Work Experience at Peebles High School:
The Views of Pupils and Employers.

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 **HISTORY OF WORK EXPERIENCE**

The first important educational report to refer to work experience programmes was the report of the Newsom Committee (Central Advisory Council for Education: 1963). It focused on students of average and below-average ability and suggested that 'the school programme, in the last year especially, ought to be deliberately outgoing.' However, it did not advocate work experience for all and concluded that 'experiments enabling some pupils over the age of fifteen to participate to a limited extent, under the auspices of the school, in the world of work in industry, commerce, or in other fields should be carefully studied.'

The report caused a great deal of controversy with Trade unions opposing the use of precious school time for such schemes and other bodies questioning the legality of younger school children taking part in them. However, the event which made educationalists take notice of the 'outgoing curriculum suggested in the Newsom Report, was the raising of the school leaving age in 1972.

The legal arguments were resolved by the Education (Work Experience) Act 1973 which made it possible for students to take part in work experience, on employers' premises, in the last year of compulsory schooling. The number of schools offering work experience steadily increased though very few offered it to ALL pupils and it was still perceived to be of use to only those pupils of average/below average ability.

The next important event in the history of work experience was the 1976 speech at Ruskin College, Oxford, by the then Prime Minister, James Callaghan and the 'Great Debate' which followed. This turned attention to the weak relationship between education and the economy and led to the formation of the 'schools-industry movement' which sprang up in various guises in the following few years.

In the late seventies and early eighties youth unemployment reached epidemic proportions and the Manpower Services
Commission (MSC) was given the task of providing a scheme to alleviate the problem. Several schemes were developed in the ensuing years e.g. the Youth Opportunities Programme, the Youth Training Programme. While these schemes were not school based, all made work experience a central feature.

Eventually, in 1982, the Government announced a new scheme for 14-18 year olds: the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). One of the main effects of TVEI was that any education authorities proposing to join the scheme had to offer at least one week of work experience to ALL students in their final year of compulsory education.

1.2 WORK EXPERIENCE AT PEEBLES HIGH SCHOOL

In accordance with the requirements of TVEI, all pupils in S4 are given the opportunity to take part in work experience. Preparation for work experience starts in S3 when pupils complete a JIIG-CAL form which is processed by Border Region Careers Service. At the beginning of fourth year, the pupils are given an application form to complete which allows them to make two choices with respect to the type of work they would like to take part in and these too are processed by the Careers Service (in close consultation with teaching staff). While this procedure is taking place, the pupils embark on a work experience module during their social education lessons. (This is an 'in-house' production rather than a SCOTVEC module). The course covers such topics as telephoning, application forms and interviews, trouble-shooting and health and safety issues. Meanwhile, the Careers Service tries to match pupils and employers as closely as possible. This is a labour intensive procedure but as we will see, it works very well. When the pupils are given details of their placements, they are encouraged to contact their employers by phone to find out about their hours of work etc. Also, some employers request an interview before taking a pupil on and this is organised. During their placement, pupils are expected to keep a diary of their activities and experiences so that these may be entered into their record of achievement.
at a later stage. These diaries are also used as a focus for discussion, after work experience, at debriefing sessions. The teaching staff involved in work experience endeavour to visit as many pupils as possible during their work experience placement.

1.3 THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT

The aim of this project was not to find fault with work experience at the conceptual level. Nor was it an attempt to single out the approach used by either Peebles High School or Borders Region, as a whole, for criticism. Rather, it was intended to be an investigation into how the participants in this particular work experience scheme viewed the exercise. Amongst the many questions which this survey will endeavour to answer are:

* What do the participants perceive to be the purpose of work experience?
* Do the participants consider work experience to be a worthwhile exercise and, for what reasons?
* In what ways could work experience be improved?
* Did the rural location of the school mean that the range of work experience offered would be limited?
2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

It was decided, from the outset, that the information required for the completion of this project should be obtained using a questionnaire. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, a relatively large amount of data can be collected from large numbers of people; secondly, using a questionnaire is less time consuming than e.g. individual interviews.

