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PhD thesis

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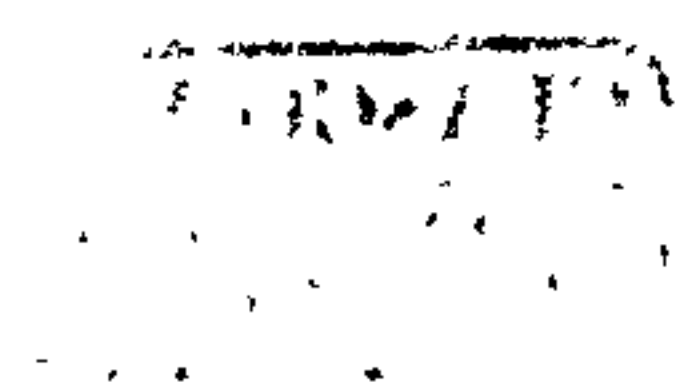
**The social construction of  
Higher Grade Physical Education:  
Teacher curriculum decision making and  
pupil subject choice (Volume 1)**

**by**

**Ann MacPhail, B.Ed.**

**Thesis submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements  
for Ph.D. Doctoral Programme**

**University of Glasgow  
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## SUMMARY

This study centres on understanding teachers' curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupils' subject choice in physical education. The curriculum reform chosen to illustrate these two central issues is Higher Grade Physical Education (HGPE), a nationally available qualification in physical education that has been available to fifth and sixth year (16 to 18 year olds) Scottish secondary pupils from 1993. The focus on teacher CDM and pupil subject choice contributes more generally to our understanding of the social construction of physical education as a school subject.

The framework used to investigate the social construction of knowledge, teacher CDM and pupil subject choice is Basil Bernstein's model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse. Bernstein's three fields of knowledge production and reproduction and his notion of pedagogic discourse allowed the framing of the examination of the development, mediation and reproduction of the HGPE course.

The study illustrates how the dominant model for innovation in Scottish schools continues to be external leadership by the centre and how agents operating at this level constructed HGPE as a science-based, sport-performance-oriented discourse. The findings suggest that teachers' and pupils' interpretations of the HGPE discourse are not explicit reasons for the decision to offer or study the subject but are more likely to be embedded in the context in which individual teachers work and in pupils' enjoyment and future vocation.

Emerging issues that are discussed include the process of managing HGPE by the SEB and the extent to which the SEB exercised power to mandate precisely the form HGPE should take as it was implemented in secondary schools. A lack of external support in delivering HGPE, teacher de-professionalisation and de-skilling and professional development support for teachers are all identified and discussed. The study concludes with suggestions for the future construction of knowledge within the Scottish education system and ideas regarding what can be done to promote HGPE.



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## **GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AHT</b>	<b>Assistant Headteacher</b>
<b>APT</b>	<b>Assistant Principal Teacher</b>
<b>BOSSS</b>	<b>Board of Senior Secondary School Studies</b>
<b>CCC</b>	<b>Consultative Council on the Curriculum</b>
<b>CDM</b>	<b>Curriculum decision making</b>
<b>CSE</b>	<b>Certificate in Secondary Subject</b>
<b>CSG</b>	<b>Central Support Group</b>
<b>CSYS</b>	<b>Certificate of Sixth Year Studies</b>
<b>EA</b>	<b>Education Authority</b>
<b>GCSE</b>	<b>General Certificate of Secondary Subject</b>
<b>HG</b>	<b>Higher Grade</b>
<b>HGPE</b>	<b>Higher Grade Physical Education</b>
<b>HMI</b>	<b>Her Majesty's Inspectorate</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>Instructional discourse</b>
<b>ILEA</b>	<b>Inner London Education Authority</b>
<b>INSET</b>	<b>In-service Training</b>
<b>JWP</b>	<b>Joint Working Party</b>
<b>LCI</b>	<b>Local context of implementation</b>
<b>LSG</b>	<b>Local Support Group</b>
<b>NCPE</b>	<b>National Curriculum for Physical Education</b>
<b>NGT</b>	<b>Nominal Group Technique</b>
<b>PE</b>	<b>Physical Education</b>
<b>PEA</b>	<b>Physical Education Association</b>
<b>PT</b>	<b>Principal Teacher</b>
<b>PTPE</b>	<b>Principal teacher of physical education</b>
<b>RD</b>	<b>Regulative discourse</b>
<b>S1 – S6</b>	<b>Year of secondary pupils, e.g., S1 denotes first year secondary pupils</b>
<b>SCE</b>	<b>Scottish Certificate of Education</b>
<b>SCCC</b>	<b>Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum</b>



SCCPE	Scottish Central Committee on Physical Education
SCEEB	Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board
SCOPEMLS	Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Movement and Leisure Studies
SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Council
SCPE	Schools Council for Physical Education
SED	Scottish Education Department
SEB	Scottish Examination Board
SF	Situational factors
SFEU	Scottish Further Education Unit
SG	Standard Grade
SGPE	Standard Grade Physical Education
SMT	School Management Team
SOED	Scottish Office Education Department
SOEID	Scottish Office Education and Industry Department
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SSC	Scottish Sports Council
SSPE	Scottish School of Physical Education
SUCE	Scottish Universities Council on Entrance
SYS	Sixth Year Studies
UK	United Kingdom

# **Chapter 1 - The social construction of Higher Grade Physical Education: Curriculum decision making and pupil subject choice**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This study centres on understanding teachers' curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupils' subject choice in physical education. The curriculum reform chosen to illustrate these two central issues is Higher Grade Physical Education (HGPE), a nationally available qualification in physical education that has been available to fifth and sixth year (16 to 18 year olds) Scottish secondary pupils from 1993. The focus on CDM and pupil subject choice in HGPE contributes more generally to the understanding of the social construction of physical education as a school subject.

### **1.1.1 Social construction of knowledge**

The 1971 publication 'Knowledge and Control', edited by Michael Young, is credited with introducing the concept of school knowledge being politically and socially constructed. Kirk (1992a) devoted a whole book to examining the social construction of physical education from the end of the second world war to the early 1990s, aiming to show the existence of connections and the consequences of such interaction between events in school physical education and in society more broadly. As Kirk explained;

'The act of defining physical education is a social process, one which involves drawing on ideas in general circulation, and fixing these ideas in a meaningful configuration. This fixing, as an intrinsic part of defining the subject, is no arbitrary process...particular definitions of physical education have gained acceptance as the orthodox version of the subject, and these definitions have advantaged certain social groups over others at particular times in history' (p.25).

Kirk's awareness of competing groups attempting to define the physical education subject is similar to the concerns of others. Even within one subject group there can be sub-groups that have differing values, interests and identity (Goodson, 1993). This was illustrated in work carried out on the subject history of Geography where geography was perceived as having two different themes; geography as defined by scholars and geography as traditionally taught in schools (Goodson, 1987). While schools supported a pedagogic and utilitarian bias towards geography, universities argued for academic rigour. Stengel (1997) examined the relationship between an academic discipline and the related school subject. He believed that within the education system there is a bias towards academic rather than practical or pedagogical concerns. The dominant views of what should constitute HGPE and the groups and individuals involved with constructing HGPE will be investigated in subsequent chapters.

Goodson (1990) believed that the way forward in studying curriculum was by adopting the notion of 'curriculum as social construction', believing that there is a need to understand social construction of curricula at the levels of prescription, process and practice. Bernstein's (1990) model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse follows a similar trend in that it allows examination of the development, mediation and reproduction of curricula using three fields of knowledge production that he terms 'primary', 'recontextualising' and 'secondary'. These three fields of knowledge production are used to structure the study and explain and discuss such a theoretical framework in Chapter 2. This study discusses all three levels in relation to HGPE with a deliberate focus on the 'secondary' level, asking how teachers are influenced in their decision to offer or not to offer HGPE and what factors influence pupils in choosing or not choosing to study HGPE.

To date, no substantial research has been carried out to examine CDM and pupil subject choice within HGPE. By examining the various discourses that were dominant at different phases of the HGPE development it is anticipated that HGPE was socially constructed. Consequently how the social construction of HGPE has affected teachers' decisions to offer the subject and pupils' reasons for choosing to undertake the subject will be examined.



However, as recently as 1999, Brewer and Sharp (1999) attempted to describe what is actually taught in Scottish secondary school physical education. They perhaps unconsciously addressed the issue of the subject being socially constructed by discussing the influences of government policy and assessment requirements. They identified the rise of formally assessed and certificated courses as a key development in physical education over the past twenty years, and the move towards 'curricula more closely prescribed by an assessment agenda outwith the formal control of the school physical education department' (p.541). As a consequence, they were aware of possible teacher de-professionalisation through the need to implement schemes devised and approved external to the school. The issue of de-professionalisation is apparent in Chapters 5 and 6 and is discussed more fully in Chapter 8.

This chapter foregrounds HGPE before going on to set the context through a brief background to the Scottish education system and physical education in Scottish secondary schools. The issues of CDM and teachers' role in curriculum development will then be addressed in an attempt to highlight issues pertinent to teachers involved in considering a new addition to the curriculum. Pupil subject choice will be addressed through investigating the process of subject choice within the secondary school context.

The focus will then shift to discuss the theoretical framework chosen to examine the development, mediation and reproduction of the HGPE course. It is anticipated that the chosen theoretical framework will help to address what signifies educational knowledge in the context of HGPE and consequently establish how such knowledge was socially constructed and organised within schools.

## 1.2 Higher Grade Physical Education (HGPE)

This section briefly introduces HGPE and the awards that have been made at HGPE, the gender of candidates and the content of the course.

### 1.2.1 Introduction of HGPE

In 1993 selected Scottish secondary schools put a number of their S5 and S6 pupils (16-18 year olds) forward for the first time ever to complete a syllabus and then an examination for an award at HGPE. HGPE was available nationally for teaching in session 1993-1994. Nineteen ninety-four also saw the introduction of new examinations in Higher Grade in Classical Studies, Drama and Graphic Communication. The four subjects attracted almost 3,500 candidates with over half of that amount (1,889) undertaking HGPE, emphasising a demand for physical education at that level of study (SEB Examination Statistics, 1994). The demand for Higher Grade (HG) subjects in Scottish secondary schools is high due to a greater proportion of young people in Scotland staying on beyond the statutory leaving age than in the UK as a whole (Boyd, 1997), hoping to gain entrance qualifications for higher education. Table 1.1 illustrates the continued increase in the number of candidates at HGPE since its introduction, with almost a 50% increase in the number of candidates between its first and second year. The success of the HGPE uptake in the beginning mirrored SGPE which, in its first year, also had the highest uptake of all subjects that were phased in at the same time (Thomson, 1993). The phenomenon of the increase in candidates undertaking HGPE could be explained by HGPE having a low number of candidates to begin with in 1994 and so could only increase.

One specific question would not only help to explain the steady increase in institutes undertaking HGPE but also draw attention to the factors, whether they be personal, social or environmental, that have affected teacher CDM in relation to HGPE. The question is 'What factors have affected institutes, and specifically teachers within schools, from electing to offer (or not) HGPE?' A similar question would aid understanding of why there has been a steady increase in the number of candidates choosing to undertake HGPE and factors that affect candidates' subject choice. The question is 'What factors influenced candidates, and specifically pupils, to choose or not to choose HGPE as a subject to study?'



Table 1.1: Breakdown of HGPE candidates.

Year	Number of candidates	Number of centres	HGPE candidates			
			S5 pupils	S6 pupils	Further education	External
1994	1,889	139	900	963	26	0
1995	2,692	208	1,289	1,326	77	0
1996	3,189	252	1,551	1,582	51	5
1997	3,472	270	1,723	1,681	66	2
1998	3,620	293	1,727	1,836	51	6
1999	3,668	304	1,693	1,880	91	4

Source: SEB Examination Statistics for 1994, 1995 & 1996 and SQA Annual Statistical Reports for 1997, 1998 & 1999.

### 1.2.2 Pass rates and awards at HGPE

The average pass rate over all subjects at HG has been just under 70% since 1994. HGPE has maintained the lowest pass rate for all HGs since it was introduced in 1994. However, due to the responsibility of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) for maintaining standards within a subject from year to year and between subjects (Elliot & Ganson, 1999), it is unlikely that the assessment instruments for HGPE can be noticeably doctored to encourage a high pass rate. As Elliot and Ganson explained, the assessment instruments must be comparable in demand to those of previous years. Consequently, if those involved with the construction of HGPE have underestimated the difficulty of successfully completing the HGPE course, there appears to be no way of changing the very challenging criteria that was initially set for HGPE.

Table 1.2 details the pass rate for HGPE over the years and the percentage of pupils at S5 and S6 who passed. The issue of pass rates is important to this thesis because it has yet to be established who or what has caused such a pattern of awards. Could the low pass rates at HGPE be attributed to those involved in its construction striving to meet the requirements of the Scottish Examination Board (SEB), in order to achieve academic status? Was teachers' reading, and consequently delivery, of the HGPE syllabus different to that envisaged by those involved in its construction? Did those individuals who were involved in HGPE's construction produce a syllabus that was not suitable for the type of

pupil likely to be interested in undertaking a Higher in physical education? These issues are examined in the discussion regarding the suitability of HGPE for Scottish secondary pupils in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

It is possible that pupils' awareness of the pass rate for HGPE influenced their subject choice. Pupils' expectations of the grade they were likely to achieve in HGPE and the influence that choosing the subject may have on their overall score for HGs may have been considerations for pupils contemplating choosing the subject. This notion is investigated in Chapter 7. While perceptions of the academic nature of a HG in physical education may be less than supportive, it is clearly a subject in which attainment is difficult.

Table 1.2: Pass rates for HGPE.

Year	Pass rate for HGPE	Number of S5 pass rates	Number of S6 pass rates
1994	45%	36%	54%
1995	46%	40%	51%
1996	51%	42%	59%
1997	56%	Not available	Not available
1998	54%	Not available	Not available
1999	59%	Not available	Not available

Source: SEB Examination Statistics for 1994, 1995 & 1996 and SQA Annual Statistical Reports for 1997, 1998 & 1999.



Table 1.3 details the percentage of awards for HGPE at each band for all candidates and not just school pupils. An award at band A, B or C constitutes a pass at HG and the issue of HGPE awards is discussed further in this chapter under 'Subject choice'.

Table 1.3: Percentage of awards at HGPE for all candidates.

Year	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D (narrow failure)*
1994	6%	13%	26%	26%
1995	5%	14%	26%	24%
1996	6%	16%	29%	29%
1997	5%	18%	32%	27%
1998	6%	17%	31%	27%
1999	7%	21%	30%	23%

Source: SEB Examination Statistics for 1994, 1995 & 1996 and SQA Annual Statistical Reports for 1997, 1998 & 1999.

\* Subsequently, in adding all four percentages together for each year it is evident that in 1994 39% of candidates were failing HGPE outright (below a Band D award) with the number falling to 19% in 1998.

1.2.3 Gender of HGPE candidates

Table 1.4 details the gender ratio for school pupils undertaking HGPE which will become a prominent issue in the examination of the gendered history that has appeared to have influenced the thinking behind the content of the HGPE syllabus (Chapter 4). In 1987 and 1996 the staying-on rate of girls remained higher than boys (Elliot & Ganson, 1999) which is not what would be expected in reviewing the figures given in Table 1.4. A possible explanation is perhaps related to the ability of the candidates who are discussed in section 1.4.2.2 and again in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Elliot & Ganson (1999) reported that the gap between the percentage of girls and boys who passed three or more Highers continued to increase in favour of the girls between 1987 and 1996. In reporting the number of male and female presentations for SGPE between 1990 and 1996, Bilsborough & Macleod (1998) illustrated a similar pattern to that of Carroll (1995) and the percentages noted in Table 1.4.

The gender of candidates undertaking certificated physical education in Australia (Penney & Kirk, 1998) and in England (Carroll, 1995) at an equivalent level to that of HGPE resembles the figures reported in Table 1.4, with the recruitment of male students exceeding that of females. In reporting the number of candidates for 'A' level Physical Education and 'A' level Sport Studies in 1992 and 1994, Carroll (1995) revealed that there were always approximately twice as many males as females entered for the examinations.

Table 1.4: Gender ratio for school pupils undertaking HGPE.

Year	Male candidates	Female candidates
1994	69%	31%
1995	71%	29%
1996	71%	29%
1997	74%	26%
1998	73%	27%
1999	73%	27%

Source: SEB Examination Statistics for 1994, 1995 & 1996 and SQA Annual Statistical Reports for 1997, 1998 & 1999.

Numerous pieces of research have been carried out looking at gender differences in subject preference (Whitehead, 1996; Stables & Stables, 1995; Colley et al., 1994; Harvey, 1984). Harvey (1984) found that Games / physical education was favoured by third year secondary school boys. Colley et al., (1994) reported that rankings of school subject preferences by 15-16 year old pupils showed a clear effect of gender. Higher rankings were given to mathematics, science and physical education by boys and to art by girls.

Although the issue of gender differences in HGPE is not central to this study, it is important to acknowledge the issue. Carroll (1995) concluded that the gender differential and access problem within examinable physical education;

"...lies in a combination of personal preferences and perceptions which give rise to personal constraints, for example, perceptions of ability and status of the subject, and mediating influences, which result in institutional constraints and barriers, such as presentation of the option block and the teachers' selection process" (p.69).



Chapter 7 of this study examines some of these 'personal constraints' and 'mediating influences'.

#### 1.2.4 HGPE content

The four Key Features of the HGPE course (at the time this research was conducted) are Performance, Analysis of Performance, Investigation of Performance and Personal and Social Development. The first three features are assessed for certification. Performance is assessed internally and has a weighting of 40% towards the final grade while Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance are assessed externally with a weighting of 40% and 20% respectively. Two activities contribute to the assessment of Performance and pupils must therefore study a minimum of two practical activities. Analysis of Performance is sub-divided into four main areas that are Structures and Strategies, Preparation of the Body, Skills and Techniques and Appreciation of Action. From the four areas, schools select three areas they consider to be most appropriate to the activities chosen for Performance. For example, teachers may believe the areas of Structures and Strategies, Preparation of the Body and Skills and Techniques to be more appropriate to Basketball with the areas of Preparation of the Body, Skills and Techniques and Appreciation of Action being more appropriate to Gymnastics. The Investigation of Performance requires the pupils to produce an Investigation report on a specific aspect of performance in one or more physical activities.

By moving on to reporting and examining the context in which HGPE is embedded, the two areas of teacher CDM and pupil subject choice within the Scottish school system will begin to be highlighted.

### 1.3 Context for curriculum decision making and subject choice

This section will focus on the background to the Scottish education system, physical education in Scottish secondary schools and HGPE, with the prime concern being to foreground HGPE and the phenomenon of HGPE uptake by candidates.

#### 1.3.1 Scottish education system

Scotland has retained its own distinctive education system. Decisions about Scottish education are made in Scotland at three levels - national, regional and institutional. The Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID), formally the SOED, has national oversight of Scottish education, along with advising on national policy and co-ordinating activities of education authorities and others. It also oversees funding of further and higher education. However, while the SOEID has national oversight of education, it is the responsibility of thirty-two unitary authorities (i.e., education authorities) to provide and deliver school education (MacKenzie, 1999). Up until 1996, when the Conservative government took the decision to reorganise Scottish local government into unitary authorities, there were twelve local authorities. It was from one of these former and largest local authorities that the data presented and discussed in Chapters 5-7 is reported. Brown (1999) believed that from education's point of view, programmes of support for existing educational practice and the implementation of new creative ideas were reduced through the formation of unitary councils. This view was supported by Gatherer (1999) who reported that, as a consequence of the abolishment of the regions, a large number of advisory posts disappeared. He explained that 'ad hoc 'quality control' teams' (p.1001) were struggling to provide advisory support to teachers. The role of advisory support in the construction and dissemination of HGPE is apparent throughout this thesis.

The dominant model for innovation in Scottish schools continues to be external leadership by the centre (Ross, 1999; Philip, 1992; Gatherer, 1989). Ross notes strengths and weaknesses of such a model in the following comment;



'What is sometimes said of the Scottish [education] system is that it has a high degree of cooperation between the centre, the local level and the different agencies. This cooperation, however, confirms the leadership role of the centre and reinforces the dependency of the other parts of the system. Whether this agreement and mind set encourage a flexible and adaptable learning system is doubtful' (p.190).

The level of anxiety that teachers convey towards their apparent lack of control over the curriculum and increasing requirements to deliver externally prescribed curriculum content and teaching methods will be conveyed throughout this study.

Unlike England and Wales, there is no national curriculum in Scotland. Pupils aged 5-14 study a broad curriculum based on national guidelines and advice on the curriculum of the secondary school is given in the document 'Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages: Guidelines for Headteachers' (SCCC, 1989). The secondary school curriculum is categorised into eight curricular modes, each of which are allocated time on the curriculum. The modes are Language and Communication, Mathematical Studies and Applications, Scientific Studies and Applications, Social and Environmental Studies, Technological Activities and Applications, Creative and Aesthetic Activities, Physical Education and Religious and Moral Education. Subsequently, the curriculum in Scottish comprehensive secondary schools has become justified and dominated by a core of traditional subjects (Bryce & Humes, 1999a). The rationale of the curriculum originates from the Munn Report (SED/CCC, 1977a), whose assumptions are still generally accepted (Ross, 1999). While teachers' identification with a subject department may create a measure of collaboration within departments, Hargreaves (1994) warned that collaboration across subject boundaries has become 'severely restricted, creating pedagogical inconsistency, competitive territoriality and lack of opportunities for teachers to learn from and support each other' (p.18). The notion of collaboration and decision making is discussed later in this chapter. Post 14 year olds can take courses at Standard Grade (SG) and Higher Grade (HG), which both lead to awards in the Scottish Certificate of Education (SCE). Pupils also have a choice of National Certificate modules. A more comprehensive overview of secondary education in Scotland, including the constitutional and legal

framework, aims and objectives of secondary education, policy-making and innovation and the curriculum, assessment and evaluation is provided in Mitchell (1996). Gatherer (1989) has undertaken a thorough documentation of curriculum development in Scotland. More recently, Bryce & Humes (1999) edited a valuable reference point that addresses each of the sectors in the Scottish education system, along with observations concerning the important contexts within which education in Scotland is pursued.

### 1.3.2 Physical education in Scottish secondary schools

Physical education features in the Scottish curriculum for all first year secondary pupils through to fourth year secondary pupils (S1-S4, 11/12 - 16 yr. olds) and for many in S5 and S6 (16-18 yr. olds). What is offered as physical education within Scottish secondary schools will vary according to the certificated courses available in each school and at each year level. Irrespective of this variability the programme for S1 to S6 should permit a logical progression within activities and the way they are taught. Table 1.5 includes the relevant documentation and a summary for each physical education programme option available.

From Table 1.5 it is obvious that physical education within schools is available in various formats. The level of importance attached by individual physical education departments, in this study, to the various formats are highlighted in Chapters 5 and 6. A core provision allows pupils to do physical education without any formal assessment leading to certification. What is offered as core physical education for S3 and S4 is described by Bairner (1993), Cairney (1993) and Paterson (1993) and for S5 and S6 by Cherrie (1993), MacCorquodale (1993) and McFarlane (1993). Modular physical education encourages pupils to spend a specific number of hours on each module to gain a certificate. Certificated physical education leading to a SCE has been available since 1990 at Standard Grade (SGPE) and since 1994 at Higher Grade (HGPE). Each school has extensive decision making powers in choosing what the physical education programme entails. Hargreaves (1994) believed that where such powers were handed over to individual schools, the result could lead to 'diversity, innovation and teacher empowerment' (p.7).



The accuracy of Hargreave's statement in relation to teachers making the decision to offer or not offer HGPE will be investigated specifically in Chapters 5 and 6.

Table 1.5: Physical education programme options in Scottish secondary schools.

PE programme options	Documentation	Summary
Expressive Arts 5-14	National Guidelines for Expressive Arts 5-14 (SOED, 1992a) provides guidance on provision & pupils' attainment in PE from P1 to S2.	The four subjects included in the Expressive Arts (art & design, drama, PE and music) are allocated 15% of curriculum time between them. Six levels of attainment from A to F. Outcomes, strands and attainment targets are planned to fit with SGPE.
Core	Curriculum Paper 12 PE in Secondary Schools (SED, 1972) and SED / CCC (1977a)	Regular and adequate physical education for all pupils. Usually taught as a series of blocks of activity. Wider and deeper choice in PE activities for S5 / S6 pupils.
Standard physical education (SGPE)	Arrangements in PE: Scottish Certificate of Education SG (SEB, 1988) provides all information required to teach the course.	The four aspects of the course content are: Practical Performance, Knowledge & Understanding, Evaluating and Affective Development. Examinations set at three levels; Credit, General and Foundation.
National Certificate modules	Initiated by '16-18s in Scotland: An Action Plan' (SED, 1983). Catalogue of National Certificate modules available from SQA.	National Certificate modules may be part of an SCE course or in addition to doing such a course. Modules can contribute to the attainment of certain group awards. Pupils must gain success in all the modules that make up the award. Various types include GSVQ and Skillstarts.
Higher Grade physical education (HGPE)	Arrangements in PE: Scottish Certificate of Education HG (SEB, 1993) provides all information required to teach the course.	The four Key features of the course are: Performance, Analysis of Performance, Investigation of Performance & Social Development. An award at band A, B or C constitutes a pass.
Higher Still	Higher Still Arrangements for PE consultation document (SCCC, 1996) and Subject Guide PE (SCCC & SFEU, 1997)	Content of HGPE available at 5 levels; Access 3, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher.



### 1.3.3 A bleak outlook for a Higher in physical education?

In 1984, George Younger, the Secretary of State for Scotland (who was responsible to parliament for the overall supervision and development of Scottish education) announced that no new Higher or Post-Higher subjects should be introduced (Philip, 1992). The Secretary of State approved a limited revision of the HG examination of the Scottish Certificate of Education (SCE) and of the Certificate of Sixth Year Studies (CSYS).

The revision was to ensure that there was a smooth transition from the reformed courses of Standard Grade examinations in S4 to the revised Higher courses (Long, 1999). The Secretary of State suggested that because of the limited nature of the revision, the number of new Highers to be developed should be restricted. He consequently asked the SEB (the SQA from 1997) to consider whether a HG course in some subjects of a vocational nature could be replaced by a programme of modules. The Secretary of State took the view that a HG syllabus should not be developed in, 'any subject (such as Physical Education) in which, although there will be a Credit level syllabus, there is at present no Higher grade examination or plans to develop one' (SED / SEB, 1984). At this point, a hold had been put on all new developments at HG.

However, a later Secretary of State for Scotland, Ian Lang, took the view that there should be an opportunity for pupils to go on and study physical education at HG. It is possible that the popularity of SGPE and the support for a Higher Grade course in physical education (from teachers, the SEB physical education panel and HMI with responsibility for physical education) had resulted in such a turn around in policy (Niven, 1998a & b; Thomson, 1993). As Turley (1995) expressed, 'Once the process of certification in PE had begun it was the intention to go 'all the way', i.e., there was no point in opening some doors and not others, especially when the opportunity for HGPE existed on such a wide front' (p.1). In 1994 HGPE became part of a nationally validated system of assessment in physical education in the Scottish curriculum.

Another encouraging factor to introducing HGPE and therefore increasing opportunities available at HG may have been the dramatic increase in staying-on rates. In reporting the sharp rise in the rate of staying on in Scottish secondary schools beyond age sixteen, i.e., post-compulsory education, Paterson (1999) illustrated that the overall rate had risen steadily since the mid-1980s. Paterson also reported that the number of students in Scottish higher education had almost doubled from 1980 to 1994. A high number of students interested in pursuing post-school education could imply that there would be an increase in demand in schools for subjects at HG (Elliot & Ganson, 1999) that could serve as general entry requirements into further and higher education. HGPE has the potential to address such a need.

Moving on from the context of the Scottish education system, wider issues pertaining to teacher CDM and pupil subject choice are now discussed.

#### 1.4 Issues in curriculum decision making and pupils' subject choice

In referring to Table 1.1 it is clear to see that there has been an impressive increase in the number of centres (predominantly schools) offering HGPE and in the number of candidates (predominantly school pupils) opting to study HGPE. The numbers of centres presenting HGPE has more than doubled from 1994 to 1999 while the number of candidates within the same period has almost doubled. In order to understand why the numbers of centres becoming involved in HGPE increased it is necessary to investigate the whole issue surrounding curriculum decision making. What made teachers decide to undertake HGPE? What role did teachers play in the development of HGPE? Did teachers believe that HGPE was a worthwhile subject for pupils? In an attempt to address why the number of candidates undertaking HGPE has also continued to increase it is important to investigate the issue of pupils' subject choice. What influenced pupils to undertake HGPE? Was it the content of the course? Was it their ability within physical education?

Consequently, this study is primarily concerned with the two issues of CDM and pupils' subject choice. The following section will deal with both in turn, beginning with CDM



and the related areas of curriculum decision making in relation to physical education and curriculum development in Scotland. Teachers' role in curriculum development, teacher ownership, school-based curriculum development and curriculum change is also discussed.

Pupils' subject choice discusses the related areas of pupils' reasons for subject choice and how the ability of pupils can influence subject choice before moving on to the more specific area of pupil subject choice in physical education. This latter area discusses how the issues of practical activity content, the physical education teacher and teaching approach and opinion columns can all influence pupils' subject choice within physical education.

As pointed out previously, there is no statutory national curriculum in Scotland. Consequently, HGPE is not necessarily available to every pupil as the decision to teach HGPE is in the hands of particular schools and their teachers. Although the SOEID oversees the Scottish education system, many of the responsibilities of financing and running schools are delegated to local authorities and to schools themselves. Curriculum decision making is one of the two main themes (pupils' subject choice being the other) to be pursued in this study and is vital to not only understanding teachers' roles in curriculum development but also issues pertinent to teachers involved in considering a new addition to the curriculum. What a school will be able to achieve is partly dependent on a range of situational factors within the school other than the quality of teaching (Humes & Bryce, 1999) and this is investigated in Chapter 6.

#### 1.4.1 Teacher curriculum decision making

Teachers make hundreds of decisions daily before, during and after teaching and it is important to distinguish between a decision per se and the decision making process.

‘The decision making process concerns events leading up to the moment of choice and beyond, whereas a decision means to resolve upon a specific choice or course of action’ (Drummond, 1991, p.12).



It is the decision making process that this research intends to investigate as this relates to curriculum issues such as teachers' involvement within curriculum change and the subsequent sense of ownership that teachers possess in relation to such changes. McIntyre (1985) reported that decision making regarding curriculum structure, syllabus content and examinations in relation to school innovation has always been centralised in Scotland, with the involvement of HMIs (Her Majesty's Inspectorate), the SEB (Scottish Examination Board; the Scottish Qualifications Authority, SQA since 1997) and Joint Working Parties (JWPs). However, although these groups are responsible for such tasks, English authors Good & Brophy (1990) believed that the decisions facing teachers are more complex than those facing curriculum designers, 'Teachers cannot take time to devise and perfect instruction intended for individual learners' (p.299). Lawton (in Whitty, 1985) proposed 'co-operative decision making' generally, in which the aim was to reach a consensus about the curriculum. His proposal was very similar to that of Bernstein (1990) in the sense that he proposed a multi-level scheme with different groups assigned at the different levels of decision making. In 'Changing teachers, changing times' Hargreaves (1994) reported a change in culture where collaborative decision-making is a cornerstone of postmodern organisations stating that, 'the search for more collaborative modes of decision-making is posing problems for the norms of teacher isolation on which teachers' work has been based' (p.10).

Prescott (1980) identified five distinct decision making processes from the autocratic process to the delegation process where the participation in decision making moves from leader-centred to group-centred. There is concern that those involved in curriculum decision making often make decisions on the basis of their own values and experiences rather than through an analysis that takes account of all the relevant factors (Whitty, 1985; Prescott, 1980). Skilbeck (1976) identified three models of curriculum development in relation to 'decision taking'; rational deductive decision taking, rational interactive decision taking and intuitive decision taking. The first model advocates a centrally-dominated curriculum system, the second where decisions are shared by a wide range of participants while the third departs from rational planning and means end thinking to

favour spontaneity and creativity. He supported rational interactive decision making as it requires total curriculum planning and not what Gatherer (1989) terms 'piecemeal' alterations within the curriculum. Raymond (1991) referred to Everard & Morris' (1990) two models of conflict; the first in which individuals protect their own interests and are prepared to support their decision-making at all costs and the second collective responsibility that focuses on individual and group interests with participative decision-making.

Chapters 4 will foreground the model of curriculum development that was favoured in relation to the development of HGPE. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will highlight, in relation to different individuals involved in the HGPE curriculum development process, the extent to which decisions are made on the basis of values and experiences. For example, in Chapter 6 of this study, data from two Principal Teachers of physical education will highlight the weighting that each teacher allocated to their own values, and the views of the members of their respective departments, in their decision to teach or not teach HGPE. This study hopes to address questions that Fullan (1982) believed teachers needed to answer before deciding to support or reject a change. The three questions were concerned with establishing if the change was needed, if there was support for the change from 'administration' and if fellow teachers were likely to be interested in the change. Every change involves a choice and Hargreaves (1994) noted how choices can be affected;

'Which choices we make will ultimately depend on the depth of that understanding [of the context, process and consequences of change] but also on the creativity of our strategies, the courage of our convictions, and the direction of our values' (p.18).

This study is concerned with identifying why teachers make particular choices in relation to the specific curriculum development of HGPE.

Lines (1992) investigated pre-conditions and constraints that are evident when teachers participate in a CDM process. The constraints and pressures experienced by teachers in



making decisions tend to be very particular to the circumstances in individual schools, e.g., staff, buildings, time and resources (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Penney & Evans, 1999; Evans, 1986; Walton & Welton, 1976).

Walton & Welton (1976) and Hodge (1984) drew attention to the potential constraint that individual's interests and ideas can have on their foresight of what is possible. Walton & Welton reported that educational institutions undertaking curriculum development deem the identification of constraints as important, with the institutions carefully appraising and addressing (where possible) the majority of constraints before developing the curriculum. Pre-conditions and constraints that are evident when teachers are deciding to teach or not to teach HGPE are quantified and discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

Personal rewards and costs that emerge from undertaking a curriculum development influence how teachers make sense of curriculum innovations and use them (if at all) in the classroom (Brown, 1992; Sparkes, 1991b; Fullan, 1982). Rewards need to outweigh the costs for effective implementation with teachers likely to resist change if costs outweigh rewards (Sparkes, 1991b; Fullan, 1982). Professional values which teachers are obliged to protect, and subsequently will influence teacher CDM, include children's needs and interests and a degree of autonomy in determining an individual pupil's educational needs and the best ways of meeting them (Gatherer, 1999). The impact of rewards and costs on the decision to teach or not to teach HGPE and the extent to which teachers pursue the notion of addressing students' learning requirements and how this affects teacher CDM is illustrated in Chapters 5 and 6. Implications for how pupils' class rewards and costs in deciding whether or not to undertake HGPE are investigated in Chapter 7.

Doyle & Ponder (1977) discussed the practicality ethic in teacher decision making, explaining that teachers judged changes by their practicality for the particular teacher in their particular context. As Fullan (1982) advocated, 'teachers' reasons for rejecting many innovations are every bit as rational as those of the advocates prompting them' (p.116). The effect that contexts in which teachers work have on teacher CDM is the focus of Chapter 6.



It has been suggested that assessment and certification constitute the greatest sources of influence upon the curriculum (Bryce & Humes, 1999b). Not only will this study investigate the form of assessment involved in HGPE but also the management of assessment and certification within the school and external to the school.

As stated earlier, a central purpose of this thesis is to investigate CDM, i.e., how and why teachers actually do change or choose not to change the physical education provision. This study is primarily concerned with the teachers' role in CDM and more specifically the physical educators' role in physical education CDM. It is to the latter issue that the discussion now turns.

#### 1.4.1.1 Curriculum decision making in school physical education programmes

A small amount of research has reported reasons for particular physical educators deciding whether or not to teach HGPE and these are summarised in Table 1.6. Although Forsyth (1994), Muir (1994) and Lobban (1994) were all teaching HGPE they also highlighted issues that they had to contend with in their bid to offer HGPE. These included a lack of in-service training, negotiation of physical education facilities, planning of the HGPE course and its delivery and their own level of knowledge and teaching expertise. These issues may have been so prominent in other schools that it was not possible to offer HGPE and subsequently the decision would be made not to teach HGPE. The extent to which issues such as these played a part in the particular teachers' decision making regarding the teaching of HGPE in this study is investigated in greater depth in Chapters 5 and 6.

Table1.6: Reasons given for choosing to teach or not teach HGPE.

Author & Year	Factors which influenced teachers to offer HGPE
McFarlane (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff attending a number of in-service courses related directly to HGPE</li><li>• Receiving support material from the SCCC</li><li>• Teacher support material from the region</li><li>• Financial support from the school</li><li>• Assistance from the region to purchase materials</li><li>• School having already achieved good SGPE results</li><li>• Adequate number of school periods was allocated for a HGPE class</li></ul>
Forsyth (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interest and calibre of pupils were encouraging</li><li>• The school had been involved in the piloting of HGPE</li></ul>
Muir (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Belief that teachers did not have the right to deny the pupils the opportunity to study HGPE</li></ul>
Lobban (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school had been involved in the piloting of HGPE</li></ul>
Author & Year	Factors which influenced teachers not to offer HGPE
Cherrie (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PE staff not convinced of the value of academic courses when pupils and the wider community have more practical expectations</li><li>• Unlikely there will ever be a viable section for a course in HGPE, i.e., calibre of pupils or number of interested pupils</li><li>• Present staffing compliment does not provide for any surplus time on the timetable</li></ul>
Coleman et al., 1996	<p><i>(Investigated why teachers (70 PTs o. PE) had chosen not to include the biomechanics element within the HGPE syllabus)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of in-service courses</li><li>• Scarcity of material provided by the SCCC and other bodies</li></ul>

With such limited information available on the decision making process in relation to offering or not offering HGPE, it was necessary to investigate decision-making influences within the physical education programme in a wider context. Two Scottish articles written in respect to physical education in S3 and S4 and physical education in S5 and S6 highlighted influences on physical education teachers and consequently how this could affect implementation of physical education within schools. These are summarised in Table 1.7.

Table 1.7: Individual perspectives on influences affecting the Scottish physical education programme.

Author & Year	Influencing factors
Cherrie (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of pupils</li><li>• Calibre of pupils</li><li>• Staffing</li><li>• Educational beliefs of staff</li></ul>
MacCorquodale (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Availability of staff and facilities</li><li>• Number of interested pupils</li></ul>
McFarlane (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of staff</li><li>• Resources</li><li>• Facilities</li></ul>
Cairney (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilities and resources</li></ul>

While the research already mentioned in Tables 1.6 and 1.7 reported individual perspectives, a number of studies have quantified physical educators' responses regarding teachers' perceptions of the factors that influenced their work as physical education teachers. The ILEA (1988), PEA (1987), Underwood (1983) and Kane (1974) all set out to assess the level of importance certain factors had on influencing work as a physical education teacher in an English and Welsh educational context and Hendry (1978) and Sharp (1991) from a Scottish perspective. The aim, sample and main findings emerging from each of these studies is summarised in Table 1.8 on the following page.



Author & Year	Aim of study	Sample and response rate	Number of listed options and top ranked items
Kane (1974)	To assess the level of importance certain factors had on influencing work as a PE teacher.	568 secondary schools in England and Wales. 82% response rate.	20 items listed. Six highest ranked influences were: adequacy of facilities; timetable allocation to PE; amount of money allocated; freedom to experiment; attitude of school staff to PE; timetabled load.
Hendry (1978)	Teachers were to compile a list of positive and negative influences affecting their work and rank them in order.	75 PE teachers from Scottish secondary schools.	Top 3 ranked positive influences were: freedom to experiment with different teaching approaches; recognition from superiors for worthwhile work; adequacy of facilities. Top 3 ranked negative influences were timetable/teaching load/clerical duties; considerable proportion of pupils hostile to school; 'intellectually inferior' label given to PE teachers.
Underwood (1983)	To investigate the importance PE teachers attached to factors which may have influenced their planning of the PE curriculum.	793 secondary schools in 10 authorities in England and Wales. 77% response rate.	23 factors listed. Six highest ranked influencing factors were: adequate facilities; timetable allocation; aims of PE; logical progression; personal needs of the child; interests and abilities of PE staff.
Physical Education Association (1987)	To enquire into the matters of concern that may have directly affected PE teachers in carrying out their duties.	414 secondary school PE programmes chosen from a one-in-ten random sample of secondary schools in England and Wales. 53% response rate.	20 issues listed. Five highest ranked influences were: the bare adequacy of facilities; the low timetabled allocation to PE; the teaching load; the small amount of money allocated; the lack of recognition from superiors and colleagues.
Inner London Education Authority (1988)	To assess the importance of items on influencing PE teachers work.	All Heads of PE departments in ILEA secondary schools. 81% response rate.	20 issues listed. Top five ranked most important were: adequacy of facilities available to PE; timetable allocation given to PE; amount of money allotted to PE for equipment; timetabled teaching load involved; recognition from superiors of worthwhile work; attitude of school staff to PE.
Sharp (1991)	To enquire into teachers' perceptions of the factors which influenced their work as PE teachers.	All 484 Principal Teachers of PE in Scottish secondary schools. 61% response rate.	23 items. Top five ranked influencing factors were: amount of time spent teaching; adequacy of facilities available for PE; timetable allocation given to PE; number of clerical duties; amount of money allotted for equipment.

Table 1.8: UK studies investigating influences on school physical education (PE) programmes.

It is obvious from Table 1.8 that the top five or six ranked items were similar in the Scottish context (reported by Hendry, 1978 and Sharp, 1991) and the English and Welsh context. This verifies Hendry's (1978), dated but still relevant, suggestion that a common ideology runs through the teaching of physical education in Great Britain. All six studies reported that the adequacy of facilities and the timetable allocation given to physical education were the factors that had the greatest influence on physical education teachers' work. The amount of money allotted to physical education and issues relating to the physical education teachers (capability and workload) were each mentioned in the top five or six influences in four of the studies. The items mentioned in Table 1.8 do not differ greatly from the individual perspectives listed earlier regarding influences that affect the implementation of HGPE (Table 1.6) and the physical education programme in general (Table 1.7).

Again, the extent to which issues such as these noted in Table 1.8 played a part in the particular teachers' decision making regarding the teaching of HGPE in this study is investigated in greater depth in Chapters 5 and 6.

Another avenue pursued in reviewing the related literature on teachers' decision making in physical education was to view studies that had reported reasons for introducing examinable physical education and the perceived benefits such an introduction would have on the physical education subject. The reviewed studies are summarised in Table 1.9 on the following page.

From Table 1.9 it can be seen that the reasons for introducing a particular physical education programme were primarily teachers' beliefs of the benefits of such an introduction. It is obvious from Table 1.9 that teachers believed pupils and the physical education subject would benefit from the introduction of examinable physical education, and this to some extent must have influenced teachers towards offering a particular physical education programme.



Author & Year	Aim of study	Sample and response rate	Number of listed options and top ranked items
Schools Council for PE (1982)	To assess PE teachers' reasons for introducing a CSE course in PE.	In 14 regions covering England and Wales all PE departments in schools where a CSE PE course had been approved by the examination board. Response rate not calculated.	19 statements. From 106 responses five highest ranked reasons were: so that pupils may gain greater knowledge and understanding of the subject; so that pupils may study the subject in more depth; it provides a qualification for those interested in the subject; it raises standards and improves performances; it widens the experience of staff.
Aylett (1990)	To investigate PE teachers' perceptions of the introduction and delivery of a GCSE course in PE.	20 departments (33 schools in Gwent). Response rate not given.	29 items. Five highest ranked items perceived as benefits of GCSE PE were: greater understanding and knowledge; qualification for further study; another avenue for PE; worthwhile knowledge as other subjects; ensure sufficient timetable periods.
Schools Council PE Committee (1982)	To investigate the importance PE teachers gave to the benefits and advantages of CSE PE.	In 14 regions covering England and Wales all PE departments in schools where a CSE PE course had been approved by the examination board. Response rate not calculated.	27 statements. Five highest ranked important benefits were: it provides greater understanding and knowledge for the pupils; it provides an opportunity for pupils to study in greater depth; it increases the pupils' enjoyment / satisfaction; it motivates the pupils; makes staff think more about their subject and curriculum.
Sharp (1991b)	To investigate the extent to which teachers agreed or disagreed with topics relating to SGPE.	All 484 Principal Teachers of PE in Scottish secondary schools. 61% response rate.	21 comments. Top five comments that received the most agreement were: SGPE requires an expansion of in-service training; teachers have too little time to prepare SGPE material; SGPE will enhance pupils' knowledge of sport / recreation; SGPE course development requires more outside help; SGPE will enhance PE's contribution to the school curriculum.

Table 1.9: Teachers' rationales for introducing examinations in physical education (PE) and perceived benefits.



However, Table 1.9 reports research that investigated teachers' rationale for introducing CSE physical education and GCSE physical education (in England and Wales) and SGPE (in Scotland). No systematic large-scale study has been conducted into teachers' rationale for introducing HGPE and it is for this reason that the issue of curriculum decision making is crucial to this study.

While the above discussion has focussed on physical educators' role in curriculum decision making, it is to the more generic issue of curriculum development and subsequently teachers' role in curriculum decision making and curriculum development that the focus now turns.

#### 1.4.1.2 Curriculum development in Scotland

Gatherer (1989) stated that different levels of generality operate for curriculum development, from the most general level to the level of greatest specificity. Gatherer identified four levels of curriculum development (academic, national, local and school) and the relationship of the different contributors to the curriculum development process in Scotland is illustrated in Figure 1.1. In investigating SGPE as a process of curriculum development, MacLeod (1992) illustrated the communication gap between national and school level and also the problems involved in developing responsibilities to a more local, wider and less centrally controlled audience.

The upper, most general level is the 'academic' level while the level of greatest specificity is the 'school' level. As Gatherer explained;

'Although it is customary to depict curriculum development as operating in a downward movement, from the 'top' national level to the 'bottom' school level, it is the school itself which is the most important development agency...curriculum cannot be defined simplistically as a set of instructions or guidelines handed down to the teachers: it must be perceived as a dynamic process, always changing in accordance with the professional judgements of individual teachers. This has not

been understood in Scotland until recently; and for that reason the importance of curriculum development at school level has been seriously underestimated' (pp.11-12).

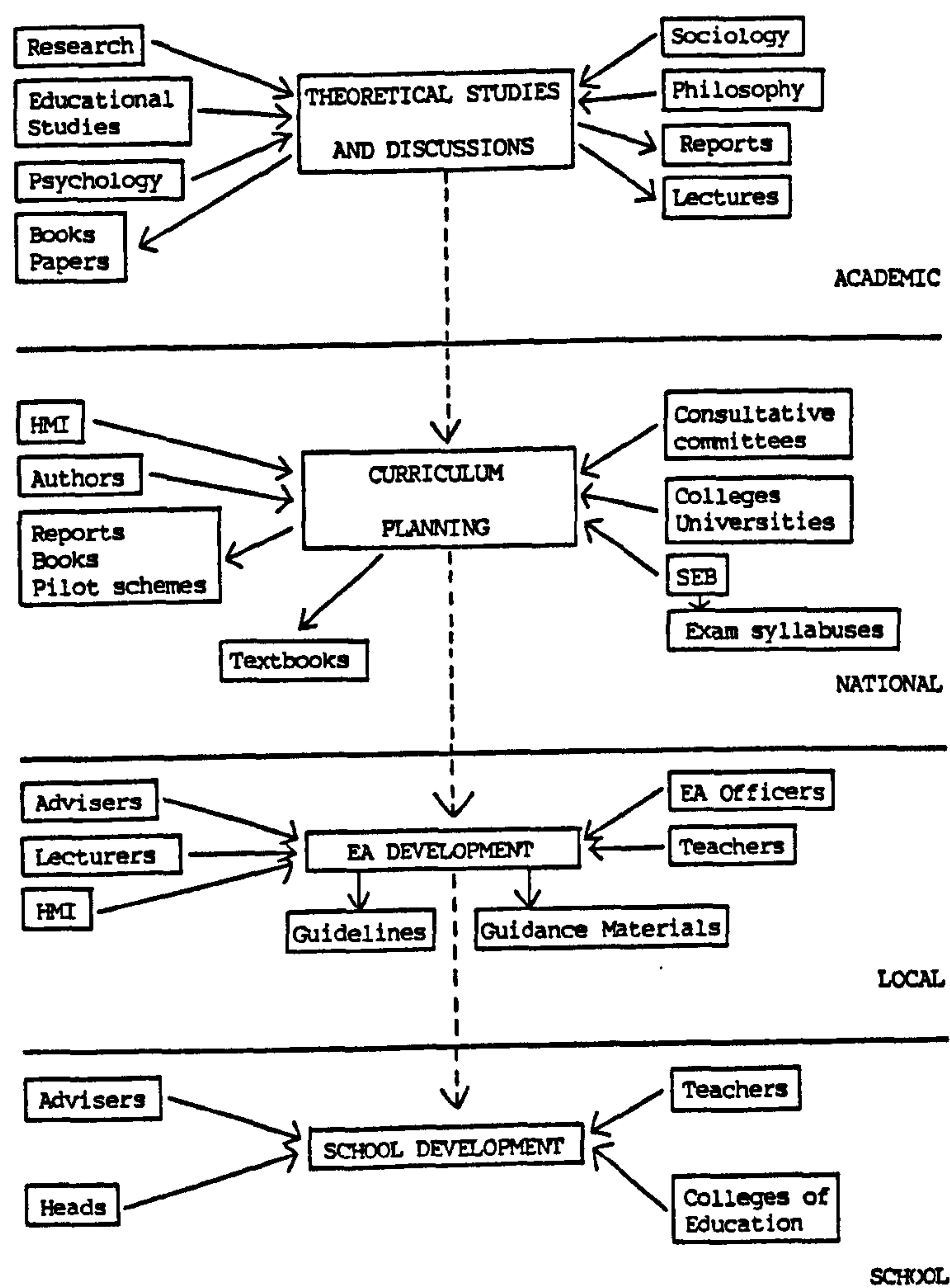


Figure 1.1: Levels of curriculum development in Scotland



From Gatherer's above quote it is obvious that he supported the importance that schools and teachers had, and should be encouraged to have, in curriculum development. Before discussing teachers' role in curriculum development the focus turns to two particular pieces of work concerned with the process of curriculum development in physical education from a Scottish perspective - M.Ed. dissertations by MacLeod (1992) and Niven (1998b). Both were concerned with investigating a particular development in physical education using the three levels of initiation, implementation and institutionalisation and subsequently interviewed people involved in the development at these different levels, i.e., initiators, implementors and recipients. MacLeod focussed on the development of SGPE and Niven on HGPE.

MacLeod suggested that there had been a lack of an overall strategy for the development of SGPE and that the input throughout the development was primarily centralised. Subsequently, there was a lack of teacher involvement both in decision making and in determining policy. Other constraints of the development of SGPE highlighted by MacLeod were a lack of resources including staff expertise, finance, time and training and poor co-ordination between national and local levels. Concern was also raised in relation to the type of pupils selecting SGPE and a lack of overall strategy, i.e., a lack of policy regarding implementation and a lack of help from centralised sources.

MacLeod was able to generate a model of development that articulated with that of SGPE from the research stage, through development and diffusion to adoption and implementation. It is the latter stages that are particularly interesting in relation to the uptake of HGPE, identifying the individual environments that teachers work in and how they affect teacher CDM. MacLeod warned that teachers may not have resources to develop programmes or the same enthusiasm or commitment of the initiators and that 'The lack of uniformity in the characteristics of the users makes it difficult to transfer change wholesale from one setting to the other' (p.189). He reported a number of reasons given by 3 Principal Teachers (PTs) of physical education decision to become involved in SGPE. They included wanting to support the direction in which physical education was



developing, securing time, staff and status for the subject and concern for the pupils. It emerged that the PTs of physical education very much controlled the CDM process, 'What is evident is that the motivation and views of the PT of PE were prime factors which explained the time of the department's entry into the development' (p.154). The role of PTs in teacher CDM in relation to HGPE is examined in Chapter 6.

Niven (1998b) complemented MacLeod's work by reviewing and analysing the process of developing HGPE, choosing to focus on the implementation phase. Her findings were also similar to those of MacLeod in identifying that a 'top down' approach of curriculum development was evident in relation to HGPE and subsequently that the HGPE course was developed centrally by a small group of experts before being passed 'down' to teachers to implement. Despite the lack of direct teacher involvement, Niven believed that positive features of the HGPE development were the involvement of a tight knit group of experts with recent experience of similar curriculum developments, the designation of pilot schools and a network of physical education advisors.

Along with Gatherer (1999), Niven adopts a positive stance in relation to how curriculum is developed in Scotland, and in physical education more specifically. Niven believed that the strengths of the HGPE development far outweighed its weaknesses and reported strengths as being the involvement of advisors at all stages of the development, the selection of the individuals making up the JWP and the pilot phase of HGPE. The challenge to such a stance will hopefully be evident in Chapter 4 when the agents and agencies involved in the construction and production of the HGPE syllabus are reported. Such beliefs will continue to be challenged when reporting the level of ownership of the HGPE syllabus portrayed by teachers (Chapters 5 and 6) and the level to which the externally produced HGPE syllabus meets the needs of Scottish upper secondary pupils (Chapter 7). Two major weaknesses of the HGPE development identified by Niven were the lack of time allocated to the process and the selection of topics for exemplar materials. These are two issues that will become evident in discussions in Chapter 8.

By interviewing three Principal Teachers of physical education (PTPE) Niven reported reasons given for offering HGPE. These included PTs perceiving their role to lead and develop curricular initiatives, believing they had more experience and knowledge of the course due to being present at the National Conference and wanting to be 'a part of the action from day one', shaping the make-up of the course. There was also the expectation by their advisor of physical education that they would be involved in the development of the course. In Chapter 6 the extent to which two PTs of physical education in two case study schools support these views is identified.

This study hopes to contribute to the work carried out by MacLeod and Niven by using HGPE to understand what affects the recipients, discussed in both pieces of research, from deciding to offer or not offer a curriculum development in physical education. Consequently, this study centres on understanding teacher CDM. Pupil subject choice, an issue not addressed by either of the above authors, is also foreground in this study in order to examine the effect that a curriculum development constructed externally to schools can have on winning or losing favour with those it is targeted at.

MacLeod's and Niven's work raised a number of issues related to the development of certificated physical education which are more generally applicable to curriculum development. These issues included teachers' role in curriculum development, teacher ownership and school-based curriculum development. Each issue will now be addressed in turn.

#### 1.4.1.3 Teachers' role in curriculum development

The level of influence teachers have over changing developments in curricula to suit their individual schools is not matched in the influence they possess in the development of such curricula outside of the school context (Penney & Evans, 1999). Even though this appears to be the case there has been strong agreement that teachers are central to curriculum planning and development as it is teachers who ultimately decide whether or not, or to what extent, to implement innovations (Gatherer, 1999; Brown, 1992; Sparkes, 1991a & b;



McIntyre, 1985). Teachers are more likely to accept innovations if they are deemed to be practical and do not challenge teachers' already established ways of teaching (McIntyre, 1985), although physical education teachers are known to be especially resistant to change (Raymond, 1991; Sparkes, 1990).

There is a lack of professional development support that teachers are encouraged to pursue and consequently this has an effect on their lack of knowledge, understanding and skill in dealing with curriculum development. According to Almond (1976);

‘For the teacher, innovation has meant that they have been asked to learn procedures, vocabulary and concepts that are not only new but likely to conflict with highly-overlearned attitudes and ways of thinking’ (p.107).

Although Almond's comment can perhaps be accused of being dated, it still appears to be relevant, verifying the notion that teacher (professional) development is inseparable from curriculum development (Kirk; 1997; Evans, 1984; Rudduck, 1984; Gibbon, 1976). The professional development of those involved in the construction of a syllabus is relevant to understanding how and why specific subject syllabus emerges with a distinct identity. The extent of professional development and the impact that individual's experience and background had on the construction of the HGPE syllabus is discussed in Chapter 8 as is the extent to which the professional development and background of teachers influenced the decision to teach or not to teach HGPE. The professional development of teachers is relevant to understanding why teachers make specific decisions about the curriculum.

The extent of teachers' formal involvement in the production of curriculum development is a concern of a number of authors (Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Hargreaves, 1994; Fullan, 1982). Hargreaves & Evans suggested that 'It is time for teachers to be the included vanguard of reform, and not be made its marginalised victims' (p.13). This calls for teachers to be genuinely involved in curriculum reform rather than the assumption that by involving some teachers on curriculum committees an implementation would be more likely to be accepted by other teachers (Fullan, 1982). As Fullan explained, the majority of



teachers are still on the receiving end of new policy and programmes many more times than they are on the initiating end. Hargreaves (1994) was aware of the lack of admittance from reformers that the involvement of teachers in educational change was likely to increase the success of a proposed change. Without such involvement from teachers, those involved in the construction and production of a curriculum reform are unaware of teachers' desires for change or for the conservation of their current practice. This study sets out to identify what makes teachers change and what makes them resist change. What factors influence teachers in their decision to undertake a curriculum innovation or to maintain their current practice? Hargreaves points out the value of such an investigation through the following comment (author's emphasis);

'If we can understand teachers' own desires for change *and* for conversation, along with the conditions that strengthen or weaken such desires, we will get valuable insights from the grassroots of the profession, from those who work in the frontlines of our classrooms, about *how* change can be made most effectively, as well as *what* we should change and *what* we should preserve' (p.11).

In order to understand the specific reasons teachers give in relation to making decisions regarding the curriculum it is necessary to understand the place of teachers in the change process more generally. This issue is addressed throughout this study.

The perceived degree of control that teachers believe they have encountered in the evolution of a change in the curriculum is another issue (in addition to teachers' professional development and background) which can influence teachers in making a particular decision in relation to undertaking curriculum change. It is to this issue, commonly referred to as 'teacher ownership', that the discussion now focuses.

#### 1.4.1.4 Teacher ownership

The importance of teachers experiencing ownership of curriculum change is stressed by a number of researchers (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Gavin, 1999; Brown, 1992 & Gatherer,

1989). Kirk & Macdonald argue that the opportunity for teachers to have some degree of control on curriculum matters in the local context of implementation affects the extent of teacher ownership and report findings that illustrate the possible involvement of teachers in educational reform, as does Gavin (1999);

'The involvement of practitioners in the whole process of planning, developing, monitoring and reviewing is essential in reflecting ownership, in maintaining confidence and in influencing the direction of change' (p.444).

