

EVERYONE'S FUTURE

Lessons from fifty
years of Scottish
comprehensive
schooling

Edited by
Daniel Murphy,
Linda Croxford,
Cathy Howieson
and David Raffe



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Everyone's Future: Lessons from 50 years of Scottish comprehensive schooling

Moray House School of Education
University of Edinburgh
27th October 2015



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SCOTTISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,
ST. ANDREW'S HOUSE
EDINBURGH, 1

27th October, 1965

Telephone: WAVERLEY 6591, Ext. 72

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Reorganisation of Secondary Education
on Comprehensive Lines

*Quite apart from educational considerations in the narrow sense, he [the Secretary of State] believes that a system which segregates children into separate schools at the age of 12 is wrong.... young people will greatly benefit in their personal and social development by spending the formative years of early adolescence in schools **where the pupils represent a fuller cross section of the community....***

/ para 5

develop a “social understanding”

..flexible arrangements .. will ensure that the development of pupils is not held back, nor the pupils themselves discouraged ..and.. will enable all children to develop a pride in their own achievements..

/paras 6&7

A flexible curriculum for all

Liberty (Freedom)

Diversity

Choice

Autonomy

Meritocracy

Equality

Opportunity

Value

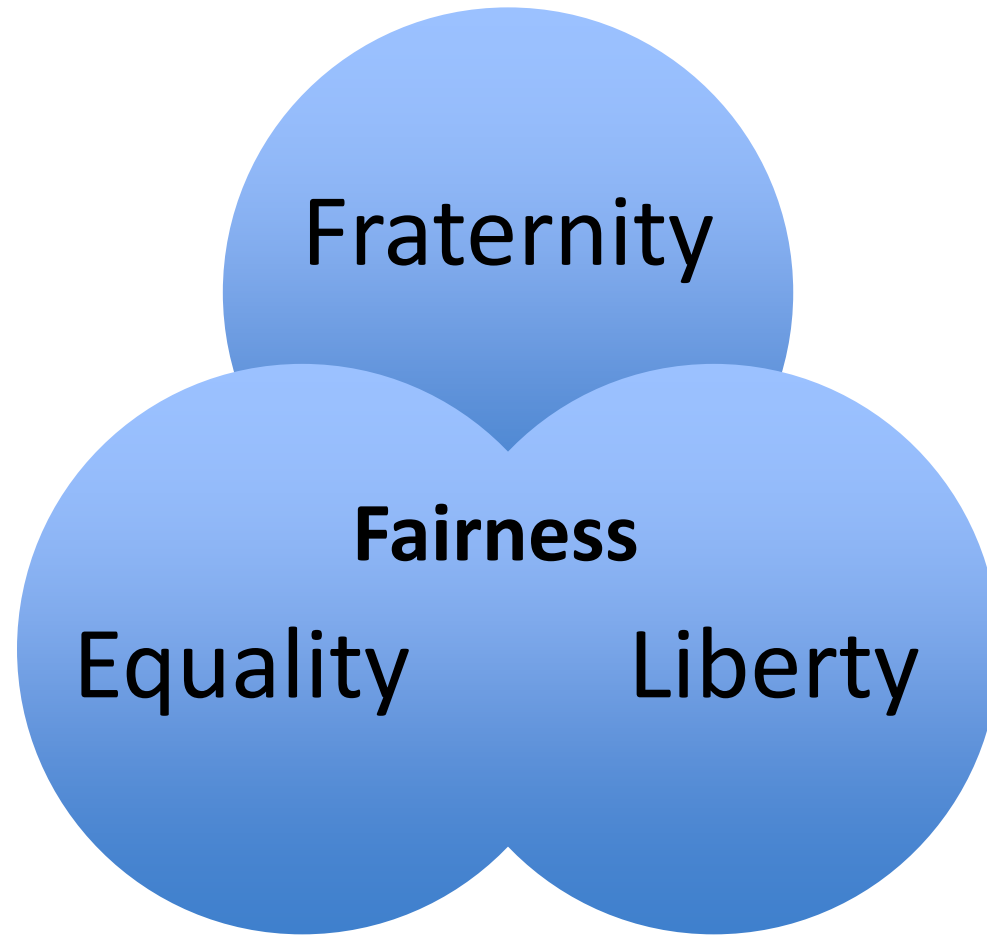
Outcome

Fraternity (community)

'Fraternity' puts liberty and equality into practice. It involves empathy and emotion. It is about personal relationships, interacting with other people in real places and real time. It is harder to be disrespectful when you are face to face and can see someone's reaction to what you say..... Fraternal relationships of warmth and concern are a necessary part of democratic living. Fraternity is found in abundance in our diverse comprehensive school communities. Where children (from diverse backgrounds) live and work together face-to-face, as in the comprehensive neighbourhood school, they learn from as well as with each other.