Another consideration was that the participating employers could complete a questionnaire at a time which was convenient to them rather than spending time on the 'phone or setting time aside for a face-to-face interview.

However, there were also disadvantages which needed consideration. It was decided that if the pupil questionnaires were completed anonymously, there would be a greater likelihood that pupils would respond truthfully but this approach left scope for certain pupils to give fatuous or silly answers. Also, the intention was that the employers should complete the questionnaire and return it to me by post and this approach relied a great deal on the employers' memory. Nevertheless, the survey was carried out according to the initial plan and thankfully, 'the gamble' paid off!

As for the actual questionnaire, the main criteria used in its production were that it should be both quick and easy to complete. It should also be easy to analyse after completion. To these ends, as few open ended questions as possible were included in the questionnaires. The questions came from a few sources. I obviously compiled some myself; some were adapted from a similar, draft questionnaire which Mr. Ian Sinclair of Peebles High School kindly supplied; some questions were taken from a publication of the results of a similar survey (Fitzgerald and Bodiley:1984). The latter was particularly useful for question 12 in the pupils' questionnaire which was intended to test a broad range of opinions by a method which would be quick to complete. (See appendices B and C for questionnaires.)
2.2 THE PARTICIPANTS

The pupils who took part were all S4 pupils who had taken part in work experience in October, 1991.

In consultation with the A.H.T. (TVEI) at the school, it was decided that rather than handing out the questionnaires to pupils to be completed at home, the survey should take place within the school. It was thought that this method would provide a better return. Also, in order to cause the minimum disruption to classes, it was decided that the questionnaires should be completed by all the pupils, at one sitting. To this end, the pupils were released from their Social Education classes for the last half-hour of the week and assembled together to complete the questionnaire.

It was intended that around 50 pupils should take part in the survey and to obtain this figure, all of the pupils who had taken part in work experience, in four of the six S4 classes, were chosen to take part. This should have provided around 60 pupils for the survey but on the actual day, due to absences etc., only 44 pupils were available. As mentioned in 2.1, it was thought that more truthful answers would be forthcoming if the pupils could complete the questionnaires anonymously.

It was decided that the A.H.T. (TVEI) and the careers officer from Borders Region should choose twenty employers from those who had taken part in work experience in October 1991. This approach was chosen because some of the employers had been carefully 'wooed' and it was possible that the future cooperation of certain employers might be in jeopardy if they were 'pestered' to fill in questionnaires.

Each of the chosen employers was contacted by 'phone and asked if they would be willing to take part in the survey before sending out the questionnaires. All of the employers approached agreed to take part and the questionnaires were sent out with explanatory letters and stamped, addressed envelopes for their return. Eighteen of the twenty employers approached returned completed forms.

No attempt was made to match pupils with the employers who provided them with work experience.
2.3 THE LITERATURE

It soon became obvious, by looking at the reference lists and bibliographies of the more easily obtainable publications, that there was a vast amount of literature available on the subject of work experience. Despite the quantity of material available, it proved difficult to obtain a lot of it because it was generally contained in specialist journals and publications not readily available in the library at Moray House College. However, a fairly small selection of literature was chosen to provide background material for the project.

There were a few very useful publications based on surveys, similar to this one, which could be used for comparison. i.e. Fitzgerald and Bodiley (1984), MacDonald and Black (1987) and Malcolm and Johnstone (1991).

In a similar vein, if slightly more radical, Shilling (1987) and Watkins (1987) were interesting contrasts to these. Probably the most useful publication examined was the recent publication by Miller et al (1991) which provided a broad overview of the history and development of work experience in Britain and highlighted some of the issues involved with this topic.
3. THE PUPILS' OPINIONS

A group of 44 pupils, comprising 20 girls and 24 boys, was questioned. All were in their fourth year at Peebles High School and all had been part of a group of 80 pupils who had taken part in work experience in October 1991.