Although teachers' role in curriculum development is very much restricted to the school context they are allowed more autonomy and decision-making in such a context. Writing from an English perspective, Penney & Evans (1999) agree that the construction of a school subject such as physical education, what Bernstein (1990) calls the 'instructional discourse', predominantly excludes the involvement of teachers and consequently, what is to be thought of as physical education is decided for teachers. The major contribution made by teachers in educational reform is by adapting the 'instructional discourse' to their individual school contexts. The modification of curricula by teachers is the rule, not the exception (Kirk, 1990). However, this does not dismiss the possibility that many individual teachers ask for more direction and clarity from external agencies as to what and how they should be teaching (Fullan, 1982). Teachers' bid to acquire such direction and clarity from the SEB in relation to delivering HGPE will become evident in Chapter 8.

Chen & Ennis (1995) examined the subject-pedagogical content knowledge transformation process and reported that although physical education teachers shared a common subject content-knowledge base, they demonstrated a personalised pedagogical content knowledge repertoire, with the classroom curriculum being closely connected to the pedagogical content knowledge base. The implication was that teachers choose an appropriate form of discourse in relation to the abilities and needs of the particular students. Consequently, a given innovation can mean different things to different teachers. It is reasonable to believe that once a curriculum is constructed it can only remain effective and successful if it adapts to the environment(s) in which it is to operate. Consequently, any development in



curriculum will evolve in accordance with particular forces within an environment. The extent to which teachers appear to make the decision to teach or not to teach HGPE in relation to the particular context in which they are working is investigated in Chapter 6.

Physical education teachers may be less successful or interested in the implementation of a curriculum development as they would be had they felt they had been involved in an official role (Kirk, 1992b; Sparkes, 1991a & b) and there are current examples of this occurring. A particular example of such an incident was when teachers' lack of involvement in the development of the NCPE resulted in their enthusiasm for the innovative implementation being weak (Penney & Evans, 1999). Data reported in this study (particularly Chapters 4 and 6) convey the level of commitment and ownership physical education teachers' experience towards the development and implementation of HGPE. MacLeod (1992), in discussing the process of curriculum development in relation to SGPE, reported how one particular PT did not identify herself as an owner of such a development 'since she had been only implementing a received product' (p. 170).

One way of increasing a sense of teacher ownership is by promoting school-based curriculum development rather than curriculum development that is pursued by those external to the school.

#### 1.4.1.5 School-based curriculum development

A distinction can be drawn between school-based development and externally planned development (McIntyre, 1985). School-based development allows teachers in individual schools to direct all phases of the development from planning through to adoption while externally planned development results in teachers implementing a development that has been planned externally to the school. McIntyre believed that school-based development is the only kind of curriculum development which stands a chance of success stating that unless development is school-based, the development itself is more than likely to be superficial. Another advocate of school-based curriculum development was Skilbeck (1984) who believed that the development of the curriculum should be a normal function



of the school. A particular teacher-initiated innovation in the context of school-based curriculum development in physical education was detailed by Kirk (1986 & 1988b), emphasising how teachers can be involved in the innovative process at a number of different levels. While Kirk illustrated that it was possible for teachers to govern curriculum development through school-based curriculum development, it is anticipated that this study will report that teachers had no such role in the development of HGPE. I hope to illustrate how HGPE was constructed by individuals (from the SEB, SCCC, etc.) outside of schools, what Bernstein (1990) terms the 'recontextualising field', rather than by teachers working in the school context, what Bernstein terms the 'secondary field'. The level of teacher involvement from Kirk's school-based curriculum development to the lack of teacher involvement in HGPE will be evident.

While Kirk's (1986 & 1988b) research strongly supported school-based curriculum development, there are a number of issues that challenge the success of such development (Gatherer, 1989; Kirk, 1988b; Skilbeck, 1984). Low esteem and inadequacy in staff, lack of relevant skills and lack of interest in staff in sustaining the change process are possible problems. In discussing the notion of 'school based development' Gatherer (1989) highlighted the change in the meaning of the term from development initiated or controlled by schools to the piloting of centrally produced courses in schools. This was very much the case in relation to the piloting of HGPE. Specific schools were chosen to pilot an area of the curriculum that had initially been conceived by others outside the school context. To a certain extent piloting of centrally produced courses can engage teachers in developing and evaluating the innovation, what Gatherer terms 'a sense of ownership'.

But what about those that are not interested in pursuing curriculum change? The issue of curriculum change is the final discussion in this section.

#### 1.4.1.6 Curriculum change

It is unrealistic to expect all teachers to be interested in change, or to participate in the same way if they are interested (Fullan, 1982). There is the possibility that a new

curriculum approach can relay the message to teachers that what they are already teaching must be changed and a new approach adopted (Brown, 1992). However, it is possible that certain circumstances do not require change or make change impossible. For example, teachers may believe that the current programme they offer is superior to that advocating a change in curricula (Fullan, 1982). Chapter 6 discusses the impact that physical education programmes already established in particular schools have had on teachers deciding to offer or not to offer a change in the physical education curriculum. Chapter 6 will also support Fullan's (1982) belief that change is not necessarily progress. In relation to one particular case study school, the aim is to expand on Fullan's insight that 'Not attempting to change may be the most appropriate response, in some situations, if there is disagreement about the innovation, or if the minimal conditions for change do not exist' (p.122).

Sparkes (1991a) explained three ways in which educational change has been addressed; technological (top-down change), ecological (teaching environment) and cultural perspectives (personal realities). The technological perspective focuses on knowledge as a product, directed by those working outside of schools who then aim to transfer it to teachers in schools. This perspective portrays the teacher 'as a more or less passive adopter'. The ecological perspective accepts the notion that the differing environments that teachers work in are the main criteria on which to base change. The conditions that teachers work in explain the reasons for change in schools. The cultural perspective highlights the effect that the cultural context of a school can have in the change process and supports seeking the thoughts of teachers. The latter perspective is reflective of the system of curriculum development at senior school level in Queensland, Australia which involves teachers as partners in the curriculum development process (Glasby, 2000). It is anticipated however that the prominent way of addressing curriculum change in relation to HGPE will be shown to resemble Sparkes' technological perspective. Sparkes' three perspectives illustrate, to differing extents, Bernstein's (1990) notion of teachers as developers of curriculum, receivers of change and reproducers of knowledge. The prominence of these three teacher roles will be examined in relation to HGPE throughout the thesis.



Bernstein's (1990) model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse that frames this study (Chapter 2) does not entertain the notion of teachers as change agents but merely as receivers of change. Fullan (1993) believed it was not farfetched to conceive of teachers as change agents, insisting that 'educators must see themselves and be seen as experts in the dynamics of change' (p.4). The central role of teachers in educational change is emphasised by Hargreaves & Evans (1997), Hargreaves (1994) and Fullan (1982), with an agreement that the final decision regarding the suitability of educational change falls with individual teachers. As Hargreaves (1994) explained;

'Teachers don't merely deliver the curriculum. They develop, define it and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get' (p.ix).

If the above statement is so well supported by the above authors concerned with reporting and discussing the issue of curriculum change, to what extent are teachers involved in the process of curriculum development? The answer to this question will be sought in Chapter 4 and developed throughout this study.

Just as it is important to investigate CDM and teachers' involvement with CDM, it is valuable to examine pupils' subject choice generally and then in relation to physical education. It was anticipated that the discussion on CDM would highlight issues pertinent to teachers involved in considering a new addition to the curriculum. It is expected that an investigation of pupils' subject choice will highlight how the particular construction of a syllabus (e.g., the focus of study) can encourage or discourage pupils from undertaking the particular subject.

#### 1.4.2 Pupils' subject choice

In referring to previous studies concerned with paying greater attention to student voice in subject and course choice, Stables (1997) reported evidence to suggest that subject choice



can increase students' motivation and enthusiasm. Many teachers and parents regard pupil choice as an important factor in sustaining motivation and in meeting career aspirations (Gavin, 1999). Gavin also pointed out that the SCCC Curricular Guidelines (SCCC, 1989) placed considerable emphasis on opportunities for pupil choice.

This section discusses the related areas of pupils' reasons for subject choice and how the ability of pupils can influence subject choice before moving on to the more specific area of pupil subject choice in physical education. This latter area discusses how the issues of practical activity content, the physical education teacher and teaching approach and opinion columns can influence pupils' subject choice within physical education.

#### 1.4.2.1 Reasons for subject choice

A pupil's subject choice in secondary school is due to a number of interacting factors (Cooper, 1995). Woods (1984) undertook a study of the subject choice process of third year students (14-15 year olds) within an English secondary school, highlighting that making a choice involves not only pupils but parents and teachers. Although this particular study is dated and consequently a number of things may have changed, Wood's method of categorising responses is still relevant to education today. Woods found that the range of choice varied among pupils depending on different social origins leading to different educational experiences. In asking pupils for their reasons for subject choices, two main factors appeared to emerge; what Woods termed 'an affective one' (liking or disliking) and 'a utilitarian one' (career and ability). Career intention has been revealed as a strong factor in subject choice in Britain (Pratt et al., 1984; Stables & Stables, 1995). Woods reported that the pupils in his study fell into two types. Pupils who made up one type tended to, 'like subjects for official, supportive, traditional educational reasons' while the other type liked subjects, 'for unofficial, counter-cultural, social reasons' (p.48). Chapter 7 mirrors pupils' responses to 'Why did you choose to take HGPE?' and 'Why did you choose not to take HGPE?' to Wood's 'affective' and 'utilitarian' factors.

Teachers are expected to offer advice and guidance on subject choice in the best interests of the pupil. However, teachers' definitions of success and failure is, according to Woods (1984), the most powerful factor in encouraging pupils to choose subjects. He further explained that an effect of teachers vying for better examination results causes them to monitor the selection of subjects with great care, stressing that teachers of all other school subjects are exposed to the same forces as their colleagues in attracting suitable pupils. The criteria teachers tend to use for assessing pupils' selection of subjects are pupils' past achievement and future potential. He also suggested that teachers and parents are influential in subject choice. He stated that teachers do not necessarily have individual pupil's interests at heart but rather are more concerned with the status, career and professionalisation that certain options can cater for and that parents tend to support the way in which teachers make subject choices on behalf of the pupil. Stables (1997) warned that teachers should be aware of the danger of letting their own self-interest affect the advice they give to pupils choosing subjects. This approach to subject choice does not account for the potential ability that the pupil possesses to undertake certain subjects. It is to such an issue that the focus now turns.

#### 1.4.2.2 The ability of pupils

Ability has also been reported as a major factor in subject choice in Britain (Ryrie et al., 1979; Stables, 1997). The SEB (1997) described the extent to which subject choice depended on the ability of the candidate. For example, of the 1551 S5 candidates who took HGPE in 1995-1996, 21% took only HGPE, 25% took HGPE and 1 other subject, 28% took HGPE and 2 other subjects, 20% took HGPE and 3 other subjects and 6% took HGPE and 4 other subjects. Therefore, those taking HGPE mostly take 2 or 3 Highers (an average of 2.7 Highers in relation to an all subject average of 3.2). Those taking 6 and 7 Highers do not choose HGPE. This pattern is similar for other subjects including Secretarial Studies and Religious Education.

Subjects such as English, French, Mathematics and Chemistry have a higher proportion of pupils who are doing 3 or 4 Highers over and above one of the mentioned subjects. For



example, pupils doing Mathematics tend to do another 3 or 4 Highers working out at an average of 4.2 Highers. There is therefore a relationship between subject choice and number of Highers taken with the implication that those pupils who are not capable of undertaking a higher number of subjects at Higher Grade choose at least one subject that is perceived as an easier option. Evidence of such a relationship between subject choice and the number of Highers undertaken is presented in Chapter 7.

However, as reported earlier in this chapter, the percentage of pass rates for HGPE have been lower than the average pass rate over all subjects at Higher Grade and a lower percentage of Band A awards are achieved by HGPE candidates (SEB Examination Statistics, 1994-1996). One would therefore expect these figures to discourage lower ability candidates from undertaking HGPE. It may be that those pupils who undertake fewer Highers include subjects perceived as less academic within their choice. Pupils who are doing 4 or more Highers are capable of studying all their Highers in subjects perceived as 'academic' and dismissing subjects such as Physical Education, Secretarial Studies and Religious Education. This trend may be due to teachers advising those pupils who are capable of completing only 1 or 2 Highers to take a second or third Higher which is perceived as an easier option without putting too much of a burden on their workload. Consequently, those capable of 4 or more Highers do not need to distinguish between the perceived difficulty of subjects. HGPE being perceived as an easy option runs counter to the evidence that HGPE has a lower percentage pass rate than any subject at Higher Grade (Table 1.3, this chapter). The SEB (1997) reported that in 1996 the percentage pass rate for HGPE increased for the number of Highers candidates were taking, i.e., 19% of students taking only physical education passed with a steady climb to 82% of students taking physical education and four other Highers passing HGPE. This reinforces that it is the more able candidates who are capable of passing HGPE and dispels the notion that HGPE is an easy option. The perceived status of the physical education subject, and HGPE specifically, is discussed further under 'Regulative discourse' in Chapter 4 and is apparent in Chapters 5 and 6 in reporting data collected from teachers.

As this study is concerned with pupil subject choice in physical education rather than with a more generic interest, it is important to address the issue of subject choice specifically in relation to physical education.

#### 1.4.2.3 Subject choice in physical education

A number of reasons are given for taking part in either core or certificated physical education. Hendry's (1978) research with pupils posed a number of questions relating to sports participation in school (through core provision). Reasons for participation included being with friends, keeping fit and healthy, enjoyment and receiving more satisfaction than from other school subjects. Although Hendry's particular piece of research was done over twenty years ago, it will be illustrated in Chapter 7 that pupils' reasons for involvement in physical education have not changed drastically.

Cooper (1995) encouraged the physical education profession in Scotland to examine the reasons given by pupils that affect their decision to choose physical education at certain levels. Cooper administered a questionnaire to pupils in three secondary schools and asked pupils for their three main reasons for choosing to study SGPE. The top three most frequently given reasons for choosing SGPE were 'Like the subject', 'Helps to keep you fit' and 'Like sport'. One would expect liking a subject to be an important consideration for pupils when choosing a subject and Laws & Fisher (1999) reported that pupils consistently gave justification for physical education under the theme of health. The reasons given by pupils in Cooper's (1995) survey for their decision to choose SGPE revolved around their 'likes' and 'dislikes' while Dickenson & Sparkes (1988) reported that just under half of their total sample of pupils placed core physical education first in a list of most enjoyable subjects. Almost 95% of the pupils involved in Coe's (1984) research clearly stated that they enjoyed core physical education. There have been no attempts to formally investigate pupils' reasons for choosing or not choosing HGPE. Laws & Fisher (1999) reported fun and enjoyment as the most commonly recurring dimension of 11-16 co-educational comprehensive school pupils' interpretations of physical education.



Pupil subject choice could also relate to whether the particular pupil wanted to be, 'free from pressures of results, performance or peers' (Dickenson & Sparkes, 1988, p.7) which would result in choosing core physical education rather than certificated physical education. However, it has been reported that students' motivation for choosing health and physical education at school in Australia included the view that it was less demanding academically than other subjects and consequently would provide a break from the more demanding subjects (Macdonald et al., 1999). From an English perspective, Laws & Fisher (1999) reported 14 to 15 year old pupils' awareness of increasing academic workloads and subsequently appreciated the respite from academia that physical education offered. The perception that pupils have of core physical education being an 'easy option' may mislead them into thinking the same for certificated physical education. Consequently, this may explain the pupil perception reported earlier, under section 1.4.2.2, that a Higher in physical education will be less academic than other subjects offered at Higher Grade.

Another reason believed to attract pupils to the subject of physical education is what Kirk (1988a) termed 'market relevance', i.e., studying physical education further with a view to a career in the field. This was reported as an attraction to choosing health and physical education at school in Australia (Macdonald et al., 1999) and examinable physical education in England (Carroll, 1995).

A further reason for pupils choosing to undertake physical education is related to the actual physical activities that the particular physical education course encompasses. This will be dealt with now in greater depth.

#### 1.4.2.3.1 Practical activity content

The inclusion of particular physical activities in physical education may also have an impact on pupils choosing to undertake physical education. In relation to the English school system, Carroll (1995) stated the potential impact that the practical activity content of examinable physical education can have on choosing to study the subject area;

"The physical activities offered by the school before year 10 and in GCSE PE will be crucial in their [students'] perceptions of the subject, and their decision to take it as an examinable subject" (p.65).

A dislike of particular activities, along with the physical demands of an activity, were reasons given by pupils in Dickenson & Sparkes (1988) investigation into reasons for disliking physical education. Ikulayo's (1983) research considered the relationship between physical ability and attitudes towards six types of physical activities amongst girls. The research revealed that in some activities girls stated physical ability as the sole criterion for liking or disliking them. Some significant differences in attainment between boys and girls in some activities offered in SGPE were evident (Menzies, 1997), with girls gaining better grades in only three of thirteen identified physical activities. The three activities were gymnastics, life-saving and squash. However, physical skill is not always a sole criterion, with the desire to socialise (Murdoch, 1986) and enjoyment being other noted determinants of attitudes to activity. The importance of the achievement environment, or climate, of physical education lessons has been widely documented and Biddle (1999) pointed out that the creation of the 'right atmosphere' in physical education classes is an important prerequisite for pupils' motivation and positive experiences.

The activities on offer within a HGPE course can obviously have an effect on pupils choosing to take or not take the subject, although the choice of assessed activity is not enough on its own to counterbalance the gender effects (SEB, 1996a). Milosevic (1996) pointed out that as girls get older they become less interested in physical education perhaps due to boys having more control over the lesson content, a point that Scraton (1993) agreed with, and girls being more self-conscious regarding their body and self image. There is a great deal of variability in the ratio of girls to boys taking different subjects, with a shortfall of girls in physical education and particularly in HGPE (see Table 1.5, this chapter). Cooper (1995) and Hargreaves (1993) both discussed the under-representation of girls in SGPE reporting that the highest percentage of females presented for S4 SGPE over the period 1991-1994 was 33%. In 1994, 30% of the S5 presentation group for HGPE and



33% of the S6 presentation group for HGPE were girls (SEB 1995). The physical activity content of HGPE will be examined in Chapter 4 to assess any relationship between the gendered history that has appeared to have influenced the thinking behind the content of HGPE and the gender ratio of school pupils undertaking HGPE. Chapter 7 distinguishes between gender in pupils' evaluations of the HGPE course, including the 'Performance' element.

Another two issues concerned with subject choice in physical education that are worthy of discussion are the physical education teacher and teaching approach and option columns.

#### 1.4.2.3.2 Physical education teacher and teaching approach

Pupils' perceptions of physical education teachers appear to be a possible influence on taking the subject when given a choice (Macdonald et al., 1999). Hendry (1978) discovered from his research that it was not so much the actual activities themselves that pupils disliked or rejected but rather the curricular processes and emphasis within the physical education subject. A number of pupils he questioned had an enthusiasm for sports but none for school or teachers or physical education teachers. Comments made by pupils which were unfavourable to physical education teachers included that teachers were not interested in pupils except the able ones, were not sympathetic or approachable, were short tempered and were only interested in sports teams. Comments made by pupils that were favourable towards physical education teachers contrasted with those stated as unfavourable. Harvey (1984) reported previous research that had found a high correlation between liking of subject and liking of teacher. The correlation between liking school physical education and the school physical education teacher was found to be significantly higher for girls than for boys.

#### 1.4.2.3.3 Option columns

Another issue that may determine subject choice is the place of physical education within option columns (Carroll, 1995; Cooper, 1995; Forsyth, 1994; Fisher, 1991 & Ledingham,

1989). Option columns are where subject groupings for examination options are placed within a number of columns and pupils are expected to choose a subject within each column. Fisher (1991) believed that physical education could be placed within option columns in categories which would promote greater access, rather than with subjects which pupils are almost obliged to choose, i.e., English, Maths and the Sciences.

## 1.5 Conclusion

This chapter initially provided insights into HGPE and the context in which it was introduced. The number of institutions offering HGPE and the number of candidates selecting HGPE were reported and this led to the core focus of the thesis being CDM and pupil subject choice being discussed. The area of CDM allows the investigation of, and a beginning to understanding, why the decision was made in certain institutes (in this case schools) to teach or not to teach HGPE. Similarly, pupils' subject choice has been shown to be useful in examining why pupils decided to select or not select HGPE.

It is important to identify the factors that impinge on teachers and pupils in making decisions regarding the teaching of a syllabus or in studying a syllabus in order that such factors can be addressed in the construction and dissemination of a syllabus. Related to this, the chapter has begun to highlight a number of issues that will be considered throughout the study. Issues include the centralisation of certain agents in the production of curriculum structure and syllabus, teachers' role in curriculum development, the importance of the particular school environment and pupils' perceptions of physical education.

Curriculum decision making and pupil subject choice (both within physical education) have been identified as the core focus of this study and the chapter has hinted that the best way to understand both is by taking the view that physical education is 'socially constructed'.



In order to examine CDM and pupil subject choice in relation to physical education, and the relationship between them, Bernstein's (1990) model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse is the preferred framework. Bernstein's model will frame the examination of the development, mediation and reproduction of the HGPE course by using Bernstein's three fields of knowledge production (primary, recontextualising and secondary fields) to structure the study. It is anticipated that such a model will help to address what signifies educational knowledge in the context of HGPE and consequently establish how such knowledge was socially constructed and organised within schools. Bernstein's theory will also be useful in positioning individuals and groups involved within the discourse of physical education. However, before discussing Bernstein's work it is useful to address other theories that could have assisted in understanding the social construction of physical education in order to emphasise why Bernstein's work is the preferred model.

Goodson (1990) suggested a number of foci that could be undertaken for studying the social construction of school curricula and two in particular which he himself promoted and worked with were 'teachers' life histories' and 'curriculum history'. Life histories were used by Goodson to examine individual teachers' lives (Goodson, 1988; Goodson & Walker, 1991) and allowed examination of "the manner in which the curriculum is received and enacted" (p.71).

In 1985 Goodson edited a collection of papers concerned with case studies in curriculum history. The majority of the case studies focused on studying individual school subjects from a historical perspective, e.g., English, Science and Religious Education. A small number of papers dealt with aspects of curriculum not solely focused on traditional subjects, i.e., the Sixth Form and Technical Education. Goodson favoured the subject history approach of curriculum history, extensively discussing the school subjects of Biology, Geography and Rural Studies in 'School subjects and curriculum change' (1987). In discussing the evolutionary profile of the three school subjects, Goodson highlighted the effectiveness of subject associations. There has always been a concern regarding the lack of presence of a unified physical education body in the UK (Kirk, 1992a; Murdoch, 1986;

Whithead et al., 1983) and this concern is discussed in relation to a single physical education association in Scotland in Chapter 8.

The life history approach (Sparkes, 1991a & b) and the curriculum history approach (Kirk, 1992a) have been pursued in a bid to address how the meaning of physical education was socially constructed. Sparkes (1987) first major piece of research involved a three-year case study of teacher-initiated innovation within a physical education department in an English secondary school. Such a focus allowed him to portray the inside world of school and life as a teacher through the eyes of physical education teachers, and to highlight the differential costs and rewards that teachers experienced when change occurred. The issue of cost is about the assessment individual teachers make of the ratio of investment to return for them in relation to curriculum change. Sparkes (1991b) suggested that the age, experience and present career position of the teacher all contributed to teachers perceiving differently the rewards and costs of changing certain practices and consequently resulted in different decisions being made. Sparkes & Templin (1992) used life histories to explore the lives and careers of physical education teachers, with the prime concern to view careers from the individual teacher's point of view.

Kirk (1992b) discussed the relationship between curriculum history and traditional history. He explained that while traditional history tends to be concerned with reporting from specified time periods, curriculum history often begins with examining the current situation and working back in time from there in an attempt to understand the present situation and to make informed observations regarding the future. Kirk (1992a) explained the value of curriculum history to physical educators by stating that;

'By understanding how physical education has changed, and how these changes articulate with broader movements in society, we will be in a better position to pursue our contemporary projects with a greater chance of success' (p.19).

Life history work was not appealing to this study which was keen to have some degree of teacher representativeness in relation to CDM and pupils subject choice. There was also



an awareness of the large time commitment that life history work would require for a small, and not guaranteed, amount of generalisable findings. The strength of the life history to allow teachers to speak for themselves could be addressed through case studies of two individual schools.

Curriculum history was certainly of interest in establishing the evolution of HGPE, i.e., What underpinned the dominant discourse in HGPE? How had previous changes in the Scottish education system affected the evolution of HGPE? However, the prime focus of the study is on CDM and pupil subject choice in relation to HGPE, and in particular school situations. While curriculum history has a part to play in illustrating the context in which HGPE evolved, in this study it does not warrant the depth of study similar to that pursued by Kirk (1992a) in his book 'Defining physical education'.

Bernstein's (1990) model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse is now discussed in Chapter 2.

## **Chapter 2 - Theoretical framework: The social construction of HGPE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

‘The issue of who and what are defining physical education and controlling the purposes that it serves, and of how particular definitions and elements of ‘control’ of teaching and learning are being established and reinforced, are matters for those involved in physical education world-wide to address’ (Penney & Evans, 1999, p.xii).

The above comment reiterates the point emphasised in Chapter 1 that physical education is socially constructed. It has only been since the late 1960s / early 1970s that a 'new direction' in the sociological approach to the study of the school curriculum has emerged with Basil Bernstein and Michael Young beginning to examine the relationship between curricula and the institutional and societal contexts (Whitty, 1985).

Bernstein (1990) raises concern that general theories of reproduction have been more concerned with analysing what is reproduced in and by education than with the analysis of the medium of reproduction, that is, the nature of the specialised discourse. He believes that reproduction theories of education have viewed school knowledge as merely a relay for something other than education itself, for example, a relay for class relations and / or gender relations and questions the medium that makes the relaying possible. To address such deficiencies, Bernstein has developed a model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse that provides a means of examining the relationships between meaning making processes at a range of levels within education systems. Bernstein's theory is similar to that of Young (1971) and Goodson (1985) in the belief that the social construction of knowledge and more specifically, school subjects, are politically driven and consequently demonstrate particular political interests of the dominating social order.

'Pedagogy' encompasses teachers, learners and the curriculum (content and knowledge). 'Discourse' refers to the numerous media that one can use to represent what constitutes



knowledge and meaning, for example, written, spoken and verbal representations (Kirk, 1999). School knowledge can be viewed as a variety of discourses. Bernstein's model allows one to describe and explain relationships between and within sites of discourse production, determining the ways in which educational discourse is constructed, transmitted and adapted. Consequently, the model has the potential to highlight the power relations within and between sites that do result in particular discourses. Such a model allows educational researchers to explore and understand the implications of the construction of educational discourse for curriculum development and change in particular educational fields (Kirk, 1999).

Competing groups or individuals are likely to be interested in bringing about particular outcomes in curriculum development and change and Bernstein's model allows the examination of the role of relations of power within and between such groups and individuals. Even subject communities are not homogeneous with members of such communities displaying different interests (Goodson, 1985). Within education, the positioning of individuals or groups can be said to be done in relation to a 'privileging text' (Bernstein, 1990). It is to this issue that attention is now turned.

### 2.1.1 Privileging pedagogic text

In discussing the 'privileging pedagogic text', i.e., in this study the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993), Bernstein (1990) distinguishes between 'relation to' and 'relation within' the privileging text. A theory or approach that focuses upon the pedagogic subject's relation to the privileging text in terms of discriminating attributes such as social class or race would illustrate 'relation to' the privileging text. However, the examination of such attributes does not inform the reader as to how the privileging text itself has been created. A theory or approach that focuses upon the rules whereby such a text has been internally constructed at the micro level (classroom or school) or the macro level (education systems) would illustrate 'relation within' the privileging text.

This particular study investigates the 'relation within' concept in relation to HGPE, including issues such as the text's distinctive features and relations along with its mode of transmission and contextualisation. It is 'relations within' the privileging text that Bernstein believes have not been addressed in theories of cultural reproduction, resistance or transformation. He states, 'These theories [theories of cultural reproduction] are more concerned with the surface ideological markings of the text (class, gender, race) than to analyse how the text has been put together, the rules of its construction, circulation, contextualisation, acquisition, and change' (p.177).

Bernstein highlights that concerns regarding the rules that operate at both the micro (for example, placing the text within the pedagogic discourses of the school) and macro (for example, the role of the Government in the construction of such discourses) have been ignored by previous theorists. This research hopes to address the absence of such inquiries by describing and explaining relationships between and within the sites involved in producing the discourse of HGPE (e.g., the SEB and schools). The possibility of variations between sites regarding what should constitute the nature and definition of HGPE knowledge will also be examined. Variations between sites can perhaps be attributed to the level of freedom that individuals are able to experience in the interpretation of a particular curriculum subject. Bernstein (1990) terms this 'relative autonomy'.

### 2.1.2 Relative autonomy

Bernstein (1990) believes that all theories of cultural reproduction allow a concept of relative autonomy, explaining that the concept grants the educational system some independence over the contexts, contents and processes it is involved in. Consequently these areas are not wholly determined by those external to the education system. Penney & Evans (1999) report that many of the decisions made at the early stages of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) process 'retained a critical influence throughout the process and thus draw attention to the corresponding limits to discursive freedom' (p.111). However, they believe that there still remains scope for teachers to



explore gaps and omissions in official texts and to be able to practice different pedagogies in teaching physical education. This will be examined in relation to HGPE by examining the movements of the HGPE text(s) across sites, and the accommodation of individuals' interpretations of the text and whether teachers are able to promote their own values and interests that may be different from the dominant discourse of HGPE.

Teachers are permitted a significant degree of personal autonomy in relation to other professions (Lortie, 1975), although Evans (1986) downplayed the level of autonomy teachers have over the teaching process, stressing that teachers, like pupils, are socialised into specific ways of thinking and acting in the process of schooling. Woods (1984) and Hendry (1978) observed how the marginal, non-examinable subjects of Art and Physical Education provided teachers of either subject the freedom to experiment with different teaching approaches. However, with the advent of certification in both subjects teachers are no longer able to experience the relative freedom they once commanded over the course design of either subject in schools.

The concept of 'pedagogic discourse' (Bernstein, 1990) helps understand how the privileging text is re-structured as different groups, experiencing different degrees of relative autonomy, attempt to make sense of the text. Before pedagogic discourse is discussed further the structure for the production, transmission and acquisition of pedagogic discourse, what Bernstein (1990) terms the pedagogic device, is discussed.

### 2.1.3 Pedagogic device and discourse

Bernstein (1990) considers the internal ordering of the pedagogic device to be the condition for the production, reproduction and transformation of culture, providing the intrinsic grammar of pedagogic discourse through distributive rules, recontextualising rules and rules of evaluation. Distributive rules 'regulate the fundamental relation between power, social groups, forms of consciousness and practice, and their reproductions and productions' (p.180). That is, they are concerned with who has the power to create knowledge and who has access to it (Kirk, 1997). Recontextualising rules regulate the

formation of specific pedagogic discourse. Rules of evaluation are established in pedagogic practice and are concerned with the transmission and acquisition of knowledge. Bernstein explains that the rules of evaluation are regulated by the recontextualising rules that in turn are regulated by the distributive rules.

'Pedagogic discourse' is defined by Bernstein as the rule for embedding and relating two discourses, not denying that it is 'an area of conflict, a site of struggle and appropriation' (1990, p.209). Pedagogic discourse is one set of 'recontextualising rules' that in addition to the above mentioned 'distributing rules' and 'rules of evaluation' form the pedagogic device. Kirk (1997) explains that pedagogic discourse involves the construction of 'instructional discourse' (ID) from a number of other discourses that form what Bernstein terms 'regulative discourse' (RD). The relationship between regulative and instructional discourse can be described through pedagogic discourse. ID transmits specialised competencies and their relation to each other. RD is less specific and provides official rules regulating order, relation and identity. Bernstein emphasises that ID is 'embedded' in the broader, non-specific field of RD. RD always dominates the ID. Kirk (1990) pointed out that the value of stressing the embeddedness of ID in wider, non-specific discourses makes it 'possible to investigate the internal dynamics of the transformation of a text' (p.419). In an example from his own research, Kirk explained that although daily physical education was embedded in the RD of 'healthism', it had a different meaning to each of the personnel involved in the different contexts. In this study it is proposed that the ID of 'Higher Grade Physical Education' is primarily constructed from the selected discourses of 'Sport' and 'Biophysical science', both of which contribute to the RD of HGPE. It is anticipated that the areas of 'Health' and 'Art' contribute very little, if anything at all, to the RD of HGPE. Groups' and individuals' interpretations of the instructional and regulative discourse of HGPE will be investigated, allowing any differences in perceptions between those involved in the production and reproduction of the HGPE syllabus to be highlighted.

As part of the theorising of pedagogic discourse, Bernstein (1990) examines the relationships between different sites of knowledge production and reproduction. Bernstein proposes that the interaction of the three sites, primary, recontextualising and secondary,



organises the pedagogic discourse. The interaction of the sites helps frame the individuals and groups involved in the production and reproduction of the HGPE syllabus. The three sites that Bernstein identifies are now discussed.

#### 2.1.4 Primary, recontextualising and secondary contexts

Bernstein introduces the fields for the production (primary), recontextualising and reproduction (secondary) of pedagogic discourse and consequently discusses the relationships between the three fields (how they can be linked to each other) and the rules of the pedagogic device. Kirk (1990) reported the three sites of 'meaning-production' involved in a particular Australian daily physical education programme; writers and publishers, education department and primary schools. He pointed out that while each group had a specific remit to fulfil, they did not take place in a linear fashion, i.e., the writers and publishers as 'producers' and the schools as 'reproducers'. This study will examine how relationships between and within sites involved in producing the HGPE discourse operated.

The 'primary context' tends to be where the 'intellectual field' of the education system originates. New ideas are selectively created, modified and changed to result in developing specialised discourses. As Bernstein emphasises, this field is concerned with the production of non-pedagogical knowledge rather than the reproduction of educational discourse and its practice. The 'secondary context' entails the selective reproduction of educational discourse involving various levels, such as tertiary and secondary. The non-pedagogical contexts of the primary field undertake a pedagogical form in the secondary field. In this study schools occupy the secondary field. The 'recontextualising context' is concerned with the transfer of texts and practices from the primary context to the secondary context, i.e., the transformation of non-pedagogical knowledge to pedagogical knowledge. This context involves those in the administration of educational programmes, i.e., in Scotland, the SQA and the SCCC. Within each of the stipulated levels there can be some degree of specialisation of agencies. HGPE in the school context is the result of recontextualising principles that have selected and delocated what signifies HGPE from the

primary context of the production of discourse and relocated, refocused HGPE in the secondary context of the reproduction of discourse. This study will draw on the areas of 'science', 'sport', 'health' and 'the arts' from the primary field and show how these non-pedagogic resources have been reworked into a pedagogical form. Figure 2.1 illustrates the three fields for the production, recontextualising and reproduction of pedagogic discourse and the agencies and agents specific to HGPE working within each field.

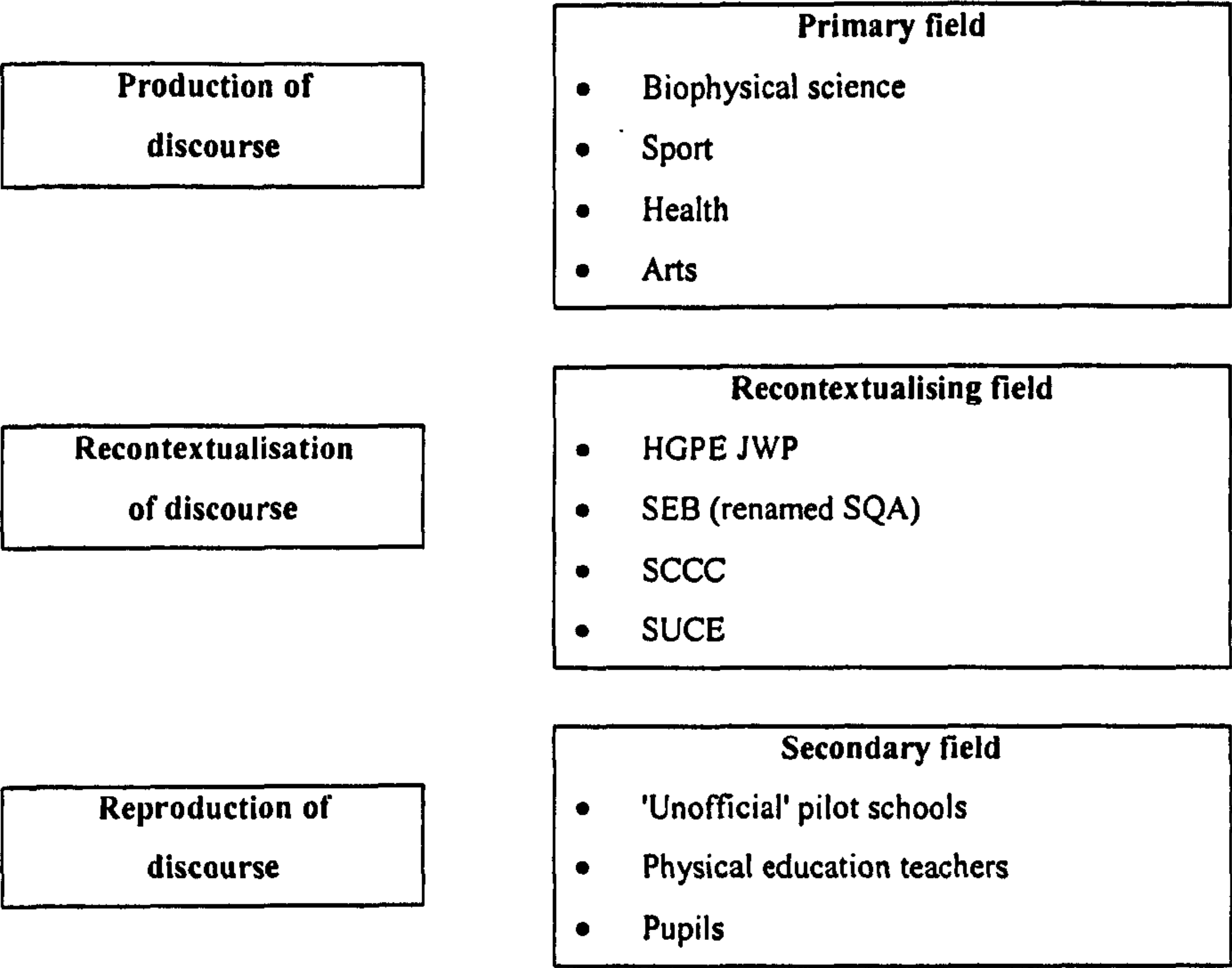


Figure 2.1: A curriculum framework: The three fields for the production, recontextualising and reproduction of pedagogic discourse and the agencies and agents specific to HGPE working within each field.

The three fields identified by Bernstein are evident in previous research concerned with the process of curriculum development in relation to Scottish school certificated physical education. The generated model proposed by MacLeod (1992) in respect to the development of SGPE followed a set of rational stages from research, through development and diffusion to adoption and implementation, the three stages possessing similar characteristics to Bernstein's primary, recontextualising and secondary fields. The similarities are evident in MacLeod's following comment;



'The nature of the predominant model employed and the innovative strategy used, varied depending on, the phase of development, as did the extent to which the change was externally or internally managed' (Abstract).

MacLeod (1992) reported that the adoption and implementation phase, with similar characteristics to Bernstein's secondary field, was generally the weakest link in curriculum development. He also pointed out how the lack of uniformity in the characteristics of the users makes it difficult to transfer a curriculum development from one setting to another. Subsequently the curriculum as it is intended to be delivered by those involved in its construction, 'curriculum-as-intended', will most probably be delivered differently in relation to differing school environments, 'curriculum-as-practiced' (Apple, 1982). This occurrence is illustrated in Chapter 6.

MacLeod (1992) and Niven (1998a & b) referred to those involved in the development of SGPE and HGPE respectively as initiators, implementors and recipients. The concern primarily in this study is with the development of HGPE at the recipient level where the findings are expected to be similar to those of teachers delivering SGPE, i.e., implementing a scheme that had been devised externally to the school.

Bernstein's model will help to illustrate the ways in which the educational discourse for HGPE is constructed, transmitted and adopted. It will also allow the two main focuses of this study, curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupil subject choice, to be investigated within the sites of knowledge production and reproduction. It is anticipated that CDM will be evident in the recontextualising and secondary fields, with the role of teachers in the decision making process being more prominent in the secondary field. Pupil subject choice will be solely confined to the secondary field. The primary field will act as a frame for the production of the HGPE discourse, discussed earlier in this chapter under the heading 'Pedagogic device and discourse'.

Kirk (1998) has argued that the recontextualising field is a neglected but important site in the social construction of physical education. It is for this reason that this particular site is investigated further.

#### 2.1.4.1 The recontextualising context

The recontextualising context appears to be a most complex and interesting field, with Bernstein stating that 'the focus of the recontextualising fields are creating, maintaining, changing and legitimising discourse, transmission and organisation practices which regulate the internal orderings of pedagogic discourse' (p.193). Kirk (1997) emphasises the value of further educational research focussing in the recontextualising field "since it is in this field that the discursive practices that form regulative discourse are brought into alignment in institutions and the instructional discourses...are created" (p.295). One would expect the HGPE text to undergo a transformation in the recontextualising context before its relocation into the secondary context, resulting in a different text. Bernstein points out that text undergoes two transformations at this point, transformation of text within the recontextualising field and the transformation of the transformed text in relation to the secondary field. This would result in the initial construction of a syllabus within the recontextualising field and then the syllabus being transformed, within the same field, into a format believed to be more suitable for those operating in the secondary field. Once the transformed syllabus reaches the secondary field, individuals within that field are likely to change the syllabus to suit the environment in which it is being introduced.

Bernstein distinguishes two recontextualising fields explaining that the major activity of each field is establishing the 'what' and 'how' of pedagogic discourse. The 'what' refers to the transmission of specific categories, content and relationships and the 'how' refers to the manner of such transmission. Although the recontextualising field brings together discourses from fields which tend to be strongly classified, Bernstein states that they rarely bring together the corresponding agents. The 'official recontextualising field' is regulated directly by the nation and includes specialised departments and sub-agencies of the nation. In relation to this study such organisations are the SCCC and SEB (now the SQA). In



situations where the official recontextualising field is the only field, it is likely that national pedagogic agencies will control what is made available. The 'pedagogic recontextualising fields' are concerned with the movement of texts from their production or existence context to their reproduction context. In relation to HGPE such a field is more difficult to identify. Within the pedagogic recontextualising field, specialised sub-fields can be produced in relation to levels of the education system and curricula. Control from the Government such as centralised curriculum and external assessment can limit the influence of the pedagogical recontextualising fields and this will be investigated in relation to the social construction of HGPE.

As mentioned earlier, competing groups or individuals are likely to be interested in bringing about particular outcomes in curriculum development and change. Bernstein (1990) emphasises that there is potential for such power conflicts to arise between the political and administrative agents within the official recontextualising field, and between the positions within the pedagogic recontextualising field and between it and the official recontextualising field. Such conflicts will be addressed through the study. There is the potential for pupils to be 'unjustly disadvantaged' in and by their school experience as a result of the interests of particular groups involved in the structure of school knowledge (Kirk, 1990). This concern emphasises the importance of involving teachers throughout a change process so that local variations and contexts of schools can be addressed as best as possible and accounted for in the interpretations of text. It also draws attention to addressing the issue of the suitability of a text for particular pupils. Consequently, CDM and pupil subject choice is the main focus of this study and is foreground throughout the study.

Bernstein (1990) identifies examining boards as one of a variety of 'recontextualising' agencies located between the production of knowledge in the primary field and reproduction of knowledge in the secondary field. The central role of such agents as examining boards is to regulate the circulation of knowledge between both the primary and secondary sites; a function that is likely to be illustrated as essential in the SEB's involvement in the production and reproduction of HGPE.

In discussing the positions of 'producers', 'reproducers' and 'acquirers' in the pedagogic field, Bernstein dismisses that one can only occupy only one of the mentioned positions at any one time, pointing out that there is a tendency to separate producing and reproducing functions institutionally. The occupancy of a group in more than one of Bernstein's 'production-reproduction' sites will be illustrated in this study by examining the specific agencies involved in the construction of HGPE. For example, the SEB may have the potential to fulfil the roles of 'producers' and 'reproducers' while teachers' involvement can be as both 'reproducers' and 'acquirers' in the pedagogic field. Investigations between and within Bernstein's three sites will highlight how each site is involved in the development and implementation of the HGPE text. It will also allow the study to focus on the transformation of the HGPE text, from how it was to be delivered to how teachers read and actually did deliver it.

## 2.2 Summary of the theoretical framework

In examining how school knowledge is socially constructed, Bernstein's work discusses how;

- (i) relationships between and within the sites involved in producing a particular discourse operate.
- (ii) teachers are able to exercise a degree of relative autonomy in the implementation of official texts, allowing them to practice different pedagogies.
- (iii) instructional discourse is embedded in regulative discourse.
- (iv) groups and individuals' reading of the ID and RD of a subject can differ.
- (v) centralised curriculum control, e.g., the Government, can limit the influence of the pedagogical recontextualising fields.
- (vi) conflicts can arise between and within the official and pedagogic recontextualising field.
- (vii) the central role of recontextualising agents is to regulate the circulation of knowledge between the primary and secondary sites.



- (viii) individuals or groups can occupy more than one of Bernstein's three sites and consequently fulfil more than one of the following roles; producer, reproducer or acquirer.

The above concepts from Bernstein's work provide the framework for investigating the following concerns regarding the social construction of HGPE, along with the concerns of CDM and pupil subject choice. Each concern informs a research question aimed to be addressed throughout the study.

1. What were the variations between the recontextualising and secondary sites regarding what should constitute the nature and definition of HGPE knowledge?
2. Were teachers able to make decisions regarding the teaching of HGPE that may differ from the dominant discourse of HGPE established in the recontextualising field?
3. To what extent was the ID of HGPE embedded in the RD?
4. How was the HGPE syllabus read by those in the secondary field, i.e., teachers and pupils? How did such readings differ? How did such readings influence the decisions teachers make to teach or not teach HGPE? How did pupils' perception of HGPE influence their choice to study or not to study HGPE?
5. To what extent was the recontextualising field's involvement in constructing HGPE limited by centralised curriculum control, e.g., the Government?
6. Did any conflicts arise in the construction of HGPE between and within the official and pedagogic recontextualising field?
7. Did the SEB's involvement in the production and reproduction of HGPE regulate the circulation of knowledge between the primary and secondary sites?
8. To what extent did teachers, or any other agencies involved in the production and reproduction of HGPE, occupy more than one of Bernstein's three sites?

### 2.3 Research questions

Consequently, the main research questions that arise from such concerns are;

1. (a) What is the instructional discourse of HGPE?  
(b) Who and what were responsible for constructing the instructional discourse of HGPE?
2. (a) What are the interfaces between the regulative and instructional discourses that influenced the construction and constitution of HGPE?  
(b) Who decided which aspects of the regulative discourse were to be reproduced in the secondary context of HGPE?
3. How have teachers' views on the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted affected their decision to offer, or not to offer, HGPE?
4. How has the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted generally affected pupils' views on the subject and consequently influenced their choice to study, or not to study, HGPE?

## 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed Bernstein's theoretical model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse, which primarily foregrounds the belief that the social construction of knowledge and more specifically, school subjects, are politically driven and consequently demonstrate particular political interests. Bernstein's model allows the description and explanation of relationships between and within sites of discourse production, determining the ways in which educational discourse is constructed, transmitted and adapted. He identifies the three sites of knowledge production and reproduction, the primary, recontextualising and secondary fields. It is by using these three fields that the framework for this study has emerged. The three fields will allow the exploration and understanding of reasons for teachers' CDM and pupils' choice (secondary field) related to HGPE, and to what extent such decision making and subject choice is affected by the construction of the HGPE discourse (primary and recontextualising fields). The major focus will be on the reproduction of the HGPE course in the secondary field.

## 2.5 Outline of the study



The data sources utilised to provide the evidence base to address the above research questions are detailed in Chapter 3 and include document and archive analysis, semi-structured interviews, teacher surveys by questionnaires, teacher semi-structured interviews, case studies, Nominal Group Technique and pupil questionnaires.

Curriculum decision making and pupil subject choice were identified in Chapter 1 as the key focus of this thesis. In order to understand both CDM and pupil subject choice in relation to HGPE, it is necessary to analyse the ID of HGPE and to subsequently identify the RD of HGPE. The RD in which the ID of HGPE is embedded will illustrate how certain discourses have been re-located and re-focused by those in the recontextualising field to develop the ID of HGPE. It is the concern of Chapter 4 to focus on 'curriculum-as-intended', i.e., the way in which those who have constructed HGPE (in the recontextualising field) intend it to be taught (in the secondary field).

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 subsequently investigate the ID in the secondary context, i.e., 'curriculum-as-practiced' / 'curriculum-as-received'. Chapters 5 and 6 will focus on teachers' interpretation and reconstruction of the HGPE in Scottish secondary schools. The ways in which teachers' local context shape their interpretation of the ID of the HGPE syllabus and the extent to which the particular form of the ID influenced their decision about offering this course of study to their pupils is investigated. Teachers' reasons for choosing either to offer or not to offer HGPE are compared with the reasons discussed in Chapter 1 that have been shown to affect the decisions teachers make in relation to the physical education curriculum.

Chapter 7 focuses on another set of agents that operate in the secondary field, i.e., pupils, and the reasons they give for deciding to choose, or choosing not to, undertake HGPE. Pupils' readings of the HGPE subject, including the practical and written elements and the usefulness of previous experience in SGPE, are reported. Pupils' reasons for choosing either to undertake or not to undertake HGPE are compared with the reasons discussed in Chapter 1 for subject choice in physical education.

Chapter 8 will focus on issues and themes that have emerged within and between chapters, hoping to highlight the interface between the recontextualising and secondary fields. The role of the teacher within the development, mediation and reproduction of HGPE will also be discussed with a view to elaborating on the issue of CDM and teachers' role in curriculum development. Pupils' perceptions of HGPE and reasons for choosing, or not choosing, to study HGPE will also inform suggestions regarding implications for practice and future directions.



## Chapter 3 – Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

It was established in Chapter 1 that the key focus of this thesis is the social construction of physical education and how this can affect teacher curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupil subject choice. In Chapter 2 four main research questions were identified and will be addressed throughout the thesis. This chapter will detail the data sources chosen to provide the evidence base to address the research questions;

- (1) (a) 'What is the instructional discourse of HGPE?  
(b) Who and what were responsible for constructing the instructional discourse of HGPE?'
- (2) (a) 'What are the interfaces between the regulative and instructional discourses that influenced the construction and constitution of HGPE?  
(b) Who decided which aspects of the regulative discourse were to be reproduced in the secondary context of HGPE?'
- (3) 'How have teachers' views on the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted affected their decision to offer, or not to offer, HGPE?'
- (4) 'How has the way in which HGPE been constructed and constituted generally affected pupils' views on the subject and consequently influenced their choice to study, or to not study, HGPE?'

Sources used to address each research question included document and archive analysis, semi-structured interviews, teacher surveys by questionnaire, teacher semi-structured interviews, case studies, Nominal Group Technique and pupil questionnaires.

The topic under study has methodological consequences. As Holstein & Gubrium (1995) pointed out, some topics lend themselves more readily to particular techniques of data collection than others. Data collection from a quantitative method enables a researcher to generalise the findings from a sample of responses to a population. The intention of

qualitative research is to investigate and examine particular situations and the reader of such research should be aware that through qualitative research the researchers biases, values and judgement are evident (Creswell, 1994). Such biases are also evident in the way quantitative instruments are designed.

Rather than using the quantitative and qualitative methods as mutually exclusive ways of understanding, they can complement and enrich each other (Salomon, 1991; Firestone, 1987; Rossman & Wilson, 1985). A combination of methods can be used to triangulate data (Creswell, 1994; Firestone, 1987; Rossman & Wilson, 1985), allowing the researcher to improve the accuracy of conclusions. For example, to discover what factors had influenced schools in their decision to teach or not teach HGPE, a survey was administered to a sample of 170 teachers and followed up the survey by undertaking two case studies. The survey provided information on a range of factors influencing teacher CDM. Case studies provided information on more specific, detailed features of the individual school context influencing teacher CDM. The potential for both quantitative and qualitative methods to corroborate data, elaborate the findings and initiate interpretations and conclusions was illustrated by Rossman & Wilson (1985). They believed that qualitative methods are best used to add richness or detail to quantitative findings (elaboration) but should precede quantitative data when clarifying the direction of inquiry (initiation), with one type of data having the potential to elaborate the findings of the other (corroboration). This study favours quantitative work as a facilitator of qualitative work (Bryman, 1988) or to use Brannen's (1992) terminology, the pre-eminence of the qualitative over the quantitative.

It is widely accepted that more than one strategy in any given study can be used. The reason for choosing to use a number of methods in this particular study was the distinctive contribution that each method could make to investigating the research questions identified in Chapter 2. The following sections of the chapter discuss each method in turn, including the purpose of each method in my research, each method's assumptions and limitations and the analysis of the data.



The use of diverse methods in addressing a research problem was termed by Burgess (1982) as 'multiple research strategies' and in the past has been widely referred to as 'triangulation'. Not only does the terminology mean more than one method of investigation but also more than one type of data. The type of method triangulation favoured in this thesis was what Brannen (1992) termed 'between-methods', i.e., using different methods in relation to the same object of study rather than repeating the same method on a number of occasions. Each method was used in relation to a different aspect of the thesis, although the data from each method lead to informing the bigger picture of teacher CDM and pupil subject choice. The multi-method approach allows the researcher to highlight differences and similarities between complementary data sets and subsequently, the complexity of issues that arise. Also, the data generated by the multi-method approach aids validity and reliability checks. However, Brannan (1992) cautions that;

'...it is inappropriate to seek to integrate data sets produced by different methods. Rather the researcher should seek to relate each set of data to the theory underpinning it and to see in what ways the data set complement and contradict one another' (p.31).

It is hoped that it is apparent as this thesis unfolds that the relationship between the data sets produced by the different methods have been confronted and considered.

### 3.2 Document and archive analysis

Document and archive analysis was essential in the bid to establish the social construction of HGPE and subsequently to understand the evolution of the instructional and regulative discourse of HGPE. Before this level of detailed analysis was attempted, document and archive analysis was a starting point that allowed the reporting of the history of HGPE and issues that had appeared to remain prominent in its delivery.

The number and year of schooling of candidates, gender ratio, number of centres offering HGPE, pass rates and percentage of awards at HGPE were gained from the SEB and SQA

examination statistics. This highlighted the success of HGPE in attracting more centres and candidates each year. It was at this initial stage that factors which had affected the decision to teach or not teach HGPE and what factors had influenced pupils to choose or not choose HGPE? Possible answers to the main concerns were evident in analysis of other SEB and SQA data. Were teachers influenced to teach HGPE due to the attraction of certification (not necessarily success) at the level of a Higher? Were teachers influenced not to teach HGPE by the low pass rates for HGPE and the fact that there was a clear distinction in the gender ratio, in favour of male candidates, for school pupils undertaking HGPE? Subsequently, issues related to HGPE's evolution and development became evident in analysis of such data. Could the low pass rates reported for HGPE be attributed to the recontextualising agents, involved in its construction, who were striving to meet the requirements of the SEB, in order to achieve academic status? Were low pass rates due to teachers reading and delivering the HGPE syllabus differently than intended by those involved in its construction? Was HGPE suitable for the 'type' of pupil likely to be interested in undertaking a Higher in physical education? What were the reasons for the gender ratio for school pupils undertaking HGPE favouring male candidates? These issues and data reported from the SEB and SQA documents were initially discussed in Chapter 1.

In order to investigate the social construction of HGPE further document and archive analysis was necessary. The first concern was to establish any shifts in thinking about physical education from the Munn Report (SED/CCC, 1977a) onwards, incorporating developments such as certificated physical education in the form of SGPE (SEB, 1988) and the critique of Highers which resulted in the Higher Still developments (SCCC, 1996). Analysis of such developments heightened the awareness of how teachers' views on HGPE could differ in relation to the period in which they undertook teacher training and the philosophies regarding school physical education at that time. This would consequently affect teacher professionalism and perhaps their decision making in relation to physical education. Data collected from the questionnaires allowed the ages and gender of the teachers who had responded to the survey to be identified. From such data, it was possible to make inferences regarding the period in which teachers undertook initial teacher training and subsequently how the orthodox view that physical education teachers held regarding



the physical education subject differed in accordance with the particular time they undertook teacher training.

Following on from the above level of analysis, the focus became more specific in analysing documentation concerned with the evolution and development of HGPE. This resulted in posing the first research question in Chapter 2;

*'What is the instructional discourse of HGPE? Who and what were responsible for constructing the instructional discourse of HGPE?'*

This research question is primarily concerned with investigating and reporting the official curriculum or the 'curriculum-as-intended' (Apple, 1982). It is also intended to convey a concern about the extent to which those agents involved in the construction of HGPE, i.e., those agents and agencies in the recontextualising field, were limited by centralised curriculum control, e.g., SEB, Government policies.

In a bid to establish the instructional discourse (ID) of HGPE it was necessary to have access to particular documents. An important document was the remit given to the HGPE joint working party (JWP) that included certain boundaries by which the JWP were to operate. For example, boundaries were set in relation to the HGPE syllabus content, award scales and levels, previous attainment assumed and assessment and awarding procedures. The most crucial document to establishing the ID of HGPE was the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993) which was analysed under the main headings of rationale, aims, course structure, learning and teaching approaches, assessment for certification and grade descriptions. The analysis of the ID of HGPE is a major concern of Chapter 4.

Through analysis of the documents mentioned in the previous paragraph, traces of the sites for the production of the regulative discourse (RD) of HGPE in which the ID of HGPE was embedded became evident. This directed the second research question;

*'What are the interfaces between the regulative and instructional discourses that influenced the construction and constitution of HGPE? Who decided which aspects of the regulative discourse were to be reproduced in the secondary context of HGPE?'*

The above question is primarily concerned with identifying the RD in which the ID of HGPE was embedded. In order to address this issue further, it was necessary to examine the effect of discursive resources generated by contemporary popular culture. By tracing the RD back from the ID of HGPE it was possible to identify five sites that possibly had impacted the social construction of HGPE. The RD and the related five sites are a focus of Chapter 4.

To compliment and enhance the information obtained from document and archive material, semi-structured interviews with two particular members of the HGPE JWP were carried out. The procedure followed in doing so is now explained.

### 3.3 Semi-structured interviews to support document and archive analysis

Apart from one piece of research, information available in relation to the evolution of HGPE, i.e., who and what was involved, was limited. This study is indebted to Niven (1998b) for her succinct and accurate report of the development of the HGPE Arrangements document that she reported in six main stages. These were the development of the JWP, pilot phase, further development by the JWP and the consultation phase, the development of Key Feature documents, the National Conference and regional development.