(Schooling Scotland p65)

But the more diverse the intake the more the challenges of fraternity



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Has comprehensive education promoted equality?

Linda Croxford

Centre for Educational Sociology (CES)

Equality is a key principle of comprehensive education

- Equality of opportunity
- Equality of outcome
- Equality of value

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Comprehensive Reforms

End of selective system

- 1965-80 Comprehensive reorganisation
- 1972 Raising of School Leaving Age (ROSLA)

Curriculum and qualification reform

- 1980s Standard Grade: curriculum and assessment “for all”
- 1983 16-18s Action Plan: NC modules
- 1990s Higher Still: “Opportunity for All”

Increase in overall participation and attainment over 50-years

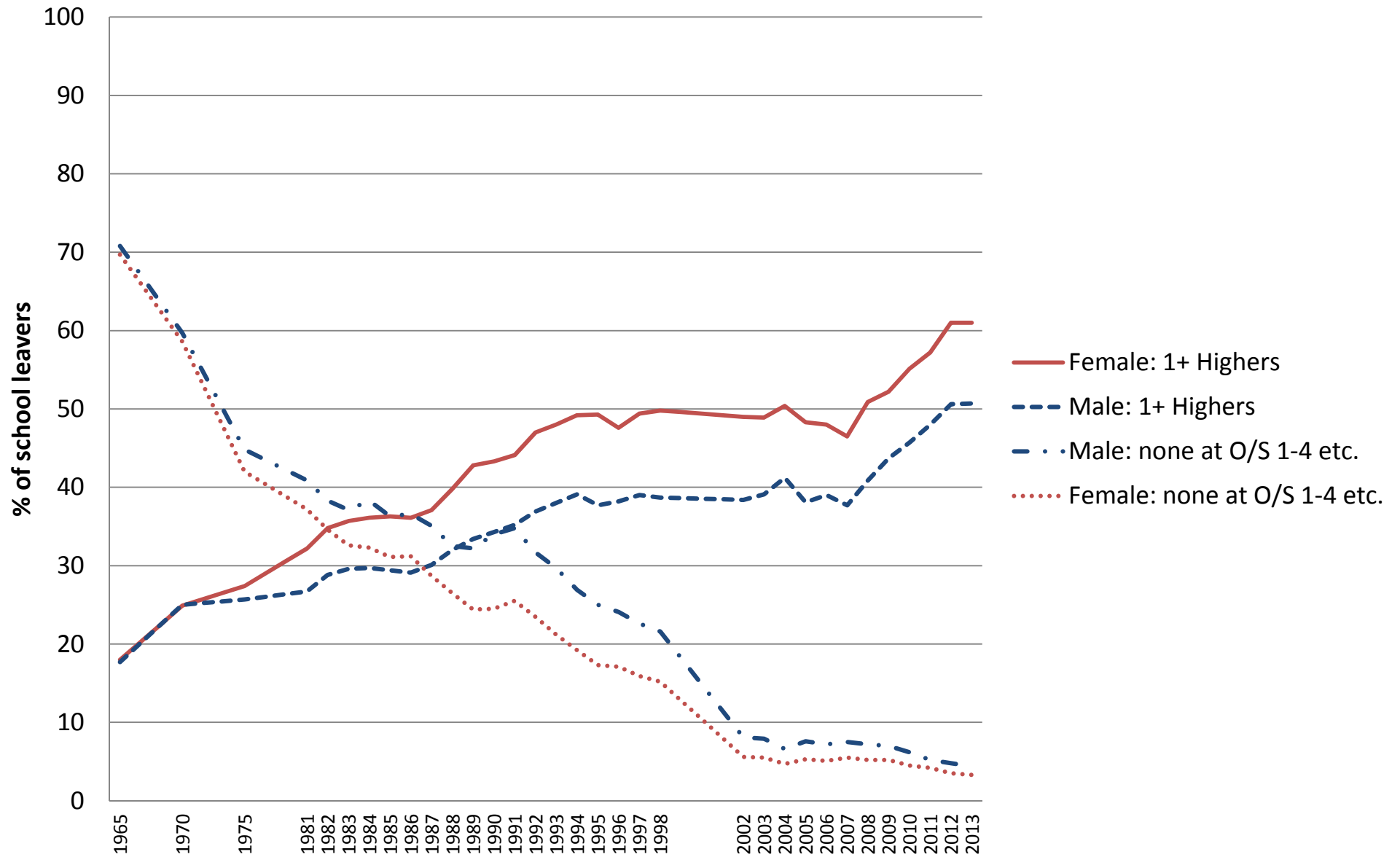
Data from Statistical Bulletins show:

- in the 1960s and 1970s most young people left school at the minimum age with no qualifications.
- now the vast majority of youngsters stay-on at school for post-compulsory education, and
- almost all school leavers (96%) have at least some qualifications when they leave.