3.1 THEIR CHOICE OF WORK

The pupils were given a free choice with regard to the type of work which they wished to try. The application form (see Appendix A) listed types of job under broad headings e.g. building trades, office work, etc., but there was also a space where pupils could specify work of a type not covered by these headings.

The question of free choice, in this situation, seems to be an important issue. Miller (1991:198) found that, 'Many work experience co-ordinators advocate free choice as a matching strategy on the grounds that it is likely to increase student motivation and therefore increase the chance of a successful placement. When students have freely chosen their placement, the responsibility for the success or failure of the placement can be more clearly laid at the student's door.'

Of course, the extent to which this free choice could be satisfied depended on two things; firstly, on the pupils making realistic choices and secondly, on the availability of placements, in some types of work, in such a rural area. The pupil choices, in the main, were realistic and covered a broad range of occupations, from office work to accountancy; from kennel maid to vet; from beauty therapist to architect. Some of their choices reflected the rurality of the area e.g. game-keeper, farm work and forestry work. Others, while not unrealistic in terms of career choice, were impractical for obvious reasons e.g. pilot, doctor, policeman.

73% of the pupils were found placements in their first choice of work and 25% their second choice. Only one pupil got neither however, he reported that he had made his own arrangements after completing the application form.

On the question of why the pupils made their particular
choices, 17 pupils (39%) cited definite career aspirations as the main reason while 9 (20%) indicated they wanted to 'try out' a particular job with a view to future employment. 34% said that they had made their choice on the basis of their interests (either within school or outside school):

'Don't have any real ideas about jobs, liked working with horses. Helped me gain more information on horseriding for my own use. I had already decided not to work with horses.'

'I chose office work because I enjoy office and information studies.'

It is interesting that parental influence was not cited as a reason, although one student indicated that he made his second choice (policeman) because it was his father's occupation. This contrasts with the findings of Fitzgerald and Bodley (1984: 60) who, in a similar exercise to this, found that 16% of pupils said that parental suggestions had influenced their choice most. Also, in a study by Agnew (1985), it was found that, 'Parents, in several cases, played an important role in determining student's choices of work placement. For example, one boy who wanted a hairdressing placement was discouraged by his parents, who wanted a more traditionally-male placement.'

3.2 THEIR ENJOYMENT OF WORK EXPERIENCE

'From the pupil's point of view, the value and enjoyment of work experience depends to a large extent on the type of activities given to do, the help available and relationships with other staff.' (MacDonald and Black: 1986:30)

This certainly seems to be true for the group of pupils questioned in this survey. During the initial planning stages of this report, it was decided to allow separate sections for 'Pupil enjoyment' and 'Type of experience gained'. However, it soon became clear that the two were inextricably linked and it was therefore impossible to treat them separately.

82% of the pupils said that they had
enjoyed work experience. The vast majority of pupils said that their relationship with other employees played an important part in the enjoyment (or otherwise) of the work, with 93% indicating that the other employees made them feel welcome. Also, 77% said that they enjoyed being part of a team.

'I liked the idea of being around people and working together'

'I did [enjoy it] because everyone made you welcome and they helped me if I had any questions and did not know about it.'

'It was good because the boss was helpfull (sic) and he was a good laugh.'

Shilling (1987:411) suggests that, '...the nature of the work they [the pupils] were required to do clearly had a major impact in students' evaluation of their placements. This involved the monotony or variety of the tasks they performed, the number of different aspects of work they were exposed to during the week, and whether they were rewarded in cases where they had been used as productive labour.'

The results of this survey seem to back up this suggestion. Students who in question 4 (What kind of work did you do?) responded with a list of varying tasks/duties often cited this variety as the main reason for enjoying the placement. One student whose response to question 4 was:

'Working with computers, some law work, photocopiers fax machines etc.'
described their enjoyment of the placement as follows,

'It was good, learning how to use different machines'

Similarly, another student who described the work they did as:

'Typing, phot coping. I used the fax machine, filing system, posting system, different computers.'
said that they had enjoyed the work because:

'... there always seemed something else to try and learn'

Another factor which seemed to influence the students' enjoyment of work experience was whether the work they did was of genuine benefit to their employers (rather than invented for the student's benefit).