To enhance the data available to me on the evolution of HGPE, separate semi-structured interviews with two individuals who were involved in the evolution of HGPE were carried out. The first individual was Mary Turley, an Advisor of Physical Education within Strathclyde. Her role as Advisor involved reviewing the curriculum, assessing and evaluating each school situation for the uptake of physical education in various forms and



supporting the schools in resources and advice. Mary had been the Convenor of the physical education subject panel for seven years and had played an active role in all major developments within physical education, from Creative & Aesthetic Studies, SGPE and HGPE to Higher Still. The set of questions posed to Mary is listed in appendix 3.1. The second individual was Morag Dunbar who was an Examination Officer for the SEB (now the SQA). Her responsibility was to oversee the assessment arrangements in physical education and one other subject for the SCE. Her role becomes evident when the production of the HGPE syllabus is reported in Chapter 4 (section 4.3). The set of questions posed to Morag is listed in appendix 3.2.

Both interviews were conducted in the interviewees' respective places of employment. Both individuals were sent a copy of the initial draft of the section dealing with the production of the HGPE syllabus in Chapter 4 and verified that the information portrayed was accurate by responding with written comments and information by telephone.

The methodology of semi-structured interviews is discussed later on in this chapter under section 3.5.3.1.

### 3.4 Teacher surveys

No previous research has quantified teachers' reasons for choosing to offer or to not offer HGPE. The decision was made that data should be collected from a sample of teachers in order to establish the general pattern of responses that teachers gave as influencing their CDM. Such data would address my third research question;

*'How have teachers' views on the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted affected their decision to offer, or not to offer, HGPE?'*

The above research question is primarily intent on focussing on how HGPE was viewed by teachers, the extent to which views differed and how such views influenced the decision made by teachers to offer (or not) HGPE. The study is also concerned with the extent to

which teachers were able to make decisions regarding the teaching of HGPE that may differ from the dominant discourse of HGPE established in the 'recontextualising field' (Bernstein, 1990). Subsequently, this would determine the variations between the recontextualising and secondary fields regarding what should constitute the nature and definition of the HGPE syllabus i.e., 'curriculum-as-intended' (Apple, 1982), and ignite a discussion on the level of teachers' involvement in the production and reproduction of HGPE. A related issue would be to examine the involvement of agents and agencies in both the production and reproduction of HGPE, i.e., the Scottish Examination Board (SEB), to assess the regulation of knowledge between the primary and secondary fields. A delimitation is that such an examination is only a minor, not a major, focus of this thesis.

The method that could best accommodate a large volume of data was a survey by postal questionnaire. Approval was obtained from Strathclyde Regional Council: Department of Education (appendix 3.3) to allow the Headteachers of all 170 targeted schools to be approached. Headteachers were asked if they were willing to allow their Principal Teacher of physical education (PTPE) or another member of the physical education staff to complete the questionnaire. The standard letter addressed to Headteachers and the letter prepared for Headteachers to pass on to their PTPE are available in appendix 3.4. Teachers' and schools' rights and privacy were protected throughout the study. All teachers' and schools' names remained anonymous.

The questionnaire was cross-sectional, i.e., the information was collected at one point in time. The main reason behind the construction of a questionnaire was to assess significant patterns of responses from teachers who were offering HGPE and teachers who were not offering HGPE. In reviewing numerous pieces of research concerned with influences that affect the teaching of physical education and / or the introduction of a new curricula or innovation within physical education (Chapter 1, Tables 1.6-1.9), possible influences were put together to form the questionnaire.

A single-stage sampling process was used due to having access to the names of the schools (through a regional mailing list) and being able to sample each school directly. The



teachers who were initially targeted were all PTPE who worked within Strathclyde Region secondary schools (excluding special schools and fee-paying schools). This resulted in a sample of 170 secondary schools. Demographic details were obtained from the teachers who had returned completed questionnaires, i.e., position within the school, age and gender. A 93% response rate was achieved.

#### 3.4.1 Piloting of the questionnaire

There were three complementary but individual pilot studies used to finalise the questionnaire. Pilot testing was important to improve questions, format and the scales used for scoring. The three pilot phases are reported, including the alterations that were recommended and those that were made at each phase.

The format of the initial questionnaire was similar to Fox's (1990) Physical Self-Perception Profile (PSPP). The questionnaire consisted of two contrary comments. It was expected that with two contrary comments one would be more positive than the other, so each set of comments were randomly placed on either side of the centre. This allowed teachers to choose the comment that they did agree with rather than being concerned with forming a pattern of responses on one side of the questionnaire rather than the other. The teacher had to decide for each comment whether they believed it had influenced the decision to teach or not teach HGPE in the school they worked in. Once that decision was made they had to assess the extent of their belief, i.e., whether they 'believed' or 'strongly believed' with the comment in the context of their own situation. For example, teachers had the choice between deciding whether teachers were or were not interested in teaching HGPE. If they felt they were not, on the right hand side of the questionnaire they had to answer whether they 'believed' or 'strongly believed' that this had played a role in their CDM. If they had felt that they were interested in teaching HGPE, they would then have answered to what extent it had influenced their department's CDM on the left-hand side of the questionnaire. The questionnaire did differ from the PSPP in the sense that a fifth column was available if the respondents felt that neither of the comments had influenced CDM. This option column separated each set of comments.

The questions were positioned randomly throughout the questionnaire and were not grouped by any criteria. This is standard design in constructing a questionnaire as it draws the respondents' attention away from focussing on set responses to questions concerned with similar issues.

#### 3.4.1.1 Validity of the questionnaire (Pilot study 1)

Experienced physical educationalists in the three main groups of advisors, lecturers and teachers were approached and asked to give their views on the questionnaire. There were three representatives within each group. Also, a representative of Further Education, an employee from the SEB and an employee from the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) were approached and asked to give their views on the questionnaire. It was felt that the twelve individuals would constitute the wide array of individuals who were involved in the physical education subject. Each received the same information and worked independently from each other. This technique is similar to that used by Matanin & Tannehill (1994) in their research concerned with assessing and grading physical education.

The principle purpose of this initial pilot survey was to assess each question's clarity of meaning and the likelihood that all respondents would interpret it the same way. The capacity of a questionnaire to perform well against validation measures does not appear to be solely related to its length or attention to detail. The logic with which its questions are constructed seems to be more important. It was anticipated that some of the more obvious flaws would be removed and that the reasoning behind the questionnaire would be discussed. It was also hoped that any questions that had the potential to offend would be pinpointed and that items included in the questionnaire would be interesting to teachers, obviously relevant to the purpose of the study and limited to absolutely essential items.

There were nine responses from the twelve individuals. No response was received from three individuals - two Advisors of Physical Education and a physical education teacher.



Suggested inclusions and alterations to the introductory comments were considered and taken on board. These were;

- to include the statement that ‘all responses will be confidential’.
- to include gender as a descriptor.
- to add ‘Senior Teacher’ and ‘Job Share’ options to the position of the teacher in the department.
- to cut down the information given regarding how to complete the questionnaire.

Suggested inclusions and alterations to the actual questionnaire that were considered and taken on board were;

- to include items such as staff expertise, staff development time, public perception of PE, teaching approach, obligation to teach HGPE through the insistence of the Headteacher, financial support and comprehensible documentation.
- that the actual statement of what teachers were being asked to answer should re-appear at the top of each page of the questionnaire to keep the teachers focused and to prevent them from having to refer back to the covering page.
- that there should be general space at the end of the questionnaire to allow additional comments and a statement thanking the respondents for their assistance.
- to number the questionnaire pages.
- to change the format of the questionnaire with the question on the left hand side of the page only.
- to have two separate questionnaires - one for those teaching HGPE and one for those not teaching HGPE.
- to have questions in the past tense as the departments had already made their decision to teach or not teach HGPE and to make the wording for some questions more concise.
- to change the order of the questions so that the second half of the questionnaire does not involve more political items.
- specific alterations on wording and phrasing for specific items already listed in the questionnaire.

#### 3.4.1.2 Reliability of the questionnaire (Pilot study 2)

While the first pilot study was primarily concerned with determining the validity of the questionnaire, the second pilot study was concerned with the reliability of the questionnaire. The two questionnaires tested in the second pilot study were the result of the inclusions and alterations that had arisen in the first pilot stage. Again, the procedure followed in setting up the reliability test was the same as that reported by Matanin & Tannehill (1994) in their research on assessing and grading physical education.

A low response rate was anticipated as a consequence of re-issuing the questionnaire and it was hoped that this obstacle could be reduced if the questionnaires were administered by methods other than mail. Two physical education teachers, who worked in two different regions from the region that had been chosen for the main study, were contacted. They were chosen for their interest in research in the physical education field and the fact that they had liaised with the author on previous occasions. They distributed the questionnaires, on both occasions, to each teacher personally. As this pilot study was for reliability purposes teachers received the same questionnaire twice but had no prior knowledge that they were to be re-tested.

From the first batch of questionnaires to be dispersed (totaling 24) 19 were received. Seven were returned from one region and 12 from the other. Of those returned, 11 were from teachers who had decided to teach HGPE and 8 were from those who had made the decision to not teach HGPE. There was a one-month gap from receiving the first questionnaire and the second. In the re-test phase, 11 questionnaires were returned - 7 from those who had decided to teach HGPE and 4 from those who had decided to not teach HGPE. From these returns, the demographic pages of only 7 questionnaires corresponded with the first issue number. This implied that on the second occasion, different people had completed the questionnaire. This resulted in there being only 4 test and post-test questionnaires for those teaching HGPE and 3 test and post-test questionnaires for those not teaching HGPE that could be analysed. Following discussion with a statistical analyst



it was agreed that due to the small number of accurate returns there was no need to enter the data into Minitab in order to obtain a reliability coefficient.

On examining the degree of reliability from teachers answering the questionnaire on the first occasion to the second, changes were again made to the actual format of the questionnaire. These included;

- asking for two separate responses to each question (agreement and influence) rather than expecting the respondent to merge both their extent of agreement and influence responses into one response.
- questions in both questionnaires being worded as similarly as possible and not having a positive emphasis ('interested' and 'sufficient') in the questionnaires for teachers teaching HGPE and a negative emphasis ('not interested' and 'insufficient') in the questionnaire for teachers not teaching HGPE.

From these changes two possible formats were drafted, keeping with the idea of a separate questionnaire for teachers offering HGPE and teachers not offering HGPE.

#### 3.4.1.3 Teacher feedback on the questionnaire (Pilot study 3)

The next concern was to obtain feedback from teachers regarding the revised initial questionnaire and to obtain views on the two new formats. Four teachers who had completed and returned both questionnaires were approached and qualitative data was gathered from talking with them. The main comments were that;

- a 'yes', 'no' and 'not sure' response was much clearer and less time consuming than having to decide the extent of agreement through a five point scale. The point made by Sharp (1991) in relation to SGPE was adhered to. He explained that due to Standard Grade's brief history it was thought inappropriate to ask teachers to respond on a very fine scale. HGPE had had an extremely brief history at the time of this particular

research work and therefore it was decided to ask teachers to respond to one of three responses; 'yes', 'not sure' or 'no'.

- the 'not sure' option should remain as teachers, although aware of many of the factors, may not know the factors which truly influenced their department's decision. They may have been in the situation where they had been told they were or were not teaching HGPE without any explanation.
- for those that were teaching HGPE, questions needed to be worded in the past tense. Teachers therefore needed to be aware that they were answering the questions in relation to the period when they had decided to teach HGPE, not the present time. In the case of those not teaching HGPE, questions remained in the present tense as this was the relevant context.

These comments resulted in combining certain qualities from both questionnaires. This resulted in the questionnaire format that was to be used in the main study (appendix 3.5). Teachers were asked to read one question at a time and insert the number that corresponded with the response to that question in column A ('Yes' scoring 1, 'No' scoring 2 and 'Not sure' scoring 3). They were then prompted to stay with the same question and insert a number in column B that corresponded with the extent that their response in column A had influenced their department to teach or not teach HGPE ('Strongly influenced' scoring 1 through to 'No influence at all' scoring 5). The reason for the two columns of the questionnaire operating with a different number of response options arose from feedback from teachers. Teachers commented that while they were happy with the five response options to answering column B they found it difficult to distinguish between the original five options given as possible responses for column A, i.e., strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree. Consequently, the scale was reduced to three possible responses and for the main questionnaire changed from 'agreement' responses to 'yes' and 'no' responses.



### 3.4.2 The main questionnaire

A number of procedures were carried out to stimulate response to the questionnaire through encouraging teachers' involvement and co-operation. The covering letter that accompanied every questionnaire highlighted three encouraging factors. Firstly, it was pointed out that the region had endorsed the use of the questionnaire and that the Headteacher had conveyed support to the project by passing the questionnaire on to the PTPE. The seriousness and importance of the topic under investigation was also emphasised with potential respondents being assured that the results would justify the time and effort expended in filling out the questionnaire. Thirdly, the issue of confidentiality was stressed. Anonymity was not practical because of the need to send follow-up questionnaires to non-respondents.

The use of follow-ups was used to increase the response rate, emphasising to the non-respondents that their response was important. Three weeks after the initial mailing, each school that had not responded by returning the questionnaire was sent a follow-up request. Four weeks after this follow-up, a final attempt was made to contact those who had still not returned a questionnaire.

It was anticipated that the most effective questions would be those worded as simply and clearly as possible, allowing the teachers to give accurate answers. Due to the specialised group being targeted, consideration was given for using language or jargon that was familiar and appropriate to the population. Teachers were encouraged to comment on any of the items covered in the questionnaire and to include any other comments they wished.

A short cover letter was addressed to the PTPE, explaining the nature and importance of the study. It also mentioned that a stamped return envelope was included for their convenience and that another copy of the questionnaire could be obtained if the first copy was mislaid. It was requested that the questionnaire be completed as soon as possible and encouraged all those receiving questionnaires to call or write if they had any problems or queries.

An identical package was put together for each of the 170 Strathclyde Education Authority secondary schools being targeted. Each package was sent directly to the Headteacher of each school in order to comply with Strathclyde Regional Council Department of Education policy. Attached to the cover letter addressed to the Headteacher (appendix 3.4) was a copy of the letter from Strathclyde Regional Council Department of Education as proof of regional and divisional authorisation. A one-page letter addressed to the PTPE (appendix 3.4) was also included along with the two types of questionnaire that had been decided on by the end of the pilot stages. The two types of questionnaire were sent to every school as information regarding the schools that were or were not teaching HGPE was not available at the time from the SEB. The Headteacher was asked to pass on this information to the PTPE within their school.

#### 3.4.2.1 The validity, reliability, objectivity and practicality of the questionnaire

The questionnaire dealt with the issues of internal validity by emphasising that responses were to be in relation to when departments had decided to offer or not offer HGPE. The questionnaire did not ask for current attitudes about each item. External validity was addressed by targeting all Strathclyde secondary schools (the region in Scotland with the most schools) in order to reflect the diverse attitudes likely to be representative of all Scottish secondary schools. At the time Strathclyde Region both covered a very large and diverse area geographically and included about half the population of Scotland (Clark, 1997), which Munn (1997) believed could “exert a substantial influence on policy by reason of its size alone” (p.177). The issue of content validity was dealt with in two ways. Firstly, a number of professionals within the physical education profession were contacted in order to validate all the areas to be covered in a questionnaire concerned with HGPE. Also, the same professionals were asked to verify appropriate wording of questions in order that all teachers were likely to interpret the meaning of each question in the same way.



Reliability of the questionnaire was addressed in a number of ways. These included using 'test-retest' to check the reliability of the questionnaires, issuing a positive cover letter to encourage motivation to respondents, restricting the respondent to three and five closed options in answering each item, employing the same scorer to score the questionnaire and wording each item as simply as possible.

The objectivity of the questionnaire was improved by allowing the respondents to score the questionnaire accurately using a Likert scale format. By making the questionnaire easy to self-administer, and by having the questionnaire the minimum length possible for the topic under investigation, the issue of practicality was addressed.

The view that questionnaires in general are 'ungrounded' (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) was addressed as much as possible by collecting feedback from those representing the physical education profession, by reviewing the relevant literature and by referring to the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993).

#### 3.4.2.2 Assumptions and limitations of the questionnaire

As with any method, assumptions were made in relation to the questionnaire's use and expected delimitations and limitations were identified. Assumptions were made that all teachers targeted were aware of HGPE, the targeted teachers were representative of Scottish physical education teachers, teachers responded truthfully, all the issues included in the questionnaire were relevant to HGPE and that the questionnaire was a valid instrument for collecting the data. Delimitations included the fact that all the secondary schools were within the one geographical location, i.e., the former Strathclyde Region, and that only one teacher from each school was asked for a response. However, in defense of the questionnaires targeting teachers from the same regional education authority, the data collected would present a comprehensive account of how teachers in one particular authority approached the HGPE development. Limitations were identified as the questionnaire results from Strathclyde region perhaps not being representative to all

Scottish secondary schools and that the teachers not offering HGPE may not have been exposed to all of the issues raised in the questionnaire.

#### 3.4.2.3 Questionnaire response rate

The administration period for gathering data from the questionnaire covered a total of 12 weeks. As questionnaires were returned they were entered in a system of recording stating when they had been received. This also facilitated rapid follow-up procedures.

From the 170 packages sent out to all schools, 96 were returned in just over a three-week period. From those returned four had not been completed for various reasons. The first follow up was sent out just over three weeks after the initial packages were sent. This time a one-page letter was sent to the 74 Headteachers of the schools yet to respond. The Headteacher was asked to either prompt the physical education department for a return, return the letter asking for another package to be sent to the school or return the letter explaining the reason(s) why a response had not been obtained from the school. In response 47 returns were received. Seven letters were returned requesting that a package be re-sent to the particular school and all 7 schools did respond to this request with a completed questionnaire. One school returned both questionnaires uncompleted stating that the school did not yet teach SGPE and subsequently were unable to answer a number of the questions.

From the initial sending out of the questionnaires and the first follow up, three incomplete questionnaires were returned, with the three schools briefly explaining that they were unable to follow the format of the questionnaire. In two cases, only column A had been completed and in the other neither column A or B had been completed. The three teachers were visited and taken through the questionnaire, resulting in receiving completed data from all three schools.

A second follow up was carried out five weeks after the first follow up. By this stage 27 schools had not responded in any way. In the letter addressed to the Headteacher in the



previous follow up, a paragraph was included stating that any further correspondence would be carried out directly with the physical education department if a response did not come back from the Headteacher or the physical education department. This allowed the cover letters along with the two questionnaires to be sent directly to each of the remaining 27 PTPE. From this final mailing 15 completed questionnaires were received which resulted in a final response rate of 93%. The value of the results, in terms of their generalisability, depended on the representativeness of the sample of teachers. The final response rate of 93% is believed to provide sample representativeness of teachers working within the former Strathclyde Region.

From all the returns (158) two letters required a written response. The first was concerned that the data from the questionnaires would not reflect the individual contexts that physical education teachers have to deal with. A response was sent explaining that case studies were in place to investigate precisely the topic of context. The second letter aired a PTPE's agitation at receiving a follow up letter just over three weeks after the initial package was sent. A letter of apology was sent in response.

#### 3.4.2.4 Analysis of questionnaire responses

As mentioned previously the main reason behind the construction of the questionnaire was to assess significant patterns of responses in relation to CDM. Patterns of responses were investigated to establish how teachers' interpretation of the ID of HGPE influenced their decision making. This will allow the identification of the extent to which teachers believed the ID of HGPE could be reproduced in the secondary field in Chapter 5.

The assumption was made that when a particular question received a high number of 'yes' responses from teachers offering HGPE, teachers would state that this had 'influenced' their decision to teach HGPE. For example, 92% of teachers offering HGPE agreed that HGPE was a worthwhile development. The expectation was that such a response from the majority of teachers was likely to have influenced their decision to teach HGPE. Subsequently, the assumption was that when a particular question from the questionnaire

received a high number of 'no' responses from teachers, teachers would state that this had 'no influence' on their CDM. It was expected that for those features of the school context that teachers conveyed were not adequate, they had chosen to teach HGPE despite such conditions. For example, 84% of teachers disagreed that there was sufficient time available for staff development. The expectation was that such a response from the majority of teachers was likely to have not influenced their CDM - they had decided to teach HGPE despite the lack of staff development time. Such a relationship between 'yes' / 'influence' responses and 'no' / 'no influence' responses for teachers offering HGPE was termed as a 'positive association'.

In the case of teachers that were not offering HGPE, the relationship between 'no' / 'influence' responses and 'yes' / 'no influence' responses was termed as a 'negative association'. When a particular question from the questionnaire received a high number of 'no' responses from teachers, it was expected that teachers would state that this had 'influenced' their decision to not teach HGPE. For example, 92% of teachers disagreed that their department was achieving a majority of credit passes at SGPE. The expectation was that such a response from the majority of teachers was likely to have influenced their CDM. Subsequently, it was expected that when a particular question from the questionnaire received a high number of 'yes' responses from teachers, teachers would state that this had 'no influence' on their CDM. For example, 81% of teachers believed that HGPE provided depth of study. The expectation was that such a response from the majority of teachers was likely to have not influenced their CDM. Consequently, even when particular features of the school context were identified as being positive, teachers had made the decision to not offer HGPE.

Where both groups of teachers answered either column of the questionnaire with a 'not sure' response this was termed 'lack of association'. This was therefore a combination of 'no' / 'not sure', 'not sure' / 'no influence', 'not sure' / 'not sure', 'not sure' / 'influence' and 'yes' / 'not sure' responses.



The data collected from the questionnaires was processed using chi-square analysis. Firstly, the pattern of responses to each question (a total of nine possible combinations) was calculated using chi-square and allowed the data from the two sets of teachers to be grouped separately. This resulted in identifying the most common makeup of response combinations for each question for teachers offering HGPE and for teachers not offering HGPE. Secondly, the chi-square established whether the pattern of responses for each question in the questionnaires was in fact significantly different from expected results. Both procedures are now discussed.

#### 3.4.2.4.1 Pattern of responses to questionnaire items

The chi-square calculation results in producing data that illustrates that out of X 'yes' / 'no' responses, Y out of Z total responses stated that it had 'influenced' / 'not influenced' the decision to teach HGPE. By using the chi-square data to collate the various combinations of possible responses to each question in the questionnaire (positive, negative or lack), it was possible to produce a table detailing the percentage of particular combined responses (Table 3.1). An example of how the data from the chi-square is transferable to Table 3.1. is detailed in appendix 3.5 (note 4). As pointed out earlier, positive associations are identified as 'yes' / 'influence' and 'no' / 'no influence' responses to a question. Negative associations are identified as 'yes' / 'no influence' and 'no' / 'influence' responses to a question. As a reminder, the 'influence' responses reflected the number of 'influenced' and 'strongly influenced' responses from the questionnaire and the 'no influence' responses reflected the number of 'very little influence' and 'no influence at all' responses from the questionnaire. A 'lack of association' arose where teachers answered either column of the questionnaire with a 'not sure' response.

#### 3.4.2.4.2 Significance of the patterns of responses to questionnaire items

The chi-square was further used to calculate whether the pattern of responses (reported in Table 3.1) for each question was significant. That is, what was the likelihood of the responses occurring again if the study was repeated? The chi-square technique provides a

statistical test as to the significance of the discrepancy between the observed and the expected results (Thomas & Nelson, 1990) and also provides a pattern of distribution for responses (reported in Table 3.1). In this thesis, the observed results were those obtained empirically from administration of the survey while the expected results were those generated by chi-square calculations. The calculation of observed and expected results is detailed in appendix 3.6 (notes 1 & 2 ). The chi-square addresses whether the differences between the observed and the expected (sometimes termed the 'theoretical frequencies') are significant. Chi-square is therefore a descriptive measure of the magnitude of discrepancies between the observed and expected frequencies.

If the value of chi-square is equal to or greater than the critical value required for significance at an accepted significant level for the appropriate degree of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected. In this context the null hypothesis was that there was no association between the agreement and influence responses for each question in the two questionnaires, i.e., agree and influence responses were independent. If the null hypothesis is rejected, we are able to state that the difference between the observed and expected frequencies is significant.

Values of the chi-square are required for significance at various probability levels for different values of degree of freedom. In this particular study any chi-square value greater than 18.46 (value significant at 0.1% where four degrees of freedom are associated with the chi-square value) provided evidence that there was a significant pattern of response for the specific question. That is, I would reject the null hypothesis if patterns of responses were found to be significant at 0.1%, i.e.,  $p < 0.001$ . Critical values of chi square and the categories used to get 4 degrees of freedom are explained in appendix 3.6 (note 3).

It was possible to condense the data in Table 3.1 further to the questionnaire items that were found to have a significant positive association between responses from teachers offering HGPE (Table 3.2) and those that had a significant negative association between responses from teachers not offering HGPE (Table 3.3). The higher percentage in the two right-hand columns of Tables 3.2 and 3.3 let us know the stronger association. Using a



previous example (appendix 3.6, note 4), in Table 3.2, in response to Question 1, 77% of teachers were significantly likely to report that because they believed teachers in their department were interested in teaching HGPE, this subsequently influenced their CDM. Only 9% of teachers reported that because they believed teachers in their department were not interested in teaching HGPE this had not influenced their CDM. It is possible to reduce the data again from Tables 3.2 and 3.3 to the items of the questionnaire that portray the relationship this study is most interested in. That is, which items have influenced teachers to offer HGPE ('yes' / 'influence' responses) and which items have influenced teachers to not offer HGPE ('no' / 'influence' responses). These items are listed in Tables 3.4 and 3.5 respectively and will be discussed in Chapter 5.

However, items from Table 3.2 that convey a positive relationship through 'no' / 'no influence' responses for teachers who had made the decision to offer HGPE remain important responses none the less. For example, it is clear from Table 3.2 that although teachers stated that there was inadequate assistance from the SEB on assessing HGPE (Question 13) this had not influenced their CDM. They had made the decision to offer HGPE despite inadequate assistance. In a similar way, items from Table 3.3 that convey a negative relationship through 'yes' and 'no influence' responses for teachers who had made the decision to not offer HGPE remain important responses. For example, it is evident from Table 3.3 that although teachers stated that there was a sufficient amount of equipment available for the teaching of HGPE (Question 2), this had no influence on CDM. Therefore, despite a sufficient amount of equipment teachers had not been influenced to offer HGPE. Factors that teachers made decisions despite of are investigated in Chapter 8.

Teachers were given the opportunity to write comments on the back of the questionnaire. Any comments they had on topics mentioned, or indeed topics that were not included in the questionnaire, were welcomed. Analysis was completed by manually sorting, organising and indexing the data before comparing, developing and describing the comments that had been received (Mason, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Creswell, 1994).

Qualitative comments from the teacher surveys have been incorporated into the reporting and discussion of the survey findings in Chapter 5.

It was anticipated that analysis of the questionnaire responses would generalise the factors that had influenced teacher CDM. To establish factors in relation to each other in specific situations, it was necessary to conduct case studies and this was pursued to investigate two specific school contexts. The data that was generated from the two case study schools is reported and discussed in Chapter 6.



Table 3.1: Percentage of combined responses from chi-square analysis to each questionnaire item for each group of teachers.

Question	% of responses for teachers teaching HGPE			% of responses for teachers not teaching HGPE		
	Positive <sup>1</sup>	Negative <sup>2</sup>	Lack <sup>3</sup>	Positive <sup>1</sup>	Negative <sup>2</sup>	Lack <sup>3</sup>
1	86*	5	9	21	47	32
2	69	20	11	13	75*	13
3	72*	7	21	19	52	30
4	55*	2	42	27	36	38
5	61*	20	20	19	45*	36
6	67*	7	26	22	52	27
7	72*	20	8	29	62	10
8	49	28	23	8	56*	37
9	83*	5	13	8	63*	29
10	70*	15	15	39	41*	20
11	79*	14	7	19	73*	8
12	75*	0	25	13	61	27
13	51*	20	29	14	28	58
14	61*	11	28	22	38	41
15	67*	21	13	13	68	19
16	86	10	3	16	63*	22
17	59*	22	20	19	48	33
18	52*	15	33	47	16	38
19	77	14	9	22	70	8
20	43	37	20	5	38	58*
21	55*	24	21	11	44	45*
22	87*	5	8	16	45	39
23	83*	3	14	23	58	19
24	82*	10	8	14	77*	9
25	56*	19	25	8	17	75
26	65*	8	27	19	39	42
27	42	35	23	5	39	56*
28	64*	29	7	6	38	56*
29	86*	7	7	13	67*	21
30	75*	9	16	30	52*	18
31	73*	9	17	21	35	44*
32	69*	7	24	24	51*	25
33	75*	15	9	60	33	6
34	78*	9	13	11	65*	24
35	39	2	59*	38	11	51
36	42*	21	36	5	23	73*
37	42	35	23	16	70*	14
38	64*	21	15	13	59*	29
39	44*	26	30	32	35*	33
40	55	19	26	16	65*	19
41	67*	9	23	60	24	16

<sup>1</sup> Combination of 'yes' and 'influence' responses and 'disagree' and 'no influence' responses

<sup>2</sup> Combination of 'no' and 'influence' responses and 'disagree' and 'influence' responses

<sup>3</sup> Combination of responses including 'not sure'

\* denotes a significant  $X^2$  at  $p < .001$  and indicates where the significant difference between observed and expected results was located, i.e., more of these responses were observed than expected.

**Table 3.2: Questions from teachers offering HGPE that had a significant positive association \***

	<b>% 'yes' and 'influence' responses</b>	<b>% 'no' and 'no influence' responses</b>
<b>1. Were teachers in your department interested in teaching HGPE?</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>3. Do you believe that HGPE serves the needs of pupils in the school wishing to continue their general education?</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>4. Do you believe that HGPE portrays the true meaning of PE?</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>5. Is adequate assistance available from the Advisor of PE in setting up the HGPE course?</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>6. Do you believe that HGPE provides depth of study?</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>7. Does your department achieve a majority of credit passes at SGPE?</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>9. Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to study PE to an advanced level within school?</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>10. Did you believe that HGPE helped raise the status of PE?</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>11. Were adequate facilities available for teaching HGPE?</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>12. Did you believe that the teacher(s) in your department would be successful in teaching HGPE?</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>13. Was adequate assistance on assessing HGPE available from the Scottish Examination Board?</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>14. Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of the pupils wishing to use the subject as an entry requirement to higher / further education?</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>15. Were there a high proportion of high calibre pupils interested in HGPE?</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>17. Was adequate in-service training available?</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>18. Did you believe that HGPE provided encouragement to pupils to remain in the education system?</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>21. Was there enough support documentation for HGPE, in terms of curricula materials, available from the SCCC?</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>22. Did you feel HGPE was a worthwhile development?</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>1%</b>



<b>Table 3.2, (continued)</b>		
	<b>% 'yes' and 'influence' responses</b>	<b>% 'no' and 'no influence' responses</b>
<b>23.</b> Did you believe that HGPE provided a link from pre-16 education, i.e. SGPE?	<b>75%</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>24.</b> Was there sufficient staff available to offer HGPE?	<b>78%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>25.</b> Was the statutory time for HGPE sufficient to complete the HGPE syllabus?	<b>51%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>26.</b> Did you believe that HGPE provided vocational possibilities?	<b>49%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>28.</b> Was it possible for HGPE to be entered in a favourable 'option' column?	<b>56%</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>29.</b> Was there an adequate number of pupils in your school wishing to be taught HGPE?	<b>83%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>30.</b> Did your department receive positive support from the school management team regarding HGPE?	<b>72%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>31.</b> Did you believe that HGPE provided a link to post school education and training?	<b>60%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>32.</b> Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to enter a career within sport, leisure and recreation?	<b>61%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>33.</b> Did the Headteacher of your school enforce pressure on your department concerning the teaching of HGPE?	<b>9%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>34.</b> Was sufficient staff expertise available for the teaching of HGPE?	<b>75%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>36.</b> Were the teaching approaches involved in HGPE realistic?	<b>32%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>38.</b> Were sufficient resources available for teaching HGPE?	<b>46%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>39.</b> Was financial support and / or inducement from the school available for teaching HGPE?	<b>43%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>41.</b> Had parents expressed an interest in including HGPE in the school curriculum?	<b>25%</b>	<b>41%</b>

\* denotes a significant  $X^2$  at  $p < .001$  and indicates where the significant difference between observed and expected results was located (revisit appendix 3.6, note 4).

<b>Table 3.3: Questions from teachers not offering HGPE that had a significant negative association *</b>		
	<b>% 'yes' and 'no influence' responses</b>	<b>% 'no' and 'influence' responses</b>
<b>2. Is there a sufficient amount of equipment available for the teaching of HGPE?</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>5. Is adequate assistance available from the Advisor of PE in setting up the HGPE course?</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>8. Is sufficient preparation time available for HGPE?</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>9. Do you believe that HGPE serves the needs of pupils wishing to study PE to an advanced level within school?</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>10. Do you believe that HGPE helps raise the status of PE?</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>11. Are adequate facilities available for teaching HGPE?</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>16. Are appropriate blocks of time available in the school timetable for HGPE?</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>24. Is there sufficient staff available to offer HGPE?</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>29. Are there an adequate number of pupils in your school wishing to be taught HGPE?</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>30. Do you receive positive support from the school management team regarding the teaching of HGPE?</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>32. Do you believe that HGPE serves the needs of pupils wishing to enter a career within sport, leisure and recreation?</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>34. Is sufficient staff expertise available for the teaching of HGPE?</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>37. Is plenty of time available for staff development?</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>38. Are sufficient resources available for teaching HGPE?</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>39. Is financial support and / or inducement from the school available for teaching HGPE?</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>40. Is the HGPE documentation comprehensible?</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>17%</b>

\* denotes a significant  $X^2$  at  $p < .001$  and indicates where the significant difference between observed and expected results was located.



<b>Table 3.4: Questions from teachers offering HGPE that had a significant positive association * between 'yes' and 'influence' responses</b>	
<b>Questionnaire items</b>	<b>% 'yes' and 'influence' responses</b>
1. Were teachers in your department interested in teaching HGPE?	77
3. Do you believe that HGPE serves the needs of pupils in the school wishing to continue their general education?	69
6. Do you believe that HGPE provides depth of study?	64
9. Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to study PE to an advanced level within school?	80
10. Did you believe that HGPE helped raise the status of PE?	53
11. Were adequate facilities available for teaching HGPE?	67
12. Did you believe that the teacher(s) in your department would be successful in teaching HGPE?	75
14. Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of the pupils wishing to use the subject as an entry requirement to higher / further education?	48
22. Did you feel HGPE was a worthwhile development?	86
23. Did you believe that HGPE provided a link from pre-16 education, i.e. SGPE?	75
24. Was there sufficient staff available to offer HGPE?	78
25. Was the statutory time for HGPE sufficient to complete the HGPE syllabus?	51
26. Did you believe that HGPE provided vocational possibilities?	49
28. Was it possible for HGPE to be entered in a favourable 'option' column?	56
29. Was there an adequate number of pupils in your school wishing to be taught HGPE?	83
30. Did your department receive positive support from the school management team regarding HGPE?	72
31. Did you believe that HGPE provided a link to post school education and training?	60
32. Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to enter a career within sport, leisure and recreation?	61
34. Was sufficient staff expertise available for the teaching of HGPE?	75
36. Were the teaching approaches involved in HGPE realistic?	32
38. Were sufficient resources available for teaching HGPE?	46
39. Was financial support and / or inducement from the school available for teaching HGPE?	43

\* denotes a significant  $X^2$  at  $p < .001$  and indicates where the significant difference between observed and expected results was located.

Table 3.5: Questions from teachers not offering HGPE that had a significant negative association * between 'no' and 'influence' responses	
Questionnaire items	% 'no' and 'influence' responses
5. Is adequate assistance available from the Advisor of PE in setting up the HGPE course?	23
8. Is sufficient preparation time available for HGPE?	55
29. Are there an adequate number of pupils in your school wishing to be taught HGPE?	53
37. Is plenty of time available for staff development?	59
38. Are sufficient resources available for teaching HGPE?	33
39. Is financial support and / or inducement from the school available for teaching HGPE?	23

\* denotes a significant  $X^2$  at  $p < .001$  and indicates where the significant difference between observed and expected results was located.

### 3.5 School case studies and the issue of generalisation

Individual schools represent a distinctive social context (Sparkes, 1991a). Case studies allow examination of authentic insights that would not be possible if data was collected outwith the context, i.e., by telephone. It was anticipated that each case study would further examine issues that arose in the questionnaire and also highlight aspects of individual school contexts that were not identified through the questionnaire. The aim was to identify and explain the unique features of each school. The case studies were therefore used to complement the larger scale inquiry of the questionnaire (Yin, 1989; Walker, 1980) and to investigate the level of interaction between the issues identified in the questionnaire as influencing teachers' CDM. The case studies allow another level of analysis of the third research question;

*'How have teachers' views on the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted affected their decision to offer, or not to offer, HGPE?'*

Much of the criticism leveled against the case study methodology that has prevented it from being widely applied is the belief that it is impossible to generalise from one case (Schofield, 1990; Becker, 1990). While it has been suggested that an attempt should be made toward analytical generalisation in doing case studies (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Yin,



1989), Silverman (1993) warned against generalising to a larger population. Schofield (1990) pointed out that generalisability is best thought of as a matter of the 'fit' between the situation studied and other situations.

Silverman (1993) believed it to be unlikely that the case chosen for study would have been selected on a random basis. Glaser (1978) stated in explaining the notion of 'theoretical sampling', 'The initial decisions in theoretical sampling are based only on a general sociological perspective about a substantive area within a population' (p.36). This posed the problem of representativeness, i.e., how representative are the case study findings to all members of the population from which the case was selected? Through comparisons with the larger sample involved in the questionnaires it was hoped to be able to establish some sense of the representativeness of the individual cases.

It is important to recognise that generalising from case(s) to populations does not follow a purely statistical logic in field research. In fact data from any methodologies used, whether quantitative or qualitative, may not be able to offer proof but merely provide strong evidence. The claim is not being made that it is the function of the case study method to provide generalisable statements. A study of a single case limits both the strength and the range of generalisation arguments considerably. It does not however preclude a description of the relevant common and unique attributes of the case (Schofield, 1990). The case study's ability is in discovering what there is to discover. The aim is to be specific both in my description of the attributes of the two case study schools and in the interpretation of the way in which these attributes influenced the specific schools in their CDM. Readers of this information must determine whether the findings are applicable in their own school contexts (Donmoyer, 1990; Schofield, 1990; Walker, 1980).

### 3.5.1 The piloting of school case studies

The pilot case study sites were selected on three main criteria; convenience, access and geographic proximity. It was anticipated that the pilot case studies would help me to refine the data collection plans with respect to both the type of data and the possible and practical

procedures to be followed. The inquiry was much broader and less focused than the ultimate data collection plan. The final research design was informed by reviewing relevant literature and by information gathered during the pilot stage.

Five schools were visited and the PTPE from each school spoke informally about their situation and experience with HGPE. It was anticipated that in discussion with the five teachers issues would arise that both the teachers and the author believed warranted further investigation through the main case studies.

The first three schools visited (Pilot Schools A, B and C) were teaching HGPE and the remaining two schools visited (Pilot Schools D and E) were not teaching HGPE. It took just over a three-week period to complete the five single visits to the schools. The pilot case studies highlighted preferred solutions for both research-design and field procedures.

Informal semi-structured active interviewing was successful in extracting information from the teachers at the pilot stage and active interviewing is discussed later in this section. Also, there was support that the questionnaire was an appropriate part of the research design as many issues that were raised by the five individual teachers had already been covered in the questionnaire. From talking to three teachers offering HGPE and two teachers not offering HGPE it was apparent that there were conflicting views on the same issues and it was hoped the questionnaire would convey such contrasts.

Issues that appeared prominent when talking to the five pilot schools and were consequently useful in informing the questions for the main case study schools are listed in Table 3.6.

While visiting the five teachers in their respective schools, it became obvious to me that time during school hours was of a premium to teachers. Subsequently, visits to the main case study schools was planned once every week for 40 minutes to one hour at a time, rather than attempting to claim whole mornings or afternoons to complete the data collection.



Table 3.6: Issues raised by pilot school teachers in relation to offering HGPE.

Pilot School	Prominent issues
A (Teach HGPE)	HGPE being driven by the Principal Teacher of PE. Demand from pupils for the HGPE subject. Lack of facilities resulting in travelling to other venues. Teacher interest in keeping abreast of new developments in PE.
B (Teach HGPE)	HGPE being driven by the Principal Teacher of PE. Staff expertise and interest in HGPE. Inclusion of more timetable time for PE departments if they taught HGPE.
C (Teach HGPE)	The degree of certification in PE. Concern regarding the erosion of core PE. The area the school was located in and consequently the suitability of pupils for HGPE. Competition with neighbouring schools regarding offering HGPE.
D (Not teach HGPE)	Lack of quality results from pupils doing SGPE. More academic pupils doing other Higher subjects. Modules on offer being more appropriate to the interest and ability of pupils. Concern on how to choose activities and the amount of staff and time necessary were you to teach HGPE.
E (Not teach HGPE)	Concern with other PE curriculum developments, i.e., SCOTVEC and SGPE. Possible changes in the teaching of HGPE with the on-set of Higher Still. In this particular school, PE classes not being co-educational until fifth year due to a large percentage of pupils from an ethnic background that were unable to accept co-educational classes at a younger age.

### 3.5.2 Establishing two case study schools and gaining access

One school teaching HGPE, referred to throughout this study as Ayrborne, and one school not teaching HGPE, referred to as Bushburn, were recommended by teachers in the pilot case studies or by Advisors of physical education. There was consensus that the PTPE in each school would be very honest when disclosing information. Both were factors influencing the choice of site. Both schools were approached and agreed to be main case study schools. Neither school had taken part in the pilot case studies. Choosing Ayrborne, a school that had only begun to teach HGPE, allowed current issues that arose from implementing HGPE to be followed. The interest in investigating Ayrborne was to map the process and related factors that lead to the implementation of HGPE. By investigating Bushburn the aim was to provide a tentative formulation of the issues that had kept the

school from offering HGPE. As stated earlier, each school would allow the third research question to be addressed, i.e., how did teachers' views of the way in which HGPE had been constructed and constituted affect teacher CDM.

Approval to approach schools (appendix 3.3), and consequently Headteachers, had already been obtained from Strathclyde Regional Council: Department of Education when permission to send out the questionnaires was sought. A letter was sent to both Headteachers of Ayrborne and Bushburn explaining the interest in further investigation in their school. Both Headteachers agreed to the request that they and the PTPE would provide more detailed information on the factors that, in their minds, influenced their CDM.

While a questionnaire sample focuses on sample representativeness (populations), interviews focus on people. By selecting individuals as well as representatives of populations it is being advocated that individuals have worthwhile stories to tell and consequently have a part to play in this research.

The schools' and teachers' rights and privacy were protected throughout the study. All teachers' and schools' names remained anonymous.

### 3.5.3 Collection of data from the case study schools

A copy of the questions chosen to discuss with the Headteachers and PTPE (appendix 3.7) were sent directly to the teachers before meeting with them for the interviews. This allowed them to read through the questions and highlight in advance any concerns or queries they had regarding the topic under investigation.

Two separate interviews were carried out with each Headteacher. The first interview focused on the school, and information regarding the management structure of the school was collected in the second interview. Two separate interviews were also carried out with each PTPE. The first set of questions put to each PTPE regarded the structure and teaching



of the physical education programme. The second set of questions dealt with the issue of HGPE in relation to the school. For Ayrborne, questions such as the procedures that were involved in planning to offer HGPE, the co-ordination of the process and school factors that were encouraging or posed problems in relation to offering HGPE were raised. For Bushburn questions were concerned with the importance that certain factors (already established in the questionnaire) had on the teacher's decision to not offer HGPE. The reader's attention is drawn to the fact that the two interviews in Ayrborne with the PTPE were conducted in the presence of the Assistant PTPE who contributed to the interview as well as the PTPE. This was at the request of the PTPE and the reason for making the request was that the PTPE acknowledged the Assistant PTPE's involvement in contributing to the decision to offer HGPE, which will become evident in Chapter 6.

Each interview was conducted over a number of weeks to accommodate teachers' free time from teaching commitments. The interviews were audiotaped and subsequently transcribed for close analysis. The transcripts are available in appendix 3.8. Table 3.7 below lists the transcript name that has been given to each interview and specific details regarding the content of the interview and who was involved.

Table 3.7: Case study interviews: names and details.

Transcript name	Specific details
<b>AYRSCHO</b>	Interview regarding the school with the Headteacher in Ayrborne
<b>AYRMAN</b>	Interview regarding management with the Headteacher in Ayrborne
<b>AYRSTRU</b>	Interview regarding structure of PE and the PE department with the PT and APT of PE in Ayrborne
<b>AYRHGPE</b>	Interview regarding HGPE with the PT and APT of PE in Ayrborne
<b>BUSHSCHO</b>	Interview regarding the school with the Headteacher in Bushburn
<b>BUSHMAN</b>	Interview regarding management with the Headteacher in Bushburn
<b>BUSHSTRU</b>	Interview regarding structure of PE and the PE department with the PT of PE in Bushburn
<b>BUSHHGPE</b>	Interview regarding HGPE with the PT of PE in Bushburn

### 3.5.3.1 Active interviewing as a method of data collection

It has long been established that in case studies of educational institutions, such as a school, the interview is the basic research instrument (Nisbet & Watt, 1978). Holstein & Gubrium (1995) highlighted the difference between 'standard' and 'active' interviewing. Standard interviewing is more appropriate for generating straightforward behavioural or demographic information while active interviewing brings meaning and its construction to the foreground. An active approach was therefore thought to be the most appropriate in this instance where the interest was in the process of interpretation. Elements of standard interviewing were evident when looking to gather information of a demographic nature, e.g., number of teachers and pupils in the school.

The interviews were loosely structured, allowing each teacher to respond in their own way, while remembering that the interview process is situation specific (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) and guided by the interviewer and their research agenda. The tasks of the active interviewer extend far beyond asking a list of questions. As Holstein & Gubrium (1995) stated, "Interviews are conversations where meanings are not only conveyed but co-operatively built up, interpreted and recorded by the interviewer" (p.11). As an active interviewer there was an awareness to constrain as well as provoke answers from the teacher.

The social relationship that is evident between the interviewer and interviewee can also have an effect on the information conveyed. In this particular study, it was anticipated that the author's background in training as a physical education teacher would bear well with the teachers being interviewed. Also, being an outsider to the school would hopefully allow teachers to have more freedom in their comments than if they were to be questioned by a teacher from their own school. An invaluable resource was the author's knowledge relevant to the research topic (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

While a standardised questionnaire dictates the questions to be asked, the active interview has more of a conversational agenda than a direct procedure to follow. Holstein & Gubrium (1995) encouraged the interviewer to let the respondent's responses determine whether particular questions from the interview guide were necessary or appropriate. The



interviewer could also add new questions or discussion items as the interview unfolds. Advice on constructing the questions to make up the interview agenda was given by a number of authors. Goetz & LeCompte (1984) advised that questions should be posed in language that was meaningful and clear to the respondents, that each question should involve only a single idea rather than a string of questions and that the sequencing of questions must be considered. They also advised that, for qualitative analysis strategies, open questions were preferable (as did Nisbet & Watt, 1978) and, in agreeing with Holstein & Gubrium (1995), to avoid the use of leading questions as this reveals what the interviewer believes to be the preferable answer.

Control over events in either school was not possible and there was a concern with attempting to record and analyse events that had taken place, or were current, to gain accurate accounts of how such events had influenced Ayrborne or Bushburn in CDM. It was anticipated that a number of themes related to the particular school's decision to offer or not offer HGPE would reoccur and gain increasing importance in investigating factors that affected teacher CDM in each school.

#### 3.5.4 Assumptions and limitations of the case studies

As with the questionnaire, assumptions were made in relation to the use of case studies in this particular piece of work and expected delimitations and limitations were identified. Assumptions were made that all the teachers interviewed were truthful about the school context, teachers' views about the ethos within the school were accurate and that all relevant information was disclosed.

Delimitations included only one secondary school being investigated from 94 schools teaching HGPE in Strathclyde and 251 schools nation-wide, (Ganson, SEB Research Officer, March 1997) and only one secondary school being investigated from 76 schools not teaching HGPE in Strathclyde and 155 nation-wide. Another two delimitations were that interviews were only with two members of the school staff - the Headteacher and the PTPE and that the case studies were over the course of one year. Limitations were

identified as the two particular school contexts perhaps not being representative of all Scottish secondary schools and that the views of the teachers interviewed may not have been representative of other teachers' views within the school.

### 3.5.5 Analysis of case study data

From the semi-structured interviews conducted in both schools and from information available in school prospectuses and outlines of the school's physical education programme, it was possible to identify text segments, attach category labels to the segments and sort for all text segments that related to a specific category or theme. Similar to the constant comparative method of analysing the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the data was manually reviewed repeatedly and continually coded, looking for similarities and differences, groupings, patterns and items of particular significance (Mason, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Creswell, 1994). The evidence presented in Chapter 6 related to the case study data provides certain insights into individual teacher's perspectives.

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, data from any methods used, whether quantitative or qualitative, may not be able to offer proof but merely provide strong evidence. Data can offer confirming or disconfirming evidence but never conclusive evidence. Furthermore, the strength of the evidence is a matter of judgement. Readers of this information must therefore determine whether the findings are applicable in relation to their own working context.

The teacher survey and school case studies were concerned with providing a thorough investigation into teachers' decision-making processes in relation to HGPE. The frequency to which pupils' perceptions and views are often omitted when considering curriculum planning (Brooker & Macdonald, 1999; Fullan, 1993) was addressed by choosing to investigate pupils' reasons for deciding to study or not to study HGPE. It is to explaining the method chosen to address the final research question that the focus now turns.



### 3.6 Nominal Group Technique and pupil survey

By using a group technique to gather information from pupils it was hoped that this would allow them to take part in this study with pupils they already knew and not in a one-to-one situation with an 'outsider'. Reasons that influenced pupils' choice in studying or not studying HGPE were investigated using a group process called Nominal Group Technique (NGT) and are discussed in Chapter 7. A pupil questionnaire complemented the data collected by NGT and both methods served the purpose of addressing the fourth research question identified in Chapter 2;

*'How has the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted generally affected pupils views on the subject and consequently influenced their choice to study, or to not study, HGPE?'*

The above research question is primarily intent on focussing on how HGPE was viewed by pupils and how such perceptions influenced their subject choice.

#### 3.6.1 Group techniques for the collection of data

A variety of group techniques could be used with pupils to generate, develop and select reasons in response to being asked why they had chosen to study or not study HGPE. These included Focus Groups, Brainstorming, the Delphi technique and NGT. After reviewing the above methods, it was decided to choose the NGT. The decision to use the NGT group format over the other techniques was determined by the nature of the issue being investigated. Consideration was also given to the amount of time available to familiarise and pilot the process and the confidence in undertaking the process. The more controlled approach of NGT which has a clear set of predetermined procedures to follow was preferred.

### 3.6.2 Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

In the educational research literature, NGT has been used to incorporate college students' perspectives into assessment (Farone et al., 1998), to prioritise implications for vocational teacher education (Frantz, 1997), for the evaluation of college students' teaching and learning experiences (Chapple & Murphy, 1996) and to identify and rank problems faced by students in an inner-city school (Gerdes & Benson, 1995). Earlier uses of NGT identified specific course topics and emphasis sought by students enrolling in undergraduate and graduate social work courses (Zastrow & Navarre, 1977) and investigated the strengths and weaknesses of B.Ed. programmes (O'Neil, 1981).

The NGT approach is designed to receive input from all group members, not just from the more vocal members. A nominal group is defined as, “...*a group which individuals work in the presence of others but do not verbally interact*” (Zastrow & Navarre, 1977, p.113). As O'Neil (1981) explained, the use of the prefix ‘nominal’ refers to a non-interacting group, i.e., a group in name only.

NGT is a modification of the brainstorming technique. Moore (1987) admitted that NGT is likely to produce a better product and a higher degree of group satisfaction than other ways of generating ideas. NGT relies on independent individual work for idea generation then pools the individual judgements of group members, allows for a discussion stage and incorporates mathematical voting procedures. Objectives of the NGT process stated by Delbecq et al. (1975) are to assure different processes for each phase, to balance participation among members and to incorporate mathematical voting techniques in the aggregation of group judgement.

Depending on the number of participants, NGT can take up to 45 minutes (Zastrow & Navarre, 1977), between 60 to 90 minutes (Delbecq et al., 1975), or even two to two and a half hours (O'Neil & Jackson, 1983) to complete. The maximum time for each school period in the two case study schools was no longer than 55 minutes and it would not be practical for the process to last any longer. Thus the NGT was piloted to fit this time scale.



O'Neil & Jackson (1983) advised that a group of 8-10 people is usually regarded as an optimum size for a group seated around a table in this process.

There did not seem to be precise criteria developed for the NGT, with each article that reported on the topic varying slightly between the mechanics of the process. The particular NGT described by Hegarty (1977) was a modified version of the original technique introduced by Delbecq & Van de Ven (1971). Although there was no exact agreed format for carrying out NGT there is a prescribed sequence of problem solving steps. These are;

- the silent generation of ideas in writing
- round-robin feedback from group members to record each idea in a concise phrase on a flip chart
- discussion of each recorded idea for clarification and evaluation, and
- individual voting on priority ideas with the group decision being mathematically derived through rank-ordering or rating (Delbecq et al., 1975).

### 3.6.3 The piloting of NGT

A number of piloting stages were necessary to become comfortable in delivering the NGT to pupils and to determine the question to be posed.

#### 3.6.3.1 The facilitation of NGT (Pilot study 1)

It was essential that the author had experience of facilitating NGT before conducting the main study NGT sessions and it was for this reason the decision was made to carry out a pilot study. It took just over 3 months to complete the pilot stages and the main study NGT sessions.

A number of preliminary steps needed to be taken before each of the NGT meetings got underway. These included clearly identifying the information desired from the group, selecting and preparing the meeting area, providing the necessary supplies and presenting

the opening statement. It was then necessary to study the processes involved, as mentioned earlier, in conducting a NGT meeting.

Eight undergraduate students at Glasgow University were approached and agreed to take part in the NGT process. Those chosen were not given any indication of the question to be considered in order to minimise discussion between members before the meeting. It was explained to them that the purpose of their involvement was to evaluate a research method to be used with school pupils. In choosing a question to ask the group an attempt was made to choose a question that was likely to be similar to the question for the main study with pupils in school. The question 'Why did you choose to study at Glasgow University?' was posed.

Administration of the process was under the control of the researcher with the supervisor as a non-participant observing and evaluating my administration. Evaluation sheets had been prepared for the supervisor to complete for each step of the process. Along with the feedback from the completed evaluation sheets, further feedback was gathered from video taping the process and from completed evaluation sheets from the members of the group. The following issues arose and were adhered to:

- Rather than numbering each line of the worksheet given to participants, insert bullet points so that members of the group do not feel pressured to 'find' responses to fill all the numbered spaces.
- To promote a speedier process, stipulate a time that the group is being given to write down their ideas. If someone is still writing once that time constraint has elapsed, the leader can announce to the group that they have one further minute.
- Explanation of the duplication issue needed further clarification. At the point where the group members are asked to select a certain number of items from the list, emphasise that only the exact wording of the items on the list are those to be chosen. If anyone has any other item they want to rank, to share it with the group so that it can be listed also.
- Be aware of statements that actually contain a number of possible statements.
- It would be advantageous to prepare a ballot sheet on the flip chart in advance.



- The actual writing on the index cards of the statement letter and the corresponding wording was unnecessary and time consuming. Change the format to asking the participants to only write an enlarged version of the statement letter of the chosen item in the centre of the index cards, keeping with the ranking system in the bottom right hand corner.
- Asking pupils to prioritise any more than five items may lead to confusion. On the advice of Delbecq et al. (1975) the group members were asked to select five priority items. Delbecq et al. reported that individuals are able to accurately rank about seven, plus or minus 2, items, i.e., that group members can select five to nine priority items with some reliability of judgement.
- Rather than have one member of the group read out all the results one member could be issued with all the cards to divide them, according to each statement letter, between the other participants in the group. The participants could then add up the rankings for each pile they had in front of them and score them. In this way all members would be involved in the recording process.
- Ask the participants to write their name on a badge so that the leader could use their names for the round-robin phase of the NGT process.

There was a discrepancy within the NGT literature regarding the involvement of the leader. O'Neil (1981) and O'Neil & Jackson (1983) stated that the leader should not contribute to the master list items, explaining that the leader is essentially a neutral receiver of group ideas. In contrast, Delbecq et al. (1975) stipulated that in the round robin recording of ideas the leader should contribute to the master list. Another discrepancy was the discussion of results with the members of the group. Zastrow & Navarre (1977) in their working of the NGT briefly discussed their results with the members of the NGT as did O'Neil (1981) and O'Neil & Jackson (1983). Delbecq et al. (1975) made no reference to discussion at the end of the process. From the pilot the following issues arose regarding the manner of leading the NGT;

- Avoid helping a member summarise or abbreviate ideas.
- A conscious effort must be made to make eye contact with all group members.

- Slower explanations as well as a simple introduction are necessary.
- Do not allow discussion to arise during the actual recording step. It may happen to some extent but do not let it run away from the task in hand.
- Summarise to the group what has evolved through the process.

An evaluation sheet had been prepared and participants were asked to state what they felt the NGT format achieved that other group formats would not. The opportunity to observe others' ideas and use or modify them, freedom of thought and a more comprehensive outcome, i.e., written answers rather than verbal, along with the informal set up making it easier to say what you wanted to say were all noted. The NGT being friendlier than other group formats, an easy format to follow, every member of the group having to participate and the fact that the set format did not allow discussion to degenerate into arguing were also mentioned. All these observations confirmed my preference for favouring the NGT over other group formats.

Before a pilot study of the NGT could take place with pupils, a suitable question needed to be formulated and tested.

#### 3.6.3.2 Piloting of the NGT question (Pilot study 2)

Delbecq et al. (1975) stated that writing the question that is to be the focus of the group's effort is an important preparatory task. Once the objective of the first two main study NGT meetings were clear (to find out the reasons that had influenced pupils to study or not study HGPE) it was possible to focus attention on the expected answers. Expected responses to the questions were listed to make it easier to develop possible questions that would yield these responses. These questions were pilot tested with two sample groups in two secondary schools teaching HGPE, not in Ayrborne. In total, 21 pupils were taking HGPE and 15 pupils were not. Both groups completed one of the four relevant question sheets in relation to whether they were or were not taking HGPE. Pupils were also asked to devise a question that they thought would elicit the types of responses previously listed. A main



benefit of the pilot testing of the questions was in the wide array of responses received. This provided some idea of the expectation of responses in the main NGT meetings.

