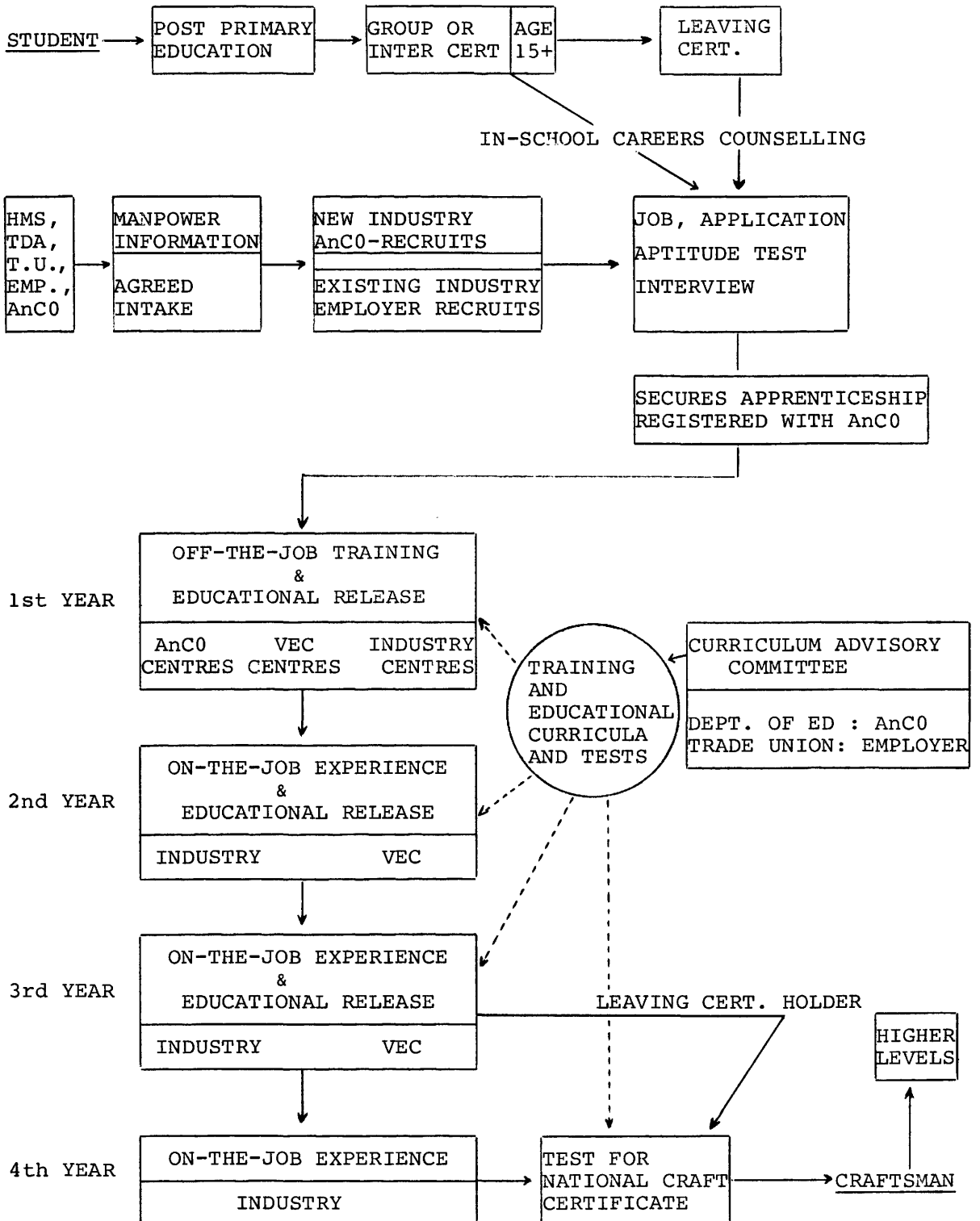


ENGINEERING AND METAL



ANNEX 4

Diagrammatic layout of the new apprenticeship



# STUDIES

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