'I enjoyed it because I was able to meet and get along with new people. And I felt I was being involved in the work.'

'I enjoyed it because I did what the other employee's (sic) were doing.'

Eight of the pupils said that they had not enjoyed their placements and offered reasons, directly opposed to those given above, for their negative experiences. i.e. boredom and a sense of alienation from other employees.

'I did not get to do anything and it was very boring' (Student on P.E. teaching placement)

'I was bored every afternoon as all the patients were sleeping. I felt that I didn't fit in with the other nurses. Also that they were a different age from me.' (Nursing placement)

'I did not enjoy this work experience because I felt the employees had no time for me although I know a lot of the work was confidential.' (Student on Law Practice placement)

It is interesting that the pupil on placement at the Law firm tries to emphasize that his disappointment was not due to unrealistic expectations on his part, but rather, the
perceived indifference of the other employees. Of course, we have only the pupil's point of view and there may be a variety of reasons for the disappointing situation here. However, this student was obviously left with a 'bad taste' in his mouth after work experience since, to emphasize his point, he wrote the following in the margin of the questionnaire:

'N.B. I felt that my work experience did not help me at all and has put me off law as a profession because although a lot of work was confidential, they had little or no time for me.'

In the same vein, most of this student's other answers in this survey were negative.

The attitudes of the majority of the pupils over a range of factors pertaining to their experiences and their enjoyment of work experience were, in the main, favourable. 75% of the pupils indicated that they were not given a programme of work for the week but 80% said that they worked under supervision and 82% said that they were allowed to do some jobs unsupervised. The majority of the pupils (80%) said that they got 'hands-on' experience of the tools/equipment for the job and 34% felt that they had mainly observed other people at work.

In terms of those factors which related to their enjoyment of work experience, 93% of the pupils said that they were made to feel welcome by the other employees and 77% enjoyed being 'part of a team'. Only 2 of the pupils (5%) felt that work experience was a waste of time.

Shilling (1987:416) notes that amongst the students in his study, there was a '...very sharp sense of injustice which stemmed from a failure of the firm to provide some sort of remuneration when they had been used as productive labour.' However, in this survey, 64% of the pupils disagreed with the suggestion that they had been used as unpaid labour. This response may be due in part to the fact that the pupils are told, before they go on placement that they will not be pai
for their week's work and therefore, they have no expectation of reward.

Enjoyment of work experience was borne out by the fact that only 3 pupils thought that the time allowed for it should be shorter and, not surprisingly, these pupils had not enjoyed their work placements.

3.3 IS IT USEFUL TO DO WORK EXPERIENCE?

The vast majority of pupils (98%) thought that it was useful to do work experience. Miller et al (1991:18) identify several possible aims of work experience. Two of these aims, in particular, seem to be reflected in the pupils' responses to questions about the purpose and usefulness of work experience. By far the most common response, could be categorised under their (Miller et al) 'sampling' aim which 'enables students to test their vocational preference before committing themselves to it.' Some pupils thought it was useful to have a 'taster' of a job they were interested in:

'I think it is useful because instead of just thinking you would like to do a certain kind of job you can go out and try it and see.'

'It helps you to get a feel of what the work is like, especially a mechanic working in cold weather etc.'

Others thought that it helped them to make up their mind about jobs they were considering:

'I enjoyed my week and I learned a lot. It also made my mind up to do some type of countryside work. Preferably forestry.'

'... it will help you decide if it is really the career (sic) you want to follow up, or if you have changed your mind.'

'I found out that I did not want to go into joinery'
Several pupils identified what Miller et al describe as the 'maturational' aim of work experience, i.e. 'to facilitate students' personal and social development.'

'So you can get used to the idea of meeting new people.'

'To get experience of taking orders and working with the public.'

'Helps you lose inhibitions and work with people.'