From the results of piloting the NGT questions it was decided to use the wording '*Why did you choose to take HGPE?*' for those pupils who were doing HGPE and '*Why did you choose not to take HGPE?*' for those pupils not doing HGPE.

### 3.6.3.3 NGT in a school situation (Pilot study 3)

A local PTPE was approached and once NGT and the reasons for its use had been explained the PTPE agreed to name ten pupils who were currently studying HGPE that could be used to pilot the technique. A cover letter and letter of consent (appendix 3.9) was addressed to each of the pupil's parent or guardian. The parent or guardian was asked to return the consent form to the school if they had any objections to the child in their care taking part. All ten pupils took part.

The NGT took place in a classroom in the school during a period when the pupils would normally have been in the same classroom undertaking written work related to HGPE. It was explained to the pupils that the NGT process focused on group data and not each individual's data. It was emphasised that pupils remained anonymous in the sense that they were never asked to divulge their name on any of the written sheets and that no individual was associated with any particular finding. Pupils were also assured that no one within their school would have access to the original data and were encouraged to approach the researcher if they had any questions or concerns. It is probable that pupils give more reliable answers to someone whom they do not know than to their own teacher (Cooper, 1995).

Pupils were given a short questionnaire to complete before the NGT process (appendix 3.10), which had been prepared to collect the pupils' subject interest at both SG and HG and any aspirations of where they saw themselves after leaving school. It was anticipated that such information would give an idea of the 'kinds of pupils' opting for HGPE and

complement the discussion in Chapter 1 regarding pupils' ability and the number of HGs they undertake. The questionnaire consisted of seven questions only and was completed quickly and without any difficulty.

In completing the two questions on the evaluation sheet regarding the questionnaire, the group members were unanimous in reporting that the questionnaire was easy to follow and most group members agreed that nothing was missing from the questionnaire.

The actual NGT process followed was similar to the first pilot study, incorporating suggested alterations that had arisen through assessing the first pilot study. The question posed, decided from previous piloting of the wording of the question, was '*Why did you choose to take Higher Grade Physical Education?*' Before the pupils were left to write down their responses, great emphasis was put on the fact that it was to be the reasons pertaining to when they had made the decision to take HGPE, i.e., the previous May or June when they were choosing what Highers to do. The results are available in appendix 3.11.

As before, pupils were encouraged to add items to the accumulated list that they believed may have had the same meanings to items already listed but were perhaps worded differently. However, from later looking through the pupils' worksheets, there were a number of items that had not been raised. This led to contemplating further alteration to the NGT process by asking the pupils to read out all the items that they had written down once the round robin phase was completed. In this way the group could decide whether each of the items was covered in the communal list. However, it was felt that this could have the potential to be threatening to pupils and was therefore dismissed from being included in the main NGT study.

From the rankings (appendix 3.11) it was apparent that the rank number 3 appeared only seven times and not ten times like all the other rank numbers. This was due to three of the pupils choosing only to rank four items. This is acceptable and encouraged as I believe



that there is no point in ranking a fifth item if it has had no influence on a pupil's subject choice.

In providing feedback on a prepared evaluation sheet, pupils stated that they liked NGT due to the relaxed atmosphere, freedom to say what you like, the opportunity to know what other people are thinking and the confidentiality. Only one pupil commented that they did not like everyone hearing their particular reasons for choosing HGPE.

#### 3.6.4 NGT data collection

The setting for the NGT with pupils who had chosen HGPE at Ayrborne was similar to that of Pilot study 3 in that it took place in the classroom where the HGPE pupils would sometimes go for their HGPE course. It took place on the same day and time as the pupils would be in the classroom for HGPE. A cover letter and letter of consent (as for Pilot study 3) had been addressed to each of the pupils' parent or guardian.

The group of pupils who had chosen to not study HGPE at Ayrborne was made up from pupils who came to core physical education for a double period. The teacher asked for volunteers to give up some of their physical education time to take part in the NGT. The process ran smoothly even though it took place in a small hall that had been converted into a weights gym. The pupils managed by sitting on benches and using higher benches to lean on when writing. These particular surroundings did not appear to have any direct influence on the process.

The NGT for pupils in Bushburn who chose physical education as a module in S5 or S6 took place in a changing room located within the physical education department. It took place at a time when the pupils involved were timetabled for physical education. A cover letter and letter of consent had been addressed to each of the pupils' parent or guardian.

As with the above group from Bushburn, the NGT for pupils who chose not to do physical education in any form in S5 or S6 in Bushburn was also carried out in a physical education

changing room. The pupils who volunteered were dismissed from a class ten minutes before the break and had permission to return late to the class after the break. This allowed the time needed to complete the process without disrupting the pupils' day too much.

It was anticipated that the sample of pupils would incorporate the full range of characteristics and conditions affecting subject choice, from those who were committed to physical education to those who were less enthusiastic.

The NGT procedure for both groups of pupils (those at Ayrborne and those at Bushburn) was almost identical to Pilot study 3. Pupils were initially asked to individually list all possible responses to the given question. Each group's responses were then collected and pooled and pupils were asked to choose five responses that were more true to their own situation. They were then directed to prioritise the five responses by giving a scoring of 5 to the most important reason through to a scoring of 1 to the least important reason. The statements given in response to the question posed to each group and the scoring they allotted to each statement is reported and discussed in Chapter 7.

### 3.6.5 Validity and reliability of NGT

An instrument that measures what you intend it to measure is termed as 'valid' while an instrument that produces the same results with similar groups is seen to be reliable.

The issue of internal validity was dealt with by being unobtrusive and honest with the subjects, involving the pupils in all phases of the NGT and being present throughout the whole NGT process. By asking the reader to evaluate the descriptions and analysis and consequently determine what issues apply to their own particular situation, external validity is addressed.

The issue of internal reliability was addressed by obtaining the completed worksheets of items each pupil had written down. Hopefully by not being a threat to the pupils, i.e., a visitor to the school, by randomly selecting pupils and by carrying out the NGT in



conditions pupils were used to, i.e., classroom or changing rooms, the external reliability of the NGT was increased.

#### 3.6.6 Assumptions and limitations of using NGT

Assumptions were made in relation to using NGT and expected delimitations and limitations were identified. Assumptions were made that the process was clearly presented, pupils understood what they were being asked to do and that pupils had no previous knowledge about the NGT process. Delimitations included two groups of pupils from each case study school being chosen. Limitations were identified as the results from the two groups of pupils perhaps not being representative to all pupils in S5 / S6 and that there was no method of measuring the honesty of pupils' responses.

#### 3.6.7 Analysis of NGT data

Care must be taken in interpreting results from the NGT data. The statements have been prioritised in respect to the number of pupils who actually ranked each statement. It is also important not to dismiss the items that did not score at all or received a minimal number of rankings. These were items that the pupils themselves had brought up and, due to being asked to prioritise only five items, pupils could not give a ranking to every statement listed. The reporting and discussion of the NGT data is the main concern of Chapter 7.

#### 3.6.8 Pupil HGPE survey

Before sitting their HGPE examination paper, pupils at Ayrborne were asked to complete a survey asking for their views on the HGPE course. The PTPE selected to administer a survey to pupils undertaking HGPE in order to have a record of pupils' feelings towards the course. The survey was constructed around the main issues of practical and written work, focusing on the HGPE elements of Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance. Prior experience in physical education that pupils had before embarking on HGPE, pupils' enjoyment of the subject, differences between SGPE and HGPE and possible utilitarian reasons for undertaking HGPE were also explored. A copy of the survey is available in appendix 3.12. The responses were not only valuable to highlighting how pupils' perceived the HGPE syllabus but also assisted the school in evaluating the course. Such information would allow the evaluation of teaching and learning

approaches that were followed in the delivery of HGPE and, where relevant, may result in teachers addressing issues of concern raised by pupils. Pupils were asked to comment on the practical and written elements of HGPE, the usefulness of previous experience in SGPE in undertaking HGPE and how they planned to use the qualification. The survey findings are discussed in Chapter 7.

### 3.7 Conclusion

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it is widely accepted that more than one strategy in any given study can be used. In fact, Brannen's (1992) whole book 'Mixing Methods' was devoted to supporting the use of multi-methods in research and other authors have highlighted the benefits of the multi-method approach in research (Patton, 1990) and more specifically in educational research (Denzin, 2000; Cohen & Manion, 1989). The reason for choosing to use a number of methodologies in this particular study was the distinctive contribution that each method could make towards investigating and answering the research questions identified in Chapter 2 while at the same time producing data that would be complementary.

The key focus of this thesis is the social construction of physical education and how this can affect teacher CDM and pupil subject choice. Document and archive analysis would not only provide contextual information about HGPE but also stimulate the formulation of questions that became the main research questions of this study and begin to establish how HGPE was socially constructed. This form of analysis resulted in the foundation of the study. A teacher survey complemented by investigation of two specific school instances was anticipated to illustrate the relationship between the pattern of responses from the survey and the school context. This, in turn, would allow investigation into teacher CDM, i.e., what influences teachers in their decision to offer or to not offer HGPE? To investigate pupils subject choice, the Nominal Group Technique was the favoured group technique in allowing pupils an equal opportunity to divulge their reasons for choosing or choosing not to study HGPE.

Chapters 4 to 7 set out to answer the research questions posed by reporting the findings and subsequently discussing the data that was collected through the various sources. In the next chapter document analysis is primarily used to establish the instructional and regulative discourse of HGPE, the relationship between each and those who were responsible for the construction of HGPE.



## **Chapter 4 - The official recontextualising field: The construction of the instructional discourse and regulative discourse of HGPE**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The key focus of this thesis was established in Chapter 1 as being concerned with the social construction of physical education and how this can affect curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupil subject choice. Chapter 2 discussed Basil Bernstein's framework that is to be used to address this concern. Before being able to understand the issues that lead to CDM and pupil subject choice that occur in schools, in what Bernstein (1990) terms the secondary context, it is necessary to investigate the role of the recontextualising field in the construction of HGPE. It is in the recontextualising field where the broad parameters and subject matter of HGPE are constructed, i.e., the instructional discourse constructed by recontextualising agents and agencies determines what is expected to be delivered as HGPE by teachers operating in the secondary field.

Bernstein (1990) argues that the 'recontextualising context' is concerned with the transfer of texts and practices from the primary context to the secondary context, i.e., from discursive production to discursive reproduction. In this study the recontextualising context includes agents and agencies involved in the administration of educational programmes, for example, the SEB (the SQA since 1997) in Scotland.

It is important to note that the definition of the primary context used in this study is slightly different from the definition given by Bernstein. While Bernstein (1990) determines the primary context as being where the 'intellectual field' of the education system originates, i.e., universities and research agencies, the primary context in this study is interpreted more broadly to include a number of other sites involved in the production of the 'regulative discourse'. The form of the regulative discourse determines the form 'instructional discourse' can take.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the relationship between 'regulative' and 'instructional' discourse can be described through pedagogic discourse. Pedagogic discourse involves the construction of 'instructional discourse' from a number of other discourses that form what Bernstein (1990) terms 'regulative discourse'. Instructional discourse (ID) transmits specialised competencies and their relation to each other. Regulative discourse (RD) is less specific and provides official rules regulating order, relation and identity. Bernstein emphasises that ID is embedded in the broader, non-specific field of RD.

This chapter aims to introduce the regulative and instructional components of the pedagogic discourse of HGPE. The ID of HGPE, the context in which the ID of HGPE emerged (i.e., the process of selection and exclusion of knowledge), and the RD in which the ID of HGPE is embedded, will become evident. In this study 'Higher Grade Physical Education' is identified as the ID while a number of issues related to contemporary culture act as the RD. This chapter will illustrate how discourse concerned with contemporary culture are re-located and re-focused by agents, including curriculum writers and officers of the SEB, in the recontextualising field to develop the ID of HGPE.

The identification of the RD of HGPE begins with an analysis of the ID as it is set out in the HGPE Arrangements document. The ID of HGPE illustrates the 'curriculum-as-intended', i.e., as explained in Chapter 2, the way in which those who have constructed HGPE in the recontextualising field intend it to be taught in the secondary field. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 will subsequently investigate the ID in the secondary context, i.e., 'curriculum-as-practiced' / 'curriculum-as-received' (Apple, 1982). These latter chapters will focus on teachers' interpretation and reconstruction of the HGPE in Scottish secondary schools and pupils' readings of the HGPE subject, including the practical and written elements and the usefulness of previous experience in SGPE.

Once the ID of HGPE has been established the actual production of the ID will be investigated, from the initial proposal of the subject through to its availability in Scottish secondary schools. Such an investigation will highlight the activity of agents in the recontextualising field which is of central importance to the creation of what is thinkable



or imaginable as 'physical education' (Kirk, 1998). In this study, the concern is with determining what is thinkable or imaginable for a Higher Grade in physical education. Discussion on the extent to which non-specific discourse sites acted as the RD for HGPE will be the final focus of this chapter. This chapter will consequently highlight what the ID of HGPE is, who and what were responsible for the ID of HGPE and how consistent the ID of HGPE is with trends in the RD. The first section examines the ID of HGPE.

#### 4.2 The instructional discourse of Higher Grade Physical Education

The ID of HGPE is detailed in the 'Arrangements in Physical Education Higher Grade' (SEB, 1993) document. It is important to point out that an Arrangements document is a framework that details what a particular syllabus is to look like. Arrangement documents act as a template for establishing a set of procedures used for the development of all Scottish secondary school subjects (Niven, 1998b). They appear to frame the rules and construct the way in which writers are to think about the development of a subject. Consequently, an Arrangements document perhaps serves the writers of a text more than those who it is intended will implement it although it is expected to provide all the information required to teach the particular course. Consequently, the planning and construction of the HGPE course was controlled by the requirements of the Arrangements document, and the Arrangements document itself is defined as '*proposals* [my emphasis] for a syllabus and examination' (SEB, 1993, p.3).

The Arrangements document is not a syllabus in the sense that a substantial amount of work has to be done by teachers to put the Arrangements document into practice. Fullan (1982) maintained that in developing new programmes, there is much flexibility at the teacher level for making decisions on many of the implementation details such as teaching methods. Niven (1998b) reported that teachers felt the need for more guidance in the construction and delivery of the HGPE course as the documentation was vague. This work is expected to be carried out by teachers wishing to implement the subject and is necessary in assembling a course that can be transferred directly into the teaching and learning environment. The Arrangements document can therefore be said to not be mandatory, but

merely sets out guidelines for the teaching of HGPE, lacking detailed advice as to how to fulfil the assessment criteria (Niven, 1998b). Niven also suggested that a lack of guidance and national support for the HGPE course allowed teachers a sense of ownership of the course, interpreting guidelines in their own way and developing the course as they felt appropriate. The issue of ownership was discussed previously in Chapter 1. However, the assessment for certification is mandatory and it may be necessary for teachers to follow the guidelines as if they were mandatory in order to provide pupils with a higher chance of achieving a pass grade. The issue of teachers deciding whether to strictly follow the Arrangements document guidelines in delivering HGPE and the impact this can have on pupils' final grade is investigated in Chapters 6 and 8. The Joint Working Party (JWP) that was set up to produce an Arrangements document for HGPE was given a template that included the titles of the separate sections (Niven, 1998b). The ID of HGPE will now be examined in relation to the stipulated sections of the Arrangements document.

#### 4.2.1 Rationale

The rationale of the HGPE Arrangements document claims to fulfill 'the broad educational aims of the Scottish education system' (SEB, 1993, para.1 1, p.4) which are communicated through the Munn Report (SED/CCC, 1977a), the Action Plan (SED, 1983) and the Howie report (SOED, 1992b). In particular the HGPE Arrangements document claims to demonstrate 'the characteristics of an S5 / S6 system by providing depth of study, articulation with pre-16 education and post-school education and training, vocational possibilities, and encouragement to pupils to remain in the education system' (SEB, 1993, para.1 1, p.4). Chapters 5 and 6 examine the extent to which teachers believed these claims were evident in HGPE and also investigate whether such claims influenced teachers in making the decision to offer or not offer HGPE.

Although the rationale of the HGPE course claims 'to serve the needs of pupils' who wish to study the subject for various reasons (SEB, 1993, para. 1 2, p.4), no guidance is given as to the level of practical and academic ability necessary for successful completion of the HGPE course. The level of practical and academic ability deemed necessary for successful



completion of the HGPE course is discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 from teachers' perspectives and in Chapter 7 from pupils' perspectives. It is also claimed that the course can serve the needs of pupils who wish to 'use the subject as part of the entry requirements for courses in higher education' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 2, p.4). The implication here is that HGPE is a way into studying a related subject after leaving school. However, as will be discussed later in this chapter, the Scottish Universities Council on Entrance (SUCE) took the view that HGPE could not be regarded as a 'science', and could not be acceptable as such for purposes of admission to Bachelor of Science and Sports Science degrees. Also, HGPE is not a pre-requisite for entry into a degree programme that provides preparation for physical education teaching. SUCE did approve HGPE as a general entry requirement, which means that if a course does not stipulate that all Highers are to be specific ones, HGPE can be counted towards entrance into higher or further education. The impact that opportunities in further and higher education, and employment opportunities related to sport have had on the ID of HGPE are discussed later on in this chapter under the heading 'The regulative discourse of HGPE'.

The nature of the HGPE course unfolds on reading the rationale. Performance is the prime focus, with the course engaging pupils 'in an increasingly sophisticated and rigorous study of the ways in which physical activities are performed' (SEB, 1993, para.1 4, p.4). Teachers' views towards such a high level of study expected at HGPE are explored in Chapters 5 and 6. Pupils are required 'to take part in a number of physical activities' and 'work on improving their own performance', developing 'the ability to assess and appraise performance' (SEB, 1993, paras.1 4 & 1 5, p.4). The strong performance orientation, traditionally more akin with sport than physical education, is examined later on in this chapter when the extent of influence that sport has had on the ID of HGPE is assessed.

The rationale states that 'pupils will acquire a more thorough understanding of the concepts explored at Standard Grade' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 5, p.4). However, there is no acknowledgement of how this can be achieved, far less with pupils who have not undertaken SGPE but are interested in doing HGPE. The issue of SGPE is discussed later

in this chapter to determine its influence as a possible RD of HGPE and in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 as a pre-requisite to HGPE.

The rationale also points out that the course has a 'flexible structure' but only discusses such a structure in relation to the pupils (SEB, 1993, para. 1 7, p.5). No mention is made to how the flexible structure can, if at all, benefit teachers. Teachers' willingness to utilise the flexible structure of the HGPE course is explored in Chapter 8, with some teachers reporting a preference for less flexibility than the course advocates.

#### 4.2.2 Aims

The course aims continue the performance emphasis in stating that 'pupils should achieve a thorough understanding of performance and the ways in which such performance, by self and others, might be improved' (SEB, 1993, para. 2, p.6). The improvement of pupils' own performance in the selected physical activities is also mentioned. Again, this leads to the discussion later on in this chapter regarding sport as a RD for HGPE.

#### 4.2.3 Course Structure

As noted in Chapter 1, the four Key Features are Performance, Analysis of Performance, Investigation of Performance and Personal and Social Development. Three features are assessed for certification. Performance is assessed internally and has a weighting of 40% while Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance are assessed externally with a weighting of 40% and 20% respectively. The link between the concepts explored at Standard Grade and the content at Higher Grade is evident, 'In identifying these Key Features the content areas of Standard Grade have been refined and developed to reflect the higher level study which would be expected' (SEB, 1993, para. 3 1 1, p.7).



#### 4.2.3.1 Performance

The Arrangements document emphasises improved performance, 'pupil's development of competence in the performance of selected physical activities' (SEB, 1993, para.3 1 1, p.7). The activity-based structure of HGPE focuses on performance in two activities rather than the more generic approach through involvement in a minimum of five activities in SGPE. One of the main aims of HGPE is for candidates to 'improve their performance in selected physical activities' (SEB, 1993, para. 2, p.6). In order 'to engage pupils in an increasingly sophisticated and rigorous study of the ways in which physical activities are performed' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 3, p.4) it has been deemed necessary to reduce the number of practical activities in which pupils are involved at Higher level. The two assessable activities at Higher Grade are not only to serve as contexts for learning;

'Through their work on improving their own performance pupils will acquire a more thorough understanding...' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 5, p.4)

but also as ends in themselves;

'They [pupils] will be expected to achieve improved personal standards in activities...' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 4, p.4).

Consultation and negotiation between teachers and pupils in making decisions about the content of the course is emphasised in paragraphs 3 1 2, 3 2 1 and 3 2 4 of the HGPE Arrangements document. 'Each school will select a minimum of two practical activities which will be pursued by all pupils throughout the course' (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 1, p.8). Also, the activities chosen have to fulfill the SEB's stipulation that activities should be of a 'competitive, co-operative and individual nature' (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 2, p.8). The impact which specific physical activities have on pupils choosing to study physical education has already been discussed in Chapter 1 and is examined further in relation to HGPE in Chapter 7. Teachers' reasons for choosing particular activities and making the decision themselves or with the aid of pupils are discussed in Chapter 6.

The Arrangements document suggests that schools may wish to insert additional non-assessed practical activities into the course to illustrate related concepts to those of the assessed activities (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 3, p.8). However, if teachers do choose to introduce other activities they are not assessed. Only two activities are assessed for certification. As will become apparent in Chapter 6, the suggestion of introducing other activities over and above the assessed activities perhaps does not acknowledge the workload that teachers are already expected to fulfill in offering the two activities to be assessed. Introducing a third activity takes time away from each of the two assessed activities.

Although the assessment for the Performance element of the HGPE course 'will be directly linked to the personal practical competence which pupils demonstrate in the course' (SEB, 1993, para. 5 2 1, p.11), the assessment criteria is based on the level at which candidates select, combine and perform skills (SEB, 1993, Appendix 1, p.14). As stated earlier, the Analysis of Performance element of HGPE accounts for 40% of the overall HGPE award, with the Investigation of Performance allocated 20% and Performance 40%. Subsequently, 60% of the marks are concerned with acquiring knowledge and its application to physical activities. Consequently, the implication is that pupils can rely only to a small extent on their physical competency in the two assessable activities that make up the Performance element to obtain a pass at HGPE. Pupils are required to understand the context in which they are being asked to perform and make decisions regarding their performance; a task that one could assume would draw on the disciplines incorporated within the Analysis of Performance strand. This is now discussed further.

#### 4.2.3.2 Analysis of Performance

Analysis of Performance is sub-divided into Structures and Strategies, Preparation of the Body, Skills and Techniques and Appreciation of Action. From the four areas, schools are to select the three they consider to be most appropriate to the activities chosen for Performance. For example, teachers may believe the areas of Structures and Strategies,



Preparation of the Body and Skills and Techniques be more appropriate to Basketball with the areas of Preparation of the Body, Skills and Techniques and Appreciation of Action being more appropriate to Gymnastics. It is possible that physical activities are chosen for the ease of integration with the areas of Analysis of Performance. That is, teachers do not choose activities and then try to decide which areas of Analysis of Performance are appropriate to them. Rather, they choose activities that they know will be appropriate to the areas of Analysis of Performance that they would prefer to work with.

For such a complex area of the HGPE course, very little detailed information related to the teaching and learning of Analysis of Performance is included in the Arrangements document. Teachers may well be required to spend time contemplating the delivery of the content for Analysis of Performance through different media than have previously been used in physical education classes. Possible environments in which Analysis of Performance may take place are cited as 'in the course of actual performance by the candidates or other performers, in workshops or through the use of video or computer, or as a result of observations made outside school' (SEB, 1993, para. 3 3 4, p.8).

In examining the four areas of Analysis of Performance more closely it is evident that biophysical sub-disciplines are evident. For example, the area titled 'Preparation of the Body' incorporates the sub-disciplines of exercise physiology and anatomy, dealing with the related concepts of testing, physique, muscular endurance and cardiovascular principles. 'Skills and Techniques' incorporates motor control, dealing with concepts of skill and technique, learning and developing skills and programmes for skill training. The scientific influence is obvious in referring to what Green (1997) and Sharp (1997b) respectively believed to be relevant texts for the teaching of these two areas. Suggested references for the Preparation of the Body included texts titled 'Physiology of sport and exercise', 'Essentials of exercise physiology' and 'Measuring performance'. Likewise, suggested references for Skills and Techniques included 'Psychology in sport', 'Acquiring skill in sport' and 'Motor learning and performance'.

In examining the specimen question paper included in the Arrangements document the evidence of the biophysical sub-disciplines is again evident. For example, a specimen question under the area 'Preparation of the Body' clearly draws on the sub-discipline of exercise physiology;

'Choose TWO activities in which you have taken part.

- (a) Explain the fitness requirements of each activity.
- (b) Consider the fitness requirements which are similar for both activities and for each activity explain why these are important.
- (c) Consider the fitness requirements which are different for both activities and for each activity explain why these are important.' (SEB, 1993, p.25).

Another example, a specimen question under the area 'Skills and Techniques' clearly draws on the sub-discipline of motor control;

- '(a) From one of the activities in your course identify five skills you regard as important for that activity.
- (b) Select two of these skills and analyse your own performance with specific reference to the most successful and least successful aspects.
- (c) Describe a programme of work which would enable you to develop one skill from this activity.
- (d) What factors have influenced skill learning in your chosen activity?' (SEB, 1993, p.25).

Hill (1993) discussed the HGPE Arrangements document's advocacy of a science-based HGPE course, believing that the 'HGPE course is basically a sports science course masquerading as a physical education course' (p.44). Biophysical science as a RD for HGPE is discussed later in this chapter.

#### 4.2.3.3 Investigation of Performance



The Investigation of Performance requires the pupils to produce an Investigation report on a specific aspect of performance in one or more physical activities. The role of the pupil and teacher in undertaking the Investigation (SEB, 1993, para. 3 4 3, p.9), information on what is involved in such a piece of work (SEB, 1993, para. 3 4 4, p.9) and how the report should be structured (SEB, 1993, para. 3 4 5, p.9) are explained in the Arrangements document. No guidance as to the extent of help teachers should give to individual investigations is given. As is evident in Chapter 6, concern is raised regarding teachers' lack of experience and confidence in helping to produce an Investigation report. The lack of previous experience pupils have had in preparing such an investigation is reported in Chapter 7.

As with Analysis of Performance, the part played by the biophysical sub-disciplines is evident when you examine the sample topics for the Investigation of Performance included in the HGPE Arrangements document. Suggested topics include 'A comparison of the physical requirements and training programmes for the sporting activities of gymnastics and basketball' and 'The development of balance: a study of my progress in gymnastics'. The first topic would require an understanding and application of functional anatomy and exercise physiology while the second topic would focus more on motor control and perhaps biomechanics.

As stated previously, the influence of the biophysical sciences on acting as the RD for HGPE is investigated later in this chapter.

#### 4.2.3.4 Personal and Social Development

Although Personal and Social Development is a Key Feature of the course it is not directly assessed. It is anticipated that attitudes and values will be promoted in two different ways; through interaction with teachers and peers within a physical activity context and through more independent forms of study, i.e., Investigation of Performance.

#### 4.2.4 Learning and Teaching Approaches

'The gradual shift in the level of independence given to the pupils as they move through a range of approaches from teacher-directed learning to problem-solving, has particular significance at Higher Grade' (SEB, 1993, para. 4.2, p.10).

HGPE requires pupils to become independent learners. Consequently, 'For the teacher this means a change in role from one of organiser and manager to that of co-ordinator, facilitator and consultant' (SEB, 1993, para. 4.3, p.10). Teachers may well have to re-think their role when working with such a group of pupils and re-visit the spectrum of teaching styles available to them, i.e., Mosston & Ashworth (1994). The Arrangements document summarises the three levels of involvement teachers should experience in their involvement with HGPE; active engagement in pupil contact, being available for consultation through to having no direct input (SEB, 1993, para. 4.5, p.10).

Commenting on factors influencing the effectiveness of innovations, Brown (1992) warned of the dangers of regarding 'teaching and learning' as an entity. She pointed out that it is often the case that teachers are strictly directed on *what* is to be learned with the assumptions about *how* learning occurs being less explicit. She also believed that *how* children learn has very much been secondary to the practical matters of implementing an innovation, an issue returned to in Chapter 8.

The HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993) apports a significant section to what pupils are to learn if they are to successfully complete a Higher Grade in physical education. A significantly smaller proportion of the document discusses 'learning and teaching approaches' emphasising the role of pupils as independent learners and consequently the change in the role for the teacher. The document on numerous occasions does stress that learning in physical education at Higher Grade is essentially through performance and not in isolation from practical activities. As Thorburn (1999) observed, the distinctive feature of the teaching and learning experiences within HGPE are that they



are performance driven, 'Relevant knowledge and understanding are introduced and developed in carefully designed performance contexts' (p.19).

#### 4.2.5 Assessment for Certification

The integrated nature of the course is reinforced in reporting the recording of an award. The Arrangements document notes that;

‘Achievement in separate Key Features will not be recorded. No award will be possible unless the assessment requirements of all three key features have been met’ (SEB, 1993, para. 5 1, p.11).

Consequently, if pupils score exceptionally well in Performance but fail either the Analysis of Performance examination or the Investigation of Performance they fail to gain any acknowledgement for what they have scored well in. This is discussed further in Chapter 7.

The idea of pupils being 'expected to achieve improved personal standards' (SEB, 1993, para.1.4, p.4) and improve their own performance (SEB, 1993, para.1.5, p.4) is not apparent when we read the section dealing with the system of assessment for Performance. There is no emphasis on personal improvement. The document states that 'Assessment will be directly linked to the personal practical competence which pupils demonstrate in the course' (SEB, 1993, 5 2 1, p.11). A possible concern with this manner of assessment could be that no matter what method of assessment is used for Performance, those pupils who were already outstanding at either of the activities chosen as part of the course are likely to score well. However, it appears that those who that have never taken part in, or have a limited ability in, the chosen activities will be penalised if improvement of performance is not assessed.

Analysis of Performance is to be tested 'by a written examination which will be externally set and externally marked' (SEB, 1993, para.5 2 2, p.11). Chapters 5 and 6 questions such

an assessment tool, suggesting that the written examination may test pupils' ability to reproduce example responses rather than their ability to analyse performance. The concern of teachers that the examination is externally administered and marked is discussed in Chapter 8. Consequently, it could be suggested that those dealing with assessment will not have the insight that physical education teachers have in relation to identifying pupils who are capable of analysing performance but are unable to convey their views in writing.

#### 4.2.6 Grade Descriptions

The Grade Descriptions detail expected performance at band C, the minimum level awarded as a pass. This may be far from adequate in assisting teachers in making accurate assessments of pupils and in conveying the standards expected from both internal and external moderation.

#### 4.2.7 General overview of the HGPE Arrangements document

It is worth reinforcing what has been stated earlier in this chapter. An Arrangements document acts as a template for establishing a set of procedures used for the development of all Scottish secondary school subjects and the HGPE Arrangements documents is a framework that details what the HGPE syllabus is to look like. Although the Arrangements document is not mandatory, the implication from teachers may be that the more teachers stray from the framework it details, the more likely it is that they are jeopardising pupils' chances of obtaining a successful award at HGPE. This is discussed further in Chapter 8.

It is clear that the HGPE Arrangements document is not the definitive text for HGPE as teachers are required to carry out a significant amount of work in assembling a HGPE course that can be transferred directly into the teaching and learning environment of their particular schools. This can work in favour of teachers that are prepared to devise programmes suited to their school environment and against teachers who are not prepared to spend time developing materials. Teachers' views on the amount of work to be done by



teachers over and above the resource of the Arrangements documents is evident in Chapter 8.

In examining the ID of HGPE it is possible to see traces of the RD that have impacted the ID of HGPE. Already, further and higher education developments, sport-related employment opportunities, Standard Grade Physical Education and sport have been suggested as possible sites for the production of the RD of HGPE that have affected the ID of HGPE. The RD of HGPE is discussed later in this chapter.

As discussed in Chapter 1, physical education, like all other fields of study, is socially constructed, implying that knowledge is organised according to the preferences, interests and cultures of individuals and groups of people. If we are to begin to understand how the ID of HGPE came to read as it does, it is necessary to investigate who and what were responsible for producing the ID of HGPE. This will be addressed by highlighting the context in which HGPE was developed, from an initial proposal for HGPE through to its availability in Scottish secondary schools.

### 4.3 Production of HGPE

The development of the text for the HGPE proposals involved six main stages that have been summarised by Niven (1998a); development by the JWP, pilot phase, further development by the JWP and the consultation phase, the development of Key Feature documents, the National Conference and regional development. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the timeline for the construction phase of the HGPE proposals. A more detailed chronology of the development of HGPE is available in Niven (1998b).

Figure 4.1: The timeline for the construction of HGPE.

<b>1990</b>	
Summer	Proposal for HGPE submitted by Central Advisory Group of the SOED
Autumn	Approval for a Higher Grade course in physical education by the Secretary of State for Education via HMI, Physical Education, Ben Fryer
<b>1991</b>	
January	First meeting of HGPE JWP
June	JWP produced a draft Arrangements document
August - December	'Unofficial' pilot of HGPE in 12 schools
<b>1992</b>	
February	Final meeting of HGPE JWP HGPE proposals put to SEB's Steering Committee for the Revision of Higher and Post-Higher
April	HGPE consultation document made available to all interested parties, e.g., secondary schools, universities and teachers' unions
October	Deadline for observations on HGPE consultation document
<b>1993</b>	
January	Arrangements document for HGPE nationally available
February	National HGPE conference
March	Publication of exemplar materials
March - June	Individual teacher preparation for the HGPE course
August	HGPE available to be taught for the first time
<b>1994</b>	
August	Pupils receive notification of their result for HGPE

It is the intention to use the above timeline as a structure for the next section of this chapter dealing with the production of the HGPE Arrangements document. As pointed out at the start of this chapter, the activities of the agents in the recontextualising field are of central importance to the creation of what is thinkable or imaginable as HGPE. As discussed in Chapter 2, Bernstein (1990) identifies examining boards as one of a variety of 'recontextualising' agents located between the production of knowledge in the primary field and reproduction of knowledge in the secondary field. He believes that the central role of such agents is to regulate the circulation of knowledge between both the primary and



secondary sites. This is carried out by establishing and then applying a number of recontextualising rules that govern, in the case of this study, the form Higher Grade Syllabuses are permitted to take and by mandating specific aspects of their implementation such as how learning will be assessed. The following section is concerned with activity in the recontextualising field while the extent to which these rules can produce syllabuses that teachers believe are 'workable' in their schools is an issue that Chapters 5 and 6 seek to address.

#### 4.3.1 Proposals and approval for a Higher Grade in physical education

A paper describing the outline proposals for HGPE was prepared and submitted by a Central Advisory Group of the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) in the summer of 1990. Approval for a course was given in the autumn of the same year by the Secretary of State for Scotland via Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) Ben Fryer (Niven, 1998a). When there is a perceived demand for certification in a new area of the curriculum, provided that the SQA (formally SEB), the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) and the Secretary of State are convinced that the change is desirable, a course and examination is developed (Long, 1999). The power of the SEB was conveyed by Ross (1999) when reporting a particular discrepancy between the SCCC and the Board, 'the Board was adamant and the Board won' (p.186). It is the task of a Joint Working Party (JWP) to undertake the necessary work in developing the course and examination, convincing the already named agencies of its benefits (SEB, 1994a).

#### 4.3.2 The HGPE Joint Working Party (JWP)

Table 4.1 lists the names of the individuals who served on the HGPE JWP and their professional status. The selection of representatives lay primarily with the SOED and the Senior HMI in physical education (Niven, 1998b).

Table 4.1: Names and professional status of the individuals who served on the HGPE JWP.

Name of individuals	Professional status
David Bayman	Director of the Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Movement and Leisure Studies (SCOPEMLS) / Moray House Institute of Education.
Bob Brewer	Lecturer at SCOPEMLS. National Development Officer for HGPE.
Ben Fryer	Senior HMI in physical education
Morag Dunbar	Examination Officer
Mary Turley	Advisor in physical education, Strathclyde Region
Tom McGowan	Teacher of physical education
David Lobban	Teacher of physical education
Tom Hardie	Teacher of physical education
Mr. Paul	Teacher of physical education
Malcolm Renny	Advisor in physical education, Strathclyde Region

Ten people representing the SOED, SEB, SCCC and teachers of physical education served on the JWP set up to produce an arrangements document for HGPE. Four of the members, Bob Brewer, Ben Fryer, Morag Dunbar and Mary Turley had also been involved in the development of SGPE (Niven, 1998b). Previous involvement in developing SGPE may have influenced the particular views of these individuals on how the ID of HGPE should be constructed and this is investigated in greater depth later in this chapter.

The Chairman of the JWP, David Bayman, was at the time the current Director of The Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Movement and Leisure Studies (SCOPEMLS) at Moray House Institute of Education in Edinburgh. He received an invitation from the SOED to act as Chairman for the JWP initially and subsequently to chair the central support group (Bilsborough & Gowrie, 1994). It was seen '...as a very important decision to have a Convenor who was steeped in a PE background and who also had a clear role in guiding the Higher in a direction which would suit a possible client at the end of the day' (Turley, 1995, p.2).

Another representative from SCOPEMLS, Bob Brewer, had been the National Development Officer for SGPE and consequently '...there was expertise in knowing where HGPE was coming from and what to expect from pupils' (Turley, 1995, p.2).



All four teachers were chosen from different education regions not only for their personal qualities but also to provide a national spread of experience and working contexts (Turley, 1995 & written correspondence from Dunbar, 1995). A number had already been active in the development of SGPE and had proven skills in terms of writing courses. As Turley explained 'There was a balance of people [between those] with ideas of what would work in the school context and also in being able to write the JWP document and the question papers for HGPE' (Turley, 1995, p.2). Two physical education Advisors and an Assessor from HMI also served on the JWP.

Finally, in any JWP where Higher Grade (HG) or Standard Grade (SG) is being developed, an Examination Officer from the SEB is part of that group. The Examination Officer chosen had a remit to cover the subjects of music and physical education. This person is there to implement the decisions of the group but also to advise on any syllabus and assessment problems (Dunbar, 1995). For example, a HG subject can only have a certain percentage of internal assessment as part of the overall award and this has to be explained when the assessment is being decided. Also, the Examination Officer has to make sure that the proposals can be assessed. The Examination Officer's role is not only to implement the decisions but also to advise if these decisions are impractical and are likely to be rejected at the approval stage (Dunbar, 1995). As Watkins (1993) explained, 'In accordance with its guidelines on the structure of Higher Grade courses, the SEB needed to be convinced that the course [HGPE] had sufficient academic content' (p.47).

It is evident that all ten people who served on the JWP for HGPE were involved with physical education in a number of different contexts. The membership of the JWP for HGPE managed to escape the 'professional sportsmen' and 'representatives from the business world' that were to work with 'educationalists' in writing and producing the English and Welsh National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) (Penney, 1999).

The Chairman of the JWP and Niven (1998a) reported the selection of individuals making up the JWP as a strength of the process of development. The Chairman was quoted as

stating, '...there was an excellent blend of expertise and experience...The blend, range and depth of experience was distinctive' (Bilsborough & Gowrie, 1994, p.31). He continued to praise the 'collaborative and co-operative nature of the whole exercise involving working groups, HMIs, advisers and education authorities' (Bilsborough & Gowrie, 1994, p.31). Dunbar (1995) illustrated such collaboration when she reported that although the JWP put the proposals together, the SEB Panel was informed of discussions and views throughout the process. The minutes of every meeting of the JWP who met on six occasions for two day meetings (Niven, 1998b) were circulated in the SEB and, if the SEB Examination Officer on the JWP had any concerns, she sought advice and was able to feed that back to the next meeting. Consequently between each JWP meeting, all decisions were checked by the SEB and feedback was given.

#### 4.3.3 The HGPE Joint Working Party (JWP) Remit

As is standard practice, a remit was given to the JWP (appendix 4.1). The remit set out for the HGPE JWP failed to fill two sides of an A4 sheet. The purpose of the HGPE JWP was 'to develop a syllabus and examination in Physical Education on the Higher grade which will articulate with the present Standard Grade Arrangements' (para. 1, HGPE JWP remit). The remit included information related to the mode of operation of the JWP and the timing of the introduction and new arrangements. Issues more related to the actual HGPE syllabus content were mentioned under the headings of the time basis for syllabus definition, award scales and levels, previous attainment assumed, aggregate awards and profiles, grade descriptions, assessment and awarding procedures, external and internal assessment, presentation conditions and central support. It is worth noting at this point the direction given to the JWP under the heading 'previous attainment assumed'. This becomes a contentious issue when we start to report teachers' experiences of teaching HGPE (Chapter 6) and the national trend of low pass rates for HGPE (already mentioned in Chapter 1 and discussed further in Chapters 7 and 8). The JWP are told, 'The demands of the course should be such that, in general terms, a pupil who has obtained a grade 1 or 2 award on a Standard Grade course would be expected to gain at least a C on the Higher Grade after one year's further study. A pupil with a grade 3 on a Standard Grade course



would be expected to gain at least a C on the Higher Grade after two years' further study' (para. 6, HGPE JWP remit).

#### 4.3.3.1 Expectations of a Higher in physical education

To gain approval as a valid Higher, HGPE had to gain approval of the SEB and the acceptance of SUCE. HGPE would be judged by the same criteria as other subjects and not, as in the past, results of sport performances undertaken in extra-curricular time (Niven, 1998b). Subsequently, Niven reported how the Senior HMI in physical education serving on the HGPE JWP was eager to make the subject fit in, rather than be different and misunderstood. The issue of status was a motivating factor, 'The credibility of certificate courses would put physical education on the same level as other subjects in the school curriculum' (p.52).

While physical education is essentially a practical subject where pupils gain knowledge 'through' participation in a range of activities, HG courses are based on 'knowing that' and consequently for HGPE to be comparable with other HG courses the latter type of knowledge needed to be addressed and incorporated (Niven, 1998b). Niven reported that the JWP were able to arrive at an integrated solution, including sufficient 'knowing that' content to be accepted by SUCE and the SEB whilst retaining the element of knowledge 'through' physical activity. This issue is re-visited under the heading 'Sport perspective on HGPE' (section 4.4.8).

#### 4.3.4 The development of the HGPE course and examination

The JWP's first meeting was in January 1991. The group was given a template (as outlined in section 3.2) to work to, including the titles of the separate sections. Niven (1998a) reported that the group did not spend time debating whether or not this model was the most suitable procedure for producing course arrangements. The Chairman of the JWP explained how the group took direction from examining, reporting and discussing courses in physical education and other related subjects and in related fields that were already

available (Bilsborough & Gowrie, 1994). Such deliberation resulted in them pursuing the development of a course that involved a practical element (Bilsborough & Gowrie, 1994). The JWP's main focus was the overall design of the course, the identification of its key features, consideration of appropriate teaching and learning strategies and the specification of the assessment arrangements (Niven, 1998a).

The JWP had been required to have the consultation document ready by the summer of 1992 (Turley, 1995). The JWP were able to disband early with the last meeting of the JWP taking place in February 1992 (Dunbar, 1995). When the consultation document was released, the official role of the JWP ended (Dunbar, 1995).

Niven (1998a) emphasised the JWP's 'tight reign of control' in the development of HGPE by reporting that the official consultation phase was the only phase in which direct contact was made with teachers. Before the Consultation document was made available to teachers and other interested parties in April 1992 for comments, the proposals went before a full meeting of the SEB's Steering Committee for the Revision of Higher and Post-Higher held in February 1992 (Dunbar, 1995). Dunbar explained that this Committee had the power to disallow the proposals to go out for consultation if they were unhappy with them.

#### 4.3.4.1 Pilot schools

Although HGPE was a new HG, its development occurred during the period when all HGs were being revised, a development that allowed no funding for piloting (Turley, 1995 & written correspondence from Dunbar, 1995). No exception was made for HGPE but to compensate, an unofficial pilot scheme was devised with the physical education teachers who were on the JWP (Turley, 1995 & written correspondence from Dunbar, 1995). The early concept of HGPE was taken by these teachers and experimented with in twelve schools between August and Christmas of 1991 and as the unofficial pilot developed, HGPE also developed (Turley, 1995).



Niven (1998b) reported that the schools were selected by three criteria; geography and locality, large and small rural and urban schools and schools' track record in SGPE. In relation to the third criteria, schools that were able to operate independently were selected. Consequently, possible constraints that could affect teacher CDM were not addressed. Each of the twelve schools were asked to develop and deliver one of the four elements of the HGPE Analysis of Performance, i.e., Structures and Strategies, Preparation of the Body, Skills and Techniques and Appreciation of Action, over one term. Schools were not asked to pilot the whole course due to a lack of formal documentation regarding what the course should entail, i.e., there was no draft Arrangements document to be tried and tested (Niven, 1998b). Niven also explained that it was expected to have been very difficult to organise pupils to undertake a course in which they would gain no formal award at the end. Niven identified two main problems encountered by teachers embarking on the course. The first was concerned with teaching and learning approaches and focussed on teaching pupils how to formulate thoughts on paper and the integration of Analysis of Performance and Performance. The second concern was with the type of pupil who should undertake HGPE and how to deal with the expectation that pupils have of being a good performer resulting in success in HGPE. Both of these concerns are prominent when reporting data from this particular study in the remaining chapters.

Teachers reported back to the HMI for physical education and the National Development Officer for HGPE about the problems and the reasons for these problems, along with new ideas that were surfacing. Consequently Turley (1995) believed that 'There is no doubt that the pilot influenced what happened in the evolution of HGPE. It was intrinsic to the process' (p.2). However, the generic role that teachers played in the development of HGPE can be questioned. Although teachers were involved in creating parts of the HGPE course and not simply testing the JWP's ideas (Niven, 1998b), such information can lead to the suggestion that teachers' involvement was piecemeal and was being used to the advantage of those in the JWP.

#### 4.3.5 JWP HGPE consultation document

In the views of Whitehead et al. (1983) and Hendry (1978) it is imperative that discussions regarding a new addition to the school curriculum reach teachers and others and not only those involved in producing the document. Penney & Evans (1999) reported that teachers' lack of involvement in the development of the NCPE in England and Wales resulted in teachers' enthusiasm for the innovative implementation being weak. This observation illustrated how teachers' exclusion from the development process can distance them from the initiative. Consequently they may be less successful or interested in its implementation as they would be had they felt they had more than a passive role (Kirk, 1992a and Sparkes, 1991a & b). This has already been highlighted in Chapter 1 and is discussed further in Chapter 8.

The consultation document was issued for comment to a wide range of interested bodies at the end of April 1992. A consultation document is a process of syllabus development and sets out proposed arrangements for courses and is not the final document regarding the teaching of a specific course. The JWP Report stated clearly on the front cover, 'The proposals contained in this report are issued for the purposes of consultation only and are not to be misunderstood as decisions affecting syllabuses and examinations'.

Just over four months were allocated for the consultation period (Dunbar, 1995), with the final date for receipt of comments being towards the end of September 1992. Every secondary school, university, college, teachers' union (Educational Institute of Scotland & the Scottish Schools Teacher Association), along with specialist physical education organisations like the Scottish Council for Physical Education and the Scottish Physical Education Association were sent a copy of the Consultation document (Dunbar, 1995). As Dunbar pointed out, and as is evident from reading the first page of the report on observations submitted, many others commented but only the names of recognised interested bodies were given in the report.



It was the responsibility of the SEB Panel to deal with the comments and put together the final Arrangements document (Dunbar, 1995). However, the Panel felt it was important to hear the views of the JWP and so held a joint meeting of both committees to discuss the comments and agree the way forward (Dunbar, 1995). One person collated the comments and made a summary of them stating who had made what comments so that it was easy to identify the most common ones. The paper stated both the comments that had been taken on board and the consequent changes made and the comments that had been disregarded and the reasons why. A copy of the paper is included as Appendix 4.2. Once comments received from interested bodies were considered, the SEB's Steering Committee for Higher and Post-Higher approved the proposals for the introduction of HGPE (Dunbar, 1995).

#### 4.3.6 Observations submitted in response to the consultation document

In investigating the observations submitted in response to the consultation document it is possible to examine the extent of the influence that such observations actually had on the text of the final Arrangements document. In the consultation document the focus was on a 'high level of personal performance' in two practical activities selected from the SGPE activity categories of gymnastics, dance, water-based activities, outdoor pursuits, directly and indirectly competitive individual activities and indoor and outdoor team games. Also in the consultation document candidates' performance was assessed in two activities with each carrying the same weighting and there was an option of choosing from five main areas of 'Performance Analysis'. However, in the finalised Arrangements document the focus had changed from 'high level of personal performance' to 'competence' in the performance of two selected activities, not necessarily from the SGPE activity categories, with assessment of performance being allocated a 2 : 1 weighting applied in favour of the activity with the higher mark. The Key Feature of 'Performance Analysis' became 'Analysis of Performance' and its five main areas were cut to four.

Three respondents had noted that the consultation document did not make it clear to the reader routes, other than Standard Grade, that existed to a Higher Grade course in physical

education. This appears not to have been addressed. The following statement from the Arrangements document focuses on those pupils who have come to HGPE with experience at SGPE but does not address the background that other pupils may have when undertaking HGPE;

'Through their work on improving their own performance pupils will acquire a more thorough understanding of the concepts explored at Standard Grade' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 5, p.4).

The routes pupils have followed before undertaking HGPE are discussed in Chapter 7 and will hopefully illustrate the level of suitability of HGPE to pupils with different school experiences.

There appeared to be overwhelming support for the practical experiential nature of the course and the emphasis on performance. However, it was suggested by some of the interested bodies that responded to the consultation document that the focus of performance should be introduced earlier in the Rationale and that some definition of performance should be provided. Also, clarification of the phrase 'personal high standards of performance' was requested. The first suggestion was carried out with the statement 'Performance will be the prime focus' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 3, p.4) appearing earlier on in the Rationale. The term 'performance' has been elaborated on, 'a practical experiential base upon which skills and techniques, knowledge and understanding, analysis and evaluation are developed' (SEB, 1993, para. 13, p.4) while the phrase 'personal high standards of performance' appears to have been changed to read 'improved personal standards' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 4, p.4).

Another observation that does not appear to have been addressed directly was the concern that the aim relating to personal and social development was not evident in the rest of the document. This was a particularly glaring omission when, in the consultation document, under the course structure, the other three Key Features of the course (Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance) were expanded on. The Key



Feature 'Personal and Social Development' appeared not to warrant any further discussion (SEB, 1992, pp. 7-9).

Those responding to the consultation document suggested an expansion of the 'Recording of award' to address the concern that one respondent had in questioning the possibility of the physically elite gaining a pass without having followed the course. The Arrangements document made it clear that 'No award will be possible unless the assessment requirements of all three key features have been met' (SEB, 1993, para. 5 1, p.11).

According to the submitted observations the most contentious requirement of the course was the selection of two practical activities, with sixteen bodies expressing concern. In response to the concern of undertaking only two activities in the HGPE course, the course requirements were amended to allow the selection of a minimum of two practical activities (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 1, p.8). Centres were given the option to run more than one course to accommodate different interests in different activities. The observation was also made that the need to select the physical activities from the Standard Grade categories was unnecessary and restrictive. The SEB Physical Education Panel and the JWP accepted the comment and amended the finalised Arrangements document accordingly.

The area of 'Conduct and Culture' as part of Performance Analysis (changed in the Arrangements document to Analysis of Performance) was deleted from the Arrangements document. Although the SEB stated that a number of the forms of analysis previously listed under 'Conduct and Culture' were relocated, only two appear amongst the remaining four areas of Analysis of Performance.

The area of 'Assessment for certification' resulted in a number of observations. Ten bodies wanted the weighting of 40% given to Performance increased and the SEB reported that three bodies 'recognised' that 40% was the maximum to be expected at this Grade. The use of the word 'recognised' implies that those responsible for allocating the 40% could not see any reason for the weighting being any different. Consequently, the weighting of 40% for Performance stayed the same.

A number of observations were not addressed by the SEB in their report. The idea that the course is designed to serve the needs of pupils who wish to pursue a career in physical education (SEB, 1992, para. 1 1, p.4,) and activities' relevance to the creative and aesthetic modes (SEB, 1992, para. 1 3, p.4) were both removed from the consultation document. Also, candidates were initially expected to answer two questions in the examination paper (SEB, 1992, para. 5 2 2 , p.11,) and were now expected to answer three in the Arrangements document (SEB, 1992, para. 5 2 2, p.11).

#### 4.3.6.1 Overview of the HGPE consultation document

The above section highlights the opportunity teachers and others external to the recontextualising field had in voicing opinion on the proposed HGPE Arrangements document. Instances have been shown where concerns raised had been addressed by those involved in the production of the HGPE Arrangements document. However, those operating in the recontextualising field had also ignored many concerns. Consequently, the consultation phase did allow teachers and others, in a limited capacity, to act as 'reproducers' of knowledge in the pedagogic field (Bernstein, 1990; discussed in Chapter 2). Teachers could therefore claim to have played a role in the social construction of HGPE and teachers' views towards this claim are investigated in Chapter 8. The role of teachers as 'acquirers' of such knowledge in the secondary field and the extent to which the rules governing HGPE produced in the recontextualising field are 'workable' in their schools are issues addressed in Chapter 6. By examining the content of HGPE that teachers believe to be either transferable or not transferable to the school context, it will be possible to assess the elements of the HGPE course that have influenced teachers in their decision to offer or not to offer HGPE.

#### 4.3.7 Arrangements document for HGPE

In light of submissions received from the consultation process proposals were amended, producing the finalised Arrangements which was intended to provide all the information



required to enable teachers in schools and lecturers in Further Education centres to deliver the course. Final approval copies of the Arrangements document, along with a copy of the report on observations received from interested bodies, were issued to all presenting centres and interested bodies at the end of January, 1993. It had taken two and a half years to create a Higher Grade course in physical education.

#### 4.3.8 National Conference

The initial phase of dissemination took place at a national conference held in February 1993, and was attended by Advisers and 'selected' physical education teachers (Niven, 1998a & b). Niven's use of the words 'selected' and 'nominated' implies that, even at this late stage in the development of HGPE, the teaching profession on a whole was not invited to scrutinise and debate issues related to the agreed HGPE syllabus. She explained how it was the job of the Advisers to select staff from their regions to attend the national conference, 'staff capable of discussing relevant issues and leading regional in-service developmental work' (1998a, p.19). From the conference, delegates were expected to return to their respective regions or schools and pass on information from the conference. This was a similar set up to that of SGPE where Local Support Groups were responsible for leading in-service training to train the wider groups of PTs who would then be subsequently responsible for the staff training and development of the rest of their department (MacLeod, 1992). However, Niven (1998a) admitted that the national conference was severely hampered by time restrictions, 'Although teachers were encouraged to discuss and offer their opinions, there was insufficient time to undertake this in a comprehensive way and many teachers returned from the conference with more questions than answers' (p.17-18). According to Niven the national conference was a token gesture in an attempt to allow people to respond to concerns they had regarding HGPE, as the Arrangements document was already finalised and distributed and therefore could not be changed. Also, there was insufficient time to make any suggested alterations to the four Key Feature documents that were to support teachers in delivering HGPE as they were published shortly after the conference (March 1993). Consequently, the national

conference was about dissemination of the ID rather than the construction of the ID of HGPE.

#### 4.3.9 The role of Physical Education Advisers

According to Niven (1998a), Advisers were to lead teachers in their adoption and implementation of HGPE. Advisers secured resources and funding to support HGPE and offer in-service training (INSET) courses delivered by those teachers who had attended the national conference (Niven, 1998a). The Advisers' role was similar to that of the Local Education Authorities in England and Wales overseeing and supporting the successful implementation of the National Curriculum in schools within their authority (Penney, 1999). However, at the time, the post of specialist Advisers in physical education in Scotland were beginning to be 'lost' through local government re-organisation and it is perhaps inaccurate to believe that the majority of schools were able to benefit in the assistance offered by such people.

#### 4.3.10 Exemplar materials

As for SGPE, a Central Support Group (CSG) was formed to produce staff development papers and exemplar packages (SCCC, 1993a & b). The staff development papers ('Guidelines on Course Development') and materials for each of the three Key Features in HGPE (Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance) were commissioned by the SOED from the staff of SCOPEMLS (Niven, 1998b; Turley, 1995). These materials were intended to assist teachers in planning and preparing for the introduction of HGPE.

Niven (1998a) believed that rather than the information teachers were given through the exemplar materials on the four key features in the arrangements document, teachers required information on teaching and learning issues and more specifically on how to integrate the Analysis of Performance and Performance sections. She goes as far as to



suggest that the lack of documentation addressing such issues resulted in many teachers choosing not to implement HGPE initially.

Teachers' involvement in producing exemplar materials appeared to increase when materials were developed through education authority Local Support Groups (LSGs). Turley (1995) reported that the materials were produced with the assistance of '...practicing teachers who had been identified and resourced through their advisory service' (Turley, 1995, p.3). She explained that different regions made up specific elements of the exemplar materials. For example, Fife Region were responsible for Basketball while Strathclyde Region produced Hockey material and subsequently the materials were made available to other regions so that in a limited space of time a complete package of materials were available. Members of the CSG took the editorial responsibility for such materials, although they returned the materials to the LSGs to undertake the necessary revision or re-writing of exemplar materials.

#### 4.3.11 The role of the Scottish Universities Council on Entrance (SUCE)

SUCE's approval was not required to establish the HGPE course. However, its endorsement was very important for the marketing of the course (Watkins, 1993). In discussing academic subjects and curriculum change, Goodson (1987) highlighted the important role played by university admissions policies in confirming the hierarchy of status in favour of academic subjects. Munn (SED/CCC, 1997a) pursued this notion further in stating that;

"...higher education through its admission criteria has, as always, the power to influence dramatically what is taught and regarded as important in the school curriculum" (p.171).

This has been shown to be true for HGPE to a certain extent previously in this chapter. There was always a SUCE representative on the SEB, and at the time of the production of the HGPE Arrangements document, the SUCE Chairman was the representative. He was

also a member of the Steering Committee for Higher and Post-Higher and was present when the Panel representatives took the proposals for HGPE before the Steering Committee and when the Board approved the decisions of its Steering Committee (telephone conversation, Dunbar, 1995).

There were never any formal discussions with SUCE (Dunbar, 1995) and SUCE had their own process for deliberation (Turley, 1995). SUCE received the final document in the same way as they would for any other subject and the only correspondence with SUCE was a letter received by the SEB in June 1993 approving the HGPE (Dunbar, 1995) for university entrance purposes.