% stayed on to S5 and S6, 1977-2013



% of school leavers with (a) no qualifications, and (b) 1+ Highers, by sex, 1965-2013



EQUALITY OF OUTCOME

Scottish School Leavers Surveys (SSLS), 1977-2005

Nationally-representative samples:

- Began in 1977 - discontinued by SG after 2005

Focus here on inequalities by social class

- End of selection
- Introduction of Standard Grade
- Social class gap to 2005

*It is not possible to update analyses presented here
beyond 2005*

End of selection

CES researchers found that by the 1980s:

- % of pupils in comprehensive schools rose to 91%
- Social-class segregation between schools reduced
- Increased attainment by working class pupils – and girls -> reduced inequality

“Comprehensive schooling is better and fairer”

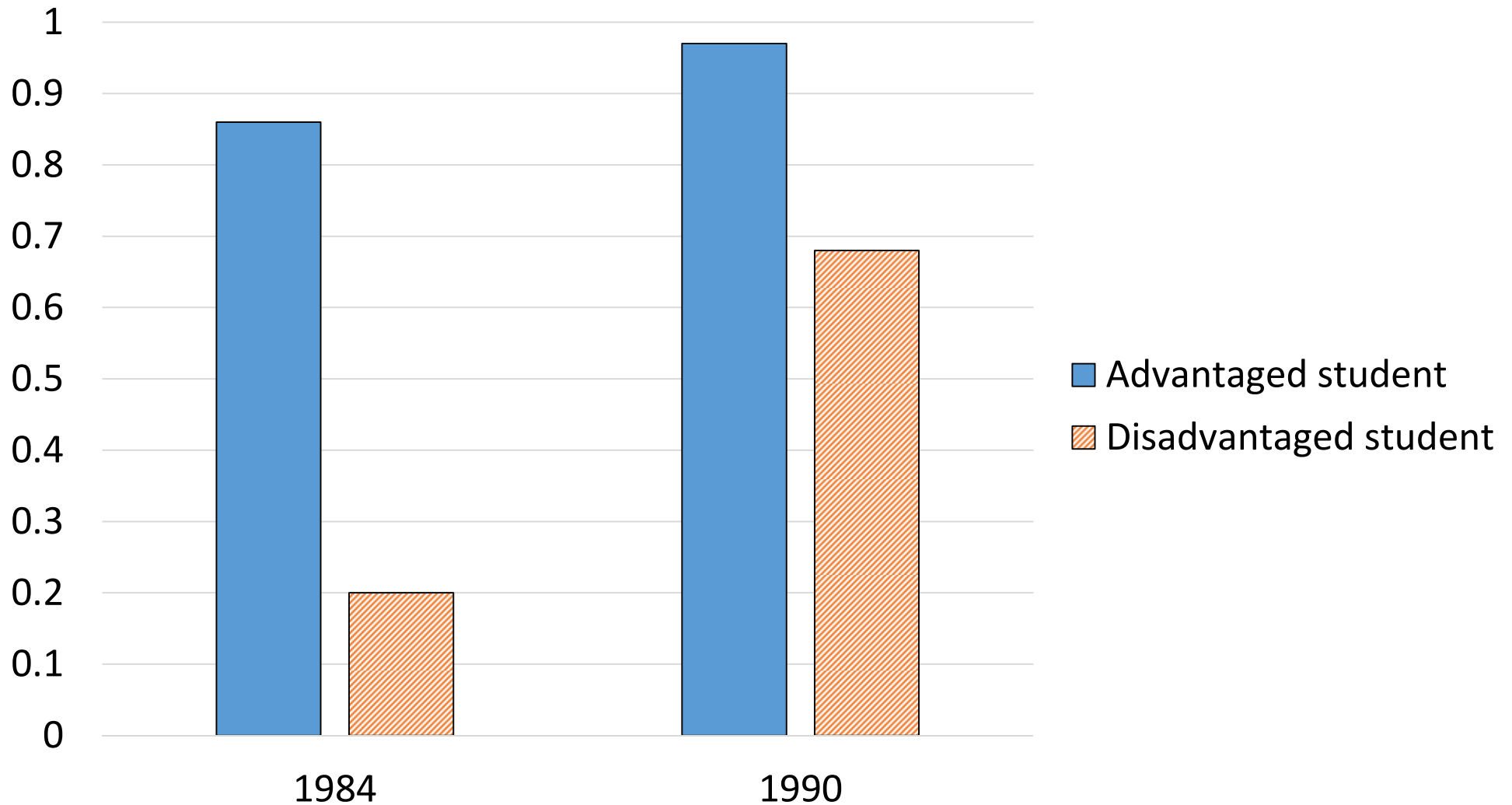
(McPherson & Willms 1988)