16% of the pupils said that they had changed their mind about their choice of career after work experience and over half (55%) indicated that work experience had helped them decide on their future career. 42 out of the 44 pupils refuted the suggestion that work experience is a waste of time.

3.4 DID THEY FEEL PREPARED FOR WORK EXPERIENCE?

Only 7 pupils said that they did not think they had been adequately prepared for work experience. One pupil, rather surprisingly, commented that:

'You don't really (sic) need to be prepared. I think it isn't that hard.'

Of the remainder, four said that they would have liked more information on different aspects of the world of work. One pupil wrote that their preparation could have been improved by:

'Giving us more info on it [work experience]. We just heard from 1 teacher about it.'

Another requested more information about interviews. The last two in this group wanted 'an idea of what working with adults would be like' and 'more indication of choices.' (I took the latter to mean more information on specific jobs). As
Malcolm and Johnstone (1981:18) suggested in their recent study, 'This may be a failure of understanding on the pupils' part; teachers may have given broad information while pupils expected details.'

3.5 THEIR INTENTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The pupils were questioned on their future intentions (with regard to their education) in order to gauge two things. Firstly, the ability range within the group (or, at least their perception of their own ability) and, secondly, whether work experience had had a bearing on their decisions.

68% replied that they intended to get some Highers before going to college or university. Of the remainder, 7% said that they wanted to get some Highers before finding a job and 5% wanted to leave school as soon as possible to find a job; 20% were undecided about their intentions.

The majority (91%) disagreed with the suggestion that after work experience they decided to leave school as soon as possible and 60% said that they decided to stay on and get more qualifications.
4. THE EMPLOYERS' OPINIONS

Questionnaires were sent to twenty employers selected by the A.H.T. (TVEI) at Peebles High School and the Careers Officer from Borders Region. All had offered work experience placements in October, 1991. Eighteen completed questionnaires were returned.

4.1 WHO WERE THE EMPLOYERS?

A wide range of employers took part. All, except one, were based in the Peebles area. The nature of their business varied from farmer to vet and from travel agent to engineering. The size of the companies also varied greatly. Most of the employers (9) described their companies as medium/‘family’ concerns and six classed themselves as ‘one person’ operations; one was in the public sector and two were part of nationwide chains. The majority (12) employed five people or less, four employed between six and thirty people and the remaining two had 50 and 96 employees respectively. Only two employers were taking part in work experience for the first time.

4.2 WHAT MOTIVATED THEM TO TAKE PART?

Miller et al (1991:137-138) ask the question, 'Why do employers support work experience? To suggest that their motives are purely philanthropic would be naive, as is demonstrated in the business adage 'there's no such thing as a free lunch'.'

The motivation of employers is important as this can have a marked affect on the quality of work experience placements in terms of both usefulness and enjoyment to the student. For example, employers whose main motive for taking part in work experience is to take advantage of 'an extra pair of hands', might restrict the type of experience offered to boring and repetitive tasks while those who might see some benefit in terms of public relations might take a more carefully planned approach. (see Shilling:1989:140-141).
It is not my intent, in citing the above opinions, to suggest that the pupils taking part in this survey were exploited in any way by their employers. However, there would be no reason for employers to offer work experience without some benefit to their companies.

Six of the employers taking part either gave no answer in this section (question 10) or replied that there was no benefit to their company in providing work experience. Of those who said that there were gains in one way or another, five said that they looked upon the pupils as potential employees.

'It can sometimes identify an employee of the future. We have offered work to some of the students.'

'To stimulate interest in school leavers in our industry. We view it as a subtle recruitment drive'

These views fit in well with the findings of Malcolm and Johnstone (1991:12): 'Telephone interviews revealed that employers saw three chief advantages in taking part in the work experience scheme. Most frequently mentioned was that participation gave them an opportunity to explore the labour market'.

Three employers said that they benefitted by gaining an extra employee for a short time.

'An extra pair of hands is always useful'

'Some benefits include catching up on some of the back-log of more general duties...'