There were no formal remits that resulted in SUCE's position being unclear. While some subjects had a specialist committee within SUCE, Physical Education did not. Dunbar (1995) admitted that during the development of HGPE, the JWP not only contacted people from universities but also had meetings with a number of them in order to become aware of any current issues. An issue which the JWP may have been interested in investigating could have been the direction that universities were planning to follow in relation to physical education and how HGPE could best address such developments.

Approval for HGPE came through in time for the SEB to answer queries from schools who wanted to offer HGPE from August 1993 (Dunbar, 1995). Although SUCE decided that the syllabus should be added to the Council's approved list, approval for HGPE was provisional for the 1994, 1995 and 1996 examinations pending evaluation of substantive examination papers (telephone conversation, Dunbar, 1995). Despite general acceptability, the Council took the view that HGPE could not be regarded as a 'science', and could not be acceptable as such for purposes of admission to Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) / Sports Science degrees (telephone conversation, Dunbar, 1995). This is similar to the Senior Physical Education subject in Queensland, Australia where subjects other than Senior Physical Education are specified as pre-requisites for entry to some tertiary programmes in related fields (Penney & Kirk, 1998). If SUCE withdrew recognition of HGPE it would not have meant that the SEB would cease to offer HGPE, only that its status would decline



(Dunbar, 1995). Higher Grade Home Economics had been unrecognised for years before being given recognition. SUCE did not approve the Revised Higher Grade Arrangements in Home Economics (1989) for university entrance purposes until June 1994 (SEB Annual Report, 1994b, p.6).

#### 4.3.12 General overview of the production of HGPE

According to Niven (1998b), the JWP's main challenge was to balance teachers' perceptions and expectations of a Higher Grade course in physical education with the requirements of the SEB and SUCE. However, this was always going to be a difficult task when the perceptions and expectations of teachers were unknown and no conscious effort was made to collect such information. In 1977 the Munn Report supported the practice of the planning and writing of syllabuses remaining centralised;

'We envisage that the planning of syllabuses leading to national certification should be a central responsibility, undertaken by joint curriculum / assessment groups, whose members, under the present arrangements for the management of the curriculum and assessment, would be drawn from the CCC and SCEEB subject committees.' (SED / CCC, 1977a, para. 9.10, p.61).

McIntyre (1985) confirmed that from a Scottish perspective, decision-making regarding structure, syllabus content and examinations in relation to school innovation had always been centralised. The first part of this chapter has introduced the recontextualising agents who were involved in the construction of the ID of HGPE. Three main agencies were the SOED (now called the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department), the SEB (the Scottish Qualifications Authority since 1997) and the SCCC. While the SOED was responsible for administering policy for education, the SEB was involved in making sure that the development of HGPE maintained the standards of established qualifications. The SCCC supported and promoted the qualifications devised by the SEB by producing and publishing seemingly related teaching materials and guidelines.

Recontextualising rules were active in regulating what the recontextualising agents produced as the ID of HGPE. One rule that framed the recontextualising agents' actions included conforming to the broad educational aims of the Munn Report, the Action Plan and the Howie Report (para.1 1, p.4, SEB, 1993). Another was the weighting of the 'academic' and 'practical' elements of the course in order for HGPE to be accepted as a Higher Grade subject. The consequence of recontextualising agents operating within these established boundaries is directly experienced by those in the secondary context, i.e., teachers. Teachers' concerns in relation to the perceived success of the recontextualising agents in producing the HGPE Arrangements document as the intended text for teaching the subject is investigated in Chapter 8.

While recontextualising rules were active in regulating what the recontextualising agents produced as the ID of HGPE, the RD of HGPE had an impact on defining the dominant discourse of HGPE. The following section will illustrate how discursive resources generated by contemporary culture were re-located and re-focused by agents, including curriculum writers and officers of the SEB, in the recontextualising field to develop the ID of HGPE.

#### 4.4 The regulative discourse of HGPE

While the ID of HGPE transmits specialised competencies and their relation to each other, the RD is less specific and provides official rules regulating order, relation and identity (Bernstein, 1990). The intention is to portray the sites that acted as the RD in the case of HGPE and examine how and why the particular definition of physical education emerged as the dominant discourse of HGPE. Each site will be examined in turn, focussing on the content and the philosophies that help to explain the RD in which the ID of HGPE is embedded. This is done by tracing the RD back from the ID of HGPE (detailed earlier in this chapter).

Knowledge produced in the primary field is not pedagogical but performs a regulative function when it enters the recontextualising field (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Bernstein,



1990). In examining the ID of HGPE earlier on in this chapter we began to see traces of the RD that had impacted the ID of HGPE. Five sites believed to have impacted the social construction of HGPE are discussed. These are;

1. Standard Grade Physical Education
2. Further and higher education developments
3. Sport-related employment opportunities
4. National interest in sport
5. Academic credibility (certification and survival)

Underlying these five sites are an increasing interest in a scientific perspective of physical education (at the expense of a social-cultural perspective) and in a sporting perspective of physical education (emphasising performance rather than involvement). Brewer & Sharp (1999) illustrated that the rationale for physical education remained a 'site of struggle'. They pointed out that physical education is expected to fulfil intentions associated with an expressive arts curriculum at 5-14 but transforms to a rationale based on performance and the analysis and investigation of it at ages 16-18. The scientific and sporting perspectives will be the focus after discussing the above five sites in turn.

#### 4.4.1 Standard Grade Physical Education

The content of both the SGPE and HGPE courses is structured very similarly. In SGPE, Practical Performance, Knowledge and Understanding and Evaluation are assessed for certification (a weighting of 2:1:1 in favour of Practical Performance) while Affective Development is not assessed for certification. In HGPE, Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance are assessed for certification (40%, 40% and 20% respectively) while Personal and Social Development is not assessed for certification.

One would predict that the level of knowledge and understanding expected at HGPE would develop from the content undertaken in SGPE. It appears that the sub-disciplines of physical education, e.g., exercise physiology, biomechanics, motor learning and sport

sociology have more recently been used to structure the knowledge base for certificated physical education. Three areas of knowledge are identified within the Knowledge and Understanding aspect of the SGPE course; the body, skills and activities. The 'body' element clearly covers content related to exercise physiology and anatomy while 'skills' involves an understanding of biomechanics and motor control. The expectation that HGPE pupils will increase the depth of study into such aspects is evident in referring to the HGPE Arrangements document;

'At Higher Grade the course will engage pupils in an increasingly sophisticated and rigorous study of the ways in which physical activities are performed' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 3, p.4) and '...pupils will acquire a more thorough understanding of the concepts explored at Standard Grade. The development of these concepts to a more advanced level...' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 5, p.4).

The first statement implies that it will develop the content of SGPE while the second statement refers to the development of SGPE concepts.

In undertaking a critique of SGPE, McGowan (1993) stated that,

'The course [SGPE] includes a substantial element of content concerned with developing knowledge and understanding of certain facts, concepts and principles underpinned by reference to anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, psychology and associated disciplines' (p.29).

SGPE impacting the ID of HGPE is evident when one not only examines the content of SGPE but also the development of such content into HGPE, illustrated in the previous section titled 'The instructional discourse of HGPE'.



#### 4.4.2 Further and higher education developments

There was a growing leisure industry throughout the 1970s and early 1980s (Ramsay, 1996). The number of opportunities in further and higher education in various aspects of sport increased with numerous courses dealing with leisure management, health and fitness and sports coaching. In reading the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993) those involved in constructing the ID of HGPE were aware of such a trend,

'The [Physical Education] Higher Grade course is...designed to serve the needs of pupils who may wish to...take advantage of the expanding career opportunities within sport, leisure and recreation' (SEB, 1993, para. 1 2, p.4).

Those involved in constructing HGPE may have felt that by addressing such trends physical education's position within the school curriculum would be protected due to its relevance to the 'outside world'. There may also have been the feeling that if the physical education profession did not react to the changing needs of society, other groups would develop opportunities for those wishing to be involved in related areas (Newell, 1990). This would have the potential to result in school physical education once again having to legitimise its inclusion in the school curriculum. One possible way of increasing the legitimisation of physical education within the school curriculum was through certification. This is addressed under 'Academic credibility'.

#### 4.4.3 Sport-related employment opportunities

A number of authors highlighted the impact employment opportunities in sport (and related areas such as recreation and exercise) and the increase in the commercialism of sport has had on the physical activity field (Kirk, 2000; Horne et. al., 1999; SOEID, 1995). Kirk (2000) believed that the physical activity field is now perceived to be more concerned with coaching and performance and less with the educational and involvement approach.

As stated previously the number of opportunities in further and higher education in various aspects of sport have increased. Such an increase may reflect the continual increase in the employment opportunities in sport. As discussed earlier when reporting the ID of HGPE, and under the heading of 'Further and higher education developments' in this section, the HGPE Arrangements document conveyed an awareness of sport-related employment opportunities.

It is interesting that physical education is not mentioned in the HGPE Arrangements document alongside sport, leisure and recreation as another career area that can be served by HGPE. Such an omission leads one to contemplate that this particular Higher course could perhaps be more accurately titled as a Higher in sport and/or leisure and/or recreation. As reported earlier in this chapter when discussing the ID of HGPE, Hill (1993) believed that the HGPE course was 'basically a sports science course masquerading as a physical education course' (p.44). This argument is strengthened by the fact that HGPE is not an entry requirement for physical education teacher training in Scotland. In fact, as stated earlier in this chapter, the idea that the HGPE course was designed to serve the needs of pupils wishing to pursue a career in physical education was reported in the HGPE consultation document. However, this idea was omitted from the final HGPE Arrangements document.

It is now common for people to have a career that is concerned with the promotion and development of one particular sport, e.g., Development Officers for National Governing Bodies. The focus on two particular physical activities within HGPE can be an advantage to those who are interested in following a sport-specific employment opportunity if they are given an opportunity to undertake that specific sport within the HGPE course. This way of thinking in constructing the HGPE course would have resulted in those involved in the ID of HGPE having the foresight of future trends within career opportunities in sport and working towards this.



#### 4.4.4 National interest in sport

Schools have, in the past, been accused of being responsible for poor performance in sports at international level;

'The demise of school sport [in the mid 1980s] was equated with Britain's poor showing in international sport. The assumption was clearly made by many of the contributors to the debate that sport is part of Britain's cultural heritage and an emblem of national pride and identity, and schools have their part to play in fostering the sports stars of tomorrow' (Kirk, 1992a, p.5).

Much of Britain's Government interest in sport has been to get more (young) people involved in sport and consequently national reports emphasise the attraction and importance of targeting schools. Three Scottish Sports Council reports (1988a&b; 1989) from the late 1980s discussed the contribution that the physical education subject could make to participation in sport, with a possible agenda of regulating school physical education. Such reports alert the reader to concerns of sport that were evident at the time HGPE was being developed.

'Laying the foundations: Report on school-aged sport in Scotland' (SSC, 1988a) considered the contribution that physical education could make to the development of sport for school-aged children at both primary and secondary levels. The report requested that consideration be given to introducing departments of physical education and sport, as opposed to physical education departments, and that a member of staff be given the responsibility to undertake a programme of sports activities after school. Secondary schools were also encouraged to '...take the initiative in identifying new means of providing opportunities for sport for young people' (SSC, 1988a, para. 36, p.6).

'Sport 2000: A strategic approach to the development of sport in Scotland' (SSC, 1989) followed a similar format to the above report in relation to discussing the four main stages

in what was previously referred to as the 'sport development continuum', i.e., foundation, participation, performance and excellence;

'...physical education is seen as having a crucial link with the tasking up of sport, as well as having a contribution to make at the participation, performance and excellence levels' (SSC, 1989, para. 3.13, p.16).

In allocating the strategic role of each group of organisations involved in sport (e.g., local sports councils, private sector, governing bodies, tertiary education), schools were requested to pursue four issues. These were to;

- provide daily physical education at primary level;
- integrate physical education within the core curriculum and as a subject for examination courses at secondary level;
- continue to promote traditional competitive sports while developing opportunities for newer or less team-based physical recreations; and
- form effective links with local clubs and local authority providers of sporting opportunities to bridge the gap into continuing participation by the school leaver (SSC, 1989, para. 6.13, p.76).

The above issue regarding the maintenance of traditional competitive sports within physical education reinforces the earlier discussion that the discourse of 'traditional physical education' looks set to remain in schools (Kirk, 1992a). HGPE has maintained such a discourse.

In response to the decrease in team-based sports that was reported in 'Laying the foundations' (SSC, 1988a), the recommendations of an Enquiry group were published under the title 'School-aged team sport: Enquiry group report' (SSC, 1988b). A number of recommendations were made to strengthen the role of physical education as a foundation for sport. Suggestions included the appointment of a teacher as a sports clubs' liaison officer, to encourage further development in appropriate age groups of mixed team games



and to develop and promote mini versions of the adult form of the particular game. Again, the traditional team sports that have been the mainstay of physical education for so long were being promoted.

A more recent paper 'Scotland's sporting future: A new start' (Scottish Office, 1995) was part of a wider package of Conservative Government measures to develop sport throughout the UK. The paper stated that the starting point to providing opportunities for the pursuit of sporting activities began in schools and that the school provided an environment where education and sport could be linked and where sport could become a key feature of school life. The importance of the role of the school in such a task was illustrated when the paper reported (in bold typing) that the Secretary of State had written to every school board in Scotland encouraging them to take a particular interest in the place of sport in their schools. The report praised the strong performance element in SGPE and HGPE and encouraged specific development of technique and performance, with no concern regarding the potential of physical education to address health and fitness issues.

The above reports all promote schools, and in particular physical education, as having a role to fulfill in the development of sport. Since the introduction of HGPE, the relationship between sport and sport provision in schools has continued to be a focus of reports (Scottish Office, 1995; Department of National Heritage, 1995). Along with this pressure external to the physical education profession, physical education is putting pressure on itself to be perceived by others as a more credible subject. This issue is now addressed.

#### 4.4.5 Academic credibility : certification and survival

Following on from the work of Goodson (1987) in 'School subjects and curriculum change', particular school subjects have been reported internationally as having a persistent identity problem. These include Home Economics (Grundy & Henry, 1995 from an Australian perspective; Attar, 1990 from a UK perspective) and Technology Education (Lewis, 1995 from a USA perspective).

HGPE has been reported as a means of protecting the physical education subject by safeguarding time on the school timetable in S5 and S6 and, by enticing pupils to the subject at all levels, maintaining and creating jobs for physical education teachers (Niven, 1988b). Niven does not deny that the enhancement of the status of the subject was also a significant motivation for the introduction of HGPE.

In a similar fashion to Kirk's (1997) explanation of the social construction of pedagogic discourse in physical education in Australia, it is assumed that by focussing on the scientific form of the physical activity field in HGPE academic credibility was sought (Boyd, 1993). Such subject matter may aim to provide physical education teachers and the physical education subject with a degree of intellectual credibility, i.e., school physical education being organised around a more 'academic' framework of science and sport science. SGPE was believed to have increased the status of the physical education subject (MacLeod, 1992).

However, as reported earlier in this chapter, SUCE did not accredit HGPE with Sport Science status and this illustrated the potential impact that universities' admissions policies can have on the status of a subject. Goodson (1987) reported that subjects which are established as university studies in their own right are strongly supported by universities while practical subjects struggle to command similar respect. While in Australia school physical education counts towards tertiary entrance (Kirk, 1997), school physical education does not fulfill such a role in Scotland. Consequently there is no obvious 'interface' between HGPE and higher education in the way that there is, for example, between Higher English and an English degree. Nevertheless, the biophysical slant of HGPE does serve further and higher education programmes, an issue that has been discussed earlier in this section.

Carroll (1982 & 1983) was perhaps more realistic in the effect certification would have on the status of physical education. Carroll did not dispute that the entry of physical education in the National Curriculum in England and Wales may have assured physical education a place in the curriculum. However, he believed that because of its late entry



into the system and consequently its different treatment, physical education would receive lower status than other subjects. In Scotland, the late onset of SGPE in relation to other curricula subjects accounted for the later implementation of physical education at Higher Grade.

As noted earlier in this section, underlying the above five sites is an increasing interest in a scientific perspective and a sporting perspective of physical education. Before examining each perspective individually an historical account is given of how the two perspectives have achieved prominence within Scottish physical education.

#### 4.4.6 Historical account of scientific and sporting perspectives of physical education in Scotland

Sport did not form part of the regular curriculum experience of pupils in the state run secondary school system until the 1950s and 1960s, although it was already a dominating feature in elite private schools. Kirk (1992a & 1998) has illustrated how the introduction of sport-based physical education in Scotland was as a result of the widespread introduction of male teachers of physical education into schools and it is this line of inquiry that is now pursued.

Male physical educators in the late 1950s / early 1960s argued that (competitive) sports and games, rather than gymnastics, should be the focus of school physical education. They also made a case for the scientific dimensions of physical performance to be pursued, e.g., strength and endurance, emphasising the physical effects of exercise / movement, resulting in the introduction of fitness activities. Female physical educators of the same time upheld a more holistic approach to teaching than that of the men. They tended to advocate a child-centred movement focus, favouring educational gymnastics and the idea of obtaining general body awareness before introducing specific skills.

The diversity between the two groups of teachers was emphasised by Kirk when he reported two separate submissions from the Scottish School of Physical Education (SSPE)

and the Scottish Central Committee on Physical education (SCCPE) (representing views from Dunfermline College of Physical Education) to the Munn Committee in the mid 1970s. The Munn Committee had been set up to review the philosophy and aims of the third and fourth years of secondary education in Scotland (SED/CCC, 1977a).

The Scottish School (who dealt with teacher training for future male physical education teachers) requested that school physical education be concerned primarily with health and fitness, perceptual motor skills and leisure pursuits. In effect, the SSPE was challenging the previously female influence of 'aesthetics' that had monopolised how physical education was approached and perceived.

Dunfermline College (concerned with training future female physical education teachers) was concerned with a more abstract approach to school physical education, believing that physical education should promote an 'aesthetic' medium primarily through 'movement' based physical education (i.e., movement education, educational dance, educational gymnastics).

Each submission supported one of two approaches to teaching and learning in physical education; the SSPE advocating education 'of' the physical (skill development) and the SCCPE / Dunfermline College favouring education 'through' the physical (movement and creativity).

While the SSPE denied that knowledge and cognitive ability were involved when one was performing physical activities (Kirk, 1987), the SCCPE / Dunfermline College believed movement to be a medium for intellectual and creative abilities. The Munn Report chose to reflect the male view of physical education by stating that physical education, among other activities, placed a 'heavy emphasis on non-cognitive aspects' (SED/CCC, 1977a, para. 7.7, p.47). Kirk (1992a) explained why the SSPE recommendations were attractive to the Munn Committee;



'...the new knowledge of fitness training, skill acquisition and biomechanics had an apparently clear and direct contribution to make to enhancing elite sports performance' (Kirk, 1992a, p. 159) and '...the male definition of physical education [was] perceived to be clear and obvious...' (Kirk, 1992a, p. 158)

Kirk's comment implies that the SCCPE / Dunfermline College suggestions were much more abstract in relation to the practicality of the SSPE recommendations. Consequently, physical education primarily exists in a masculinised form; constructed by males to favour males. The SEB have classed physical education as a 'boy-friendly' subject (SEB Research 3, 1995a), later confirming that gender bias in favour of boys does occur at both Standard Grade and Higher Grade in the context of particular activities, most noticeably badminton, basketball and volleyball (SQA, 1996a & 1996b). Bias in moderation data on performance was shown not to be related to the gender of the assessors and therefore '...was seen to be more embedded, either in the arrangements for assessment or in the operationalising of these arrangements by the profession' (SQA, 1996a, p.2). The same paper concluded that,

'Average gender differences in grades or marks in Practical Performance are partly about real differences between boys' and girls' performance standards. Such differences are not addressed in the assessment criteria at Standard Grade or Higher Grade' (p.11).

Such an observation can only strengthen the argument that the SGPE and HGPE documentation has an underlying masculine bias in the way it is written. Girls tend to do better than boys in SEB examinations. Nationally twice as many boys as girls choose to undertake SGPE (SOEID, 1995), although the only subject in which girls do consistently worse than boys at Standard Grade is physical education (SEB Research 3, 1995a). SGPE was one of the subjects with the widest range of element grade differences where the girls did 0.43 of a grade better in Knowledge and Understanding, 0.05 worse in Evaluating and 0.43 worse in Practical Performance (SEB Research 3, 1995a). This latter figure reinforces the implication that the specific physical activities favour boys. Unfortunately,

figures are not available for grade differences between boys and girls that have undertaken HGPE.

The male and female perspectives initiated the discussion regarding the relationship between school physical education and sport performance, leading to a concern that sport-based physical education would be perceived as a means of identifying talented youngsters to elite sport as opposed to catering for the majority of pupils. However, sport-based physical education won favour at the time.

In referring to the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993) it is possible to notice the extent to which both the dated male and female perspectives on learning within the physical domain are reflected in the documentation. The virtual omission of the creative and aesthetic element in HGPE could be attributed to it being a much more abstract entity to assess than the functional and direct view of performance. The popular activities undertaken at HGPE tend to favour activities such as basketball and badminton (which have previously been noted as favouring boys in terms of assessing Practical Performance) over the more aesthetic and creative activities of gymnastics and dance. Reasons for this may not only be linked to the confidence that teachers have in delivering such physical activities but also to the ease in which teachers can relate the practical activities to the Areas of Analysis of Performance. To support this observation the SEB (Annual Report, 1996) and the SQA (Annual Statistical Report, 1997) reported that very few candidates had attempted to answer questions on 'Appreciation of Action' in the Analysis of Performance paper since the onset of HGPE. It is however not clear if the small numbers were due to a lack of interest or knowledge from pupils in such an area or a lack of teachers' interest and confidence in teaching such subject matter. Is the HGPE 'curriculum-as-practiced' based primarily on the interests, preferences and background of teachers rather than of students? The issue of the histories and professional development of teachers in the delivery of the curriculum is discussed in Chapter 8.

What is noticeable in the HGPE Arrangements document is the promotion of cognitive learning through an integration of theoretical and practical content, bringing together the



mind and body. This approach is very different to that of the dated male perspective that favoured a scientific approach to the assessment of activities only, believing that knowledge and cognitive ability were not involved in the performance of physical activities.

What can be stated from examining the historical perspective of school physical education is that the dominant discourse of physical education has been 'traditional physical education' with a prime concern on improving sports performance through scientific functionalism (Kirk, 1992a). However, a number of trends have detracted from the traditional involvement of schools in performance including a broadening of the curriculum (i.e., offering extra activities), an increasing emphasis on participation rather than performance and a decline in competitive sport between schools (Scottish Sports Council, 1988b). Although such trends may have weakened the traditional model of physical education at certain periods in time, this study now intends to show how the ID of HGPE has drawn on the two historical areas (in the physical education context) of science and sport.

#### 4.4.7 Scientific perspective on HGPE

According to Hill (1993) the HGPE Arrangements document could be accused of implying that scientific knowledge is the best way to understand performance and how to improve performance. While Tinning (1997) admitted that scientific discourses could help us understand how to improve the physical performance of athletes, he also stated that the same discourses are of little help with issues relating to participation in the movement culture. In 1992 Kirk warned,

'There is the danger of a trend over time to first of all gradually reduce the amount of time spent within [physical education] programmes on practical physical activity, and then to continue to increase the scientific, bio-physical aspects of the subject at the expense of socio-cultural knowledge' (Kirk, 1992a, p.164).

Kirk's perception of an increase in the bio-physical aspects of the physical education subject at the expense of socio-cultural knowledge (e.g., history, pedagogy and sociology) is apparent in reading through the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993). The 'Arts' element of physical education is suppressed in HGPE and it is noticeable that the creative and aesthetic slant that appeared in the HGPE consultation document does not appear in the HGPE Arrangements document. McGowan (1993) and Reid (1993) were concerned with the narrowing of subject context in HGPE and the emphasis placed on the scientific aspects of performance. According to McGowan (1993) the situation regarding the scientific perspective is the same for SGPE where '...there has been a devaluing of personal and subjective knowledge of self in favour of acquiring knowledge generated by scientific approaches to understanding participation and performance' (p.29).

Concerns were expressed at the phase of writing support documentation for HGPE about the overemphasis of science in certificated courses in physical education (Niven, 1998b). Niven explained that one particular writer commissioned to write support documentation did not perceive such a problem, reflecting his preference for a scientific approach to HGPE than from an arts perspective. This particular writer was commissioned to write supporting documentation for the Analysis of Performance (A of P) element of HGPE. He apparently struggled to accept the Appreciation of Action strand as a valid part of A of P, to the extent that he requested it be abolished from A of P. Such an incident illustrates the impact individuals working within Bernstein's recontextualising field can have on what is to be constituted as the curriculum to be delivered in the secondary field. Although writers were reported to have consulted with others in the construction of their documents, they were reinforcing their own approaches by consulting with like-minded people and admitted that the documents they were commissioned to produce were based on their own experiences and views (Niven, 1998b).

However, the biophysical and socio-cultural dimensions of physical education appear to approach parity when one views the Associated Examining Board General Certificate of Education Advanced Level 1999 syllabus for Physical Education in England and Wales ('A' level and Higher Grade target a similar age group of 17 to 18 year olds). This



particular syllabus encompasses a written paper section worth 30% for 'Anatomical and physiological aspects of sport and physical education', including content on the principles of movement and exercise physiology and the effects of training. Another written paper worth 40% covers the areas of 'Historical, social and cultural aspects of physical activity' and 'Psychological aspects of sport and physical education'. The remaining 30% is allocated to Practical Performance where candidates are required to plan, perform and evaluate two physical activities.

A possible explanation for a balance between the science and social science strands of 'A' level Physical Education may be due to the fact that the ID of 'A' level Physical Education was initiated, interpreted and developed by teachers in schools rather than primarily by those external to schools. Francis (1988) goes on to explain how the Associated Examination Board and three groups of schools and colleges initially worked together in developing the 'A' level syllabus. This contrasts with the process that was undertaken with HGPE. According to Niven (1998b), the Chairman and the Senior HMI in physical education who had both served on the HGPE JWP had studied 'A' level and equivalent courses and '...were keen not to follow the 'A' level route and get caught up in an abstract type of physical education course where performance had no bearing in course work and pupils' achievements' (p.63). Practical performance was central to the notion of HGPE, perhaps not only due to the preferences of Scottish physical education teachers but more certainly because it was the base of SGPE, to which HGPE was to progress on from and articulate with (see section 4.4.1).

The creative and aesthetics and health and fitness issues are evident to an extent when examining the four areas of Analysis of Performance within the HGPE Arrangements document. For example, health and fitness is a component of 'Preparation of the Body' when referring to principles such as frequency, duration and intensity and discussing fitness programmes. 'Creativity' and 'aesthetics' are listed under qualities of action in Appreciation of Action. However, the continual focus on physical and biological sciences is evident in the inclusion of biomechanics in Appreciation of Action (Niven, 1998b).

However, there is no obvious reference in the HGPE Arrangements document to the creative and aesthetic elements of physical education. As reported previously in this chapter, reference to activities' relevance to the creative and aesthetic modes was evident in the HGPE consultation document but does not appear in the Arrangements document. Physical education was however still being deemed by the SEB as a 'creative and aesthetic' subject (SEB Examination Statistics, 1995).

Also, there are no direct references to the notion of health-related physical education in the HGPE Arrangements document, although such an issue was deemed as being central by the 5-14 curriculum document (SOED, 1993). Although SGPE does not foreground health-related fitness, the SGPE Arrangements document stated that, 'All of the physical activities in which they [pupils] engage will contribute in some way to an improvement in physical condition (SEB, 1988, para. 14, p.4). SGPE also encompassed a Thematic Study which was an opportunity to identify common links across a variety of categories, which could result in pupils investigating to what extent health or performance related fitness contributed to different activities. It could be suggested that the omission of health related fitness (which is informed by scientifically-based knowledge of exercise) from HGPE is unusual in that its inclusion would reinforce the scientific approach that certificated physical education appears to be pursuing.

In examining the ID discourse of HGPE earlier in this chapter, it is evident that physical and biological sciences form part of the RD in which the ID of HGPE is embedded. It is the biophysical sub-disciplines of the physical education field that are foreground in HGPE. Anatomical, mechanical, physiological, neural and psychological bases are noted by Abernethy et al., (1996) as the biophysical foundations of Human Movement (an alternative term for physical education and sport) with functional anatomy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, motor control and sport and exercise psychology as the respective biophysical sub-disciplines.



#### 4.4.8 Sport perspective on HGPE

Over the years the RD of sport in Britain has been reconstructed from encouraging 'participation for all' to 'performance' (Penney & Evans, 1999) and it would appear that the ID of physical education has been reconstructed in line with this in the production of HGPE. There is the suggestion that the authors of the HGPE Arrangements document have attempted to safeguard the practical nature of the physical education subject by emphasising performance (Hill, 1993). There is a concern that not only does the activity-based structure of physical education in England and Wales promote a focus on performance in the activities per se, but that there is a danger of cultivating elite performance in specific activities (Penney & Chandler, 2000).

Sport as the RD in which the ID of school physical education has been drawn since the early 1980s may have been an attempt to retain physical education as part of the school curriculum. From a Scottish perspective, Cairney (1999) certainly believes so and summarises the position that the physical education subject is currently in;

'...we are in a position where there are only 3 (at the last count) local authority physical education advisers, where some former advisers' posts are sports dominated, where one local authority can replace a principal teacher of physical education with a principal teacher of 'Fitness and Health', where the chief public advocate of physical education in the primary school is the Scottish Sports Council, and where pronouncements on government policy on physical education are made by the sports minister rather than the education minister' (p.29).

Cairney continues his attack on the role sport now plays within physical education by referring to the 'menace of the sports lobby which has already made significant inroads in the curriculum' (p.30). He also voices concern that the physical education teaching profession is insufficiently organised to address the ignorance of some directorate in local authorities who are unable to distinguish between physical education and sport, believing that individuals equate sport with physical education.

Sport and physical education are not synonymous, but there is a very significant relationship between them (Lyle, 1989). Both deal with encouraging involvement in physical activities. As explained earlier in this chapter, while physical education has been primarily identified as accommodating the majority of 'performers' irrespective of their level of ability, sport tends to be perceived as catering for the minority who can perform at a particular level. Consequently, HGPE would appear to be dealing with 'sport' rather than 'physical education'.

The SOEID (1995) report, 'Effective learning and teaching in Scottish secondary schools; Physical Education' admitted that Scottish school physical education courses had become more clearly orientated to performance with the implication that the developments in physical education had aimed to promote performance. In SGPE the 'Practical Performance' element accounts for 50% of the final mark and the 'Performance' element in HGPE 40%. In both courses the other assessable elements are related to pupils' knowledge and understanding of performance in the physical education context. It would be very difficult to deny that one of the main aims, if not the main aim, of physical education is to improve pupils' performance. Sharpe (1991) showed that physical education teachers were united about the importance of performance in the orientation of physical education's subject matter. It would also be hard to argue against the positive effect that performance in physical activities can have on pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical education. However, the use of the term 'performance' and the context in which it is referred to in the HGPE text does not encourage the thought of performance as participation in physical activities at all levels but rather implies a certain level of competence. This was evident in the earlier discussion in this chapter concerned with the ID of HGPE.

Performance remains the major strength of the HGPE course (SEB Annual Reports 1994 and 1995 & SQA Annual Report 1996) with a high degree of agreement between schools and Moderators on assessment. This could possibly be attributed to physical educators being confident in delivering the Performance element of the HGPE course. It is not until



the SQA Annual Report of 1998 that a very modest improvement in the Analysis of Performance and Investigation elements of HGPE is reported.

It is difficult to argue against the importance of performance in the context of physical education. However, there is room for discussion related to the current emphasis in physical education nationally of accommodating a minority of elite performers at the expense of the majority or less talented pupils (Penney & Evans, 1999; Kirk, 1992a). It is important to be aware that it is not only the physical capabilities of pupils that result in the small numbers accommodated by HGPE but also the structure of the HGPE course and the related teaching and learning contexts. It has been suggested that the problem between establishing the relationship between physical education and sport lies in questioning what function physical activities fulfil in the physical education curriculum;

'There are those who see physical activities as only being a means to fulfil broader educational objectives, in which the individual child is the focus. Unfortunately this progressive ideal has been misinterpreted, which has led to a body of opinion which supports the view that the activities are unimportant. However, when that belief is translated into practice, the activities are often watered down into a wishy-washy, mish-mash of untidy and undemanding 'educational contexts' (Ledingham, 1989, p.12).

The above statement illustrates the approach more commonly referred to as education 'through' the physical where the general goals of education are achieved 'through' physical activities. Historically this approach was favoured when dealing with health and hygiene (early 1900s) and movement education (1970s), shown earlier in this chapter as being the concern of female physical educators. This differs from an education 'of' the physical approach that focuses on performance as an end outcome, not a process. This approach favours physical fitness and motor skills and was portrayed earlier in this chapter as being the concern of male physical educators.

#### 4.4.9 General overview of the regulative discourse of HGPE

Since the introduction of certification in Scottish school physical education there has been a noticeable move to a greater science emphasis in physical education. The level of biophysical science evident through the content of SGPE is developed to a greater level at HGPE. Reasons for biophysical science underpinning HGPE, as opposed to socio-cultural knowledge, appear to include academic credibility for the subject and the survival of physical education through serving a function to related further and higher educational qualifications.

The social phenomenon of sport as a RD for HGPE was illustrated by highlighting the number and orientation of physical activities, i.e., a smaller number of activities and a focus on performance. Reasons for sport being prominent in the ID of HGPE included a national interest in sport and to service employment opportunities in the sporting arena. It is difficult to deny that sport is the substance of physical education and that schools provide a suitable and safe context for introducing young people to sport. The following comment by Lyle (1989) illustrates the central role of sport in physical education;

'Physical education is a concept: it must have substantive subject matter which is rooted in experience and real life. Sport can provide the context in which educational goals can be achieved' (p.6).

#### 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the ID discourse of HGPE, the production of the HGPE Arrangements document and the RD of HGPE. In doing so, an awareness of some of the dominant issues in contemporary culture have been shown to have impacted recontextualising agents in the construction of the ID of HGPE. Highlighting these issues will hopefully make it easier to understand how such issues, along with the social construction process of HGPE, impacted on teachers' CDM and pupil subject choice in



relation to HGPE in the secondary context. Teachers' CDM and pupil subject choice are the focus of the following three chapters.

Penney & Chandler (2000) believed that certificated physical education in England and Wales was currently an activity-based structure that focused on performance in chosen activities (e.g., basketball, hockey) rather than the adoption of an educational approach. Performance remains the prominent discourse of HGPE to the extent that the RD of HGPE could be dismissed as a 'participation discourse' (Tinning, 1997) in favour of a 'performance discourse' (Whitson & MacIntosh, 1990). Consequently, HGPE is a science-based, sport-performance-oriented discourse. Whitson & MacIntosh described such a performance-oriented approach to physical education as the 'scientisation of physical education' with sport scientists framing the knowledge and practices to be generated.

While the aim of this chapter has been to investigate the ID of HGPE and how the RD was evident in the construction of HGPE, the adoption of the dominant discourse of HGPE is examined in Chapters 5 and 6 from the perspective of teachers. Chapter 5 will examine the extent to which teachers, working in what Bernstein (1990) termed the 'secondary context', make sense of the ID of HGPE that has been decided for them by those operating in the recontextualising field. Reasons for teachers making the decision to either offer or not offer HGPE will be examined. According to Kirk & Macdonald (2001) it is teachers' immersion in delivering the ID in the 'local context of implementation' that apparently limits teachers' opportunities to be producers of the ID. The impact of situational factors within two particular schools on the transformation of the HGPE text between the recontextualising and secondary fields will be discussed in Chapter 6.

## **Chapter 5 - Teacher curriculum decision making in the secondary field**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter will concentrate on establishing to what extent teachers' views of the instructional discourse (ID) of HGPE, influenced their decision-making.

In Chapter 1 it was established that the key focus of this thesis is the social construction of physical education, curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupil subject choice. In the same chapter the issue of teacher CDM was discussed, highlighting a number of decision-making models (Everard & Morris, 1990; Prescott, 1980) and pre-conditions and constraints that are evident when teachers participate in a CDM process. Various factors, such as the interest and ability of pupils and the availability of staff, that have been identified by a number of authors in influencing Scottish teachers' CDM in relation to HGPE were reported (Table 1.6). Similar dimensions were reported as influencing particular Scottish school physical education programmes (Table 1.7), and from a UK perspective influencing the work of physical educators (Table 1.8) and the introduction of examinable physical education in Britain (Table 1.9). This chapter will establish the extent to which factors, such as resources, facilities and time, reported in Chapter 1 as influencing the decision to offer particular physical education programmes, were evident in teachers' CDM. The issue of teachers' role and impact in curriculum development in was also addressed in Chapter 1 and this chapter will assess the extent to which teachers' interest, confidence and expertise influenced CDM. In Chapter 8 the extent to which the manner in which the ID of HGPE has been constructed, and how the lack of involvement from teachers in its construction, has suppressed teachers' interest, confidence and expertise in delivering HGPE will be examined.

As reported in Chapter 2, Bernstein (1990) explains that in the 'secondary context' the selective reproduction of educational discourse and its practice takes place. The non-pedagogical discourses of the primary field take on a pedagogical form in the secondary field. In this study, schools, particularly teachers and pupils, constitute the secondary field



(Chapter 2, Figure 2.1) and, as discussed in Chapter 4, are expected by recontextualising agents and agencies to implement the form of the ID that has been constructed within the recontextualising field. In relation to HGPE Niven (1998b) explained, 'The documents shaping the nature of the [HGPE] course had been created. Teachers had to accept them and put them into practice' (p.78). As already noted, another feature of the secondary context is that teachers have some degree of autonomy in this process (Bernstein, 1990). However, teachers' power to negotiate the ID of HGPE may be limited by the SQA's ability to mandate assessment. On close investigation it is evident that the SQA, as well as being an agency in the recontextualising field, plays a role in the secondary field. This will become clear in Chapter 8 when discussing the continuous involvement of the SQA in regulating the HGPE course in schools through assessment procedures and in the lack of feedback that the SQA provide to teachers on evaluating the learning and teaching approaches in HGPE. Both practices result in the SQA retaining a degree of control over the HGPE curriculum as practiced in the secondary field. The lack of teacher involvement in the production of HGPE in the recontextualising field and in the reproduction of HGPE in the secondary field dispels any notion of teacher ownership of HGPE. Without involvement from teachers operating in the secondary field, those recontextualising agents and agencies who were involved in the production of the ID of HGPE may have been unaware of the dimensions of the secondary field that can impact on schools and subsequently teachers' CDM. It is at the recontextualising agents' peril that they choose to eliminate teachers' knowledge of the factors of the school environment that can affect teachers' CDM. The importance of teachers experiencing ownership of curriculum change has already been stressed in Chapter 1 and will be re-visited in Chapter 8.

Chapter 6 will investigate how differing school environments and the conditions of teachers' work variously described in the literature as 'the local context of implementation' (Kirk and Macdonald, 2001) and teachers 'zones of enactment' (Spillane, 1999) are the main basis on which teachers make decisions.

This chapter is concerned then with the key issue;

How did teachers' interpretation of HGPE influence curriculum decision making?

Identifying and discussing the main dimensions from survey data that teachers reported had influenced their decision to offer (or not) HGPE is reported before discussing the quantitative and qualitative data collected by teacher survey. The chapter concludes by highlighting the similarities and differences between the influences that operated in teachers' CDM.

## 5.2 Questionnaire responses

One hundred and seventy secondary schools under the former Strathclyde Region (excluding special schools and fee-paying schools) were sent a questionnaire regarding their decision to offer or not offer HGPE. A 93% response rate was achieved due to 158 completed questionnaires being returned. From those that were returned 151 were used in the analysis of data that is reported in this chapter. The valid returns consisted of 87 (almost 58%) from schools offering HGPE and 64 (42%) from schools not offering HGPE. The demographic information of the respondents is given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Demographic information for questionnaire responses from teachers.

	Teachers teaching HGPE (n = 87)	Teachers not teaching HGPE (n = 64)
<b>Gender of teachers:</b>		
Male	79%	81%
Female	21%	19%
<b>Position occupied by teachers:</b>		
Principal teacher	87%	93%
Assistant principal teacher	5%	0
Full-time teacher	5%	1%
Part-time teacher	0	2%
Senior teacher	3%	2%
Job share	0	2%
<b>Age of teachers:</b>		
21-25 years	0	0
26-35 years	8%	13%
36-45 years	60%	49%
Over 45 years	32%	38%



Reasons for the inclusion of the 41 questions in the questionnaires were given in Chapter 3 and a copy of the questionnaires that were completed by either set of teachers are available in appendix 3.4. Responses from column A of the questionnaires allow us to assess physical educators' reading and interpretation of particular issues related to the teaching of HGPE in relation to their own school situation. For example, in the particular environment teachers were working in, were teachers interested in teaching HGPE? Was sufficient preparation time available for HGPE? Was there an adequate number of pupils in their school wishing to be taught HGPE? Teachers' responses to the questionnaire items are listed in appendix 5.1 and allow us to assess how teachers read and interpreted issues related to HGPE.

As explained in Chapter 3, the main reason behind the construction of the questionnaire was to investigate teacher CDM. Patterns of responses were investigated between teachers' extent of agreement about particular issues related to the teaching of HGPE (column A of the questionnaire) and how their interpretation of the ID of HGPE influenced teacher CDM (column B of the questionnaire). The extent to which teachers believed the ID of HGPE can be reproduced in the secondary field, taking into consideration the differing school environments that are evident in the secondary field is identified from the data. The discussion begins with teachers who had made the decision to offer HGPE.

### 5.3 Dimensions and factors influencing teachers' decision to offer HGPE

From the 87 teachers offering HGPE who responded to the survey, over 90% were over the age of 35, with 32% being over the age of 45. Almost 80% of teachers were male. Chapter 8 discusses the most likely time that this particular sample of teachers undertook teacher training, entered the teaching profession and the era of curriculum developments with which they identified. This information can aid the understanding of the particular pattern of responses from the sample of teachers in this study.

Analysis of questionnaire responses resulted in 22 questions from the questionnaire receiving a significant positive association between 'yes' responses (column A) and 'influence' responses (column B). The calculation of such results and the findings (Table 3.4) are reported in Chapter 3. The 22 questions are identifiable as three main dimensions that affects teacher CDM and consequently, curriculum-as-practiced. The three main dimensions are;

- the expertise and availability of teachers and their views about HGPE
- addressing pupils' needs, and
- appropriate school conditions for the teaching of HGPE.

Each dimension will be discussed in turn, reporting and discussing both the quantitative and qualitative survey data related to each. The following section is concerned only with reporting and discussing data from teachers who have made the decision to offer HGPE.

#### 5.3.1 The expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE

As already identified in Chapter 1, the provision of teachers and their views and beliefs towards school physical education were influences reported as affecting the physical education programme not only in specific Scottish secondary schools (Table 1.7) but also throughout the UK (Table 1.8). Chapter 1 reported factors that had influenced teachers to offer HGPE in two particular secondary schools (Table 1.6). The two specific factors were that the teachers had expertise in dealing with HGPE through attending a number of in-service courses related directly to HGPE (McFarlane, 1993) and that the school had been involved in piloting HGPE (Forsyth, 1994; Lobban, 1994). Table 5.2 lists the factors related to the provision of teachers and their values towards HGPE that teachers stated were positive aspects that subsequently influenced teacher CDM.



Table 5.2: Responses to questions related to teachers and views of teachers that had a significant positive association between 'yes' and 'influence' responses.

Questions	% of 'yes' responses	Significant positive association between 'yes' and 'Influence' responses
22. Did you feel HGPE was a worthwhile development?	92	86%
1. Were teachers in your department interested in teaching HGPE?	78	77%
12. Did you believe that the teacher(s) in your department would be successful in teaching HGPE?	77	75%
34. Was sufficient staff expertise available for the teaching of HGPE?	77	75%
10. Did you believe that HGPE helped raise the status of PE?	68	53%

From Table 5.2, the main factor that influenced most teachers CDM was HGPE being deemed to be a worthwhile development. Teachers' interest and expertise in delivering HGPE and HGPE aiding the status of physical education are shown to have had less of an influence on teacher CDM.

5.3.1.1 HGPE as a worthwhile development

Table 5.2 illustrates that the major influence on teacher CDM was the belief that HGPE was a worthwhile development (Question 22). From the 22 identified positive aspects, this was the strongest factor influencing teacher CDM. Chapter 6 investigates if the reasons given for SGPE being perceived by teachers as a worthwhile development (Sharp, 1991) are relevant to HGPE. Reasons reported by Sharp included SGPE being an exciting challenge for pupils that in turn would encourage more pupils to take physical education, enhancing pupils' knowledge of sport and recreation as well as encouraging higher skill levels.

Although the majority of teachers believed that HGPE was a worthwhile development, comments from the questionnaire revealed concerns they had about HGPE. One teacher

commented that a lot of work still needed to be done on HGPE (tu.37, TEACH) and another teacher questioned the characteristics of HGPE;

'The results nationally over the last two years have made us somewhat sceptical about the whole process. It seems that pupils have to be very talented physically and also have a very strong command of the English language to achieve any sort of success in the subject' (tu.1, TEACH).

Some teachers expressed doubts about HGPE as an appropriate development. One teacher said;

'Our department is not certain that this [HGPE] is the best way forward for physical education' (tu.31, TEACH),

while another teacher stated;

'There is some doubt in my mind about the worth of teaching HGPE in my school three years on' (tu.26, TEACH).

MacLeod (1992) reported similar doubts with the SGPE development, noting that some physical educationalists were not entirely won over with the development or with the view that certification was the best way for the physical education subject to proceed. The above comments highlight the dilemma that can be evident even within schools that are teaching HGPE. Regardless of teachers' concerns with HGPE, they were still teaching the subject and this may have been due to their commitment to offering pupils the opportunity to undertake further study in HGPE. It was for this reason that Muir (1994), despite his concerns with HGPE, taught the subject, '...I did not have the right to deny pupils the opportunity to study HGPE' (p.12). Teachers' commitment to serving pupils is evident throughout this chapter and in Chapter 6.

#### 5.3.1.2 Teachers' interest and expertise in delivering HGPE



Another strong influence on teacher CDM included teachers being interested in teaching HGPE (Question 1) and that there was sufficient expertise (Question 34), with the expectation that teachers would be successful in teaching HGPE (Question 12). Penney & Kirk (1998), in evaluating the Trial-Pilot Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Australia) identified the interest and enthusiasm of the head of department and other physical education teachers as critical to successful implementation of the syllabus. Chapter 1 reported that teacher expertise and confidence was crucial to dealing with curriculum development in physical education (Forsyth, 1994; Lobban, 1994). One teacher highlighted the demand that HGPE can have on staff expertise;

'I have thoroughly enjoyed teaching HGPE, finding it a real challenge. It places demands on teachers' expertise, forcing them to teach at a more advanced level. The whole concept of HGPE, in my opinion, is good for physical education' (tu.82, TEACH).

The above comment hints at the positive effect involvement in HGPE can have on teachers' professional development. The demographic information of the teachers who were teaching HGPE has already been noted in this chapter and will be discussed further in Chapter 8 in relation to professional development.

#### 5.3.1.3 HGPE and the status of physical education

Educational status has been a perennial topic of concern for physical education. For example, Sparkes (1991b) stated;

'Status is an important issue within the teaching profession, and within the subject subculture of physical education it is almost an obsession' (p.28).

Chapter 1 (Table 1.8) reported, on research concerned with UK school physical education programmes, that the status that the physical education subject has within schools can

influence its provision (ILEA, 1988; PEA, 1987; Hendry, 1978). Research conducted throughout the UK (Chapter 1, Table 1.9) has also highlighted the benefits that certification is perceived to have for physical education. These benefits were believed to be an attraction for introducing examinations in physical education (Sharp, 1991; Aylett, 1990; SCPEC, 1982). Niven (1988b) reported that the Chairman of the HGPE JWP commented that the increased depth of study through HGPE would enhance physical education as part of the whole curriculum.

However, Table 5.2 shows that only 53% of teachers were influenced to teach HGPE by the idea that HGPE could raise the status of physical education (Question 10). An explanation for this relatively low response may be due to the late introduction of physical education at HG in relation to the already well-established HG subjects. Similarly, as reported in Chapter 4, Carroll (1982 and 1983) suggested that, due to physical education's late introduction into the National Curriculum in England and Wales, it would never fully accrue the status from certification that other school subjects have. Another explanation may be that teachers are more interested in increasing their own personal status than with increasing the status of the physical education programme (Carroll, 1995; Darmoody, 1993). As I reported in Chapter 1 (Table 1.9), teachers mentioned the benefits for physical education staff of CSE PE courses considerably more than benefits for pupils, for physical education generally or for the school (SCPEC, 1982). MacLeod (1992) believed that SGPE had provided a greater role for staff and secured the place of the physical education subject not only within the timetable but also within the mainstream of the secondary school curriculum. It was inferred in Chapter 4 that those agents and agencies involved in constructing HGPE assumed that by focussing on the scientific form of the physical activity field in HGPE academic credibility was gained. Consequently, one other explanation for the issue of status having a relatively poor influence on teacher CDM may be that teachers did not value the form of physical education contained in the ID of HGPE. Teachers may have felt that this form of ID was not suitable to the kinds of pupils likely to be interested in undertaking HGPE. These latter two issues arise when focussing on the case study schools in Chapter 6 and again in Chapter 8.



Attention is now turned to the second dimension that has been identified as affecting teacher CDM, addressing pupils' needs.

### 5.3.2 Addressing pupils' needs

Along with schools and teachers, pupils occupy the secondary field. Teachers, as well as pupils, had no role in constructing the ID of HGPE. As reported in Chapter 1, Chen & Ennis (1995), in examining the subject-pedagogical content knowledge transformation process, implied that teachers choose an appropriate form of discursive practice in relation to the abilities and needs of the particular students. It may be imperative that agents in the recontextualising field address such a finding. The perceived success of HGPE falls to the pupils who choose to take the subject. It may have been beneficial for the recontextualising agents to involve teachers and pupils in the construction of the HGPE syllabus. However, it could be suggested that those involved with the construction of the ID were concerned with producing a course that was deemed to be more acceptable in the certificated school system than to providing an opportunity for those pupils with a genuine interest in the subject (Chapter 4). Gavin (1999) supports such a suggestion when he admitted that critics of any programme setting out to bring about change might represent interests other than the well being of young people in schools.

Pupils appear to be a significant influence in teachers' CDM. The interest and ability of pupils influenced Forsyth (1994) to teach HGPE in his particular school and was noted by Cherrie (1993) and MacCorquodale (1993) as influences affecting the physical education programme in their own schools (Tables 1.6 & 1.7 respectively, Chapter 1). Also in Chapter 1 (Table 1.8) UK studies that noted the influence of pupils on school physical education programmes were reported (Hendry, 1978; Underwood, 1983). Hendry reported that pupils' lack of motivation to conform was a disruptive factor in physical education while the personal needs of the pupils was reported by Underwood as an influencing factor on school programmes in England and Wales. More recently, Hobbs (1999), writing from a Scottish perspective, discussed the issue of disaffection with schooling, addressing the characteristics of youth culture and anti-school sub-cultures.

Table 5.3 lists the factors that teachers stated were positive aspects of their working context with regard to pupils.

Table 5.3: Responses to questions related to pupils that had a significant positive association between 'yes' and 'influence' responses.

Questions	% of 'yes' responses	Significant positive association between 'yes' and 'influence' responses
29. Was there an adequate number of pupils in your school wishing to be taught HGPE?	92	83%
9. Do you believe that HGPE served the needs of pupils in the school wishing to study PE to an advanced level within school?	83	80%
23. Did you believe that HGPE provided a link from pre-16 education, i.e., SGPE?	77	75%
3. Do you believe that HGPE serves the needs of pupils in the school wishing to continue their general education?	79	69%
6. Do you believe that HGPE provides depth of study?	89	64%
32. Did you believe that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to enter a career within sport, leisure and recreation?	72	61%
31. Did you believe that HGPE provided a link to post school education and training?	71	60%
26. Did you believe that HGPE provided vocational possibilities?	62	49%
14. Do you believe that HGPE served the needs of the pupils wishing to use the subject as an entry requirement to higher / further education?	60	48%

### 5.3.2.1 Number of pupils wishing to undertake HGPE

From Table 5.3 it is clear that an adequate number of pupils wishing to undertake HGPE (Question 29) was the factor influencing the highest percentage of teacher CDM. Some comments made by teachers requested that the number of pupils undertaking HGPE be restricted to between 15 and 20 in order to avoid ‘placing unrealistic demand’ (tu.19, TEACH) on one member of staff (tu.13, 19 & 24, TEACH). Physical education teachers also hinted at other teachers in the school using HGPE to ‘dump’ pupils who were not



wanted in other subject departments (tu.69 & 72, TEACH). MacLeod (1992) also reported this behaviour in relation to SGPE.

From Table 5.3, the three main factors that influenced teacher CDM were the number of pupils wishing to undertake HGPE, the characteristics of HGPE and the needs of pupils. Each factor will now be discussed.

#### 5.3.2.2 The characteristics of HGPE

Table 5.3 shows that teachers had been influenced to offer HGPE, to varying extent, by the S5 / S6 characteristics that the HGPE Arrangements document claimed HGPE demonstrated (SEB, 1993, para. 1 1, p.4);

- depth of study (Question 6)
- articulation with pre-16 education (Question 23)
- articulation with post-school education and training (Question 31), and
- vocational possibilities (Question 26).

Depth of study (Question 6) was allocated the highest degree of influence. 'Depth of study' is a very vague term but teachers may have been familiar with such a phrase in the context of the HGPE Arrangements document where 'depth of study' was conveyed as providing pupils with;

'...an increasingly sophisticated and rigorous study of the ways in which physical activities are performed', 'improved personal standards in activities' and pupils having to 'cope with the study demands of Higher education courses' (SEB, 1993, p.4, paras. 1 3, 1 4 & 1 5 respectively).

The concern that the 'depth of study' may be too intense for the majority of pupils can lead to a dilemma in schools where it is not possible to cater for a smaller number of pupils who are expected to be capable of pursuing HGPE and maintain a physical education

programme that accommodates the majority of pupils. This is evident in reporting data from a particular school in Chapter 6 that chose not to offer HGPE.

Underwood (1983) collected data from over 600 secondary schools in England and Wales and listed 'logical progression' (hinted at in Questions 23 & 31) as an influencing factor in planning the physical education programme on offer in schools (Table 1.8, Chapter 1). As mentioned in Chapter 4 it might be reasonable to expect the level of knowledge and understanding at HGPE to develop from the content undertaken in SGPE (Question 23), as HG subjects provide progression from subjects undertaken in S3 and S4 (Gavin, 1999). The nature of 'progression' is touched on in this chapter and is discussed further in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Teachers allocated the lowest degree of influence to the vocational possibilities that the HGPE Arrangements document could provide (Question 26). An explanation for this is perhaps that HGPE is not an entry requirement for related courses in further / higher education. The role of the Scottish Universities Council on Entrance in approving the HGPE course and the decision that it could be used as a general entry requirement for further / higher education has already been discussed in Chapter 4.

### 5.3.2.3 The needs of pupils

Chapter 1 (Table 1.8) reported that the needs of pupils had been identified as influencing the physical education programmes available in English and Welsh schools (Underwood, 1983). Niven (1988b) summarised teachers' argument for HGPE from a pupils' needs perspective, explaining that teachers felt that the introduction of HGPE would benefit pupils in three ways. Firstly, by filling the gap between SG and further and higher education, facilitating vocational opportunities. Secondly, by increasing the width of the curriculum and finally by increasing the depth of study available in physical education, recognising and rewarding talent shown by pupils in physical education. From Table 5.3 it is evident that teacher CDM was related to teachers' belief that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to;



- study the physical education subject as part of their general education (Question 3)
- study physical education to an advanced level (Question 9)
- use the subject as part of the entry requirements for courses in higher education (Question 14), and
- take advantage of expanding career opportunities within sport, leisure and recreation (Question 32)

The HGPE Arrangements document stated that HGPE served the needs of such pupils (SEB, 1993, para. 1 2, p.4). Chapter 1 (Table 1.9) reported similar reasons given in other studies for physical educators introducing examinations in physical education in England and Wales. These included pupils gaining greater knowledge and understanding of the subject, pupils studying the subject in more depth, providing a qualification for those interested in physical education and a qualification for further study (Aylett, 1990; SCPE, 1982).

Table 5.3 illustrates a lower percentage for agreement and for combined agreement / influence responses (60% and 48% respectively) in relation to pupils using the HGPE subject as part of the entry requirements for higher education courses (Question 14). As already pointed out in this chapter and in Chapter 4, although HGPE is not an entry requirement for related courses in further or higher education, it does contribute points to entering higher or further education as a general entry requirement. Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling and Strathclyde Universities all acknowledged HGPE as an approved subject and expected each of their faculties to accept it as a general entry requirement after stipulated Highers have been gained for specific courses. As pointed out in Chapter 4, Goodson (1987), in discussing academic subjects and curriculum change, highlighted the important role carried out by university policies in confirming the hierarchy of status in favour of academic subjects. Subsequently, school subjects that are directly linked to a university subject will benefit in being deemed, by the universities, as a stipulated entry requirement for further study of that subject at university. In speculating why HGPE is not directly linked to a university subject, the suggestion can be made that in fairness to all Scottish secondary pupils, HGPE cannot be a specific entry requirement to higher education because not all pupils have the opportunity to undertake HGPE. Another

reason may be the lack of strength that the content of HGPE has in being identifiable with a recognised academic subject. As explained in Chapter 4, HGPE was not regarded as a 'science' and subsequently could not be acceptable as such for purposes of admission to Bachelor of Science / Sports Science degrees.

It could be suggested that those people genuinely concerned with the education of school children will predominantly favour the interest and needs of pupils as priorities in decisions made regarding the curriculum. However, conditions outwith the direct control of teachers can also influence teacher CDM. These influences are considered in the next section.

### 5.3.3 Appropriate school conditions for the teaching of HGPE

Conditions relate to the provision, i.e., facilities, resources, support from the school and sufficient staff and time, that is expected to be available if teachers are to offer a new subject in the curriculum. Both time (Hargreaves, 1994; Little, 1992; Sikes, 1992) and support from senior managers (Wideen, 1992) have been reported as perennial issues in the innovation literature. It was reported in Chapter 1 (Table 1.7) that facilities and resources, including staff, were issues affecting the physical education programme offered in particular Scottish secondary schools (Cherrie, 1993; MacCorquodale, 1993; McFarlane, 1993; Cairney, 1993). Facilities and timetabling issues were also reported in Chapter 1 (Table 1.8) as influencing the work of a physical education teacher and the planning of the physical education curriculum within the UK (Kane, 1974; Hendry, 1978; Underwood, 1983; PEA, 1987; ILEA, 1988; Sharp, 1991). Table 5.4 lists the factors that teachers stated were positive aspects in relation to appropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE and which subsequently influenced teacher CDM.