A few of the participants said that they gained in terms of a kind of 'new blood' factor.

'...breath of new thinking into office...'
'Looking at particular methods of working from the fresh eyes of an inexperienced worker can help to point out any flaws or easier ways of completing several jobs which may not have been obvious before.'

4.3 THE TYPE OF EXPERIENCE OFFERED

A variety of jobs was offered by the employers and some employers provided a choice or a mixture of different experiences to the students they employed. For example, a hotel offered a choice/mixture of housekeeping, bar work, kitchen work, hotel reception and restaurant work.

Sometimes, because of the nature of the work, pupils spent some of their time observing others at work, e.g. in a veterinary practice (although in this practice pupils did go on rounds with the vet and assisted in the surgery.).

By far, the most common type of experience offered was clerical work. Strangely, most of the employers who offered only clerical experience indicated that they employed workers in other fields such as computing, retail and technical areas. It is difficult to surmise why placements were not offered in these areas other than the perception that the pupils would be unsuitable for the work or that the tasks involved in such jobs would be too difficult.

4.4 ARE THE STUDENTS ADEQUATELY PREPARED?

Only three out of the eighteen employers thought that the students were not adequately prepared for work experience. One employer chose not to elaborate on his answer. Another wrote:

'Due to their age and years of conditioning in an educational environment they often lack the ability of lateral thinking for themselves.' (my emphasis)

The last of the three thought that,

'...some students obviously had no interest in this type of work and were doing it because they had to.'
When I read this statement it rather conjured up the idea of 'forced labour' with children being marched off to work at gun-point. However, as with any other area of the curriculum, there are obviously some pupils who are not interested in work experience and have not thought very carefully about the type of work in which they would like to participate. The result is that these pupils will be less than enthusiastic about their placements. One employer who thought that pupils were adequately prepared added the proviso:

'But others are not so willing to learn- find it a bit of a waste of time.'

4.5 WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF WORK EXPERIENCE?

The Peebles High School guide for pupils and parents (1991-'92) states that '....it is not intended that during this period [work experience] the pupil will receive training for a specific career nor is it the intention that work experience should prepare a pupil for one particular sector of employment. ... The prime purpose is that pupils will further their own education by increasing their knowledge of industrial or commercial life.'

Most of the employers questioned in this survey gave more than one response to this question and only two made any reference to training or preparation.

'Work experience helps to prepare the young people for the kind of situations that would occur in the working environment.'

Another employer (in an architectural practice) was more specific:

'Gives experience of actual drawing worth and an insight into other areas of office requirement. e.g. colouring plans, forms regulations etc.'
The majority of employers cited 'sampling' or an aid to 'decision making' as the main purpose of work experience. 'Some jobs can be appealing in 'theory', but the practical situation enables the student to get 'hands on' experience and therefore find out if the job is suitable for them.'

'Gives them an idea if this is really what they want to do.'

'Work experience is good as it lets young people see the basics of that particular job and then they can decide if it is what they want to do.'

Others put forward the view that pupils would gain experience of the discipline required in working life.

'To see what is involved in working with other people and to get some idea of constraints of employment e.g. time keeping.'

'...it also gives them an insight into a commercial working environment and the disciplines required.'

4.6 HOW COULD WORK EXPERIENCE BE IMPROVED?

Most of the employers offered some suggestion in this area. Two indicated that they should be consulted to a greater extent as to the timing of placements. Another consideration was that the length of the placement should be increased. However, the main areas for improvement were considered to be liaison between the school and the workplace and that there should be some 'end product' in the exercise e.g. a report for the employers.

'Possibly involving the employers visiting the school in advance to explain what is involved.'
'Send a teacher for a visit prior to placement?'

'Better communications between schools etc. and employers.'

'Students must be set projects to do on their work placement - must be made to use their heads.'

'Student to write a report to the company on his feelings.'
5. CONCLUSIONS

If the findings of this survey are accurate then work experience at Peebles High School is a success from the participants' point of view. The overwhelming opinion of the pupils was that it was an enjoyable experience.

However, the perceptions of the participants as to the purpose of work experience seems to be at odds with its aims. To reiterate the school brochure, 'The prime purpose [of work experience] is that pupils will further their own education by increasing their knowledge of industrial or commercial life.'

This contrasts with the views of the participants i.e. that the main purpose of work experience is that it is a 'sampling exercise', an opportunity for the pupils to try out a particular job with a view to its suitability as a future career.

As to the question, 'Is it useful to do work experience?', again, the answer is a resounding 'Yes'. Again, the over-riding conclusion of the participants was that pupils were able to get a 'taster' of the world of work. However, some pupils it seems had a very negative experience of their chosen career. I refer specifically to the pupil who was completely alienated against a career in law after his/her experience (p. 11-12) I do not know if this pupil has the ability to become a lawyer or if there were any factors in terms of this pupil's nature (e.g. extreme shyness) which might have contributed to the negative outcome. However, I feel that there should be some form of counselling available for pupils in this situation.

Another widely held view of the usefulness of work experience was that it helped to 'socialise' young people for the world of work. However, over 50% of the pupils questioned said that they already had a part time job and would therefore be accustomed to dealing with other workers and/or members of the public. On the other hand, those pupils who don't have a job probably did gain some experience in this area. i.e. they were treated as equals by adults in the workplace.

The views of the participants as far as improvements were concerned were fairly varied. The few pupils who offered suggestions in this area seemed to want more detailed advice
on specific jobs before they went out on placements. The employers, however, expressed two main concerns. Firstly, that liaison between the school and the workplace should be improved and secondly, that work experience should be linked with some sort of task i.e. that it should be part of a school project or that the pupils should prepare a report for the employers.

Finally, it is clear that the rurality of the school had no bearing on the choice of placements available to the pupils. One pupil specified marine engineering as his choice of work experience and, a placement was found for him in this area (albeit in Edinburgh). This is due entirely to the efforts of the staff involved in work experience in Borders Region and it is probably the fact that pupils and placements are matched as closely as possible which makes the scheme so successful.
APPENDIX A
The application form
PEEBLES HIGH SCHOOL

WORK EXPERIENCE

APPLICATION FORM

SURNAME: __________________________ FORE NAMES: __________________________

FORM CLASS: __________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________ Tel No: ________________

TODAY'S DATE: __________ DATE OF BIRTH: _______/_____/______

SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND LEVELS AT WHICH THEY ARE BEING STUDIED

N.B. For "Level" state 'O' or Standard Grade or Module and whether Foundation, General or Credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
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</table>

YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS: __________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

DETAILS OF PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE:

EMPLOYER'S NAME: _________________________________________________

ADDRESS: _______________________________________________________

"WORK WHICH YOU DID": ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
**CHOICE OF PROBABLE WORK EXPERIENCE** - Indicate in order of preference your choice of Work Experience. If your choice of job is not listed below, there is a box for you to state what your choice is.

Put 1 in box for your top choice.  
Put 2 for your second choice.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicate 1 or 2</th>
<th>Indicate 1 or 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURE</td>
<td>ENGINEERING (please specify)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING TRADES (please specify)</td>
<td>GARAGE WORK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARING - under 5's</td>
<td>HAIRDRESSING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARING - Handicapped</td>
<td>HEALTH CARE (please specify)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARING - Old Folks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATERING - Hotel</td>
<td>KNITWE R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>OFFICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARGE STORE</td>
<td>SHOP WORK (small, shop)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANOTHER JOB NOT LISTED ABOVE.**  
(Give full details)

| Transport Difficulties: If you are likely to have any transport problems, e.g. because you live in an outlying area, please give details below of your difficulty and how it could be solved (e.g. lift available to Edinburgh).