Table 5.4: Responses to questions related to school conditions that had a significant positive association between 'yes' and 'influence' responses.

Questions	% of 'yes' responses	Significant positive association between 'yes' and 'influence' responses
24. Was there sufficient staff available to offer HGPE?	83	78%
30. Did your department receive positive support from the school management team regarding HGPE?	83	72%
11. Were adequate facilities available for teaching HGPE?	69	67%
28. Was it possible for HGPE to be entered in a favourable 'option' column?	77	56%
25. Was the statutory time for HGPE sufficient to complete the HGPE syllabus?	74	51%
38. Were sufficient resources available for teaching HGPE?	52	46%
39. Was financial support and / or inducement from the school available for teaching HGPE?	52	43%
36. Were the teaching approaches involved in HGPE realistic?	67	32%

Table 5.4 illustrates six main factors that influenced teacher CDM. These were adequate facilities and staff, HGPE's entry into a favourable option column, positive support from the school management team (SMT), e.g., timetabling and preparation time, resources and financial support and the teaching approaches of HGPE. Each factor is discussed below.

#### 5.3.3.1 Adequate facilities and staff

The relatively high number of teachers stating that their schools possessed a sufficient amount of facilities and staff (Questions 11 & 24 respectively) reinforces the expectations of the HGPE Arrangements document. It states that activities chosen for the HGPE course need to be balanced against available resources along with expertise and facilities (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 1, p.8). The implication is that HGPE can be offered in any school context regardless of expertise, facilities and available resources. However, two schools offering HGPE made the following comments;

'Adequate facilities were available to allow the teaching of the course using certain activities. Choice was very restricted' (tu.87, TEACH).

'The facilities and resources within the department are very limited and far from ideal for teaching HGPE. However, when the needs of the pupils indicate that this is an appropriate course for them then the course is adapted to fit available facilities and resources' (tu.48, TEACH).

The first comment conveys the impact that the available facilities within a school can have on the physical activities that are chosen as part of the HGPE course. This issue is also prevalent when examining the case study school teaching HGPE in Chapter 6. The second comment suggests facilities and resources may not be ideal for teaching HGPE but teachers can make the best use of what they have. It also highlights this particular teacher's concern with addressing the needs of pupils, an issue that has already been shown to influence teacher CDM.

#### 5.3.3.2 HGPE and its entry in an option column

Whether or not HGPE was entered in a favourable 'option' column (Question 28) was another condition that influenced teacher CDM. Chapter 1 reported the importance several authors have placed on physical education's entry to an option column in determining pupil subject choice (Cooper, 1995; Forsyth, 1994; Fisher, 1991; Ledingham, 1989). A favourable option column in the eyes of teachers would perhaps result in HGPE being more accessible. To be avoided is a column with subjects which pupils were almost obliged to choose, i.e., English and Maths. It could be suggested that a favourable option column for teachers would also result in teachers being happy with the blocks of time they had been allocated for the teaching of HGPE. As pointed out in Chapter 1 HGPE would more than likely have to work around the already established physical education provision within schools, i.e., SGPE, National Certificate modules and core physical education (Forsyth, 1994; Muir, 1994).



#### 5.3.3.3 Support from the School Management Team (SMT)

Support for HGPE from the school management team (Question 30) was clearly a condition that influenced teacher CDM and is well documented in the research literature on innovation (Wideen, 1992; Kirk, 1986). In evaluating the Trial-Pilot Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Australia) secondary schools, Penney & Kirk (1998) reported the significance of support from the school principal in facilitating successful implementation, particularly in relation to the provision of time for planning, development and INSET. It is possible to speculate about what teachers refer to as positive support, but two issues that tend to be overseen by the SMT in schools are timetabling issues and the allocation of preparation time for teachers to familiarise themselves with a new subject to the curriculum. Time has been reported as a perennial issue in innovation (Hargreaves, 1994).

The amount of time allocated for the HGPE development process was believed by Niven (1998b) to be a major weakness of the HGPE development. In discussing SGPE as a process of curriculum development, MacLeod (1992) reported that there was a lack of time and resources to put SGPE into practice. MacLeod also explained that due to a lack of time away from training, much of the development work necessary for offering SGPE took place in teachers' own time. According to Hargreaves (1994) an 'intense compression of time' is a characteristic of an increasingly postindustrial, postmodern world believing that 'One of the most basic, constitutive features of teachers' work is that of time' (p.15). He discussed the argument known as the 'intensification thesis', i.e., the thesis that time in teaching is becoming more compressed with worrying consequences. Support for such a thesis is evident in this particular section as well as section 5.4.2.1 where the various formats of school physical education that are now available are shown to be competing for time. Little (1992) and Sikes (1992), in discussing teacher development and imposed changes and the experienced teacher respectively, highlighted that time is at a premium in schools, especially when changes to the curriculum take place. Fullan & Hargreaves (1992) refer to the research of Pink (1989) who identified a lack of time for teachers to

plan for and learn new skills and practices as a barrier to innovation-effectiveness. The two issues of timetabling and preparation time are discussed in turn, assessing the potential level of support that the SMT can genuinely provide.

#### 5.3.3.3.1 Timetabling of HGPE

Responses to the questionnaire provide an insight into differing timetabling scenarios, none of which imply appropriate blocks of time for HGPE. In one school, HGPE was timetabled to use the physical education facilities along with either SGPE classes or S1 and S2 classes. The teacher highlighted the consequent problem, 'This puts tremendous strain on the timetable and use of facilities with regards to working area' (tu.71, TEACH). Another two teachers reported adjustments being made to the curriculum to accommodate HGPE (tu.8 & 77, TEACH), similar to Muir's (1994) re-organisation of the S2 physical education programme in order for the HGPE group to gain access to prime facilities. One teacher admitted that although time had been made available to accommodate HGPE, '...the timetabling has not been sympathetic to other needs, e.g. all single periods' (tu.77, TEACH). In this case, no double period slots had been allocated to HGPE and it may have been the case that it was virtually impossible to allocate double periods to HGPE due to the current physical education provision in that school. Penney & Kirk (1998) reported a similar problem with the pilot senior syllabus in physical education in Queensland, Australia. While the pilot syllabus was being allocated sufficient time in schools, problems were associated with the arrangements of the time allocated rather than the allocation per se. This further reinforces the need for school management support in implementation of a syllabus.

Another influence on teacher CDM was that teachers believed the statutory time for HGPE was sufficient to complete the HGPE syllabus (Question 25). However, this view did not reflect the considerable amount of time that teachers had spent on familiarising themselves with HGPE and preparing themselves to teach the HGPE syllabus. Pritchard & Ralph (1991), in seeking opinions from over 60 school teachers, found that academic or examination work in physical education was pursued in lunch time or after school, almost



entirely undertaken outside 'normal hours'. It has been pointed out from a Scottish perspective that additional working time is required beyond the specific number of working hours of teachers (Mitchell, 1996) and this seems apparent when teachers are reporting an inadequacy of time for preparation, administration and staff development (appendix 5.1).

#### 5.3.3.3.2 Preparation time for HGPE

Responses to the survey convey the strength of teacher feeling about the need for adequate preparation time for HGPE. In one school, extra time had been made available to staff for the preparation of HGPE. However, once HGPE was underway the extra time ceased. As the teacher explained;

'Strongest influence for starting HGPE was that extra preparation time was made available by the management, i.e., 0.2 was added to the department staff allocation. This however has been withdrawn now that the course is running' (tu.23, TEACH).

Another teacher commented that in the initial stages of teaching HGPE they frequently felt under pressure (tu.2, TEACH), while finding a time for staff to co-ordinate and develop HGPE had been the major problem for another school (tu.10, TEACH).

The amount of time teachers spent familiarising themselves with HGPE was illustrated by a number of comments. One teacher stated that;

'HGPE started in my school due to the efforts and enthusiasm of a number of staff who have freely given up their own time to learn more about HGPE' (tu.18, TEACH).

Another teacher increased the amount of free time afforded to the physical education teacher who was going to teach the HGPE course in order to develop the HGPE course and materials (tu.61, TEACH). Again, the time involved in such a task was highlighted;

'This [increasing amount of time] he used as well as many, many hours at home before and during the summer...as well as throughout the course ever since, in order that the course can be well taught to our pupils' (tu.61, TEACH).

In investigating SGPE, Sharp (1991) also found that teachers believed the time available to them to prepare materials was inadequate. The 22% of teachers who did agree that sufficient preparation time was available for HGPE (appendix 5.1) were perhaps working in a school that had specifically allocated time for HGPE preparation or had prioritised preparation time solely to the HGPE programme. Alternatively, these particular teachers were perhaps more efficient and capable workers.

The interpretation of the comments made by teachers is that the SMT are limited in what they can physically do to accommodate HGPE in an already crowded school curriculum. From data collected as part of a case study concerned with school-based teacher development, Wideen (1992) reported that teachers cited the role of the principal, a position similar to that of the Headteacher, as a key factor in bringing about and maintaining change. The principal was reported to have taken actions that directly supported the development and implementation of change. Such actions included providing money to support teachers' efforts and preparation time for implementation. Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) reported that barriers to innovation-effectiveness highlighted by Pink (1989) included a number of features related to support from within the school. These included a lack of sustained central office support and trying to do too much with too little support. The extent of support from school management in two case study schools is investigated further in Chapter 6.

#### 5.3.3.4 Resources, financial support and teaching approaches

A weaker influence in teacher CDM was related to sufficient resources (Question 38) and financial support and / or inducement available from the school for teaching HGPE (Question 39). Financial support from one particular school was reported in Chapter 1



(Table 1.6) as being a condition that had influenced a teacher to offer HGPE (McFarlane, 1993). The amount of money allocated to physical education was also reported in Chapter 1 (Table 1.8) as influencing the work of physical education teachers and the planning of the physical education curriculum throughout the UK (Sharp, 1991; ILEA, 1988; PEA, 1987; Kane, 1974). However, the data from this study suggests this was not an influence for the majority of teachers.

Another weak influence in teacher CDM was the belief that the teaching approaches involved in HGPE were realistic (Question 36), i.e., the teaching approaches promoted were practical and would result in achieving the aims of the course. The teaching approaches promoted in HGPE in investigating the ID of HGPE have already been discussed in Chapter 4. The implication here is that for teachers to state that the teaching approaches of HGPE had influenced CDM, they had spent time evaluating the teaching approaches advocated by the HGPE Arrangements document and simply did not dismiss them.

#### 5.3.4 Summary of the factors influencing teacher CDM

In the above section the three main dimensions that impacted on teachers' CDM have been identified and discussed. They were the expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE, addressing pupils' needs and appropriate conditions. Two key factors in teachers' CDM were teachers' belief that HGPE was a worthwhile development and that there was an adequate number of pupils in the school wishing to be taught HGPE. Chapter 6 investigates the prominence of the three dimensions in greater depth in a case study school offering HGPE. Before that attention is turned to establishing dimensions and the related factors that were reported by teachers not offering HGPE as having an impact on teacher CDM. The following section is concerned only with reporting and discussing data from teachers who have made the decision to not offer HGPE.

## 5.4 Dimensions and factors influencing teachers' decision to not offer HGPE

From the 64 teachers not offering HGPE who responded to the survey, almost 90% were over the age of 35, with 38% being over the age of 45. Over 80% of teachers were male. Chapter 8 discusses the most likely time that this particular group of teachers undertook teacher training, entered the teaching profession and the era of curriculum developments with which they identified. This information can aid our understanding of the particular pattern of responses from the sample of teachers in this study.

Analysis of questionnaire responses resulted in 6 questions from the questionnaire receiving a significant positive association between 'no' responses (column A of the questionnaire) and 'influence' responses (column B of the questionnaire). The calculation of such results and the findings (Table 3.5) are reported in Chapter 3. The 6 questions suggest two main dimensions that affect teacher CDM. The dimensions are the needs of pupils and inappropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. Each will be taken in turn, reporting and discussing both the quantitative and qualitative survey data.

### 5.4.1 The needs of pupils

Addressing the needs of pupils was also a dimension affecting the CDM of teachers offering HGPE (section 5.3.2). Chapter 1 reported that the ability and interest of pupils were believed by some authors to be issues affecting physical education in particular Scottish secondary schools (Table 1.7). In a study of over 600 secondary schools in England and Wales the personal needs of the pupils was reported by Underwood (1983) as an influencing factor on school programmes. Another factor that was shown in one particular school to have influenced teachers' decision to not offer HGPE was the inadequate number of pupils in the school wishing to be taught HGPE (Cherrie, 1993).

Table 5.5 lists the only aspect with regard to pupils that influenced teachers' CDM.



Table 5.5: Responses to questions related to pupils that had a significant positive association between 'no' and 'influence' responses.

Questions	% of 'no' responses	Significant positive association between 'no' and 'influence' responses
29. Are there an adequate number of pupils in your school wishing to be taught HGPE?	60	53%

As one would expect, teachers' CDM was influenced by the apparent lack of interest in the HGPE subject from pupils. One teacher did comment that they would have to address the problem of pupil attitude to HGPE before they could deliver HGPE (tu.4, NOTEACH). Another teacher suggested two possible reasons for the apparent lack of interest from pupils;

'The apparent awareness of assessment areas, i.e., Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation (into Performance) excludes pupils who may have general interest in physical education or in physical education / sport which is not specifically performance related' (tu.49, NOTEACH).

'Pupils may also perceive in physical education (because of development of certification) as performance equaling success to the exclusion of other benefits of health and well being. Therefore many pupils fail in their own eyes to achieve success in physical education. HGPE may only heighten this perception and therefore have negative effect on student choice of physical education courses on post-sixteen area' (tu.50, NOTEACH).

Both of the above suggestions centre round the perception that pupils have regarding HGPE and this issue, along with pupils' subject choice, are addressed in Chapter 7.

5.4.2 Inappropriate school conditions for the teaching of HGPE

The appropriateness of conditions, such as time and support, for the teaching of HGPE has previously been discussed in section 5.3.3. Chapter 1 (Table 1.7) reported that from a

Scottish perspective, resources (including facilities) impacted on the kind of physical education programme that could be offered in secondary schools (MacCorquodale, 1993; McFarlane, 1993; Cairney, 1993). Facilities were consistently mentioned in Table 1.8 in Chapter 1 as influencing the work of physical education teachers and the planning of the physical education curriculum throughout the UK.

Table 5.6 lists the factors that teachers stated were negative aspects with regard to conditions and that subsequently influenced teacher CDM. Table 5.6 illustrates that a lack of staff development time, insufficient preparation time and insufficient resources, support and assistance for the teaching of HGPE were factors that influenced teacher CDM. Each factor will now be discussed in turn. As reported earlier, Hargreaves (1994) identified shortage of time as a perennial complaint of teachers and teaching, explaining that teachers experience time as a major constraint on what they are able and expected to achieve in their schools. This is clearly evident from the following discussion.

Table 5.6: Responses to questions related to conditions that had a significant positive association between 'no' and 'influence' responses.

Questions	% of 'no' responses	Significant positive association between 'no' and 'influence' responses
37. Is plenty of time available for staff development?	83	59%
8. Is sufficient preparation time available for HGPE?	67	55%
38. Are sufficient resources available for teaching HGPE?	41	33%
5. Is adequate assistance available from the Advisor of PE in setting up the HGPE course?	36	23%
39. Is financial support / and or inducement from the school available for teaching HGPE?	49	23%

#### 5.4.2.1 Lack of staff development time

Table 5.6 illustrates that the lack of staff development time (Question 37) was a key factor in teacher CDM. In schools not offering HGPE there was a suggestion that where there was time set aside for staff development, it tended to be concerned with dealing with other



current developments rather than supporting HGPE. For example, teachers commented that;

'HGPE is not on our school or department development plan as we are presently implementing 5-14 Expressive Arts PE. Resources in terms of money, time, materials and INSET are being directed towards 5-14 as it's our priority' (tu.24, NOTEACH).

'Workload with SGPE, 5-14, modules now too much never mind HGPE / Higher Still' (tu.30, NOTEACH).

'There is no doubt that ultimately this school will teach HGPE but my current development this year is to set up and implement 5-14 and adopt my existing programmes / pupil text books to reflect the new exam system in SGPE' (tu.47, NOTEACH).

The above comments support Little's (1992) statement in discussing teacher development, 'Staff development competes for teachers' time and attention with other obligations, most with greater immediacy' (p.179). These comments from teachers clearly illustrate that teachers had other priorities for staff development time. In discussing policy making and the changing status of physical education, Cairney (1999) noted the pressure of dealing with the administration involved with the various formats of physical education that teachers deal with, i.e., 5-14 curriculum, SGPE, National Certificates as well as with core provision.

#### 5.4.2.2 Insufficient preparation time

Along with lack of staff development time, insufficient preparation time (Question 8) was a further factor in teachers' CDM. A lack of time to prepare adequately to deliver the HGPE course was a factor identified by Niven (1998b) in dissuading schools to offer

HGPE and was reported by one teacher as a main reason influencing CDM (tu.32, NOTEACH).

#### 5.4.2.3 Insufficient resources, support and assistance for the teaching of HGPE

One of the weaker features that is shown in Table 5.6 to have influenced teacher CDM was a lack of resources (Question 39). The HGPE Arrangements document implies that HGPE can be offered in any school context regardless of facilities and available resources (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 1, p.8). However, two teachers commented;

‘The main reasons we do not offer HGPE are a lack of indoor facilities compared to the size of the school we have. We have only two indoor areas for over nine hundred pupils...If HGPE was introduced this would we feel prove to be unworkable...the HGPE courses we would want to do would hog the indoor areas’ (tu.21, NOTEACH).

‘In physical education we have two gymnasium and the occasional use of the Assembly Theatre...There is no room to accommodate further numbers at present...Should circumstances change (i.e., promised provision of sports hall) then circumstances might change due to greater choice of activity’ (tu.19, NOTEACH).

The above comments highlight the reality of what teachers believe they can offer with the facilities that the school possesses. Both teachers do not appear to have entertained the notion of accessing facilities elsewhere, i.e., other schools, leisure centres, hiring pitches or thought about how they could use their facilities differently in order to accommodate HGPE.

Two further weak factors in teacher CDM were a lack of assistance and support. The (alleged) lack of assistance from the Adviser of physical education in setting up the HGPE course (Question 5) and the lack of financial support for teaching HGPE from the school (Question 39) are both illustrated in Table 5.6. However, the accuracy of teachers’



perceptions is questionable. The percentage of 'unsure' responses to both questions 5 and 39 were respectively 34% and 30% (appendix 5.1), suggesting that teachers may not have sought out the help that was available to them.

The teachers in this sample have reported insufficient resources, time and assistance as influencing teacher CDM. However, it could be suggested that if teachers were keen to offer HGPE these are all issues they could work around or make the most of. This is illustrated to a certain extent in Chapter 6 in reporting data from the case study school that was teaching HGPE and discussed more fully in Chapter 8 when addressing the issue of teachers offering HGPE despite negative features of the school environment.

#### 5.4.3 Summary of the factors influencing teachers CDM

In the above section the two main dimensions that impacted on teachers' decision not to offer HGPE have been identified and discussed. They were the needs of pupils and inappropriate conditions. Two key factors in teachers' CDM was insufficient time available for staff development and insufficient preparation time available for HGPE. Chapter 6 will investigate the prominence of these two dimensions in greater depth in one particular school that had made the decision to not teach HGPE.

### 5.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to investigate how teachers' interpretation of HGPE had influenced teacher CDM. Three dimensions that influenced teachers to offer HGPE were identified as the provision of teachers and their views towards HGPE, addressing pupils' needs and appropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. The two dimensions that influenced teachers to not offer HGPE were very similar to two of these dimensions. They were addressing pupils' needs and inappropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. Three particular factors were identified as having influenced teacher CDM in both samples. These were the number of pupils in the school electing to study HGPE, the resources available for teaching HGPE and the financial support available from the school. This

implies that these are three main issues that those involved in the promotion of HGPE need to be aware of. Not only did such factors influence teachers to offer HGPE but they also had the potential to influence other teachers to not offer HGPE. In Chapter 8 the decision made to teach HGPE despite unsupportive factors of the school situation and the decision to not teach HGPE despite supportive factors will be highlighted.

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the extent to which teachers' views of the ID of HGPE influenced their decision-making. However, it has become clear throughout this chapter that teachers' interpretations of the ID of HGPE are not explicit reasons for CDM but are embedded in other reasons. For example, teachers who were offering HGPE reported that they had been influenced to do so by believing that HGPE demonstrated, amongst other things, depth of study and articulation with pre-16 education. However, on closer examination, it is evident that teachers' views were being interpreted in relation to the pupils they were likely to be dealing with. Consequently, teachers' interpretations of the ID of HGPE in this instance appeared to be embedded in the particular needs of the pupils at the teachers' schools. Another example is the interpretation by teachers that sufficient facilities were available to deliver the ID of HGPE. This interpretation was possibly related to the extent that teachers felt they were able to accommodate HGPE through their current facilities. The two examples highlight how teachers' interpretations of the ID of HGPE are not explicit reasons for CDM but are more likely to be embedded in the context in which individuals work. This is the focus of Chapter 6 and will form part of the discussion in Chapter 8.

This chapter begins to understand the extent to which teachers are able and prepared to deliver the form of the ID of HGPE that was constructed within the recontextualising field. The lack of teacher involvement in the production of HGPE results in teachers being expected by recontextualising agents and agencies to implement the form of ID that has been constructed within the recontextualising field, i.e., curriculum-as-intended. Such a process does not acknowledge the differing school environments that teachers occupy and subsequently, the factors that operate in delivering a curriculum to suit the population of particular schools. It is to investigating differing school environments and the conditions of teachers' work that Chapter 6 focuses on. The relevance of the particular factors identified in this chapter as influencing teacher CDM will be investigated in relation to two particular case study schools in Chapter 6.



## **Chapter 6 - Situational factors and teacher curriculum decision making**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter 5 established the extent to which teachers' views of the instructional discourse (ID) of HGPE influenced CDM. This chapter emphasises that the differing school environments and the conditions of teachers work, variously described in the literature as 'the local context of implementation' (Kirk and Macdonald, 2001) and teachers 'zones of enactment' (Spillane, 1999) are the main basis on which teachers make decisions. Dimensions of the local context of implementation (LCI) include the management structure of a school, the facilities available in the school and the particular pupils that attend the school. The notion of the LCI is supported by a number of authors who appreciated that the contexts in which teachers work must be taken into account when making decisions (Hargreaves, 1994; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Fullan, 1982). As mentioned in Chapter 1, teachers judge changes by their practicality to the contexts in which they are teaching (Doyle & Ponder, 1977).

Kirk and Macdonald (2001) were concerned with teacher voice and ownership of curriculum change, arguing that 'the possibilities for teacher ownership of curriculum change are circumscribed by the anchoring of their authority to speak on curriculum matters in the local context of implementation' (p.1). Three particular dimensions of the LCI were identified as being prominent in relation to teachers' authority to speak. These were teachers' knowledge of their students, resources available to teachers and the practicalities of teachers' work. These particular dimensions will be re-visited throughout this chapter. Spillane (1999) used the term 'zones of enactment' to refer to 'that space where reform initiatives are encountered by the world of practitioners and 'practice', delineating that zone in which teachers notice, construe, construct and operationalise the instructional ideas advocated by reformers' (p.144). Spillane speculated that the extent to which teachers revise their practice would depend on the characteristics of their zones of enactment.

There appears to be a subtle difference between LCI and 'zones of enactment'. While LCI is primarily concerned with the immediate environment of the school, teachers' zones of enactment extend beyond the individual school and emphasise a social dimension, such as deliberations regarding curriculum change with local experts and university academics. The value of interaction opportunities between teachers in helping each other to make decisions and dealing with change have been identified by a number of authors (Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Fullan, 1982). The same authors believe that the extent of interaction is strongly related to the degree of change implemented by teachers or as a measure of whether to become involved in innovation. Both LCI and zones of enactment are useful in framing this chapter and the term 'situational factors' (SF) is used to encompass both concepts.

It will become obvious from the findings reported and discussed in this chapter that teachers always read the intended curriculum, in this case the HGPE Arrangements document, in relation to the school environment and conditions in which they work. Consequently, the largest impact on teachers' CDM is shown to be their interpretations of the ID of HGPE in relation to their understanding of SF. As Gavin (1999) stated, 'While in theory teachers may agree with the vision of the future which is to be achieved through change, their immediate concerns often relate to their own present and special interests' (p.444). It is therefore very difficult to separate SF from teacher CDM and vice versa. Both are dependent on each other. This interdependency of CDM and SF is illustrated in the point that the same teacher could interpret the same text differently depending on the environment and conditions in which they are teaching. A consequence of teacher CDM being strongly related to the SF is that the curriculum that teachers choose to deliver, i.e., 'curriculum-as-practiced', may be very different to the curriculum that was intended to be delivered, i.e., 'curriculum-as-intended', by the recontextualising agents involved in its construction. Although the HGPE Arrangements document sets boundaries regarding the 'what' and 'how' of the HGPE discourse, it may be that its delivery will differ between schools, i.e., curriculum-as-practiced is specific to each school. Teachers' reasons for choosing to offer HGPE in their particular school context is likely to have an impact on how they deliver the HGPE curriculum. A delimitation of this study is that data was not



directly collected on 'curriculum-as-practiced', focussing instead on teacher CDM in relation to HGPE. However, it is possible through the data collected from the case study schools to report and discuss views of teachers and implications for teaching (or not) HGPE.

Fullan (1982) identified two perspectives on educational change; the fidelity perspective and the mutual-adaptation or evolutionary perspective. The latter perspective acknowledges that adaptations to, and decisions made regarding, educational change should be particular to the context in which it is to be implemented. Bernstein (1990) who believes that all theories of cultural reproduction allow a concept of relative autonomy supports such a perspective. The concept grants schools some independence from external forces. Consequently, school practice is not wholly determined by forces external to the education system. Fullan explained that the fidelity approach to change;

"...is based on the assumption that an already developed innovation exists and the task is to get individuals and groups of individuals to implement it faithfully in practice - that is, to use it as it is "supposed to be used" as intended by the developer" (p.31).

Fullan's fidelity perspective is very similar to what Apple (1982) termed 'curriculum-as - intended' (Chapter 2). In relation to HGPE this perspective implies that teachers should stringently follow the framework set out in the HGPE Arrangements document framework without any deviation. However, there is strong evidence in the literature to suggest that the fidelity perspective is factually inaccurate as it is simply not possible for all teachers to deliver the HGPE syllabus identically. It is inevitable that teachers adapt the mandates of the ID of HGPE to fit their SF. The impact of the SF on teachers' decision to teach an addition to the curriculum and how the context can alter the delivery of a curriculum innovation is another key focus in this chapter.

This chapter is concerned then with the key issue;

What impact did teachers' knowledge of the local context have on curriculum decision making?

The hope is to illustrate through two case study schools how teachers interpreted and subsequently made the decision to implement or not implement the HGPE Arrangements document in relation to the particular school environment and conditions in which they were teaching. This will allow deeper examination and understanding of the impact those teachers' awareness of SF has in teacher CDM. Highlighting the similarities and differences between the SF that operated in teachers' CDM in the two school situations will conclude the chapter.

## 6.2 Case study schools

To understand the impact of SF on teacher CDM it is necessary to have in-depth contextual information. Examining case study schools will allow an investigation in greater detail regarding the key dimensions of teacher CDM that have been identified from the survey data. SF inevitably mediates the implementation of curriculum and this chapter will argue subsequently how SF impact significantly on CDM. The study focuses on two particular case study schools. The case study school that made the decision to teach HGPE will allow more specifically to illustrate and examine the connections between the three areas of teacher CDM, SF and 'curriculum-as-practiced'. The interview questions and the subsequent interview transcripts are available in appendices 3.6 and 3.7 respectively. Where direct reference is made to the transcripts, the transcript title and the line in which the reference appears is noted, allowing the reader to examine the context in which the comment was made. Details regarding the title and content of each transcript has already been noted in Chapter 3 (Table 3.7).

Before discussing the already identified dimensions that influenced teachers to offer HGPE (Chapter 5) the institutional context in which the physical education programme of one school offering HGPE is embedded is described.



### 6.3 Ayrborne - A school teaching HGPE

Using the three criteria of convenience, access and geographic proximity access was sought to a local school to collect, record and analyse SF of the school that had influenced the decision to teach HGPE. The school has been given the pseudonym 'Ayrborne'. Visits to Ayrborne were made over a three month period and the following section reports and discusses data that was collected primarily through informal semi-structured interviews. The intention is to firstly describe the institutional context in which the physical education programme at Ayrborne is embedded, then progress to investigating the relevance of particular SF that have already been identified through the survey data (Chapter 5) as influencing schools to teach HGPE to the working conditions of Ayrborne.

#### 6.3.1 Overview of the institutional context of Ayrborne

##### 6.3.1.1 School location

Ayrborne was situated in a busy, urban area, south of Glasgow city centre. At the time the research was carried out the school was under the Glasgow Division of Strathclyde. Under the new regime (explained by Brown, 1999; MacKenzie, 1999; Ross, 1999) it is now part of Glasgow City Council. It was located in both a commercial and residential area, predominantly but not exclusively middle class. The school covered a large catchment area but also had pupils attending the school from very varied areas outwith the catchment area. About 500 pupils attending the school came from Areas of Priority Treatment although less than a third of this number actually lived in the school's catchment area. Over a third of all the school pupils took free school lunches and about the same figure received clothing grants, with it tending to be the same pupils who received both.

#### 6.3.1.2 Aims and ethos of the school

The aims of the school were, 'to cater for the needs of each individual pupil, provide good planning and teaching, engender self-respect and esteem from others and prepare them [pupils] for the world of work / future career' (tu.12, AYRSCHO). The ethos of the school was hoped to be a reasonably positive and friendly one with a good relationship between staff and pupils. Parental support was strong and the school had an active School Board.

#### 6.3.1.3 School buildings

The main school building was rather old. It was built in the 1930s with additions in the 1960s and more recent refurbishment to the facilities. Consequently facilities were, 'a bit antiquated' (tu.10, AYRSCHO) but were improving due to the refurbishment. Facilities in technology subjects, science, drama and music had been improved - however, not in physical education.

#### 6.3.1.4 Number of teachers and pupils

There were over 100 teachers in Ayrborne, with 6 members of staff above this quota teaching English as a second language, due to the high Asian pupil population. The number of pupils was over 1450 and the Headteacher highlighted that pupils attendance was not as good as teachers would have liked. The number of pupils going into Further and Higher Education was more than the Glasgow averages and the national figures. The Headteacher believed that for some pupils further education was 'deferred employment' (tu.43, AYRSCHO), meaning that had there been employment vacancies to go to some pupils would have chosen that option over further education. Local career opportunities in shops and businesses were better than in other areas. In addition, people were reasonably mobile because of good public transport links to employment not within the immediate area.



### 6.3.1.5 Examination performance

It was possible to access data on Ayrborne's examination results that give an idea of the examination performance for the school. In general, from examining the Audit Unit of HMIs of Schools 1997 report, this particular school's examination performance over the three examination diets (1994-1996) was above the Glasgow City Council education authority (EA) averages. In 1996, the end of the school year which covered the case study period, the percentage of S4 pupils:

- gaining 5+ SGs at 1-2 was above the EA average but below the National average.
- gaining 3+ HGs at A-C in S5 was again above the EA average but below the National average.
- gaining 1+ in CSYS at A-C in S6 was above the EA average but not the National average.

### 6.3.1.6 School management

The managerial structure of Ayrborne consisted of the Headteacher, Depute Headteacher and five Assistant Headteachers (AHTs). The Depute had no timetabled teaching commitments while the AHTs had approximately half a teaching timetable. The Depute was in charge of timetabling while each of the five AHTs had one of the following responsibilities; S1 and S2, S3 and S4, S5 and S6, Resources or Guidance.

### 6.3.1.7 School curriculum

First and second year pupils were taught in unstreamed mixed ability classes, with an element of 'setting' in Maths later on in S2. Thereafter, classes tended to be set in each subject, i.e., Credit / General class or General / Foundation class.

#### 6.3.1.8 Curriculum development

Ayrborne had an 'absence cover budget' which freed teachers from timetable commitments for a couple of days at a time. This aided teachers in putting together new curriculum developments in writing.

#### 6.3.1.9 Subject choice

Pupil subject choice started in S2 when pupils chose S3 / S4 subjects, with information and advice given in guidance classes and visiting speakers, parent nights, an information booklet and a careers officer all involved in the process. Submitted option sheets were studied by teachers and changes were suggested if necessary. The same situation arose for S4 pupils when they chose S5 subjects.

#### 6.3.1.10 Physical education teachers and physical education facilities

There were seven full time physical education teachers in Ayrborne including the PTPE, Assistant Principal Teacher (APT), two Principal Teachers of Guidance and an Acting Senior Teacher. Indoor facilities within the school included three gyms (one designated as a fitness suite), the use of the Assembly Hall and a swimming pool. Two playing fields were within the school grounds.

#### 6.3.1.11 Physical education programme

The core physical education programme spanned from S1 through to S4. S1 through to S4 were single sex classes due to the high number of Asian girls, except for one co-educational SGPE class. Physical education was optional for S5 and S6 pupils. Table 6.1 lists the content and time allocation for core physical education within each year of schooling in Ayrborne.



Table 6.1: Ayrborne's core physical education programme.

SCHOOL YEAR	CONTENT	TIME ALLOCATION
S1 - S2	Athletics, badminton, basketball, cross-country running, fitness, football (boys), gymnastics, hockey, netball (girls), Scottish country dancing, swimming, volleyball.	2 x 52 minute periods a week
S3	Same as S1 - S2 apart from dropping 1 period of gymnastics for trampolining and badminton receiving a double weighting.	2 periods a week & 3 additional periods for SGPE pupils
S4	Four core activities - badminton, basketball, fitness and trampolining. Second visit each week pupils have option of activity.	
S5 - S6	Whatever activities chosen by majority of pupils. Also, options from using multi - gym in local gym, playing tennis at local courts or skiing. Social dance programme before Christmas.	2 periods a week & 5 additional periods for HGPE pupils
Extra -curricula activities	Athletics, cross - country running, football, netball, skiing, swimming and volleyball.	

### 6.3.2 Situational factors that impacted on Ayrborne

Chapter 5 investigated dimensions that had influenced a sample of teachers in their decision to teach HGPE. The main dimensions were the expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE, addressing pupils' needs and appropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. It is to mapping these issues within Ayrborne that this chapter now turns. Although the dimensions will be used to direct the following discussion, it is not expected that they will all be relevant to Ayrborne. Issues arising through the case study data that was not evident in the survey data are also highlighted and discussed. The following discussion illustrates how SF within Ayrborne mediates the implementation of the HGPE curriculum and subsequently impacts significantly on teacher CDM. The first issue to be addressed is the expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE.

### 6.3.2.1 The expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE

The three main factors related to the above dimension that influenced teachers to offer HGPE have previously been identified and discussed (Chapter 5). These were HGPE being deemed to be a worthwhile development, teachers' interest and expertise in delivering HGPE and the issue of increased status for physical education through HGPE. The factors differ slightly when investigating the extent to which the provision of teachers and their views influenced teacher CDM in Ayrborne. The three factors within Ayrborne were the provision of teachers, the expertise and confidence of teachers and the delivery of certificated courses. Certain factors reinforce the findings of the survey data reported earlier while others introduce the reader to aspects of SF within Ayrborne that remain particular to that school.

#### 6.3.2.1.1 Provision of teachers

Ayrborne had seven physical education teachers (four who were in promoted posts), with experience in teaching ranging from 11 years to 22 years. There were 4 female teachers and 3 male teachers. Five of the seven teachers were involved in the teaching of SGPE with two female teachers (PTPE and APT PE) also involved with HGPE. The other two teachers were not involved with either SGPE or HGPE. A similar situation was reported by Forsyth (1994) where, although there were eight staff in his physical education department, it was himself and one other colleague that were initially involved in teaching HGPE. The claim could be made that the HGPE programme does not encourage the involvement of all the members of a physical education department to the same extent that SGPE does. However, is it really the structure of the course that suppresses involvement from all teachers or is it physically impossible for physical education departments to find time to involve all members of staff in the delivery of HGPE? The involvement of all staff delivering HGPE is discussed in due course not only in relation to Ayrborne (sections 6.3.2.1.2 & 6.3.2.1.3) but also Bushburn, a school not offering HGPE (section 6.4.2.2).



The PTPE in Ayrborne seemed unhappy with the teaching commitment of the other physical education staff. She stated that the hardest thing for her to cope with was the promoted staff within the department. Although they were very conscientious they did not appear to do anything above and beyond the minimum involvement in teaching classes, failing to accept that curriculum development, assessment, reporting and recording was part of their job. However, she admitted that although she was able to call on their non-contact time she chose not to. The PTPE could not deny that one of the unpromoted teachers gave a high level of support and contribution to the physical education department. However, in her opinion his only downfall was that he was not in favour of certification in physical education, preferring a much more unstructured approach of 'play'. The PTPE's views towards all members of the physical education department being involved in certification are discussed in the following sub-sections.

#### 6.3.2.1.2 Perceived expertise and confidence of teachers

The PTPE and APT appeared to hold the view that they were the only two teachers in the department who were capable of successfully overseeing the certification of physical education within the school. When asked about responsibilities in relation to SGPE, the PTPE highlighted the APT's role as well as her own. This pattern continually emerged throughout the interviews when, asking about teachers' involvement, the PTPE and APT's views and responsibilities merged into one, almost to the exclusion of the other members of the department;

'We very much work as a partnership really and if there's anything needed done then we kind of set about it ourselves' (tu.73, AYRSTRU), 'We're experienced teachers and balance very well' [in reference to teaching the 'academic' strand of SGPE], (tu.75, AYRSTRU), 'We are both very comfortable with Standard Grade and for us it's kind of 'au fait'' (tu.75, AYRSTRU).

The above comments highlight both the PTPE's and APT's confidence in dealing with the physical education curriculum, their working partnership and the implication that they set the standard in the department for other teachers to follow. The PTPE did not show the same level of confidence in the other physical education staff and consequently a number of references were made in relation to their perceived lack of competence;

'...there was no way they [physical education staff] were ready to take that [HGPE] on board' (tu.2, AYRHGPE), 'I mean they were still living in the dark ages' [regarding the teaching of SGPE] (tu.13, AYRHGPE), '...we [PTPE and APT] should have done it ourselves' [in relation to teachers being unable to complete a task correctly] (tu.36, AYRHGPE).

The implication from the above comments is that the majority of the teachers in the physical education department were incapable of dealing with HGPE due to their current handling of other areas of the physical education curriculum. Examples of such inadequacies in teaching specific physical education programmes are highlighted in the following section concerned with certification.

Physical educationists hold conflicting views about the educational value of physical education and consequently disagreement arises as to how they perceive their role within the physical education subject (Boyd, 1993; Reid, 1993; Kirk, 1987 & 1988b). The PTPE and APT of Ayrborne very much oversaw and took responsibility for virtually everything within the physical education department, especially the certificated options of SGPE and HGPE. This led to differing views between the PTPE and APT and the other teachers. Teacher CDM was very much perceived by the PTPE and APT as their duty, and not the responsibility of others in the physical education department. By doing so there is an implication that they have kept HGPE as the concern of only themselves, being unconvinced in involving the other physical education teachers in the delivery of HGPE (section 6.3.2.1.3). This not only illustrates how SF can affect teacher CDM but also how decisions can be led by one or two particular teachers, reflecting their own values and interests rather than those of the physical education department. Kirk (1987 & 1988b)



questioned the extent to which three particular teachers in his study used an innovation as a vehicle for professional self-development and career enhancement.

#### 6.3.2.1.3 Delivery of certificated courses

Although the PTPE and APT could be accused of cutting themselves off from the department as regards the teaching of HGPE, they believed that was not what they were doing. As the PTPE explained;

'It's not as though we're covering it [HGPE] and keeping it to ourselves. It's simpler, in the initial stages it's simpler because we're very much walking [as opposed to 'running'] as well' (tu.43, AYRHGPE).

However, in examining further comments made by the PTPE and APT it appears that they are (consciously or unconsciously) restraining other teachers from becoming involved with HGPE. Both the PTPE and the APT had appeared to ignore the advice of Carroll (1995) who, in discussing getting started in an examination scheme, stressed that it was important for a physical education department to be united in supporting a new course. Carroll reported how the division within a particular physical education department had resulted in potential expertise of the department not being available for use on a new course. This was evident in Ayrborne when the PTPE admitted that she had not undertaken volleyball as one of the practical activities in HGPE as it was the specialty of another teacher and she did not want him involved in teaching the HGPE syllabus (tu.13, AYRHGPE). The consequence of the PTPE and the APT making decisions on behalf of the department has resulted in a distinctive division of staff in Ayrborne's physical education department.

In reporting the innovative idea of a health-related fitness course as part of a physical education curriculum within a school, Kirk (1988b) noted that participation in such an innovation was not equal among all teachers. He also questioned how far the centrality of two particular teachers to the innovative process excluded a higher level of involvement of other teachers. In emphasising the point made earlier in relation to how the PTPE and

APT's views and responsibilities merged into one, almost to the exclusion of the other members of the department, the following comments were made by the PTPE in relation to certification;

'We're aware of the shortcuts [in the teaching of the academic element of SGPE] and we're hoping by leading by example' (tu.75, AYRSTRU), 'We're the two that have the whole philosophy of certification where it should be' (tu.38, AYRHGPE) and 'We're of one' [in reference to having the same perception of certification] (tu.38, AYRSTRU).

In order to understand the context in which the first comment was made, further investigation is necessary. It was evident that teachers within the department were not fulfilling the SEB expectations for teaching SGPE (detailed in the SGPE Arrangements document) and were subsequently missing out parts of the course;

'I have members of staff who discount that [SEB expectations]. "It's not important that the SEB are telling you to do that" so they just miss that bit out of the course all together...If I give them that responsibility, then respect or not, they will do what's in the SEB guidelines and don't miss out part of the course because it doesn't suit them, or they don't believe in it or it's too hard or it's too much bother...That's being unprofessional and it happens so these people will not get teaching the Higher until I'm happy that their philosophy accepts what the Higher's all about' (tu.40, AYRHGPE).

This highlights the PTPE's (and APT's) philosophy of certification that, if you undertake to teach a certificated course, it is vital that you fulfill every element of the course stipulated by the SEB. By not delivering the syllabus as recommended by the HGPE Arrangements document it is possible to appreciate how 'curriculum-as-practiced' differs from 'curriculum-as-intended'. Indeed, across schools delivering the syllabus as stipulated in the Arrangements document, the actual HGPE curriculum can differ in accordance with such SF that have already been highlighted. The differences in emphasis in the curriculum-as-



practiced as well as confusions and contradictions within teachers' understanding of what an innovative idea implies for curriculum practice has previously been addressed in a physical education environment by Kirk (1988b & 1986) and Sparkes (1987).

The PTPE has a responsibility to ensure that the standard of work undertaken by the pupils matches the requirements of the HGPE proposals and respects the expectation, of those who constructed the syllabus, that teachers fulfill established course criteria. The following comment hints at the PTPE's reasoning for not allowing those unwilling to follow the SEB's expectations in certificated physical education to teach HGPE;

'It's all very well in a situation where I am forced to timetable certain people to take on Standard Grade. That upsets me and there is a serious issue to that but to do it for Higher when you're mucking about with somebody's career prospects - no' (tu.36, AYRHGPE), 'Where I am tolerating more deviancies of how they [teachers] will do Standard Grade, I will not tolerate it at the Higher' (tu.43, AYRHGPE).

It is apparent from the above comments that the PTPE's concern regarding teachers not fulfilling SEB expectations is related to the effect it will have on pupils. While she is prepared to be flexible on teachers' approach towards SGPE, she is not prepared to jeopardise pupils' future by allowing teachers not prepared to follow the expectations of HGPE to deliver it. The extent to which the pupils in Ayrborne influenced the physical education programme on offer will be investigated in the following dimension (section 6.3.2.2.).

When probed about respecting other teachers' views on certification, the PTPE stated that she would respect the fact that teachers have differing opinions about certification in physical education although she then appeared to contradict herself by stating that;

'I would argue anybody's own opinion on how they feel certification doesn't work' (tu.38, AYRHGPE).

The PTPE asked those who took the view that certification was detrimental to the subject to remember that pupils have two periods of core physical education a week. This provision accommodates the majority of pupils while SGPE, and now HGPE, requires more of a commitment from a smaller number of pupils. The PTPE did not believe that certification had been detrimental to the physical education subject. It may be suggested that teachers' views and beliefs regarding physical education are being reflected in their decision to teach or to omit certain areas of a stipulated physical education curriculum. This subsequently reflects on teachers' professional development and draws attention to teachers who are prepared to re-educate themselves and move with the times regarding school physical education and those who are not willing to change entrenched views they have regarding school physical education. The issue of teacher professional development is discussed in Chapter 8.

#### 6.3.2.1.4 Teachers' views specific to HGPE

Table 5.1 in the previous chapter informed us that teachers CDM had been influenced the most, more than any other factor, by believing that HGPE was a worthwhile development. A weaker influence was that teachers believed HGPE raised the status of the physical education subject.

The PTPE continued to reinforce her belief in HGPE being a worthwhile development by commenting that HGPE would heighten teachers' and parents' awareness of the depth of work involved in certificated physical education. She also believed it would be worthwhile for those pupils who had always been interested in being involved within physical education to a higher level.

HGPE raising the status of physical education was evident to a certain extent within Ayrborne. The PTPE did admit that other subject teachers had commented that they only recently appreciated what was involved in certificated physical education;



'...there's nothing I like better than kids going to other members of staff saying "Sir / Miss, can you help us because we're stuck. We've to do this in PE" then other staffs' awareness are being raised and then they come and they make comments and I'm delighted about that because I think slowly but surely you do change peoples' opinion' (tu.77, AYRSTRU).

'Other members of staff come back and say, "Here, so and so was up at me...I didn't realise that there was so much involved [in HGPE]" (tu.19, AYRHGPE).

However, some teachers were still making derogatory comments;

'...you still get the comments why are the PE department up here photocopying things...Why have you got books...' (tu.19, AYRHGPE).

The Headteacher at Ayrborne already believed that physical education was valued in line with other school subjects, not being discriminated against or unduly favoured. In fact, he did point out that other subject teachers could argue that physical education was a subject favoured more than others due to the amount of time it was allocated on the timetable, i.e., time allocated to core physical education as well as SGPE and now HGPE. He did however dismiss such a view on the grounds that English and Maths were two other subjects that all pupils were required to do and subsequently were allocated a large proportion of time.

This section highlighted the different philosophies towards the teaching of physical education that can be evident within physical education teaching and confirms Goodson's (1985) belief that subject communities are not homogeneous, with members displaying different interests. The situation in Ayrborne takes this observation to another level in that it stresses the different ways in which teachers working in the same environment are reported to interpret a text. A limitation of the study however was that data was collected from only two teachers within Ayrborne. As a consequence, it is their perspectives of the teachers within the physical education department that the discussion has relied heavily on.

The above section examined how the decision to teach HGPE within Ayrborne was very much related to the philosophies, values and practices of two teachers. I will now investigate to what extent pupils who attended Ayrborne, and in particular the pupils interested in physical education, influenced teacher CDM.

#### 6.3.2.1 Addressing pupils' needs

The three main factors related to the above dimension that influenced teachers to teach HGPE have previously been identified and discussed (Chapter 5). These were the number of pupils wishing to undertake HGPE, the characteristics of HGPE and the needs of pupils. The features differ slightly in relation to Ayrborne. The factors within Ayrborne that had influenced teacher CDM were pupil interest and demand, the ability of pupils, HGPE as a progression for pupils and the suitability of HGPE to S5 and S6 pupils. Again, certain factors reinforce the findings of the survey data while others introduce the reader to aspects of SF within Ayrborne that remain particular to that school.

##### 6.3.2.2.1 Pupil interest and demand

Chapter 5 (Table 5.2) stated that an adequate number of pupils wishing to undertake HGPE was the strongest influence within the dimension of addressing pupils' needs in teacher CDM. The pupil demand for HGPE was evident in Ayrborne. The Headteacher reported;

'...there always was a number of pupils in fifth and sixth year who enjoyed PE, did well in it, wanted to continue with it and while there certainly was PE provision there wasn't the kind of highly structured provision that, progressive provision, the Higher can offer' (tu.24, AYRMAN).

The Headteacher in Ayrborne highlighted the fact that there was a demand for HGPE from the pupils when they were aware that HGPE was available in other schools;



'In the year when, I don't know whether it was when the pilots were on the go or whether it was the first year of Higher being available, I think some of the youngsters in the area of the school, knew people in another school...where it [HGPE] was being offered [and were asking] 'Can we not have this [HGPE] as well?' So I suppose there was that kind of, not pressure, demand, and we could have ignored that pressure but we knew there was a market for it and that's been proved correct' (tu.24, AYRMAN).

The above comment highlights that the school was aware of what pupils wished to undertake in the physical education programme and by offering HGPE the school was satisfying the wishes and needs of pupils. The need of one particular pupil was evident when the PTPE reported;

'...for one of the children we have just now she must, she simply must, get a B for her Higher Grade physical education. She is depending on this B' (tu.43, AYRHGPE).

The above comment not only conveys the importance that a pass in HGPE held for one girl going on to further / higher education but also the PTPE's commitment in doing everything she could to assist this particular girl in reaching her goal. The issue of HGPE as a link to further / higher education is discussed later on in this section under the heading 'The suitability of HGPE to S5 and S6 pupils' and again in Chapter 7.

In Chapter 1 (Table 1.8) it was noted that pupils' hostility was reported as a negative influence to school, i.e., pupils' lack of motivation to conform was a disruptive factor on school physical education programmes (Hendry, 1978). According to the PTPE in Ayrborne there was little pupil hostility towards physical education from pupils at Ayrborne;

'One of the things obviously that has to influence us in our work here are the kids because I mean the kids here are excellent in terms of their attitude to the subject.

In general we are influenced by the kids because the kids are very good. For example, teaching here as opposed to teaching somewhere else...we need a lot more content in our teaching because not a lot of our time is taken up on discipline matters because basically the kids are coming in and are being taught and eager to be taught and learn' (tu.85, AYRSTRU).

The above comment acknowledges that pupil populations can differ between schools and that this can effect physical education provision.

#### 6.3.2.2.2 The ability of pupils

It was evident in Chapter 1 (Table 1.7) that the ability and interest of pupils were believed to be issues affecting the physical education programme offered in particular Scottish secondary schools (Cherrie, 1993; MacCorquodale, 1993). Regarding the pupil population in Ayrborne that the PTPE and APT were dealing with in teaching HGPE, the PTPE noted that they were 'very astounded and pleasantly surprised' at the strength of the composite class they had for HGPE (tu.19, AYRHGPE). Those who had not done SGPE all coped well, already having done their diet of Highers. The benefit of pupils undertaking HGPE in S6 rather than S5 was highlighted by the PTPE;

'Sixth years are superb, they've got the maturity, some of them already have their diet Highers, some need this Higher to get into university; so the work rate that you're getting from them is absolutely superb' (tu.13, AYRHGPE).

Although the above comment is very positive in relation to pupils undertaking HGPE, it is important to remember that the PTPE is referring to the abilities of sixth year pupils. Is such optimism shared when discussing fifth year pupils undertaking HGPE? This concern is addressed from the perspective of the PTPE and APT of Ayrborne in section 6.3.2.2.4.

Pupil demand for HGPE in Ayrborne was evident and may have been due to the positive attitudes towards the physical education subject that pupils at Ayrborne were reported to



have. The ability and interest of pupils was already identified as affecting physical education programmes (Chapters 1 and 5) and both traits were pointed out by the PTPE as being characteristics of the pupils that had undertaken HGPE in Ayrborne.

#### 6.3.2.2.3 HGPE as a progression for pupils

Chapter 5 reported that teachers had been influenced to teach HGPE due to their belief that HGPE portrayed a number of characteristics of an S5 / S6 curriculum (Table 5.2). These were depth of study, articulation with pre-16 education, articulation with post-school education and training, and vocational possibilities. Related to these four characteristics, it was also noted that Underwood (1983), in collecting data from over 600 secondary schools in England and Wales, listed 'logical progression' as an influencing factor in planning the physical education programme on offer in schools (Table 1.8, Chapter 1). The Headteacher of Ayrborne identified the articulation of HGPE with pre-16 education as being a reason for his support of HGPE. Similar to Niven (1998) and Turley (1993) he questioned the point of offering a Standard Grade in a particular subject when there was no Higher in the same subject to follow (tu.24, AYRMAN).

The characteristics of an S5 / S6 system have already been identified. Who the HGPE course is designed to serve may be relevant to some schools and not others. The Headteacher of Ayrborne admitted;

'Our figures for people going into further and higher education are higher than the national, certainly higher than the Glasgow, averages which would indicate that a lot of our pupils are doing well enough in school to go onto further education and higher education' (tu.43, AYRSCHO).

The above comment is consistent with the figures cited in the 'Examination results in Scottish schools 1994-96' (Audit Unit / HM Inspectors of Schools, 1996). Consequently, pupils attending Ayrborne may be more likely than other schools to undertake HGPE as a

general entry requirement towards entry into further or higher education due to the demand for general entry requirements towards further and higher education. In examining the staying on rates to S5 (post Christmas), Ayrborne averaged a high (77%) staying on rate between 1994 and 1996. This was higher than both the average staying on rates for Glasgow City Council and nationally (Audit Unit / HM Inspectors of Schools, 1996).

#### 6.3.2.2.4 The suitability of HGPE to S5 and S6 pupils

Chapter 5 (Table 5.2) illustrated that teachers had been influenced to teach HGPE due to their belief that HGPE served the needs of pupils wishing to pursue different opportunities. These included studying the physical education subject as part of their general education, studying physical education to an advanced level, using the subject as part of the entry requirements for courses in higher education and taking advantage of expanding career opportunities within sport, leisure and recreation. Chapter 1 (Table 1.9) has already reported similar reasons given by physical educators for introducing examinations in physical education in England and Wales (Aylett, 1990; SCPEC, 1982).

Although it is clear from Table 5.2 in Chapter 5 that teachers believed that HGPE fulfilled a number of characteristics of a S5 / S6 curriculum, the suitability of HGPE for pupils in S5 was a concern of the PTPE of Ayrborne.

A number of comments made by the PTPE questioned the suitability of HGPE to the S5 pupils at her school, implying that S6 pupils were more suited towards the successful completion of HGPE;

'The fifth years are just falling by the wayside, they hardly manage to keep up at all' (tu.48, AYRHGPE).

'The fifth years come still thinking they're to play. The sixth years have gone through the process, know that there is an academic thrust, meet deadlines, they



hand in homework and things like that. The fifth years tend not to' (tu.49, AYRHGPE).

These views are similar to those of Cairns (1997) who, in reviewing HGPE three years after its introduction, stated that sixth year pupils adapted better to the written demands of HGPE possibly due to them having undertaken Highers previously in S5. However, this raises the issue of S5 pupils undertaking other Highers. Is HGPE the only Higher that S5 pupils struggle with and if so, why? Pupils are expected to exercise extended writing skills in most Highers. Is the problem in HGPE due to pupils finding it difficult to convey in words what they are capable of performing, observing and / or discussing? Is this not a problem in other Highers? Is the problem due to the level of SGPE pupil that undertakes HGPE in S5? A possible answer may be that pupils expect to undertake writing skills in Higher subjects that had similar requirements at Standard Grade. However, for those pupils never having undertaken SGPE, they may expect HGPE to be more similar to core physical education that they have pursued throughout their secondary schooling. Subsequently, they are not prepared for the written elements of the HGPE course. The issue of expectation of a subject from previous involvement in the subject area is discussed in Chapter 7. For example, the expectation pupils have of HGPE due to being involved only in core physical education and not examinable physical education.

An increasing awareness among teachers of the trial-pilot Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Australia) that language skills are critical in determining students' level of achievement in the physical education subject was reported by Penney & Kirk (1998). Subsequently, concerns were raised in relation to the standard that students with limited writing skills can achieve in the subject. The main problem may be that the Higher in Scotland is only one year of study and places an enormous burden on pupils to complete a level of study not too dissimilar to that of the 'A' level in England and the Senior Certificate in Queensland, Australia. In the latter two instances, pupils are granted two years to complete the course of study. In Scotland in 1990 the Howie Committee reviewed the aims and purposes of the courses and assessment in S5 - S6 (SOED, 1992b). It was felt that the HG syllabus was too academically oriented for the increasing numbers

of pupils staying on at school and that there was insufficient time between the SG examinations and the HG (Clark, 1997). The development of such views and the subsequent introduction of Higher Still is discussed in Chapter 8.

In discussing the provision for middle ability S5 pupils, i.e., pupils who had SG passes mainly at General and foundation level, Tuck (1999) reported that these particular pupils attempted to make the 'leap' – not progression – from SG General level to HG in one year. Subsequently, the usual outcome was failure with pupils sometimes choosing to undertake the same Higher in S6. The PTPE hinted at the possible lack of progression from SGPE to HGPE in a wider context to that of Ayrborne and this issue will be pursued further in Chapters 7 and 8. She maintained that children who did not have a Credit in SGPE and a Credit in English would struggle with the concepts involved in HGPE. She believed that pupils who had scored well in the Knowledge and Understanding and Evaluation sections of SGPE would cope better with HGPE than pupils who had relied on solely high Performance grades. This is consistent with the views expressed by those concerned with the assessment criteria for HGPE (Douglas, 1998; Cairns, 1997; Muir, 1994; Forsyth, 1994). The PTPE acknowledged that there would be a number of pupils who had no SGPE experience but who may be capable of completing the HGPE course and when asked if there were any pupils in the Higher group that had not done SGPE she replied;

'Yes, and they're coping but they're clever people. They've already got their diet Highers and they are physically very interested in physical education, very good at what they do and they're certainly enjoying it' (tu.64, AYRHGPE).

The above comment not only highlights the level of intellect that is perhaps necessary for the successful completion of HGPE but also the advantage to pupils of undertaking a subject that they are genuinely interested in, can perform well in and enjoy. To recognise and reward pupils who enjoy and show talent in physical education was a reason stated by Turley (1995) for the initial support of a Higher Grade in physical education.



One group of pupils whose needs were not being addressed in relation to HGPE was Asian girls. There were currently no Asian girls undertaking HGPE. Ayrborne had a high Asian population that meant that in order to attract Asian girls to SGPE or HGPE there was a need for an all female section. It had been possible to cater for an all girl SGPE class the previous year but due to a change in the timetabling structure was currently not possible. If there were not enough girls to warrant an all-female group for certificated physical education classes then the Asian girls were unable to undertake either SGPE or HGPE.