**If there is anyone you know yourself whom you think would be prepared to give you work experience, give details below:—** Note that the School Careers Officer will contact this person on your behalf.

| Name: __________________________ | Business Name (If different) __________________________ |
| Address: ________________________ | ____________________________________________________ |
| Phone Number: _________________ | ____________________________________________________ |
| Type of Work Experience Involved: __________________ | ____________________ |
APPENDIX B
The pupils' questionnaire
WORK EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What job(s) did you choose for your work experience?
   1st choice __________________________________________
   2nd choice __________________________________________
   Please give reasons for your choice. ____________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

2. Did you get your 1st choice □
   (please tick one box) 2nd choice □
   Neither □

3. Where did you actually work?
   EMPLOYER'S NAME ________________________________
   ADDRESS _________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

4. What kind of work did you do? ________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

5. Do you think it is useful to do work experience?
   (Please tick one box) YES □
   NO □
   Please give reasons for your answer. ________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
6. What do you think is the point of doing work experience?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

7. Did you enjoy your work experience?
   (please tick one box)   YES □
                          NO □

Use the space below to say why you did/did not enjoy it.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

8. Do you think work experience should be
   (please tick one box) one week □
                          longer □
                          shorter □

9. Do you think your social education lessons prepared you well enough for work experience?
   (please tick one box)   YES □
                          NO □

If NO, state one way in which it could be improved.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

10. Which of the following do you intend to do?
    Leave school as soon as possible and find a job □
    Leave school as soon as possible and go to college □
    Get some Highers before finding a job □
    Get some Highers before going to college/university □
    Haven't made up your mind yet □
11. Do you have a part-time job at the moment?
   (please tick one box)    YES  
   NO  

12. Below there is a list of statements which may, or may not 
    apply to your work experience. Please show whether you 
    agree or disagree with them by ticking the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. You were given a programme of work for the week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. You worked under supervision.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. After your work experience you changed your mind about your choice of career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Work experience is a waste of time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The other employees made you feel welcome.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. You mainly watched other people working.</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. After your work experience, you decided to leave school as soon as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. You enjoyed being part of a team.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Work experience has helped you to decide on your future career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. You were used as unpaid labour.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. You were allowed to do some jobs without supervision.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. After your work experience, you decided to stay on at school to get more qualifications.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. You were given the chance to use the tools/equipment for the job.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
APPENDIX C

The employers' questionnaire
WORK EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Please state:
   Name of company ______________________________
   Nature of business ______________________________
   Nature of experience offered (e.g. clerical, agricultural etc.)
   ______________________________

2. How would you describe your company? (please tick one box)
   - Small/’one person’ business
   - Medium/’family’ business
   - Local government/public sector employer
   - Part of nationwide chain
   - Part of multi-national corporation

3. How many people do you employ? (Please give details for your branch only) __________

4. Do you employ workers in any of the following areas? (Please tick appropriate box(es).)
   - Clerical □    Skilled □    Professional □
   - Computers □  Semi-skilled □ Retail □
   - Technical □  Unskilled □

5. Prior to October, 1991 did you offer work experience?
   (Please tick one box) YES □
   NO □
   If YES, for how long have you been doing so? __________

6. Do you feel that students benefit from work experience?
   (Please tick one box) YES □
   NO □
7. Do you feel that the students were adequately prepared for work experience?  
   YES □  
   NO □  
   If NO, please give reasons.  ____________________________
   ____________________________  
   ____________________________  
   ____________________________  

8. What do you think is the point of young people doing work experience?  ____________________________
   ____________________________  
   ____________________________  
   ____________________________  

9. In your particular work situation, do you feel that one week for work experience is:  
   (please tick one box)  too long □  
   just right □  
   too short □  
   Please give reasons for your answer.  ____________________________
   ____________________________  
   ____________________________  
   ____________________________  

10. What, if any, is the benefit of work experience to your company?  ____________________________
    ____________________________  
    ____________________________  
    ____________________________  

11. Do you intend to offer work experience in the future?  
    YES □  
    NO □  

12. Please suggest one way in which work experience might be improved.  ____________________________
    ____________________________  
    ____________________________  
    ____________________________
REFERENCES