There is little doubt that the pupils attending Ayrborne had a strong influence on teacher CDM. The extent to which the third identified dimension, i.e., appropriate conditions, affected teacher CDM in Ayrborne is now investigated.

#### 6.3.2.3 Appropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE

Chapter 5 reported that teacher CDM was affected by having adequate facilities and staff, HGPE's entry into a favourable option column, the timetabling of HGPE, the preparation time for HGPE, resources and financial support and the teaching approaches of HGPE (Table 5.3). Two conditions which were not necessarily deemed to be appropriate for the teaching of HGPE in Ayrborne but which the PTPE was aware of were the features of facilities and the teaching approaches of HGPE.

##### 6.3.2.3.1 Availability of facilities

The facilities at Ayrborne that could be used for physical education were reported earlier in this chapter under the heading 'Physical education teachers and physical education facilities'. The Headteacher admitted that the only problem that he was aware of in relation to offering HGPE was accommodation;

'The facilities are a bit on the old-fashioned side and a bit limited for the amount of interest that there is in the subject [physical education]' (tu.10, AYRSCHO).

The PTPE admitted that it was the problem of facilities in relation to offering HGPE that had 'given us a major headache' (tu.23, AYRHGPE). Mirroring Forsyth's (1994) bid to offer HGPE, she also explained that they had to 'beg, steal and borrow' (tu.19, AYRHGPE) a games hall from another school to teach particular elements of the HGPE course. The APT, while acknowledging the effect that facilities can have on the physical education programme, explained that it was how the facilities were used and timetabled rather than the facility provision itself that affected the physical education programme (tu.85, AYRSTRU). This confirms the implication in the Arrangements document that the HGPE course can be offered in any school context regardless of facilities (SEB, 1993, para. 3 2 1, p.8).

The facilities of the school did affect the physical activities that were chosen as part of the HGPE course. The school had a swimming pool on site and the PTPE felt she could not ignore the facility and consequently chose swimming as one of the practical activities for the HGPE course;

'We knew we had to use the resource of the pool. It's sitting there' (tu.13, AYRHGPE).

Another factor, along with facilities, that was apparent in affecting the choice of activities for the HGPE course in Ayrborne was the confidence of the staff in delivering particular activities;

'Swimming's well taught. We teach Standard Grade [swimming] to a very high standard...definitely in life saving, not only do they get the aquatics skills but they get the rescue land skills and they do that in a big way' (tu.13, AYRHGPE).

Teachers' confidence in teaching the physical education subject at Higher Grade and the expertise (or lack of expertise) that they believed certain members of the department possessed was discussed under the previous dimension headed 'The expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE'.



#### 6.3.2.3.2 HGPE teaching approaches

A weaker influence in teacher CDM was the belief that the teaching approaches involved in HGPE were realistic (Chapter 5, Table 5.3), i.e., the teaching approaches promoted were practical and would result in achieving the aims of the course. Interestingly, according to the PTPE and APT of Ayrborne, they had no problem with delivering the HGPE syllabus as the Arrangements document intended although they were skeptical of how the other teachers in their department would approach its delivery if they were given the opportunity. As illustrated earlier in this chapter the PTPE showed no hesitation in dismissing members of the physical education staff from teaching certificated classes. Teachers who were not following the SEB expectations for SGPE and were missing out a part of the course if they felt it was not important were excluded from teaching HGPE.

The PTPE commented on the role teachers were expected to fulfil in the development of the Investigation of Performance in HGPE while at the same time accepting that it was part of the Arrangements document and consequently had to be carried out;

'It is tedious for me, it is tedious for her [APT] to give up so much of our time to do this Investigation. I don't have a choice in that, I have to. It is part of the Arrangements document and it is within what the SEB expectations are of us' (tu.40, AYRHGPE).

The respect that the PTPE had for fulfilling externally established expectations of a course has already been discussed earlier in this chapter. The SEB commented on the effect that teachers delivering a syllabus different to that encouraged by the Arrangements document had on candidates submissions;

'...submissions from candidates were generally poor and did not meet the Investigation requirements as set out in the Arrangements and related guidance material' (SEB Annual Report, 1994, p.21).

This comment from the SEB verifies the PTPE's concern noted earlier that it is the pupils who will suffer if the HGPE course is not delivered as expected. This issue is re-visited in Chapter 8.

### 6.3.3 Summary of the situational factors of Ayrborne

There was evidence of the three dimensions influencing teacher CDM in Chapter 5 mapping teacher CDM in Ayrborne, i.e., the expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE, addressing pupils' needs and appropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. One of the strongest influences within Ayrborne was the determination of the PTPE and APT to offer HGPE. They both dominated the decision-making process. Not only did they decide that HGPE would be offered in the school, but they also determined who would be involved in delivering the course and which physical activities would make up the course. Support for the introduction of HGPE was also evident from the Headteacher. The facilities of Ayrborne were not ideal for teaching HGPE but both teachers were determined to make the best use of the facilities they had by choosing physical activities for the HGPE course that could be delivered within the available facilities. The other strong influence was that of pupils. It was evident that the ability, interests and needs of pupils at Ayrborne influenced teacher CDM.

The situation in Ayrborne highlights how SF that are not necessarily supportive of the introduction of a new curriculum development can be dealt with. The PTPE and APT have shown that if there is a member of staff, or members of staff, who are prepared to take responsibility for teacher CDM, less supportive conditions can be overcome. In Chapter 8 the decision made by teachers to offer HGPE despite unsupportive features of the school context is discussed.

Following a similar pattern to that of Ayrborne, this chapter now describes the particular institutional contexts in which the physical education programme of Bushburn is



embedded before discussing the already identified dimensions that influenced teachers to not offer HGPE (Chapter 5).

#### 6.4 Bushburn - A school not teaching HGPE

In a similar manner to that used to identify Ayrborne, a school was approached to ask that access be granted in order to collect, record and analyse conditions within the school that had influenced the school to not offer HGPE. The school has been given the pseudonym 'Bushburn'. Similar to Ayrborne, visits to Bushburn were made over a three month period and the following section reports and discusses data that was collected primarily through informal semi-structured interviews. The institutional context in which the physical education programme at Bushburn is embedded is reported before progressing on to investigating the SF that have already been identified through the survey data as influencing teacher CDM.

##### 6.4.1 Overview of the institutional context of Bushburn

###### 6.4.1.1 School location

Bushburn was north of Glasgow city centre in a deprived town. The three surrounding villages incorporated a country village, a middle class area and a mix of a deprived overspill from Glasgow with new buildings. At the time the research was carried out the school was under the Dunbarton Division of Strathclyde. Under the new regime it was now part of North Lanarkshire Council. The catchment area for the school was large due to the suburban location with six buses delivering about 500 pupils each day. Approximately 19% of pupils were in receipt of free school lunches and approximately 25% in receipt of clothing grants.

#### 6.4.1.2 Aims and ethos of the school

The importance of the school serving the pupils was evident when the Headteacher stated that the aims of the school were to, 'provide the best possible education for the children' (tu.10, BUSHSCHO) and not simply to employ teachers. 'Everything is dedicated towards teaching and learning' (tu.10, BUSHSCHO). The ethos of the school was believed to be caring and friendly. A lot of responsibility was given to pupils, with older pupils looking after the younger ones. S1 and S2 form classes were linked to specific seniors in order to help with any problems regarding bullying. Parents' evenings, visits to primary schools, supervision on the school bus, selling school disco tickets, organising money and the tuck shop were all ventures in which pupils were deeply involved. Unfortunately, the School Board looked likely to fold due to a lack of interest from parents, although it had in the past been very supportive.

#### 6.4.1.3 School buildings

The school building had been started in the late 1930s but due to the Second World War the first stage was not finished until 1952, with additions following. The 'new extension' was added in 1965. In the mid-1970's ten huts arrived for use over the next five years. The school was still using huts that had been re-built, re-roofed, re-carpeted, re-wired and re-heated. Facilities were fairly limited with the school being very short on classrooms, having no staff bases, no social areas for pupils and a great shortage of offices. The school was hopeful of a major refurbishment in the next five years.

#### 6.4.1.4 Number of teachers and pupils

There were over 60 teachers employed in Bushburn to cater for approximately 850 pupils. Awarding pupils with a certificate at the end of the year encouraged good pupil attendance. This was effective in increasing the attendance of those that were already better and average attendees. More 'punitive strategies', i.e., counselling from guidance staff (tu.36, BUSHSCHO) were used for those continual non-attendees. Career opportunities were



very limited in the school locality with very little industry. The Headteacher stated that most people had to travel to gain employment; 'And if you just watch the buses in the morning they're full of our kids heading for Glasgow or wherever else' (tu.38, BUSHSCHO).

#### 6.4.1.5 Examination performance

It was possible to access data on Bushburn's examination results which gives an idea of the examination performance for the school. In general, from examining the Audit Unit of HMIs of Schools 1997 report, this particular school's examination performance over the three examination diets (1994-1996) was above the North Lanarkshire Council education authority (EA) averages. In 1996, the end of the school year which covered the case study period, the percentage of S4 pupils:

- gaining 5+ SGs at 1-2 was above the EA average but below the National average.
- gaining 3+ HGs at A-C in S5 was again above the EA average and just below the National average.
- gaining 1+ in CSYS at A-C in S6 was below both the EA average and National average.

#### 6.4.1.6 School management

The Headteacher, Depute Headteacher and three Assistant Headteachers (AHTs) made up the Senior Management Team. Each of the AHTs were responsible for the budget either for the 5-14, 14-16 or 16+ age range, with each having links to subject departments.

#### 6.4.1.7 School curriculum

All classes were mixed ability in S1 and S2. In S1 pupils did one modern language and if they did well at their first language, they were given the chance at a second language in S2. If they were not doing as well they carried on with their main language. In S1 English, the class was reduced to half size once a week so that the 'better half' could work together as

could the 'poorer half'. The same arrangement was made in S2 for Maths. Every other subject was totally comprehensive. In S3, Maths and English streamed pupils into Credit / General and General / Foundation with most other subjects catering for a wide range of ability in one class.

#### 6.4.1.8 Curriculum development

Bushburn offered 'staff development days' that staff were able to bid for. If they were successful with their bid, the particular teacher(s) timetable was covered for a day or half day. This allowed the teacher(s) to concentrate on an approved piece of work related to the school development plan.

#### 6.4.1.9 Subject choice

Pupil subject choice arose at two main stages, the end of second and fourth year. The Headteacher mentioned that the school may move towards a 'creative / craft' column into which subjects such as physical education and Home Economics would go to provide a bit more freedom for teachers and pupils.

#### 6.4.1.10 Physical education teachers and physical education facilities

There were three full-time physical education teachers and two job share teachers in Bushburn. Of the three full time teachers, one was the PTPE, another was a Principal Teacher of Guidance and the other was a Senior Teacher. Indoor facilities within the school included two gyms, the use of the Assembly Hall, a multi-gym and a swimming pool. A grass area and a red ash area were within the school grounds.



#### 6.4.1.11 Physical education programme

The core physical education programme spanned from S1 through to S4. The S5 / S6 programme was optional. Table 6.2 lists the content and time allocation for core physical education within each year of schooling in Bushburn.

Table 6.2: Bushburn's core physical education programme.

SCHOOL YEAR	CONTENT	TIME ALLOCATION
S1 - S2	Athletics, basketball (boys), cross-country running, dance (girls), gymnastics, hockey (girls), netball (girls), rugby union (boys), social dance, soccer (boys), summer games (girls), swimming, volleyball.	2 x 53 minute periods a week
S3	Athletics, aerobics (girls), basketball, cross-country running, dance (girls), gymnastics, hockey, netball (girls), soccer (boys), social dance, summer games (girls), swimming, volleyball.	2 periods a week & 3 additional periods for SGPE pupils
S4	Athletics, aerobics (girls), badminton, basketball, circuit training (boys), cross-country running, hockey, netball (girls), soccer (boys), social dance, summer games (girls), swimming, volleyball.	1 period a week & 3 additional periods for SGPE pupils
S5 - S6	Whatever activities chosen by majority of pupils. Option of completing National Certificate modules in aquatics, badminton, basketball, fitness and volleyball.	Optional - 2 / 3 periods a week (twice a week if doing modules)
Extra -curricula activities	Athletics, badminton, football, golf, rugby, skiing.	

#### 6.4.2 Situational factors that impacted on Bushburn

Chapter 5 investigated dimensions that had influenced a sample of teachers in their decision to not offer HGPE. The main dimensions were addressing pupils' needs and inappropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. In investigating data from Bushburn it became evident that the one main dimensions that had impacted on teacher CDM was the current physical education programme. Concern was raised that a significantly smaller number of pupils would be accommodated if the current programme was disbanded in

favour of offering HGPE. Another dimension that was evident in Bushburn was the PTPE's view about certification in physical education and the involvement of all physical education staff in offering a physical education programme.

#### 6.4.2.1 Current physical education programme

The timetabling issue was the first factor mentioned by the PTPE in Bushburn in response to factors that influenced work as a physical education teacher and consequently was the reason given by him for primarily deciding to not offer HGPE. If Bushburn was to offer HGPE, in order to free up staff time, the modular S5 / S6 programme would have had to be abandoned. This would have resulted in no core physical education for S5 and S6 pupils. The PTPE emphasised that they could not re-organise the S5 / S6 curriculum and teach HGPE. Cherrie (1993) admitted that the present staffing compliment in her school did not provide any surplus time in the timetable, making it very unlikely that the school would offer HGPE.

The Headteacher and the PTPE of Bushburn did not wish to jeopardise the current S5 / S6 physical education programme by the introduction of HGPE. The Headteacher stated;

'We could probably do it [offer HGPE] in staffing terms but we'd probably have to trim what we're doing for the rest of the sixth year, i.e., reduce the leisure ones which I think would be a bit of a retrograde step because it's quite popular and quite useful' (BUSHMAN, 18).

The PTPE commented;

'We just felt what we were offering was better in terms of what we could do...We decided that our fifth and sixth year programme...was better suited as it was sticking to the modular approach and not bothering with Higher physical education. We're catering for nearly 100 kids and that would basically be one section of Higher physical education which would be about 20 kids' (tu.2, BUSHGPE)



'If we had decided to go for Higher physical education...we would have had to take away, we would have had to abandon, the fifth and sixth year timetable. There is no doubt about that. Now if we go to do Higher physical education, the fifth and sixth year timetable as it is just now will not exist. We cannot do both. Physically we cannot do both' (tu.17, BUSHGPE).

There is logic to the reasoning that if only a few pupils are demanding HGPE and the physical education programme already in place is successful, then there is little argument for introducing HGPE. Cairns (1997), in reviewing HGPE three years after its introduction, believed that as a consequence of so much time being spent on relatively few pupils at HGPE, less time was being spent on the majority. Brewer & Sharp (1999) also reported concern within the physical education field that core provision for all pupils in physical education was being jeopardised by the prioritisation given to resourcing minority courses like SGPE.

The school's determination to cater for the majority of pupils was again emphasised by the PTPE when he was asked why he had chosen to teach SGPE only a year after it was nationally available and not HGPE after it had been available for two years;

'They [pupils] still got their core physical education and this was on top of it [SGPE] whereas if we do Higher physical education they won't get their core physical education because we won't have the time to do it' (tu.10, BUSHGPE).

The PTPE's main concern with HGPE appeared to be his perception that HGPE was supporting a minority of elite performers at the expense of the majority or less talented pupils, a notion that was the emphasis within traditional programmes of physical education (Kirk, 1992a).

Another aspect that enforced the maintenance of the current physical education programme was the ethos that teachers in the physical education department worked together and that no-one had a specific responsibility to the physical education curriculum;

'My own personal view is, I've always believed that, if you're doing something your whole staff should be involved' (tu.2, BUSHGPE).

SGPE had been attractive to the physical education department because it was possible for all the staff to be involved, 'In Standard Grade right from the start it [SGPE] was going to be a team thing and that's been quite high in my priority' (tu.10, BUSHGPE). The PTPE did not believe that HGPE, in its present form, lent itself to involving all the physical education staff.

#### 6.4.2.2 PTPE's views towards certification

Cherrie (1993) stated that not being convinced of the value of academic courses for physical education was a reason for her school deciding not to offer HGPE. While not dismissing the value of certificated physical education to both pupils and teachers, it has been pointed out that HGPE will not suit everyone and that there should always be a place on the curriculum to accommodate those not interested in pursuing certificated physical education (Forsyth, 1994; Ledingham, 1989).

The PTPE was also concerned about the impact certification could have on the physical education subject;

'There's this great thing that all of a sudden we're certificated and that's supposed to make us better teachers which isn't necessarily true. You've got to watch you're doing it for the right reasons' (tu.14, BUSHGPE).

The PTPE drew attention to the perception that you are a better teacher if you are involved in teaching a certificated course. In dismissing this belief, he implied that certificated



physical education programmes were not necessarily suited to every school situation. He admitted that Bushburn offering SGPE and not providing a logical progression for those that wanted to study physical education further was questionable;

'We're very aware that [for] kids doing SGPE a natural progression would be higher physical education. That is the one flaw in our argument at the moment' (tu.27, BUSHGPE).

How can we explain the PTPE's decision to teach certificated physical education at Standard Grade but not at Higher Grade? In probing deeper the question was posed as to whether it was the weighting of the content in respect to the academic and practical elements within certificated physical education that teachers were concerned with rather than certification itself. The PTPE highlighted his own concerns regarding the delivery of the theoretical elements of HGPE;

'I know talking to other people, the marking of Investigations is causing a grave concern in PE circles. We're basically not English teachers. You're being asked to do skills which English teachers find difficult' (tu.16, BUSHGPE).

This draws our attention to the level of confidence that teachers perhaps need to possess in delivering HGPE and relates to the discussion in Chapter 8 concerning the professional development of teachers and their histories and backgrounds.

#### 6.4.3 Summary of the situational factors of Bushburn

The most prominent dimension that appeared to have influenced teacher CDM in Bushburn was related to the number of pupils accommodated by the current physical education programme and the threat that the introduction of HGPE would have on accommodating only a fraction of these pupils. Another strong influencing dimension was that HGPE in its current format would not allow all the members of Bushburn's physical education department to be involved in its delivery and this was a concern of the PTPE.

Very different to the workings of Ayrborne's physical education department, Bushburn undertook a much more democratic approach to teacher CDM, with the PTPE believing that the department should work as a team.

A delimitation of the data gathered from Ayrborne and Bushburn was that interviews were conducted with only the Headteacher and PTPE (in the case of Ayrborne also the APT physical education) from each school. Subsequently, the context of the school and inter-personal relationships between the SMT and the physical education department and within the physical education department itself are reported from the perspectives of only two or three teachers in each school. However, the concern was to identify all the SF that affected teacher CDM rather than focus on a few. It is clear that inter-personal relationships, particularly within physical education departments, were a SF that affected teacher CDM. SF such as inter-personal relationships were identified through the voices of teachers themselves and subsequently illuminate and validate issues pertaining to particular teachers' involvement in teacher CDM. Teachers' voices were also invaluable in reporting what Hargreaves (1994) termed 'the emotional dynamics of teaching' (p.16).

## 6.5 Situational factors and teacher CDM

The factors that had affected teacher CDM were relatively easily to map between the sample of teachers in Chapter 5 offering HGPE and Ayrborne, i.e., the expertise and availability of teachers and their views towards HGPE, addressing the needs of pupils and appropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE. The strongest influence from the sample of teachers offering HGPE was that HGPE was a worthwhile development (86%) and that there was an adequate number of pupils in the school wishing to be taught HGPE (83%). The strongest influence on teacher CDM within Ayrborne appeared to be the determination of the PTPE and the APT to offer HGPE.

A greater disparity regarding the factors that were reported as having affected the decision to not offer HGPE was evident between the sample of teachers in Chapter 5 and Bushburn. The needs of pupils and inappropriate conditions for the teaching of HGPE were initially



identified as influencing teacher CDM. The strongest influences from the sample of teachers not offering HGPE was that there was insufficient time available for staff development and preparation time for HGPE and that there was an inadequate number of pupils in the school wishing to be taught HGPE. In the context of Bushburn, the current physical education programme and the PTPE's views towards certification were identified as the two main dimensions in teachers' CDM. In Bushburn the concern was in allowing the majority of pupils to have access to physical education rather than to jeopardise mass participation to accommodate significantly less pupils undertaking HGPE.

## 6.6 Conclusion

By focussing attention on two case study schools, the impact that teachers' knowledge and awareness of SF had in implementing (or not implementing) HGPE has been examined. The two case study schools supported the point that teachers read the HGPE Arrangements document in relation to the school environment and conditions that they worked in. In detailing an overview of both case study schools, neither school appeared to be particularly advantaged or disadvantaged over the other in the decision of whether or not to introduce HGPE. The facilities, varied background of pupils in each school and the curriculum set-up for physical education was very similar in both schools. However further examination highlighted the different vision each school had regarding physical education provision. Consequently, the largest impact on teacher CDM was shown to be due to the various SF of each school. From these findings, teachers' lack of involvement in the construction of HGPE can be questioned as can the expectation that, regardless of SF, teachers implement the form of the ID that has been constructed within the recontextualising field. Both issues are discussed again in Chapter 8.

In examining the SF that affect teacher CDM, it is very unlikely that teachers who had made the decision to offer HGPE followed Fullan's (1982) fidelity approach to change. It is obvious that teachers had made their decision in relation to the context in which they were working. Subsequently, it is unlikely that they followed the fidelity perspective of

delivering the HGPE syllabus 'as it is "supposed to be used" as intended by the developer' (Fullan, p.31), even though they believed they were meeting the SEB expectations.

Investigating pupil subject choice is the focus of Chapter 7, examining pupils' perceptions of HGPE and reasons for choosing or not choosing to study HGPE. The concern in the following chapter is similar to this, and the preceding, chapter. The concern in Chapters 5 and 6 have been to investigate the extent to which the construction of a school subject by agents and agencies in the recontextualising field can win or lose interest from those in the secondary field, i.e., teachers. In Chapter 7 the concern is with investigating how such construction has affected another group that occupy the secondary field, i.e., pupils. Relationships between four sets of pupils will be examined. From Ayrborne, pupils undertaking HGPE and pupils not studying HGPE and from Bushburn pupils undertaking modular physical education and pupils who have chosen to not undertake any physical education at all.



## **Chapter 7 - Pupils' perceptions of HGPE and subject choice within physical education**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The notion of situational factors (SF) is maintained in this chapter, to a certain extent, through the central interest to examine the similarities and differences in subject choice between groups of pupils from both case study schools. Another aim is to establish if the subject choice process differs within the two particular schools. It has been emphasised throughout this thesis that the key focus is the social construction of physical education and how this can affect curriculum decision making and pupil subject choice. This chapter will concentrate on investigating pupil subject choice, assessing pupils' perceptions of HGPE and reasons for choosing or not choosing to study HGPE. Similar to the previous two chapters, the concern is with investigating the extent to which the construction of a school subject by agents and agencies in the recontextualising field can win or lose interest from those in the secondary field. In this chapter pupils are the concern in the secondary field.

Brooker & Macdonald (1999) argued recently that the voices of young people are rarely heard in curriculum reform projects and interventions, even though these reforms affect them directly. In relation to Scottish school physical education, both Arrowsmith & Jamieson (1995) and Cooper (1995) noted a lack of young people's involvement in educational evaluation, with pupils rarely being asked about their school experiences or opinions.

Fullan (1982) pointed out that educational change is a 'people-related phenomenon' (p.147) for each and every individual, including students, and that adults rarely think of pupils as participants in a process of change. Subsequently, minimum research has been undertaken which has examined the reactions of students to innovations. In referring to research carried out over a seven-year period on the role of students in Canadian schools, Fullan (1982) reported that less than one-fifth of the students stated that teachers asked for

their opinions and ideas in deciding what or how to teach. Fullan believed that innovations which call for changes in teacher-student relationships, as HGPE does (see Chapter 4), require involvement of students and knowledge of their thoughts, attitudes, and skills regarding such relationships;

‘Students learning new behaviour are in the same boat as teachers learning how to use a new practice; they need to be involved in a process in which they are assisted as well as listened to concerning the difficulties of implementing the new behaviour’ (p.156).

In discussing physical education from an English perspective, Coe (1984) suggested that ‘it is possible that a greater awareness of children's perceptions and interests could encourage teachers to adopt or modify a programme’ (p.124). Although there has been a continued interest in reporting pupils’ attitudes and opinions about physical education (Laws & Fisher, 1999; Carroll, 1995) there has been no attempt to investigate pupils’ perceptions of HGPE or their reasons for choosing or not choosing HGPE.

Many teachers and parents regard pupil choice as an important factor in sustaining motivation and in meeting career aspirations. The SCCC Curricular Guidelines (SCCC, 1989) place considerable emphasis on opportunities for pupil choice (Gavin, 1999). Cooper (1995) encouraged the physical education profession to examine the reasons given by pupils that affects their decision to choose physical education at certain levels and to consider pupils’ ‘expectations and aspirations’ (p.37). Understanding the issues that have influenced pupils to choose HGPE will aid teachers in their assessment of what is successful in attracting pupils to HGPE and consequently what would be useful in marketing the subject. Awareness of the issues that have influenced pupils to decide not to choose HGPE will alert teachers to topics that need to be addressed or even eliminated in order to attract pupils to the subject. Also, pupils’ reasons for choosing HGPE will allow the reader to assess how closely they match those discussed in Chapter 1 for subject choice in the physical education subject in general.



Pupils' reading of the HGPE subject including the practical and written elements, the usefulness of previous experience in SGPE in undertaking HGPE and how they plan to use the qualification is reported and will hopefully highlight the reality of HGPE as far as the pupils are concerned. This will allow the reader to assess how pupils' reading of the HGPE syllabus is similar or different to the views of teachers already expressed in Chapters 5 and 6. Teachers are encouraged to use such information to evaluate the teaching and learning approaches they currently use in HGPE and, where relevant, alter them to address issues of concern raised by pupils.

This chapter is concerned with two key issues;

1. How did pupils perceive the HGPE syllabus?
2. How has the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted generally affected pupils in their decision to study, or not to study, HGPE?

The issue of pupils' perceptions of HGPE, including issues that were identified in Chapters 5 and 6 as features of the HGPE syllabus that had influenced teacher CDM will be addressed first. These include the relationship between SGPE and HGPE, the Performance element of HGPE, the written requirements of the course (Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance) and the future use of a HGPE qualification. The relationship between two sets of pupils who were drawn from the case study school, Ayrborne will then be investigated. Characteristics of the case study pupils will be discussed as a precursor to investigating the different choices that pupils made in relation to undertaking HGPE. Reasons given by two groups of pupils from the second case study school, Bushburn, for deciding to undertake modular physical education or deciding not to do any physical education at all will also be reported and discussed. This will allow examination of the similarities and differences in subject choice between the groups of pupils from both schools and attempt to locate the subject choice process within the two particular schools. Finally, similarities and differences between the identified reasons for subject choice among the Ayrborne and Bushburn pupils and previous research reported in Chapter 1 will be examined. Reporting pupils' perceptions of HGPE is the first concern.

## 7.2 Pupils' perceptions of HGPE

Pupils undertaking HGPE from Ayrborne, one of the case study schools discussed in Chapter 5, were asked to complete a short questionnaire to provide information on their HGPE experience. The questionnaire was administered before fifteen pupils at Ayrborne had concluded the HGPE course, i.e., before completing the written examination paper. Eleven pupils returned completed questionnaires. Five responses were from S6 female pupils, three from S6 male pupils and three from S5 male students. The responses are not only valuable to the school's physical education department in evaluating the HGPE course but also highlight how pupils perceived the HGPE syllabus. The data reported here has been referenced to individual pupils to allow any patterns of responses across gender and year of study to be apparent. For example, is there a difference between male and female pupils' perceptions of ability in HGPE? Are those in S6 more confident in performing well in HGPE than those in S5?

Before reporting the pupil's views, it may be worth reminding the reader of the three main elements of the HGPE syllabus. The Performance element focuses on performance in two activities. Analysis of Performance is subdivided into four areas and from the four areas, schools are to select three they consider to be the most appropriate to the activities chosen for Performance. The Investigation of Performance requires the pupils to produce an Investigation report on a specific aspect of performance in one or more physical activities. The ID of HGPE was discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

### 7.2.1 The relationship between SGPE and HGPE

Nine of the eleven pupils who had previously undertaken SGPE unanimously disagreed that the knowledge gained in their SGPE course helped in their undertaking of HGPE, with no differences in responses between gender and year of study. The following comments imply that the pupils perceived a noticeably higher level of expectation from the work involved in HGPE;



'The Higher course goes into physical education in much more depth than the Standard Grade' (Male, S6), 'The information we were given [in SGPE] was very thin, we did not really explore the subject' (Female, S6), 'SG[PE] does not prepare you as I did not have a lot of knowledge of physical education after the SG[PE] course...Standard [Grade] physical education was much easier compared to Higher physical education' (Male, S5), 'The written work in SGPE is not as difficult and is much less detailed in terms of K&U [Knowledge and Understanding]. Higher written work is much more detailed [than SGPE] and there is much more of it...More written work for Higher' (Male, S5), 'The course of HGPE does not incorporate the knowledge needed for SGPE' (Female, S6), 'SGPE I feel was much simpler than HGPE as HGPE goes into much more depth than SGPE' (Female, S6), 'Standard Grade was a lot simpler than Higher' (Female, S6), 'I think the amount of work which is covered is much greater in HGPE' (Male, S6), 'Standard Grade physical education was extremely easy. Higher Grade physical education is not' (Male, S5).

The above comments not only report the increase in depth of study from SGPE to HGPE, as one would expect, but also implies a lack of progression or link from the SGPE content to HGPE. Evidence of a lack of continuity in certain courses in England pre- and post-16 was reported by Stables & Stables (1995). It could be suggested that such comments confirm the success of the HGPE Arrangements document in 'increasing sophisticated and rigorous study of the ways in which physical activities are performed', 'improved personal standards in activities' and pupils having to 'cope with the study demands of Higher education courses' (SEB, 1993, p.4, paras. 1 3, 1 4 & 1 5 respectively). However, as reported in Chapters 5 and 6, teachers did not necessarily support the depth of study promoted by HGPE.

While the above comments tend to focus on the written expectations of the SGPE and HGPE courses, two particular comments did highlight concerns in relation to the practical performance elements of the two courses;

'The practical course [in SGPE] was in short blocks which did not allow you to come to grips with the sport, its techniques and skills' (Female, S6), 'You only concentrate on 3 sports [in HGPE] whereas SGPE is more' (Female, S6).

The above two comments pose a dilemma that has arisen in relation to the practical activities undertaken at SGPE and HGPE. SGPE involves pupils undertaking a minimum of five practical activities and, as a pupil pointed out in the first quote above, runs the risk of not allowing pupils sufficient time on each of the activities. However, an equally critical view can be taken of HGPE spending the majority of time on only two physical activities, with the possibility that those already familiar with the chosen activities will gain higher marks for performance than those new to the activities. In defence of the number of physical activities incorporated within HGPE, one pupil did believe it was successful in addressing depth of study;

'Standard Grade physical education did not allow you to develop fully in sport or to mentally understand the aspects that make a sport whereas HGPE does' (Female, S6).

The benefits of more time being allocated to fewer physical activities at HGPE are reported in the following section. It is interesting to note that it was three female pupils who commented on the practical performance elements of SGPE and HGPE and that their concern appeared to be with developing and understanding particular practical activities rather than with ability at performing each activity.

The pupils who had made the above comments in relation to the written expectations and the physical activities of HGPE all received a Grade 2 in SGPE, apart from one S5 boy who gained a Grade 3. This implies, in referring to the HGPE JWP remit (appendix 4.1), that the comments were made by pupils who were expected to be capable of successfully completing the HGPE course after one year of study. The pupils' comments confirm data from Chapters 5 and 6 that highlighted teachers' concern over the suitability of the HGPE syllabus as a progression from SGPE. This is discussed in more depth in Chapter 8.



### 7.2.2 The Performance element of HGPE

Asked if they felt they had improved in the Practical Performance element of HGPE, the pupils' responses were very positive;

'I felt that I have improved a lot in the practical area especially swimming as this has improved my fitness, and techniques' (Female, S6), 'I have improved in practice and in theory. The aspects of sport, e.g., skill development and physical improvement have both improved' (Female, S6), 'I have improved greatly in badminton and basketball. I had never previously played either sport at any serious level but after the course I found I could compete at a competent level' (Male, S6), 'I feel I have improved a great deal in each practical activity...my confidence has also built up and I'm not so 'scared' to try new things' (Female, S6).

These comments could be suggested to support the reduction of physical activities that pupils concentrate on at HGPE, discussed in the previous section. It is also interesting to note the confidence which one particular girl conveys in the latter statement regarding her involvement in physical activities. In Chapter 1 attention was drawn to the numerous findings that imply girls' dislike for physical education was related to the physical activities involved in the programme and their perceived ability at such activities (Ikulayo, 1983). The importance of pupils enjoying an activity and the subsequent improvement is noted by a couple of pupils;

'In badminton I improved but not a lot. I did improve my techniques but I didn't enjoy badminton a lot' (Female, S6), 'I think that in all the practical activities my improvements were quite noticeable. One of the reasons for this was because I enjoyed all the activities that we covered in the course' (Male, S6).

This perhaps strengthens the recommendation of the HGPE Arrangements document that teachers and pupils work together in choosing practical activities that the pupils are

interested in undertaking as part of the course (SEB, 1993, paras. 3 2 1 & 3 2 4, p.8). Chapter 1 noted the effect that the inclusion of particular physical activities within the physical education programme can have on pupils' enjoyment in the physical education subject.

A number of pupils were aware of the change in approach from SGPE to HGPE in the teaching of the practical activities which resulted in more time being allocated to fewer physical activities;

'All 3 sports [swimming, basketball, badminton] greatly increase your ability to do better because of the way in which it is taught to you' (Male, S5), 'I feel that I have improved in all of the practical activities because of the more time spent learning how to complete actions of a sport correctly' (Male, S5), 'I improved as we spent a lot more time practicing the activity involved and I got to know a lot more about the activity' (Male, S5), 'The way the practical work is taught allows you to learn a sport in much more detail allowing it to be performed at a higher level' (Female, S6).

These comments suggest that the pupils' awareness and reference to the sport and performance features within the Performance element of HGPE reinforce the impact that such features had on the construction of the ID of HGPE, discussed in Chapter 4.

### 7.2.3 Written requirements of the HGPE course

Chapters 5 and 6 reported that teachers were concerned pupils who were likely to be genuinely interested in studying HGPE were not necessarily those who would be able to fulfill the written requirements of the HGPE syllabus. Teachers were aware of specific pupils who, although having no problems in performing various skills and tasks specific to physical activities, would struggle in conveying their understanding of performance through written tasks. This raises the issue of pupils who are physically able in the chosen activities at HGPE being penalised if they are unable to convey their knowledge and



understanding through the written examination or the Investigation. As Bryce (1999) commented in discussing assessment;

‘What you can write about is not the same as what you can actually do; the former can be rehearsed on the basis of rote learning, and the latter offers greater opportunities and having it checked ‘live’ is a more valid process’ (p. 658).

The issue of rote learning was evident to examiners who were marking the Analysis of Performance papers for HGPE (SQA 1998 & 1999).

#### 7.2.3.1 Analysis of Performance

Teachers’ concern of pupils effectively communicating their theoretical understanding of the HGPE subject through written tasks was discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. Comments from the pupils confirm such concerns;

‘I found it hard to explain myself’ (Female, S6), ‘I felt that the written work was much harder than I had anticipated’ (Male, S5), ‘The written work is much harder than I thought it would be. There is a lot to get through and you have to really think about how to go about analysing your performance’ (Male, S6), ‘The written work was challenging’ (Male, S6).

The above comments suggest that the pupils had underestimated the requirements of the written elements of the HGPE course. The Ayrborne PTPE’s belief that S6 pupils were more likely to find it easier to complete the written requirements of HGPE (Chapter 6) is not verified by the S6 pupils who report difficulties in addressing the written work of HGPE. Consequently, pupils who had decided to undertake HGPE may have chosen not to if they had had a more accurate expectation of what HGPE entailed. Pupils who are attracted to physical education because of the practical performance element, and are confident and proficient in performance in the chosen activities, may have chosen to undertake HGPE without realising the level of written work required by the course. This

may partly explain the general trend of low pass rates for HGPE, as reported in Chapter 1 (Table 1.2). Pupils cannot solely rely on a strong Performance grade to achieve a pass rate at HGPE as candidates are required to meet the examination requirements of all three Key Features of HGPE, i.e., Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance (SEB, 1993, para. 5 1, p.11).

### 7.2.3.2 Investigation of Performance

Pupils' comments regarding the contribution of the Investigation of Performance to the understanding of Analysis of Performance were mixed. Comments that identified a positive contribution included;

'I think it [Investigation of Performance] helped me quite a bit as it helped me to understand the various aspects involved in Analysis of Performance because you have to involve them while doing your Investigation' (Female, S6), 'It helped me understand what areas you need to work on to improve a skill' (Female, S6), 'The Investigation of Performance gave us practical experience of formulating a training programme etc. so it did help me to understand Analysis of Performance' (Female, S6).

Three pupils were not so positive. In responding to the question asking how much the Investigation of Performance had contributed to their understanding of Analysis of Performance they replied, 'Not a great deal' (Male, S6), 'Not much' (Male, S6) and 'I felt it did not really contribute to my understanding of Analysis of Performance' (Male, S5). Again, an interesting pattern emerged in that it was girls who reported a positive relationship between Investigation of Performance and Analysis of Performance while boys were not so supportive. Girls responses to the written elements of the course being favourable is perhaps not surprising when it has been reported that girls perform better at the written elements of a physical education course than in performance of physical activities (SEB, 1996a; 1995). This again may be due to the physical activities chosen for a course favouring males.



Bilsborough & Macleod (1998) reported that the largest differences in SGPE grade point averages males and females between 1994 and 1996 were for practical performance, with males scoring higher than females. They suggested that the assessment criteria for the Practical Performance element of SGPE did not address the real differences between males' and females' standards of practical performance. Bilsborough & Macleod (1998) also suggested that the choice of activities and the context (invasion games played in mixed teams) favoured males and made it difficult for females to demonstrate their skills. In contrast to this, the same authors reported that female pupils were scoring higher than male pupils in the Knowledge and Understanding elements (i.e., the written requirements) of the SGPE course.

Both the Analysis of Performance and the Investigation of Performance have remained contentious issues for both pupils and teachers since HGPE's introduction in 1993. Chapter 6 reported the extra workload resulting from the Investigation in Ayrborne. Chapter 8 will discuss how 'curricula more closely prescribed by an assessment agenda outwith the formal control of the school physical education department' (Brewer & Sharp, 1999, p. 541) and the continued lack of feedback from the SQA regarding pupils' performance in both elements of the HGPE is detrimental to both teachers and pupils.

#### 7.2.4 Future use of a HGPE qualification

Pupils were divided between how they would use a HGPE qualification. While some were likely to use it towards entrance qualifications for further or higher education others were likely to add it to a group of qualifications they had already obtained. The three boys in S5 who answered that they were likely to use it to follow a career all commented that if they failed HGPE they would return to school and upgrade their mark. This may be due to pupils' perceptions that a Higher in physical education would be beneficial to them following a related career in sport, leisure or physical education. As one pupil stated;

'I would try to upgrade my grade to try and give me more options for the future'  
(Male, S5).

Stables (1997) suggested that one particular aim of a programme of subject choice should be to make pupils more aware of the relationship of school subjects to careers, and of changes in the employment patterns. As pointed out in previous chapters, HGPE is a general entry requirement and is not a stipulated Higher that is required for specific courses. This therefore raises the question asking why pupils chose to undertake HGPE if it was not a specific entry requirement to further or higher education and as suggested in reporting pupils' reading of the ID of HGPE, did not choose to study HGPE in relation to these readings. Were pupils who undertook HGPE aware of HGPE's status as a general entry requirement? Were pupils interested in undertaking HGPE because it was perceived as an 'easy' Higher? Were pupils generally interested in continuing their involvement in physical education to Higher level? Subsequently, this draws our attention to pupils' reasons for not choosing HGPE. Did such pupils choose to take other Higher subjects that were specific entry requirements to further / higher education courses? Were pupils not interested in continuing their involvement with school physical education? It is to addressing the issue of subject choice that the chapter now focuses with an interest in establishing if the subject choice process undertaken by pupils in relation to certificated physical education is similar to the process undertaken for non-certificated physical education programmes.

### 7.3 Pupil subject choice

The characteristics of the pupils who had chosen to study, and those who had chosen not to study, HGPE are reported before identifying their reasons for the choice they had made. Both groups of pupils attended Ayrborne. While the group of pupils undertaking HGPE was identifiable as a group, the pupils who had chosen not to study HGPE were chosen randomly. The reasons given by pupils from Bushburn for deciding to undertake modular physical education or deciding to not be involved in physical education at all will then be identified. The methods used to collect such data are detailed in Chapter 3.



### 7.3.1 Characteristics of Ayrborne pupils

The extent to which subject choice depended on the ability of the candidate was highlighted by the SEB in 1997 (see Chapter 1). The SEB reported that pupils who undertook fewer Highers included subjects perceived as less academic within their choice while those pupils who were doing 4 or more Highers were capable of studying all their Highers in subjects perceived as 'academic' and dismissing subjects such as physical education. Thorburn (1999), concerned with the knowledge and understanding elements of SG, HG and Higher Still physical education, confirmed the SEB findings;

'Higher physical education has a high uptake of students who are attempting just one Higher, rather than the more traditional diet of 3 to 5 higher subjects. This would suggest that many students who take the course may be unaware, despite advice, of just how demanding it is' (p.20).

Referring to Table 7.1, a similar pattern to that highlighted by the SEB (1997) is evident. From the four S5 pupils who had chosen to undertake HGPE one pupil was only doing HGPE, two pupils were doing one other Higher along with HGPE and the fourth pupil was doing another 2 Highers in addition to HGPE. Two of the S5 pupils who had chosen not to undertake HGPE were doing 4 and 5 Highers respectively. Three of the S6 pupils opting to do HGPE had already achieved 4 or 5 Highers in S5 and were undertaking HGPE along with a Sixth Year Studies (SYS) course. Although this implies that they were taking HGPE as a 'bonus' Higher in S6 it is important to remember that they did not have the option of taking HGPE in their fifth year as it was not available at that time in Ayrborne. Three of the S6 pupils who had chosen not to do HGPE opted for another 1 or 2 Highers along with 1 or 2 SYS subjects having already achieved 4 or 5 Highers in S5.

Another point highlighted in Chapter 1 was pupils' choosing to study physical education further with a view to a career in the physical education field (Kirk, 1988a; Woods, 1984). Referring to Table 7.1, physical education as a career aspiration was mentioned by 3 of the

4 S5 pupils doing HGPE and by one S6 pupil. Those who already had 4 or 5 Highers and had included HGPE in their S6 programme of subjects were interested in following more traditionally academic career options such as Medicine and Biology.

The data collected from the pupils at Ayrborne supports the SEB findings that pupils who undertook fewer Highers tended to favour subjects likely to be perceived as less academic than others, in this case HGPE.

The statements put forward by pupils as reasons for choosing to study or not study HGPE are listed in Tables 7.2 and 7.3 respectively. Care must be taken in interpreting results from the data. The statements have been prioritised in respect to the number of pupils who ranked each statement. It is also important not to dismiss the reasons that were not prioritised or received only a small number of rankings. These were reasons that the pupils themselves had brought up. Because they were asked to prioritise only five reasons, it was obvious that pupils could not give a ranking to every reason mentioned. The findings for the two groups of pupils from Ayrborne are now discussed.



	Number of subjects currently being studied			Number of subjects passed in S5 by S6 pupils		Further career aspirations
	Modules		Higher	Modules	Higher	
	Modules	Higher	SYS			
Pupils who chose HGPE  Nine pupils, three females and six males. Four S5 pupils and five S6 pupils.	0	3	0	1	2	PE related course
	2	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	PE or Architecture
	3	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	PE
	0	1	1	0	5	Scottish History
	3	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	Royal Marines
	4	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	PE teaching
	0	2	1	0	5	Medicine
	1	3	0	3	0	Nursery Nursing
	1	1	1	1	4	Biology
	4	0	0	5	0	Retail / Sales
	4	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	missing data
	2	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	Art
	0	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	missing data
	0	3	1	2	1	Social sciences
Pupils who did not choose HGPE  Nine pupils, all female. Three S5 pupils and six S6 pupils.	0	2	1	0	4	Business studies
	0	1	2	0	5	Medicine
	0	1	1	0	5	Physiotherapy
	2	2	0	2	2	Management

Table 7.1 : Data relating to the two groups of NGT pupils from Ayrborne.

**Table 7.2 : Items listed in response to the question “Why did you choose to take Higher Grade Physical Education?”**

Statement	Rankings received from pupils 5=highest priority 1=lowest priority
I wanted to	2,2,2,5,2
Might want to study it in college	4,5,4,1
I enjoy PE	3,5,4,3
To stay fit	2,2,4,4
Enjoyed doing PE	5,4,3
I love sport	4,5,3
Good at sport	3,2,1
Enjoyed doing SGPE	3,1,3
Thought it would be interesting	1,4,1
Looked like a good laugh	3,2
To increase your ability in certain sports	1,5
PE is my favourite subject	5
I wanted to be a PE teacher	5
Wanted to do PE courses at University	5
It seemed less academic	4
To fill up my timetable	2
From a break from other subjects	2
I liked the course and wanted to do the swimming	1
Needed another Higher to get into college	0
It was a subject I enjoyed compared to others	0
I wanted to go to PE college	0
Needed another subject	0



**Table 7.3 : Items listed in response to the question “Why did you choose not to take Higher Grade Physical Education?”**

Statement	Rankings received from pupils 5=highest priority 1=lowest priority
Didn't do SGPE	5,3,1,2,3
Didn't really know what was on the course	5,2,2,1
I was more confident in getting As and Bs in the Highers I've chosen	5,1,3
Didn't fit into my option sheet	4,1,4
There were other subjects that were more important	5,5
Not very good at PE - I thought I'd make a fool of myself	5,4
Some of the things covered don't appeal	4,4
None of my friends took it	4,3
I had to take other subjects to get into University	4,1
I've never been able to take PE seriously	2,1
Didn't need to because PE was available without doing the Higher	5
Because I came to a new school	5
I preferred to take other subjects	5
I didn't like the people doing it	4
I don't like some of the teachers	2
I wasn't any good at SGPE	1
Only like certain areas of PE - not all areas	1
I wasn't encouraged to take it	1
Normal PE is hard enough	0
Didn't want to take HGPE	0
Didn't like the theory of SGPE	0
I think I do enough exercise myself, outside school	0
I don't want to teach PE	0

### 7.3.1.1 Pupils who chose to study HGPE

Pupils who chose HGPE gave twenty-three statements as their reasons for doing so (Table 7.2). The most frequent statements suggest that pupils who chose HGPE had done so because of interest in and enjoyment of physical education. This finding is supported by the literature reviewed in Chapter 1 (Carroll, 1995; Cooper, 1995; Dickenson & Sparkes, 1988; Hendry, 1978; Woods, 1978). School guidance officers from Queensland (Australia) indicated that those students who enjoyed and experienced success in physical education in the junior years perceived senior physical education as a subject that they would similarly enjoy and in which they were likely to do well (Penney & Kirk, 1998). However, Stables (1997) warned of problems with placing subject choices too heavily on subject interest, reporting "an element of dissatisfaction with some courses by English students of 16 and over on the grounds that they were not what they had been led to expect by their courses pre-16" (p.200). Section 7.2 has highlighted some discrepancies between what pupils perceived HGPE would entail and the actual content.

Pupils' interest and enjoyment of a subject area does not necessarily imply that pupils have an accurate perception of what HGPE involves. The interest and enjoyment of the physical education subject at earlier stages in their schooling (Cooper, 1995) may have influenced pupils to undertake HGPE, without realising the degree of written work involved. The four most frequently given reasons for choosing SGPE (like the subject, helps keep you fit, like sport and helps to get a job) reported by Cooper (1995) are amongst the most frequent statements given for choosing HGPE. Dickenson & Sparkes (1988) also found that personal fitness and job related issues were reasons expressed by pupils for selecting physical education as an important subject.

Carroll (1995), Kirk (1988a) and Woods (1984) mentioned studying further in the physical education field after leaving school in discussing the importance of career aspirations of pupils in deciding what school subjects to undertake. Such aspirations were evident from this particular group of pupils with statements such as 'Might want to study it [physical



education] in college', 'I wanted to be a physical education teacher', 'Wanted to do physical education courses at University' and 'I wanted to go to physical education college'.

Pupils were very positive about the subject. Reasons which the teaching profession in general may associate with pupils taking HGPE, such as to fill up their timetable, to have a break from other classroom subjects and needing another subject (Penney & Kirk, 1998) were all mentioned but were not frequently chosen as reasons for undertaking HGPE. However, one pupil did allocate a personal ranking of 4 to the statement, 'It seemed less academic'. This may be true for pupils that are taking a number of highly academically driven Highers, an issue discussed in Chapter 1 and in the previous section in this chapter.

'To increase your ability in certain sports' and 'Good at sport' were the only two statements that directly referred to a level of performance. Only one pupil ranked the first statement as their most important reason for choosing HGPE. Although this may imply that pupils were not aware of the emphasis on practical performance in the Higher it does, along with the comment 'I love sport', highlight pupils' perceptions of HGPE being involved with sport. The attraction of particular sports to pupils' involvement is also apparent with the comment 'I liked the course and wanted to do the swimming'. The impact that the inclusion of certain physical activities within a particular physical education programme can have on pupils' subject choice within physical education was reported in Chapter 1 and was verified by Penney & Kirk (1998) in relation to the Queensland (Australia) Senior Syllabus in Physical Education.

#### 7.3.1.2 Pupils who chose to not study HGPE

Pupils who did not choose HGPE gave twenty-four reasons for doing so (Table 7.3).

It is clear from Table 7.3 that the statement, 'Didn't do SGPE [Standard Grade Physical Education]' received the highest number of rankings for pupils choosing not to do HGPE. This is interesting because SGPE is not a pre-requisite for HGPE. The pupils in this particular school may have been mis-informed or been strongly encouraged not to choose

HGPE if they had not done SGPE. Alternatively, they may have felt uncomfortable in undertaking a Higher in physical education when they had not done SGPE. However, it was reported earlier in this chapter that pupils disagreed that the knowledge gained in their SGPE course helped them in undertaking the HGPE course. The teachers in this school would need to establish which of the scenarios were true in their particular school context and correctly inform the pupils.

Penney & Kirk (1998) reported the perception amongst Australian students that the Senior Syllabus in Physical education in Queensland had limited career relevance, which subsequently detracted from recruitment with other subjects considered as a higher priority. The importance of career aspirations of pupils in deciding what school subjects to undertake is also evident in this particular group of pupils. The statement, 'There were other subjects that were more important' implies that there are courses that pupils wish to progress to after leaving school that require passes in certain school subjects. If HGPE is not one of these requirements pupils are likely to prioritise the subjects that are. Other reasons that reinforced this were, 'Didn't fit into my option sheet', 'I had to take other subjects to get into University' and, 'I preferred to take other subjects'. Cooper (1995) reported very similar reasons given from pupils who had chosen not to study SGPE. The impact that the placing of physical education in option columns can have on course eligibility is well documented (Forsyth, 1994; Fisher, 1991; Ledingham, 1989) with option columns of particular schools not necessarily favouring HGPE (Forsyth, 1994).

The reason for pupils not knowing what the HGPE course entailed ('Didn't really know what was on the course') is worrying for teachers. Pupils are highly unlikely to choose a Higher that they have heard very little about. This was the first year that HGPE had been offered in the school, which may account for the pupils' lack of knowledge about the course and course content. There were two other statements that implied pupils were unaware of what the HGPE course entailed. 'I think I do enough exercise myself, outside school' may imply that the pupil in question was under the impression that HGPE was predominantly physically demanding at the expense of the academic element. 'I don't want to teach physical education' may imply that the particular pupil who raised the



statement believed that HGPE was more suited to those who wanted to become physical education teachers. Again this highlights the need for the particular physical education teachers in this school to heighten the awareness of what HGPE entails, not only the course content but also the application of HGPE to further or higher education. In relation to examinations in physical education and sport in English secondary schools, Carroll (1995) admitted that it was not clear how much detail the pupils knew of the actual content or teaching of the examination course. This lead him to suggest that their subject choice was likely to be based on pupils' prior experiences of physical education. Penney & Kirk (1998) reported that sound strategies needed to be developed to ensure pupils were well informed about the nature and demands of the Senior Physical Education Syllabus.

The two statements, 'Only like certain areas of PE - not all areas' and 'Some of the things covered don't appeal' imply that some pupils were aware of the elements involved in HGPE. The statement 'I was more confident in getting As and Bs in the Highers I've chosen' may imply that some of the pupils were aware of the workload necessary to complete the HGPE course. That is, they perhaps felt that they were not practically and academically talented enough to pass HGPE. Pupils may also have been aware of the low percentage pass rate, in relation to other subjects, for HGPE (see Chapter 1). The latter pupil statement verifies one of Woollam's (1979) concerns when he discussed the expectancy created by examinations in physical education and the consequent reaction from pupils. The inference made by Woollam was that a pupil would only select a subject if they have the potential ability to reach the pre-conceived standard. Woollam's comment still appears to be accurate over twenty years later. Carroll (1995) reported that the statement 'Not good at PE' was given much more often by Year 10 girls than boys in response to being asked why they had chosen not to undertake GCSE physical education.

### 7.3.2 Bushburn pupils

Data was collected from pupils at Bushburn who had undergone a similar process to those pupils in Ayrborne in choosing to undertake modular physical education (Table 7.4) or no physical education at all (Table 7.5). This would allow me to assess the extent to which

the subject choice process undertaken by pupils in relation to certificated physical education was similar to the process undertaken for non-certificated physical education programmes.

**Table 7.4 : Items listed in response to the question “Why did you choose to take modular Physical Education?”**

Statement	Rankings received from pupils 5=highest priority 1=lowest priority
I enjoy taking part in sports	5,5,5,5,5,4
I enjoy keeping fit	3,5,5,3,2,4
I'd like to do the Higher	3,4,4
To stay healthy	3,1,3,3
Gives me a break from my classes	1,1,3,4
Didn't want to miss out on PE in fifth year	2,2,4
Rather do a sport than sitting in a classroom	4,1,2
You get a laugh	1,4,2
To relieve the stress of five Highers	5
It's not a hard module	2
Didn't like any of the other subjects that were in the same column	2
You don't get homework	2
You get on with the teachers	2
Fills your timetable up	1
Don't have to write very much	0
It's mixed classes	0



**Table 7.5 : Items listed in response to the question “Why did you not choose Physical Education?”**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Rankings received from pupils 5=highest priority 1=lowest priority</b>
Wanted to do the Enterprise module	5,4,3,5
Wasn't a qualification I needed	4,3,4
Only enjoyed some of the activities	4,3,1,1,1
Isn't required for the grades I need to get into college or university	5,5
Wanted to do something else that was in the same column as PE	5,4
Not very good at PE	5,2,2
All the subjects were more useful	4,2,3
Friends were all doing other things	1,2,4
Wasn't interested in doing PE	1,2,2
Asthma is made worse by exercise	5
A lot of hassle bringing in your kit	1,3
Laziness	3
I had already done it for four years	2
Wasn't compulsory to take PE	1
I didn't enjoy it	0
Didn't seem worth it - only two periods a week	0
Didn't like athletics	0
Didn't enjoy and wasn't good at	0
Wanted to do something else	0
Didn't seem important for jobs	0

### 7.3.2.1 Pupils who chose to undertake modular physical education

Sixteen statements were given as reasons for pupils choosing to do modular physical education (Table 7.4). Seven of the eight pupils stipulated one of two statements as their most important reason for choosing physical education in S5. The two statements were concerned with enjoyment, fitness and sport and these were the main three reasons that emerged from Cooper's (1995) investigation into pupils' reasons for choosing to study SGPE. It is encouraging that the two most popular reasons are involved with the practical element of the physical education subject itself and not reasons such as, 'Don't have much to write' and 'Fills your timetable up'.

Five reasons were given in relation to physical education providing a break from other school subjects. Physical education has the potential to be a release from other school subjects that could work in favour of enhancing its appeal. In investigating pupil definitions of physical education, Dickenson & Sparkes (1988) presented a number of quotations from pupils regarding physical education acting as a '...break or release from normal school work' (p.6). Laws & Fisher (1999), reporting data from English pupils aged 15-16 and Saunders (1986), in giving an overview of trends and development in physical education in the UK, also highlighted the conception of physical education '...as a means of compensating for the rigours of academic work' (Saunders, p.11).

Three pupils ranked the statement 'I'd like to do the Higher'. Although this particular school did not offer HGPE, this comment may be due to an awareness that the PTPE had, in the previous two years, sent S6 pupils to do HGPE at another school. Pupils may have been under the impression that the S5 physical education module was a pre-requisite to being sent to another school in S6 for HGPE. Alternatively, pupils may have been stating that modular physical education was the closest option to HGPE in their current school situation.



#### 7.3.2.2 Pupils who chose not to undertake any physical education at all

Twenty-one statements were given by pupils as reasons they chose not to do physical education (Table 7.5). The most frequently ranked comment was 'Only enjoyed some of the activities'. A related comment that was also made but which was not ranked was 'Didn't like athletics'. A dislike of particular activities was a reason given by pupils in England aged between 11 and 16 in Dickenson & Sparkes' (1988) investigation into reasons for disliking physical education. Hendry (1978) found that physical education teachers' decisions about the choice of activities was the most frequent comment made by Scottish secondary school pupils when asked about the physical education curriculum, with pupils unable to understand the reasons behind these decisions. It seems obvious to state that the practical activities on offer within a physical education programme can have an effect on pupils' subject choice and the issue of who chooses activities and why they are chosen needs to be continually addressed within school physical education programmes. This is a problem that teachers can accommodate to a certain degree. Only so many preferred activities can be taught due to facility and staff restrictions (not only in the number of staff but in staff expertise), and the activities chosen are more than likely not going to suit everyone.

It is evident that pupils were unable to choose both the physical education module and the Enterprise module, 'Wanted to do the Enterprise module'. This, along with the reason 'Wanted to do something else that was in the same column as physical education' explains more about the timetabling of subjects rather than pupils' interest in choosing physical education. Pupils were not necessarily choosing between subjects that interested them but rather were choosing subjects according to their applicability to further study outwith school. These reasons were concerned with the market value of physical education that has been discussed throughout this thesis.

Six statements reflected a lack of enjoyment for the physical education subject. The statements hint that enjoyment and physical ability are perceived as one of the same thing as far as physical education is concerned. Pupils who are not comfortable with their

performance at physical activities in physical education are unlikely to choose physical education when given the opportunity. Ikulayo (1983), in considering the relationship between physical ability and attitudes towards physical activities amongst girls, revealed that in some activities girls stated physical ability as the sole criterion for liking or disliking them. Dickenson & Sparkes' (1988) investigation, of 100 pupils aged between 11 and 16 from four comprehensive schools in the West Midlands, reported the physical demands of an activity as being a reason for pupils disliking physical education.

### 7.3.3 Discussion of pupils' subject choice in Ayrborne and Bushburn

Section 7.2 of this chapter examined pupils' perceptions of HGPE that included pupils being critical of the apparent lack of transfer of knowledge from SGPE to HGPE and the written requirements of the HGPE course. Pupils were more supportive to the fact that at HGPE they concentrated on fewer practical activities than in SGPE and commented that their performance in the chosen activities at HGPE had improved. Subsequently, the Performance element of the ID of HGPE may have been an attraction for pupils choosing to study HGPE. However, in general, pupils' readings of the ID of HGPE did not appear as explicit reasons for choosing to study the subject. It is those reasons that did affect pupil choice that will now be summarised.

Pupils who had chosen to study HGPE had done so due to their interest and enjoyment of the physical education subject and in the possibility of them studying further in the physical education field. There was some uncertainty as to what HGPE actually entailed for those pupils who had chosen not to do HGPE and regarding pre-requirements for entrance to the course. Also, pupils were choosing to take other Higher subjects that were more relevant to what they were either interested in or needed for entry to University.

It is encouraging that pupils had chosen modular physical education due to the nature of the subject itself and not for other reasons that would undermine the value of physical education. For example, pupils being made to do physical education or that they were doing physical education because they had nothing else to do. The most frequently ranked



reason for choosing to do physical education was through pupils' enjoyment in taking part in physical activities. There was a wider array of reasons for pupils choosing to not do physical education. A dislike of particular activities was the main deterrent. Other prominent reasons were that pupils could not choose physical education if there was another subject they wanted to do in the same option column and that physical education was not a requirement for going on to specific courses in further or higher education.

In both school contexts pupils had chosen HGPE or modular physical education due to the interest and enjoyment they had previously experienced in taking part in physical education. Both sets of pupils expressed a link in undertaking physical education and the continuation of studying the subject to another level. Pupils who chose HGPE expressed an interest in studying further in the physical education field on leaving school. Pupils who chose modular physical education were interested in undertaking HGPE and were perhaps under the impression that modular physical education would increase their opportunity of studying HGPE the following year at another school.

While both sets of results illustrated that some of the pupils experienced HGPE or modular physical education as a break from other subjects, such comments received a higher ranking from pupils who chose modular physical education. Pupils who chose modular physical education had, in some cases, been attracted towards it because of this perception. Pupils who had chosen HGPE may have realised that physical education at a Higher level was not going to be a break from the level of work required from other Highers although the nature of work expected may be different.

The main similarity between the two groups of pupils that had chosen to not study HGPE and not do any physical education was that pupils were choosing other subjects before even considering HGPE or physical education. Firstly, there may have been other subjects in the same option column as HGPE or physical education that pupils preferred to do and secondly, there may have been certain subjects that pupils required for entry to University courses. These are two valid points that would be hard for any physical education teacher to argue against in an attempt to encourage pupils to choose HGPE or physical education.

Statements regarding a lack of enjoyment from the physical education subject were much more prominent from pupils who chose not to do physical education. This may be due to the actual sample of pupils. Pupils who did not choose HGPE were taking part in a core physical education programme in S5/S6 so were obviously interested to a certain degree in physical education. Pupils who had chosen not to do physical education in Bushburn were not taking part in physical education at all, which perhaps explains why they were stronger in their delivery of comments regarding lack of enjoyment.

From the discussion of reasons given by pupils, the process that pupils pursued in making subject choices appears to have been similar between Ayrborne and Bushburn. This chapter concludes by extending the investigation of such similarities with the body of literature concerned with subject choice, and more specifically in relation to school physical education.

#### 7.4 Similarities and differences in subject choice between case study schools and previous research

In asking 14–15 year old pupils within an English secondary school for their reasons for subject choice related to all school subjects, Woods (1984) uncovered two main factors that emerged, ‘an affective one’ (liking or disliking) and ‘a utilitarian one’ (career and ability). Both of these factors have already been highlighted by a number of authors in relation to subject choice in physical education in Chapter 1. Table 7.6 illustrates comments from the pupils in Ayrborne and Bushburn that mirror the two factors.



Table 7.6: Comments from pupils related to 'affective' and 'utilitarian' factors.

	<b>Affective factors (liking or disliking)</b>	<b>Utilitarian factors (career or ability)</b>
<b>Pupils' reasons for choosing HGPE (Ayrborne)</b>	I enjoy PE / Enjoyed doing PE / Enjoyed doing SGPE / PE is my favourite subject / I liked the course / It was a subject I enjoyed compared to others	Good at sport / I wanted to be a PE teacher / Wanted to do PE course at University / I wanted to go to PE college
<b>Pupils' reasons for not choosing HGPE (Ayrborne)</b>	Some of the things covered don't appeal / I didn't like the people doing it / I didn't like some of the teachers / Only like certain areas of PE - not all areas / Didn't like the theory of SGPE	Not very good at PE / I had to take other subjects to get into University / I wasn't any good at SGPE / I don't want to teach HGPE
<b>Pupils' reasons for choosing modular PE (Bushburn)</b>	I enjoy taking part in sports / I enjoy keeping fit / Didn't like any of the other subjects that were in the same column	It's not a hard module
<b>Pupils' reasons for not choosing PE (Bushburn)</b>	Only enjoyed some of the activities / I didn't enjoy it / Didn't like athletics	Wasn't a qualification I needed / Isn't required for the grades I need to get into college or university / Not very good at PE / Didn't seem important for jobs

From Table 7.6 it is evident that each group of pupils from Ayrborne and Bushburn reported reasons for making specific choices in relation to physical education that match the two categories identified by Woods (1984) when he asked pupils their reasons for subject choice related to all school subjects. It appears that 'liking' the subject was, as one would expect, the most prominent factor influencing pupils' subject choice in undertaking HGPE or modular physical education. Liking the subject content and liking sport / activity were the most frequently mentioned factors influencing subject choice in physical education reported by others (Cooper, 1995; Dickenson & Sparkes, 1988; Hendry, 1978). Pupils appeared to have chosen not to undertake modular physical education primarily due to future career commitments that required pupils to study particular subject areas. Again, this was supported in a number of other studies (Cooper, 1995; Kirk, 1988a). Pupils' reasons for choosing not to undertake HGPE appeared to incorporate not only a dislike for the physical education subject, but also feeling that they were not physically talented at

certain activities and that physical education did not fit in with their career aspirations. Dickenson & Sparkes (1988) and Ikulayo (1983) both highlighted pupils' awareness of their physical ability at activities when deciding whether or not to choose physical education (Chapter 1). It is important to remember that those pupils that chose not to do HGPE in this particular situation took part in core or recreational physical education. This is illustrated by a reason given by one pupil for choosing not to do HGPE, 'Didn't need to because PE was available without doing the Higher' (Table 7.3). This may explain why the 'dislike' comments they gave were not ranked as highly as the 'like' comments from pupils who chose to do HGPE.

Woods (1984) also reported that pupils in his study fell into two types. One group of pupils liked subjects for 'official, supportive, traditional educational reasons' and the other group liked subjects for 'unofficial, counter-cultural, social reasons'. Again the similarity between Wood's (1984) two groups of pupils and the pupils in Ayrborne and Bushburn are illustrated in Table 7.7.

Table 7.7: Comments from pupils related to two different pupil types.

	Official, supportive, traditional educational reasons	Unofficial, counter-cultural, social reasons
Pupils' reasons for choosing HGPE (Ayrborne)	Might want to study it in college / To stay fit / To increase your ability in certain sports / I wanted to be a PE teacher / Wanted to do PE courses at University	Looked like a good laugh / It seemed less academic / To fill up my timetable / From a break from other subjects / Needed another subject
Pupils' reasons for choosing modular PE (Bushburn)	I enjoy keeping fit / I'd like to do the Higher / To stay healthy	Gives me a break from my classes / Rather do a sport than sitting in a classroom / You get a laugh / To relieve the stress of five Highers / It's not a hard module / You don't get homework / Fills your timetable up / Don't have to write very much

It is apparent from Table 7.7 that pupils were split between 'official' reasons and 'unofficial' reasons for choosing to do HGPE. However, in referring to the ranking given by pupils for each comment (Table 7.2), the 'official' reasons were more frequently ranked



by the pupils than the 'unofficial' reasons. Although 'unofficial' reasons for choosing modular physical education appear to outweigh 'official' reasons, the three 'official' reasons were individually ranked higher than any of the 'unofficial' reasons (Table 7.4). It is perhaps expected that pupils who had made a conscious decision to choose a particular subject would rank 'official' reasons higher.

## 7.5 Conclusion

The concern of this chapter was to examine how the social construction of HGPE had affected pupils' reasons for choosing to undertake HGPE and if such reasons were any different from the subject choice process for other available physical education programmes. In order to do this it was necessary to involve pupils in an educational evaluation process, asking about their experiences and opinions. It was evident in Chapters 5 and 6 that teachers' appreciation of the pupils' interests and needs were an important dimension in teacher CDM. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, while there has been a continued interest in reporting pupils' attitudes and opinions about physical education there has been no attempt to investigate pupils' reasons for choosing or not choosing HGPE. Pupils' exclusion from the construction of HGPE (see Chapter 4) has perhaps attributed to the HGPE syllabus appearing to be unsuitable for a large number of pupils and perhaps more unfortunately, for those pupils who have a genuine interest in the physical education field. By investigating pupils' perceptions of the physical education subject, teachers can work towards providing a curriculum that pupils interpret as relevant to them and their lives (Laws & Fisher, 1999). Pupils' and teachers' lack of involvement in forming the ID of HGPE is examined in Chapter 8.

The chapter firstly set out to report and investigate pupils' perceptions of HGPE, reporting that HGPE pupils perceived a lack of progression from their experience in SGPE to HGPE but appreciated the amount of time they were able to spend on fewer practical activities at HG than at SG. Pupils unanimously emphasised the difficulty they encountered with the Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance elements of HGPE and were perhaps not very well informed about the market relevance of HGPE. Subsequently,

pupils' reading of the ID of HGPE did not appear as explicit reasons for choosing to study the subject. The continued lack of feedback from the SEB / SQA regarding pupils' performance in the Analysis of Performance and how the Investigation of Performance elements of the HGPE was detrimental to both teachers and pupils is discussed in Chapter 8.

Secondly, pupils' subject choice in relation to certificated and non-certificated physical education was examined. The process that pupils pursued in making subject choices was similar in the two schools and it was also evident that the reasons given for pupil subject choice in Ayrborne and Bushburn were reflected in the wider subject choice literature reported in Chapter 1. That is, pupils' interest and enjoyment in physical education and wanting to study the subject further within school and possibly after leaving school were the most popular reasons for choosing HGPE in Ayrborne and modular physical education in Bushburn. Pupils' lack of enjoyment of physical education and preferring to pursue subjects that were directly related to future career aspirations were reasons given for choosing not to undertake HGPE in Ayrborne and not choosing physical education in Bushburn.

Chapter 8 identifies emerging issues from this study and attempts to illustrate and recommend why and how pupils, as well as teachers, should be involved in constructing a discourse that both groups believe address their needs and interests.



## **Chapter 8 - Discussion of emerging issues and conclusions**

### **8.1 Introduction**

As has been emphasised throughout this thesis the main concern has been with investigating the social construction of knowledge and subsequently teacher curriculum decision making (CDM) and pupil subject choice, all in relation to the HGPE curriculum reform. Before discussing the main issues that have emerged from this study the chapter begins by reflecting on the previous chapters of this study and specifically addresses each of the four research questions posed at the end of Chapter 2.

In Chapter 1 insights into HGPE and the context in which it was introduced were provided. The number of institutions offering HGPE had increased from 139 in 1994 to 304 in 1999. The number of candidates selecting HGPE increased from 1,889 in 1994 to 3,668 in 1999. This led to questioning what factors had affected a substantial number of teachers to offer HGPE and how did these factors differ from those teachers choosing not to offer HGPE. Similarly, questioning what factors had affected a continual increase in candidates to study the subject and why other potential candidates were refraining from undertaking HGPE was posed. The core focus of the thesis was therefore identified as teacher CDM and pupil subject choice. It was important to identify the factors that impinge on teachers and pupils in making decisions regarding the teaching of a syllabus or in studying a syllabus in order that such factors can be addressed in the construction and dissemination of a syllabus. Chapter 1 also suggested that one way to understand teacher CDM and pupil subject choice was by taking the view that physical education is 'socially constructed'.

The framework used to investigate the social construction of knowledge, teacher CDM and pupil subject choice, and subsequently to address the four research questions, is Basil Bernstein's model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse (Chapter 2). Bernstein's three fields of knowledge production and reproduction and his notion of pedagogic discourse allowed the framing of the examination of the development, mediation and reproduction of the HGPE course. It was anticipated that Bernstein's three

fields would allow exploration and understanding of reasons for teacher CDM and pupils' subject choice (secondary field) related to HGPE, and to what extent such decision making and subject choice was affected by the construction of the HGPE discourse in the recontextualising field. It was acknowledged that the major focus of the study is on the reproduction of the HGPE course in the secondary field.

Using document and archive analysis and semi-structured interviews, Chapter 4 investigated the first two research questions;

‘What is the instructional discourse of HGPE? Who and what were responsible for constructing the instructional discourse of HGPE?’

‘What is the interface between the regulative and instructional discourses that influenced the construction and constitution of HGPE? Who decided which aspects of the regulative discourse were to be reproduced in the secondary context of HGPE?’

It was established in Chapter 4 that the instructional discourse (ID) of HGPE is a science-based, sport-performance-oriented discourse. It was also illustrated how the dominant model for innovation in Scottish schools continued to be external leadership by the centre. This raises the question asking if the process that was pursued in constructing HGPE (Chapter 4) was the best option.

Using data from surveys and two case study schools the third research question was addressed in Chapters 5 and 6;

‘How have teachers’ views on the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted affected their decision to offer, or not to offer, HGPE?’

Chapter 5 reported the extent to which teachers’ views of the ID of HGPE influenced teacher CDM and mapped the identified views to the situational factors of two particular



school environments in Chapter 6. In concluding Chapter 5, teachers' interpretations of the ID of HGPE were not explicit reasons for CDM but were embedded in other reasons, such as the types of pupils teachers were dealing with and the availability of facilities. Consequently, teachers' interpretations of the ID of HGPE are not explicit reasons for CDM but are more likely to be embedded in the context in which individuals work.

Short surveys and Nominal Group Technique were utilised to address the final research question in Chapter 7;

‘How has the way in which HGPE has been constructed and constituted generally affected pupils’ views on the subject and consequently influenced their choice to study, or to not study, HGPE?’

Pupils undertaking HGPE perceived a lack of progression from their experience in SGPE to HGPE, emphasising the difficulty they encountered with the Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance elements of HGPE. They also appeared uninformed about the market relevance of HGPE, i.e., the value of HGPE in terms of vocation. Similar to the extent to which teachers' views of the ID of HGPE influenced teachers' CDM (Chapters 5 and 6), Chapter 7 reported that pupils' reading of the ID of HGPE did not appear as explicit reasons for choosing to study the subject. However, pupils' interest and enjoyment in physical education and wanting to study the subject further within school and possibly after leaving school were the most popular reasons for choosing HGPE. Pupils' lack of enjoyment of physical education and preferring to pursue subjects that were directly related to future career aspirations were reasons given for choosing not to undertake HGPE.

## 8.2 Emerging issues from this study

Bernstein's theory was useful in positioning individuals and groups involved in constructing the discourse of physical education (Chapter 4). This notion is expanded on in this chapter by discussing the process of managing HGPE by the SEB and the extent to which the SEB exercised power to mandate precisely the form the ID should take as it was implemented in secondary schools. The main factor within schools that, although unsupportive to teaching HGPE, had been ignored in schools' bid to deliver the HGPE syllabus, i.e., a lack of external support in delivering HGPE (Table 3.2, Chapter 3) is also discussed.

This chapter examines the potential that the process of the construction of HGPE had for teacher de-professionalisation and de-skilling as a consequence of Scottish teachers being expected by recontextualising agents and agencies to deliver an externally prescribed curriculum (Brewer & Sharp, 1999; Bryce, 1999; Gatherer, 1999). Further discussion will focus on how professional development support for teachers is crucial to dealing with curriculum development, and also in preventing teachers from experiencing 'de-professionalisation' and 'de-skilling' (Gatherer, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994).

Related to the issue of managing a syllabus in schools, is how the ID of HGPE compares with physical education syllabi aimed at a similar age of audience in other countries. An insight into an alternative way of looking at management in the secondary field, i.e., the Senior Health Syllabus in Queensland, Australia is provided.

Bernstein's model helped address what signified educational knowledge in the context of HGPE and consequently establish how such knowledge was socially constructed (Chapter 4) and organised within schools (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). By addressing and reporting these issues in earlier chapters it is now possible to make informed suggestions as to what can be done to promote HGPE.



Subsequently, three main issues have emerged from this study that warrant further discussion. These are;

- Was the process pursued in constructing HGPE (Chapter 4) the best option in producing a HGPE syllabus?
- How did the SEB manage HGPE and to what extent did the SEB exercise power to mandate precisely the form the ID should take as it was implemented in secondary schools?
- What can be done to promote HGPE?

Each issue will be discussed in turn, re-visiting material from this study and attempting to further develop the issues. Material that was not discussed in previous chapters is included in this chapter. Chapters 5 and 6 were concerned with reporting and discussing factors that had influenced teachers' CDM in relation to offering (or not) HGPE. However, factors that had not influenced teachers CDM, and subsequently which teachers tended to be critical of, were evident in Tables 3.2 and 3.3. in Chapter 3. Data relating to such factors are incorporated in this chapter to strengthen the three main issues that have emerged.

### 8.2.1 The process of constructing HGPE

Historically in Scotland decision-making regarding structure, syllabus content and examinations in relation to school innovation has been centralised (Philip, 1992; McIntyre, 1985). In 1977 the Munn Committee (SED / CCC, 1977a) supported the practice of planning and writing syllabuses, leading to national certification, as a central responsibility. The relationship between the recontextualising agents and agents in the secondary field is now examined. Over two decades ago, Metcalf (1978) examined a similar relationship, using the term 'changers' to refer to educational planners and 'adaptors' for subject teachers.

#### 8.2.1.1 'Changers' and 'adaptors'

A lack of respect from teachers towards those who construct syllabi was evident in Chapter 6 when the PTPE in Ayrborne reported the disregard that some of the teachers in her department had for the SEB expectations for SGPE. She explained that some teachers were missing out pieces of the SGPE course that they felt were not important. Niven (1998b) believed that the selection of writers of the HGPE documentation caused concern among some teachers of physical education who felt that such individuals were removed from school life and did not have a realistic impression of the type of assistance that teachers required in delivering the syllabus. Scottish physical education teachers involved in this study were critical of the process of constructing HGPE and the agents and agencies that had been involved.

'As always a bare framework is set out with so called efforts from Moray House College, who have never taught the course being brought in to develop courses. There should be a coherent approach to teaching. Why do all the physical education teachers have to re-invent the wheel?' (Teach, 20).

'In my opinion there has to be a far more national-based course, prepared by a knowledgeable working party who understand what goes on in schools' (Teach, 29).

The above comments encapsulate three main concerns that are raised in relation to the HGPE Arrangements document being the intended text for teaching the subject. The concerns are that the framework is inadequate and will consequently lead to different teacher interpretations. Second, that those involved in constructing the text were too removed from the secondary context to have experienced the needs of pupils and the delivery of such a course. A third concern, related more to the management of HGPE, was that teachers were spending time duplicating work that they believed should have been produced and made available nationally along with the HGPE Arrangements document. As emphasised in Chapter 5, time is at a premium in schools and teachers do not have the luxury of being able to afford time to produce materials. Hargreaves (1994) stated, "time



is the enemy of freedom" (p.95). Teachers currently appear unable to afford any substantial amount of time away from their day to day teaching activities.

Such comments highlight the disparity between the recontextualising agents (in this case Moray House College, who were responsible for the pre-service training of physical education teachers, and the SEB) and agents in the secondary field (physical education teachers) in the process of curriculum change. The implication from such comments is that teachers are expected to implement a change in the curriculum produced by people who are not primarily involved in teaching that specific curriculum in schools. This consequently raises the importance of teachers experiencing 'ownership' of a curriculum development, discussed in Chapter 1. The issue of syllabi being reproduced in the secondary context but maintaining a sense of ownership by those involved in the recontextualising context is discussed in section 8.2.2. Before visiting this particular issue, a number of concerns that arise from the previous two quotes from teachers regarding the HGPE Arrangements document being the intended text for teaching the subject are highlighted. These concerns revolve around the notion of the level of prescription and the agents and agencies involved in the production of the HGPE syllabus.

#### 8.2.1.2 The level of prescription of the HGPE Arrangements document

There can be a fine line between producing a syllabus that is considered to be too definitive or not definitive enough. In reporting the SED's involvement in developing the Munn and Dunning reports (SED/CCC, 1997a & b respectively), Philip (1992) observed that 'A balance had to be struck between giving sufficient scope for variation in courses and providing enough information on how to construct courses that would be acceptable nationally' (p.172). It would not be unreasonable to expect this to be one of the main concerns of recontextualising agents in the production of text. However, while those agents operating in the recontextualising field may believe they are supplying those in the secondary context with 'sufficient scope' and 'enough information', the expectations of the same terms can be read differently by those in the secondary fields, i.e., teachers. In order for teachers to address their local context of implementation, teachers may be forced to

make inappropriate adaptations to a syllabus regardless of its level of prescription (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001).

#### 8.2.1.3 The flexible structure of the HGPE course

The HGPE Arrangements document encourages teachers to create a version of HGPE that meets the needs of individual contexts. The flexibility of the course is also apparent in that teachers are free to make decisions regarding the areas and forms of Analysis of Performance they believe to be most relevant to the course. While this does not advocate the involvement of teachers in the production of the ID of HGPE, it does acknowledge the impact that local school contexts can have on the transformation of text between the recontextualising and secondary field. Penney & Kirk (1998), in reporting the evaluation of the trial-pilot Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Australia) secondary schools, acknowledged that the Syllabus needed to be flexible enough to account for the variety of circumstances in Queensland schools.

However, in this study no teacher voiced support for the flexibility encouraged in the HGPE Arrangements document, with teachers believing that the HGPE Arrangements document was inadequately prescriptive;

'Arrangements...are vague and open to misinterpretation' (Teach, 7), 'Staff have to develop own ideas from general headings' (Teach, 12); 'It [HGPE Arrangements document] was very vague and much (too much) was left to individual members of staff on their own to sort out' (Teach, 18); 'As always a bare framework is set out...There should be a coherent approach to teaching' (Teacher, 20), 'Teachers are all working on their own in the preparation of materials without proper guidance' (Teach, 29).

The above comments hint towards a possible link between teachers' reading of the proposals for the HGPE syllabus as not being prescriptive enough and a lack of support



materials being made available. Numerous comments were made in relation to the latter issue;

'Most schools have had to soldier on with their own developments' (Teach 8), 'Almost no useful information on syllabus construction has been produced in the three years of HGPE. Staff has little or no idea what to teach. Staff has to develop own ideas from general headings - no one available to advise on material being used in the course' (Teach 12), 'There were no exemplar materials available for the Investigation or Analysis of Performance which proved difficult. People were in fact working blindly on these elements' (Teach 15), 'As at the start of SG [Standard Grade] each school is basically left to their own devices' (Teach 20).

It is therefore evident that Scottish physical education teachers were in favour of a more prescriptive document.

#### 8.2.1.3 The need for a more definitive document?

There is an apparent contradiction between teachers favouring a level of flexibility that acknowledges the impact that school contexts can have on the transformation of text between the recontextualising and secondary field and the plea for a more definitive document. Requests for a definitive document such as a textbook or a less informal recognised text covering the syllabus have been made by teachers (Douglas, 1998; Freel, 1998; Kidd, 1998; Cairns, 1997). The following comment from one teacher confirmed Douglas' perception that a less definitive syllabus makes the teaching of a course more difficult;

'Initially, as usual, much was expected by the department staff to set up and write the course with in my opinion little support in in-service development. I did not want my department to go through the programme blind as to the pace, programme, assessments without a clear idea of expected performance particularly in the written elements' (Not teach, 20).

The recontextualising agents' role in the formulation of the HGPE Arrangements document seemed to be perceived by teachers as being inadequate. Teachers appear to have made their judgement on not being able to deliver the HGPE syllabus without having to carry out a substantial amount of work on 'fleshing out' a 'skeletal' syllabus. Although the HGPE Arrangements document allows schools a high level of independence in planning their courses, the amount of work that such independence involves appears to be unacceptable to those in the secondary context. Due to the gradual increase of curriculum developments that teachers are now having to deal with, the preference for the availability of 'fully fleshed out teaching packages' (Not teach, 6) may be deemed more valuable in terms of saving time. Such a disparity between the recontextualising agents' expectations of the time teachers could commit to 'fleshing out' the proposals and the reality of the actual time teachers had to prepare a syllabus could have perhaps been addressed before the Arrangements document reached schools. For this to have happened it would have required teachers to have had played a more prominent role in the formulation of the proposals in the recontextualising context where HGPE was constructed. However, as examined previously in Chapter 4, and re-visited in the following section, teachers undertook a negligible role in constructing HGPE.

#### 8.2.1.5 Level of power in the construction of HGPE

The level of power, in terms of the construction of the HGPE syllabus that recontextualising agents exercised in relation to agents in the secondary context was incomparable. The production of the HGPE syllabus was regulated directly by specialised departments and sub-agencies of the government, i.e., the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID) and the Scottish Examination Board (SEB), controlling what text and support materials were made available. The recontextualising agents involved in the more recent Higher Still reforms for physical education (discussed later in this chapter) also appear not to have addressed the issue of the extensive preparation of work in the secondary field necessary for the delivery of a physical education programme (Freel, 1998).



However, other procedures in curriculum development have been pursued to eliminate such an obvious level of power that was exercised by the recontextualising agents in relation to the production (and reproduction) of HGPE. The development of proposals for the HGPE syllabus took no longer than two years from the first meeting of the Joint Working Party (JWP) to the national availability of the proposals and the role of teachers was negligible (Chapter 4). In contrast, development of the Senior Health Education Syllabus in Queensland, Australia, under the watchful eye of the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies occurred over a six-year period. The first phase, lasting three years, entailed schools agreeing to assess how effective a trial syllabus was in communicating its education expectation. The second phase of syllabus development, lasting another three years, entailed a large number of schools piloting the revised syllabus that was the result of the findings from the first phase (Glasby, 2000). The process in Queensland centralises the role of the teacher allowing them to challenge the dominant discourses. Such a thorough approach to syllabus development has not been established in the Scottish education system. This perhaps helps to explain why issues such as the HGPE proposals not being suitable for a large number of secondary pupils and the lack of evidence of progression from SGPE to HGPE (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) only became evident when teachers began to implement the finalised HGPE proposals. Although it appears that there is a lot of support in the literature for teachers to be central to curriculum planning and development, accepting that it is ultimately teachers who decide whether or not to implement an innovation (Chapter 1), in reality this is very rarely pursued.

The level of power exercised by those recontextualising agents in relation to the production and reproduction of HGPE is the second emerging issue.

### 8.2.2 The process of managing HGPE by the SEB

By addressing in this section the control that agencies external to the school maintain through a 'guarded' formal assessment agenda, the extent of teacher and pupil involvement in the construction of HGPE is re-visited.

The activities of agents in the recontextualising field are of central importance to the creation of what is thinkable or imaginable as HGPE (Kirk, 1998). As reported in Chapters 2 and 4, the instructional discourse is created within the recontextualising field (Bernstein, 1990). Bernstein (1985) had earlier identified the central role of examining boards as regulating the circulation of knowledge between both the primary and secondary sites. This is done by establishing and then applying a number of recontextualising rules that govern, in the case of this study, the form Higher Grade is permitted to take, by mandating specific aspects of its implementation, such as how learning will be assessed.

It became evident throughout this study that the SEB were not only involved in administering HGPE but also in managing HGPE once in schools. Examining critically the role of the SEB in managing HGPE and how they attempted to ensure the faithful implementation of their intentions for HGPE in secondary schools is now discussed.

#### 8.2.2.1 Lack of feedback from the SEB

Numerous teachers commented on the difficulty of evaluating the learning and teaching approaches they had taken towards HGPE without adequate feedback from the SEB;

'Failure of the Exam Board to disclose details of Analysis of Performance and Investigation marking detrimental to course evaluation' (Teach 5), 'Difficult to evaluate your approaches to the teaching of HG as you are not given a breakdown regarding the Investigations submitted and the actual exam results. Totally unsatisfactory and a failing of the Scottish Exam. Board. A position they don't seem prepared to change' (Teach 8), 'The national results from HGPE indicate that something is far wrong but sadly the majority of teachers do not know where they have gone wrong. Until teachers become more informed, the future of HGPE is not looking too bright' (Teach 29).



Incorporated in the above selection of comments is the belief that the situation regarding feedback is not going to improve, perhaps implying that teachers are beginning to accept that the SEB (now the SQA) are not prepared to, or are unable to, disclose details of pupils' marks. The Principal Teacher of Physical Education (PTPE) of Ayrborne explained that schools could pay money to have the scripts returned but that there was no marks on them. Information received from the SEB was statistics on how the school had done in relation to other schools. The only element that teachers can be confident about having marks for is the internally graded Performance. Consequently, teachers are working blind towards what is likely to produce an effective discourse;

'Difficult to evaluate your approaches to the teaching of Higher Grade as you are not given any breakdown regarding the Investigations submitted and the actual exam results' (Teach, 22).

'[There is] Far too much uncertainty as to where and what is required of a student. If as during in-service provision, professional teachers are unsure of what is required to answer, and indeed understand, already undertaken papers, what chance do youngsters have?' (Not Teach, 25).

Teachers offering HGPE do so despite of the lack of communication from agents and agencies in the recontextualising field. Chapter 5 discussed the factors that had influenced teacher CDM. However, from Tables 3.2 and 3.3 in Chapter 3 it is clear that where the decision had been made to offer HGPE, there were certain factors within the school which teachers taught despite of. These included the lack of support and provision from agents and agencies operating in the recontextualising and secondary field. From referring to Table 3.2 in Chapter 3, a lack of support and assistance in delivering HGPE was evident from Advisers of physical education (Question 5), the SEB (Question 13), in-service training (Question 17) and the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (SCCC) (Question 21). In evaluating the trial-pilot Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Australia) secondary schools, Penney & Kirk (1998) reported that critical to the successful implementation of the syllabus was teacher professional development and

support provided by those involved with the syllabus. Survey data from this study on HGPE reported that only 17% of teachers offering HGPE believed that there was adequate assistance on assessing HGPE from the SEB (Appendix 5.1) and the following comment confirms this;

'Having taught HGPE since its inception, I am, at present, really frustrated, confused and slightly disillusioned because of the distinct lack of feedback from the SEB (they give you no idea how each individual student performed from the Analysis of Performance exam and Investigation), the erratic availability of courses, appropriate guidance for the Investigation, and the lack of exemplar questions and proper marking instructions for Analysis of Performance' (Teach, 29).

The above comment includes a number of points in relation to the lack of understanding as to the roles both are expected to fulfil between the recontextualising agents and those operating in the secondary field. Firstly, the teacher voices concern that there is a lack of assistance and feedback from the SEB concerning the disclosure of detailed marks for individual pupils who have completed HGPE. However, the SEB do not identify with such a role and consequently the trend is the same for every school subject. Also, the plea for marking instructions for the Analysis of Performance examination is a request that the SEB are unable to fulfill. Questions or areas of the question papers which have elicited a particularly poor response from candidates, and the overall distribution of marks scored in the paper, can effect the final pass mark decided by the SEB. Consequently, the marking instructions as they appear on the actual examination papers may not be accurate in relation to the final mark attributed to the paper. The SEB (now the SQA) do give a very brief summary every year in their Annual Reports (now the SQA Annual Statistical Reports) on how pupils have performed in the three Key Features of HGPE that are assessed, i.e., Performance, Analysis of Performance and Investigation of Performance.

Secondly, 'the erratic availability of courses' is read as referring to the number of in-service training (INSET) courses that were offered in relation to teaching HGPE. From the survey



data only 18% of teachers offering HGPE and 14% of teachers not offering HGPE believed that adequate INSET was available (Appendix 5.1). The lack of INSET provision appeared to result in two teachers abstaining from undertaking HGPE for the time being;

'Still not prepared to take on HGPE without adequate training' (Not Teach, 28) and 'Staff now wish re-training (all Diplomas)' (Not Teach, 29).

However, it was up to individual regions usually under the guidance of Advisers, and not the SEB, to decide how they would disseminate information (Niven, 1998a & b). This may have lead to the availability of INSET courses being referred to as 'erratic' in the likely scenario that some regions secured more resources and funding to support such courses and consequently were able to offer more courses. The provision of INSET courses related to the teaching of HGPE continues to be reported as inadequate (Niven, 1998a & b; Cairns, 1997; Coleman et al., 1996; Forsyth, 1994).

Thirdly, it is the SCCC that has the remit to promote information between the recontextualising and secondary fields. The SCCC is expected to support and promote curricular developments with one of its main responsibilities being to issue guidance on the curriculum to local education authorities and to schools (Ross, 1999; Clark, 1997).

Boyd (1993) believed that an unnecessary amount of effort and duplication of work in teachers preparing materials for SGPE was due to the 'tardy distribution' of such materials by, one would presume, the SCCC. Niven (1998b) commented on the appropriateness of the HGPE exemplar materials provided by the SCCC, believing that the selection of topics that had been developed for exemplar materials did not focus on the kind of information that teachers required. She believed that the lack of relevant documentation discouraged many teachers from implementing HGPE initially. A similar situation had appeared to occur in relation to the development of materials for SGPE. MacLeod (1992) reported that the process of developing materials for SGPE resulted in considerable duplication between regions and not all of the support materials being relevant. Consequently, teachers who were delivering SGPE and HGPE were spending time developing materials to aid the

delivery of each course. As discussed in Chapter 5, time has been reported as a perennial issue in the innovation literature. Time is at a premium in schools, especially when changes to the curriculum take place, and as Fullan (1982) pointed out, "time spent on materials development - on re-inventing the wheel, for example - takes time away from classroom application" (p.123).

#### 8.2.2.2 Teacher de-professionalisation and de-skilling

Such a level of control over the dissemination of information and feedback from the SEB leaves teachers with no direction on how teaching and learning approaches can or should be changed in order that more pupils complete the HGPE course successfully. This may also contribute to teachers using rote learning with pupils in a bid to prepare them for the externally assessed elements of the course (SQA Annual Statistical Reports, 1998 & 1999) and subsequently result in a de-professionalisation of physical education teachers' work. Hargreaves (1994) explained the notion of teachers' work becoming more routinised and deskilled in the following statement;

"Teachers are depicted as being treated almost like recovering alcoholics: needing to adopt step-by-step methods of instruction, or to comply with imposed tests and curricula in order to be effective" (p.14-15).

Hargreave's comment is relevant in reviewing the SQA Annual Statistical reports for 1998 and 1999. Withholding of information appears to have resulted in teachers consequently being very cautious about straying from the text in reproducing the syllabus in order to fulfill the requirements set by those in the recontextualising context. Both reports state that a rather prescriptive and limited approach has been adopted towards the Investigation of Performance element of HGPE and that there was evidence that candidates had been preparing for the Analysis of Performance examination through rote learning of answers. The significance of this is that teachers' sense of ownership of HGPE is minimal, having to teach the subject in a prescriptive way that they believe is more likely to result in a pass mark for the candidates. Bryce (1999) believed that assessment in Scottish schools had



become 'more conspicuous than curriculum' (p.657) and Brewer & Sharp (1999) discussed how the effects of external assessment procedures on physical education influenced teachers' practice of primarily teaching to fulfil the knowledge and understanding obligations of SGPE and HGPE syllabi. Revisiting the notion of 'changers' and 'adaptors' in section 8.2.1.1, McGowan (1993) and Hill (1993) reinforced the notion of the deprofessionalisation of physical education teachers' work in relation to the delivery of HGPE, evident in the following statement from McGowan;

'...we [the physical education profession] are now subject to centrally produced curricula and teachers are cast more in the role of curriculum implementors than curriculum innovators, evidence perhaps of a move towards deprofessionalisation of teaching' (p.29).

Helping pupils pass the exam has become the major preoccupation for teachers with the worth of the subject matter taking second place (Boyd, 1993; Kirk, 1988a). In discussing the English examination system over twenty years ago, Woollam (1979) believed that rather than examinations serving the curriculum, the opposite has happened in physical education where syllabi has been written to meet the requirements of the examination board. Even today, this appears to be the situation where the end product is deemed to be more important than the learning process.

#### 8.2.2.3 Power, the SEB, and the expectations of agents in the recontextualising and secondary contexts

The consequent and continuous involvement of the SEB in relation to the regulation of the HGPE course in the secondary context illustrates the level of power that this recontextualising agent maintains in the reproduction of the HGPE syllabus. For example, the SEB was not only involved at the conception of HGPE but continued to prepare examination papers, mark the examination papers, moderate the internally assessed Performance element and determine the national pass rate.

The lack of understanding regarding the roles expected to be upheld between those in the recontextualising and secondary fields is not encouraging towards the possibility of merging the agents in both sites, and consequently teachers fulfilling the role of 'producers' as well as 'reproducers' of knowledge. The agents operating in the recontextualising field produced the proposals for the HGPE syllabus and then were unable (or unwilling) to disclose information deemed useful by those operating in the secondary field. It appeared to be the case that the SEB had completed their task in producing the proposals and that it was now the teachers' task to reproduce the knowledge contained within it. This is illustrated by the following comment made by a teacher;

'Questions put to them [SEB] were given [a] standard reply - 'Refer to the arrangements document'. As if this cured all' (Teach, 15).

Subsequently, teachers lack of involvement as 'producers' of knowledge may have attributed to a number of problems they were now facing in a bid to successfully reproduce the HGPE syllabus in the secondary context. Problems included a lack of clarity regarding the assessment expectations, a lack of supporting material and the inability to evaluate the learning and teaching approaches (Chapter 6).

This section has highlighted the differing expectations between agents in the recontextualising and secondary fields in relation to what roles both are expected to fulfil. In investigating the process of developing SGPE, MacLeod (1994) highlighted the communication gap between national and school level by reporting difficulties with the training of teachers and a delay in the publication of official materials. The implication emerging is that the curriculum appears to be shaped in the secondary field in relation to the amount of information and assistance from the recontextualising field. The relationship between agents in the recontextualising field and secondary field was very much one way. The SEB set out the proposals that teachers were expected to follow and did not appear to entertain any concerns or feedback on the proposals from teachers, even although one of the SQA's Corporate goals is to 'consult and respond to the needs of users' (Tuck, 1999, p.704). Consequently, the SEB could be accused of exercising both



direct and indirect power over the teaching and assessment of pupils in relation to HGPE. An alternative way of addressing the management of a syllabus in the secondary context and transferring the power of agencies external to schools to those operating in schools, i.e., teachers, has been developed and is currently being conducted in secondary schools in Queensland, Australia.

#### 8.2.2.4 Comparative senior school physical education in Australia

The Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Australia) secondary schools was piloted in 25 schools in Queensland over two years, including pupils aged between 16 and 18. Subsequently, the ID of the Syllabus reflected not only teachers' implementation of the Syllabus but also what teachers and pupils interpreted as desirable. Penney & Kirk (1998) reported that the first interim report of the evaluation drew attention to a number of matters that required further investigation. These included a limited understanding and application of the concept of 'integration' in implementation. This was an issue that would most likely have been obvious in a thorough piloting of HGPE in relation to the teaching of the theoretical through the practical. The impact of differences in school contexts upon implementation was also identified by the interim report, listing factors already shown to have affected the delivery of HGPE, i.e., timetabling arrangements and teachers' personal interest and commitment. The report was also able to convey issues perceived as important considerations for students considering choosing the Senior Syllabus in Physical Education. Factors identified included the greater importance and career relevance of 'more academic' subjects and the perception of senior physical education as a 'soft option'. These were also factors reported by pupils in this study in relation to HGPE. A second interim report for the evaluation of the Senior Syllabus in Physical Education addressed and further explored the issues arising in the first interim report.

The Senior Syllabus in Physical Education provides a framework within which teachers are able to construct a school work programme (BOSSSS, 1998) and is coordinated by the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (BOSSSS), undertaking a function similar to that of the SQA in the Scottish context. Each school is responsible for their own work

programme that is accredited every five years by peer review, i.e., other teachers. There is an expectation that teachers write work programs and are able to develop and apply appropriate standards of assessment that clearly communicate the education expectations of the syllabus (Glasby, 2001). In reporting a similar process for Health Education, Glasby explained that the BOSSSS 'train' teachers for the responsibilities of judging not only the suitability of work programs but also the quality of the work produced by students undertaking the subject. The Senior Syllabus in both Physical Education and Health Education runs over two years with moderation of assessment taking place at the end of Year 11 and verification at the end of Year 12. District panels oversee the accreditation of work programs and the monitoring and verification of standards of students' work within their allocated regions. It is the task of the State Panel to ensure the comparability of judgements made by the various District Panels in performing the monitoring and verification of students' work (Glasby, 2001).

Glasby believed that such a process to curriculum development highlighted two important dimensions. Firstly, that comparable judgements are made not only on the quality of work programmes but also on student performances and that the curriculum development process allowed teachers' understanding of what should constitute the subject area in Years 11 and 12 to be valued as 'valid knowledge'. The contrast between the level of teacher involvement in the construction of the ID of HGPE (regulated by the SQA) and the inclusion of teachers within the structures of the BOSSSS is apparent in the following statement made by Glasby;

"...within the curriculum development structures of the BOSSSS, teachers perform a central role. It is proposed that this central role of teachers as 'peers' in the development and transmission of the instructional discourse serves to render as ineffectual the possibilities for resistance that the 'teacher-as-acquirer' of the instructional discourse may assert as a result of involvement in the curriculum development process" (p.18).



In her account of explaining the context of syllabus development, Glasby (2001) also reported how those schools who were participating in the curriculum development process were supported through a series of bi-annual teacher conferences. She believed that such support not only provided an instrumental focus to the curriculum development process but also served as a professional development focus. Returning to Bernstein's model of the social construction of pedagogic discourse, he notes that the major activity of the recontextualising field is constituting the 'what' and 'how' of pedagogic discourse. Subsequently, if teachers are not involved in constructing the pedagogic discourse it can only be expected that they will require specific knowledge to deliver the particular discourse. Tensions and conflicts between recontextualising and secondary agents and agencies are likely to be heightened when teachers' interpretation and reconstruction of HGPE in the secondary field differs from the way it was expected to be delivered by those operating in the recontextualising field. The issue of professional development as a necessity for curriculum development is now discussed.

### 8.3 The notion of curriculum development and support for professional development

Teachers' role in curriculum development was discussed in greater depth in Chapter 1 and Marker (1999) devoted a chapter to discussing the professional development of teachers from a Scottish perspective.

#### 8.3.1 Curriculum development in physical education

Physical education had, until the developments of the late 1980s, been credited with the success of the ongoing and recurring use of informal assessment on a daily basis (Lund, 1992; DES, 1989; SCCC, 1986) with pupils being assessed on skills, participation / effort, dress and attendance. Although physical education teachers have always been expected to give informal feedback to pupils on their performance, the introduction of external assessment of pupils' performance has led to physical education becoming accountable like other school subjects. A consequence of such accountability resulted in the lack of written school physical education programmes and the lack of pressure for specific

attainments from physical education being unacceptable. A more formal approach was necessary if the physical education profession was to be accountable for its share of the secondary school curriculum (Alderson, 1988; Casbon, 1988).

The level of certification now established in physical education is not necessarily welcomed by all physical education teachers with some physical education teachers currently in schools perhaps feeling 'displaced' through their initial teacher training from certification in physical education. Teachers trained in different eras understandably establish different beliefs and values of what school physical education should be about. However, it is evident from the survey and case study data gathered in this project that teachers of physical education from a similar era also hold different views of how physical education should be presented and promoted in the secondary school context. Teachers' reading of a text and how it reinforces or contradicts their feelings about the physical education subject was discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. The longer teachers have been members of the teaching profession and the more time that has elapsed from their initial teacher training, one would perhaps expect their interest in learning about and implementing curriculum developments to dwindle. As Fullan (1982) commented;

"The difficulty of learning new skills and behaviour and unlearning old ones is vastly underestimated...changes in educational beliefs, teaching styles, and other practice represent profound changes affecting the teacher's professional self-definition" (p.115).

Some teachers may not have the motivation to address the issue of professional development, whether it is through an aversion to extra work or believing they are already offering an adequate physical education programme. Longer-serving teachers may not wish to upset the lifestyle they have established for themselves over the years by taking on new challenges. Both instances highlight the importance of the availability of support for teacher professional development.

### 8.3.2 Professional development support



Professional development support is crucial to dealing with curriculum development. While emphasising that staff or teacher development is closely related to successful change, Fullan & Hargreaves (1992) were critical about the approach commonly taken to addressing teacher development. They believed that staff development tended to treat teachers as if they were all the same or stereotyped teachers. In response to this they reported how age, stage of career and life experiences have the potential to affect teacher's interest, motivation and response to innovation.

A number of authors have emphasised the importance of teachers' histories (Armour & Jones, 1998; Sparkes & Templin, 1992) and backgrounds in explaining the way they teach and the commitment and motivation they have towards current curriculum innovations (Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Hargreaves, 1994; Kirk, 1988b). Teachers who have stayed in teaching towards retirement age have had the potential to be a member of the teaching profession for almost forty years. Consequently, they are more than likely to have entered the teaching profession at the time when physical education existed 'in a world of its own' (Thomson, 1993, p.6), with physical educators devising, teaching and assessing their own programmes. Bruce (1999) used the term 'autonomous power barons' to convey the role in implementing curriculum that Scottish PTs exercised at this time.

As a reminder to the reader, the age of the 151 teachers who responded to the study survey fall into the 36-45 age band and the over 45 category. From this sample of 151 teachers, 92% of teachers teaching HGPE and 87% of teachers not teaching HGPE fall into these two age bands. This lets us calculate the most likely time that this cohort of teachers entered the teaching profession and consequently the era of curriculum developments with which they identify.

The change in discursive practice that the HGPE heralded highlights the need for teacher professional development, especially for those physical educators who have perhaps been entrenched in the delivery of a specific discourse over a significant period of time. It is to highlighting some of these previous discourses and examining more current developments

within Scottish physical education that the chapter now turns. A point of reference for agents and agencies operating in writing curriculum text in the recontextualising field is former (Kirk, 1994) or existing forms of the ID in the secondary field (Glasby, 2000; Glover, 2001). Consequently, RD may remain unexamined during the development of a subject in the curriculum in favour of reproducing previous forms of ID. This was examined in Chapter 4 and is re-visited here along with summarising the change in thinking on the physical education curriculum within the Scottish school curriculum. As Kirk (1992a) explained, and as detailed now, at particular times in history particular definitions of physical education have gained acceptance as the orthodox view of the subject.

#### 8.4 Changes in the physical education curriculum in Scottish schools

Melograno (1996) pointed out that educational trends and issues serve as an important context when designing a curriculum. Numerous changes within the Scottish school curriculum in general and in relation to physical education more specifically can be seen to have attributed towards what is now identified as HGPE. In the early 1900s, emphasis within the subject moved from a concern with the effects of exercise on posture to the inclusion of games, swimming and dancing in the mid 1930s. It was not until the early 1970s that the first Scottish school physical education syllabus appeared (SED/CCC, 1972). The emphasis at this point of time was in promoting health, physical activity and physical growth with a balance between the aesthetic, creative element in movement and the functional skills-mastery element. 'Physical activity' was identified by the Munn Committee in 1977 (SED/CCC, 1977a) as one of the eight modes of fields of study which all pupils were to engage in; 'physical activity' being described as having controlled physical movement as its 'principal medium', reinforcing the aesthetic and skilled performance elements. While the Munn Report did not recommend that physical education be nationally assessed, the subject did in fact become part of the restructured examination system introduced by the Dunning Report (SED/CCC, 1977b).



It was not until the second half of the 1980s, when the physical education profession undertook the notion of certificated physical education, that there was an increase of interest in what Kirk (1992a) has called the structuring discourses of physical education. While basic movement skills, discrete physical skills and applied skills in context are stated in the SGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1988) as contributing to practical performance, the HGPE Arrangements document (SEB, 1993) focuses more on the latter two forms of movement. The aesthetic and creative and health-related elements in both nationally certificated courses are virtually non-existent.

In 1990 the Howie Committee reviewed the aims and purposes of the courses and assessment in the fifth and sixth years of Scottish secondary education (SOED, 1992b). The Government responded to the recommendations of the Howie Committee in 'Higher Still. Opportunity for All' (Scottish Office, 1994). It was felt that the Higher Grade syllabus was too academically oriented for the increasing numbers of pupils staying on at school and that there was insufficient time between the Standard Grade examinations and the Higher Grade (Clark, 1997; Raffe, 1997; SOED, 1992b). However, the Government supported the retention of Highers with a number of changes.

The report summarised that "by extending the recommended study time, it is to be expected that many students who would otherwise narrowly fail will now have a real prospect of success, while others can expect to earn better grades" and that "Post-16 courses will have better continuity and progression from Standard Grade, so that all students should be able to continue studying at a level which is neither too easy nor too demanding" (Scottish Office, 1994, p.16). These two proposals can perhaps begin to address the low pass rate currently experienced in HGPE (Table 1.3, Chapter 1). Freel and Kidd (both 1998) expected that the large number of pupils that are currently unable to cope with the level of work in HGPE would be accommodated by the Intermediate level courses.

In response to the virtually non-existent health-related elements in SGPE and HGPE, the document 'Higher Still Subject Guide for Physical Education' admitted the potential of

physical education to 'promote active living and contribute to the health and well-being of individuals and groups in society' (SCCC, HSDU & SFEU, 1997, p.1, Rationale). It promised that fitness and health courses would be developed in due course to supplement the performance-based physical education courses.

Returning to the specific age and era of the teachers who responded to the study survey, those at the upper end of the over 45 category may have been teaching in schools from as early as 1965. The emphasis at this point in time was in promoting health, physical activity and physical growth with a balance between the aesthetic, creative element in movement and the functional skills-mastery element. Those at the upper end of the 36-45 age band could have began teaching around 1977 when physical education was the only subject outside the exam structure. Teachers of the late 1970s were likely to have been the first set of teachers in schools who had undergone a B.Ed. degree. This would have been structured around sport-based physical education and scientific knowledge for males with the promotion of an aesthetic medium primarily through movement based physical education for females. Those at the lower end of the age band were more than likely introduced into teaching around 1987 when examinable physical education was soon to be available nationally. Therefore, in accordance to when teachers entered the teaching profession, particular definitions and practices of physical education had gained acceptance as the orthodox view of the subject (Kirk, 1992a). This re-emphasises the need for continual teacher professional development so teachers understand, and are confident in delivering, curriculum innovations in their subject area.

### 8.5 Suggestions for the future construction of knowledge within the Scottish education system

The findings of this study hold a number of implications for the future construction of pedagogic discourse within the Scottish education system. It also allows possible ways in which teacher CDM and pupil subject choice can be promoted in such constructions to be suggested.



- (1) A nationwide survey on teachers' views, thoughts, beliefs and convictions to the current education system or a particular subject area would inform recontextualising agents and agencies of issues that need to be addressed and other issues that would be better left as they are. This is not to dispel the notion of having teachers involved in the process of constructing knowledge but rather to utilise their experience of working in schools to inform future curriculum innovations. Such a process would hopefully result in the genuine involvement of teachers' views, thoughts and commitment to curriculum developments at the construction phase (recontextualising field) and enhance the ownership that teachers have of curriculum development. This has been reported as a successful procedure in the piloting and evaluating of the Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Penney & Kirk, 1998), detailed earlier in this chapter. It is time that the Scottish education system moves on from enforcing the roles of 'changers' and 'adaptors' in the process of curriculum change and makes a conscious effort to allow teachers to be both producers and reproducers of knowledge.
- (2) Pupils' voice is crucial to addressing how a new addition to the curriculum can serve their needs, aspirations and interests. Without such information those involved in the construction of pedagogic discourse are guided more by the delivery of a curriculum than the actual content (Brooker & Macdonald, 1999), a concern that has been voiced in relation to physical education (Brown, 1982) and HGPE (Hill, 1993). This study, along with work carried out in piloting the Senior Syllabus in Physical Education in Queensland (Penney & Kirk, 1998), confirms the value of such involvement from prospective students.
- (3) For the successful delivery of the curriculum and to enhance teachers' feelings of confidence and competency, adequate training, assistance and the availability of resources / materials to teachers is crucial. With the transference in Scotland of resources from the local authorities to the school, it is difficult to monitor the level of INSET or professional development that is actually taking place as it depends on the ideas and expertise within individual schools (Marker, 1999).
- (4) In relation to the previous suggestion, it is imperative that communication between teachers and agencies external to schools, i.e., the SQA and the SCCC, is clear regarding the roles and responsibilities of each professional body. In this study a lack

of clarity of roles and responsibilities resulted in duplication of work, a syllabus framework that was perceived by teachers as inadequate and a lack of feedback on pupils' attainment at HGPE.

- (5) It is vital that those agents and agencies involved in the construction of knowledge are aware of and accept that different schools experience situational factors pertaining to the specific context of the school. Consequently, the expectation for teachers to deliver a specific curriculum, i.e., 'curriculum-as-intended' is unlikely in all school situations. It is more likely that the 'curriculum-as-intended' is altered to address the particular needs and interests of the pupils whom teachers are dealing with and specific resources in individual schools, i.e., 'curriculum-as-practiced'. Continued efforts to encourage teachers to deliver 'curriculum-as-intended' will only enhance the feelings teachers currently have of de-skilling and de-professionalisation.

The final emerging issue identified is addressing what can be done to promote HGPE, accepting that it is not possible to change the process that has already been undertaken in constructing and reproducing the ID of HGPE.

## 8.6 What can be done to promote HGPE?

There are a number of things that can be done to promote HGPE and attempt to compensate for the lack of teacher and pupil involvement in the construction of the form HGPE took (Chapter 4).

Chapters 1 and 4 discussed the consistently low pass rates for HGPE since its introduction in 1994 and how S6 pupils performed better at HGPE than S5 pupils. However, the arrival of Higher Still has the potential to promote HGPE as a subject that can be undertaken by a wider number of pupils now that the abilities of more pupils can be catered for through the Higher Still levels, particularly Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher.

Pupils' lack of knowledge regarding what HGPE actually entailed (Chapter 7) needs to be addressed in order to promote HGPE more accurately. This could be done by physical



education teachers preparing and delivering a short HGPE presentation to pupils making subject choices at the end of S4. This would be an ideal opportunity not only to highlight the content of HGPE and the subject's application to further and higher education but also to inform pupils that SGPE is not a pre-requisite to undertaking HGPE.

It is clear from section 8.2.2 that teachers are not impressed by the roles of the SQA and the SCCC in the promotion of HGPE. However, the lack of presence of a unified physical education body in Scotland (Gowrie, 1997; Doran & Gowrie, 1995) may result in the views and concerns of physical educationists being fragmented. Subsequently, it is perhaps not surprising that it is an established agency such as the SQA who consider what the ID of HGPE is to look like. Physical educationists may not be in a strong position to challenge developments in their field until a recognised physical education Association in Scotland is established, which would hopefully encourage and result in teachers collectively voicing their views and concerns. In order to promote HGPE more effectively, both the SAQ and the SCCC need to examine their level of involvement with schools regarding HGPE. The SCCC need to assess what materials teachers require in order to deliver the HGPE subject in the best way possible. The SQA need to examine their level of assistance to schools in relation to assessing HGPE. Disclosing detailed marks of individual pupils would perhaps result in a more positive promotion of the subject and allow teachers to endorse the subject more accurately.

Similar to the work reported in Chapter 7, pupils who have undertaken HGPE could be asked to comment on their experiences. Feedback could be used to promote HGPE and would allow pupils to make an informed decision related to the ID of HGPE in choosing to study or not study HGPE.

Teacher professional development is essential to not only promote HGPE but to also increase teachers' confidence in delivering the subject (Chapters 5 and 6). Local authorities need to view teacher professional development for HGPE as essential and address the areas of the subject that particular teachers are less familiar with. Teachers were reported to be struggling with the literary input necessary for pupils to complete

HGPE (Chapters 5 and 6). This can be addressed to a certain extent by promoting the HGPE subject and the skills that teachers need to possess in delivering the subject at the level of teacher training for physical education teachers.

Perhaps the most successful way to promote HGPE is by making sure that teachers are comfortable and confident with the content and delivery strategies expected from HGPE. The most logical way to achieve this would have been for teachers to have ownership over the HGPE syllabus. However, as teachers' involvement was not considered to any great extent in the construction of HGPE, it now appears that extensive teacher professional development is required to address the specific needs and requests from teachers currently involved in physical education in Scottish secondary schools.

## 8.7 Concluding remarks

This thesis emphasises the need for continued research into addressing an overall strategy that will result in the construction of physical education being a collaborative venture between all interested parties in the Scottish education system, i.e., teachers, pupils and government agents and agencies. The lack of teacher involvement in the construction of HGPE and their limited role in the reproduction of HGPE in schools mirror Melograno's (1996) notion of 'consumer-teachers', "'Consumer-teachers' implement someone else's philosophy, program, materials and strategies. They neither desire nor expect to be involved in any creative process of curriculum development" (p.viii). Along with addressing the issue of 'consumer-teachers', there is a need for an overall strategy in dealing with curriculum innovation, including policy regarding implementation and help from centralised sources (MacLeod, 1992; Fullan, 1982). Collaboration between all parties involved in the construction and reproduction of physical education is essential.

Without further forms of inquiry into the social construction of physical education, there is a possibility that teacher CDM and pupil subject choice in relation to physical education will be informed by factors removed from the form that physical education takes. That is, the instructional discourse of a physical education programme will continue to be secondary to teachers' and pupils' reasons for teaching or studying the subject. This study suggests trends in the social construction of physical education which may be repeated if not addressed.



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