Standard Grade reforms

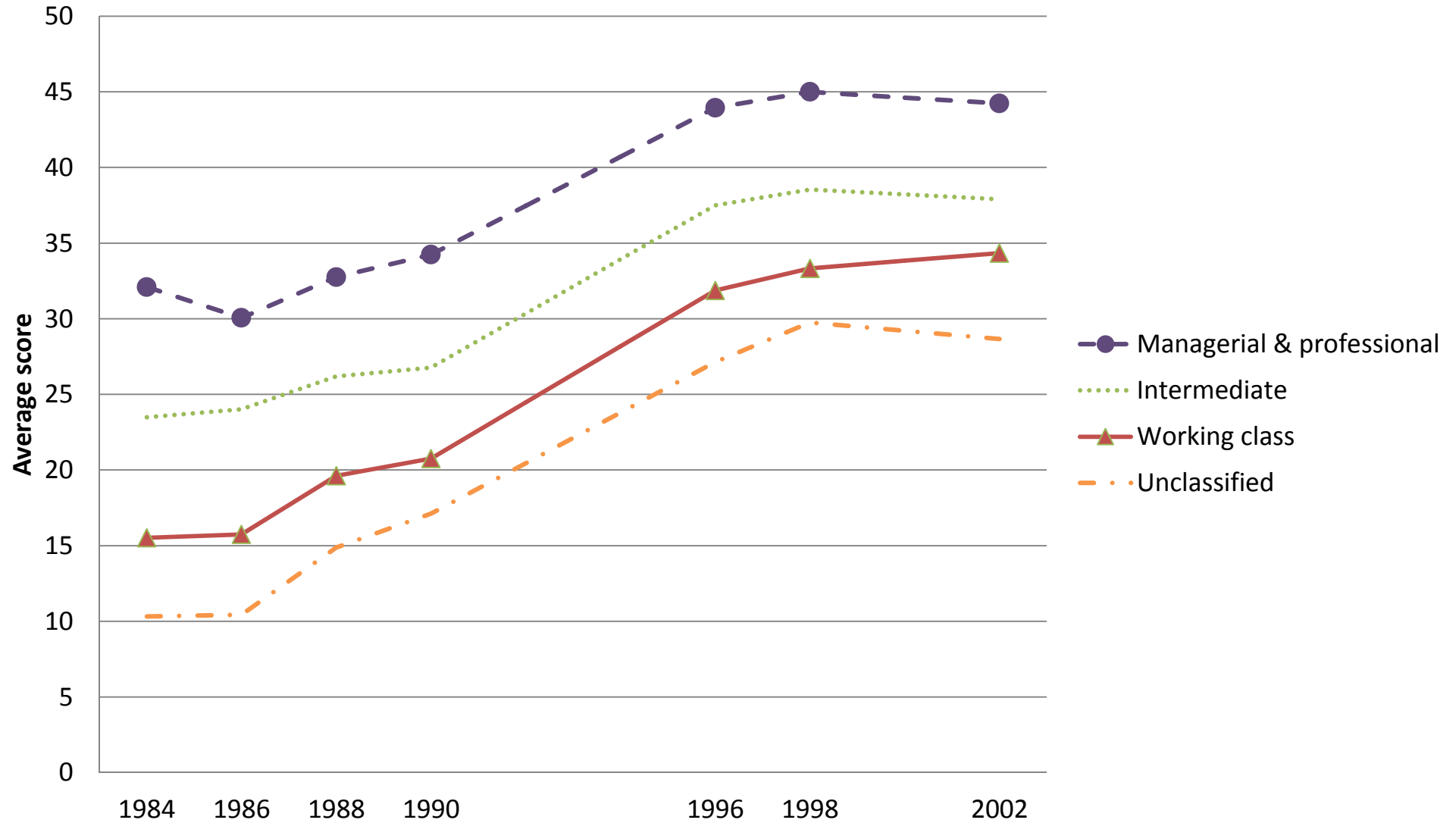
- Standard Grade reforms increased access to academic courses for low-SES pupils
- Led to faster increase in attainment of English, maths and science by low-SES pupils
- But high-SES pupils maintained advantage in top examination scores

'Improving opportunities for disadvantaged pupils'
(Gamoran 1996)

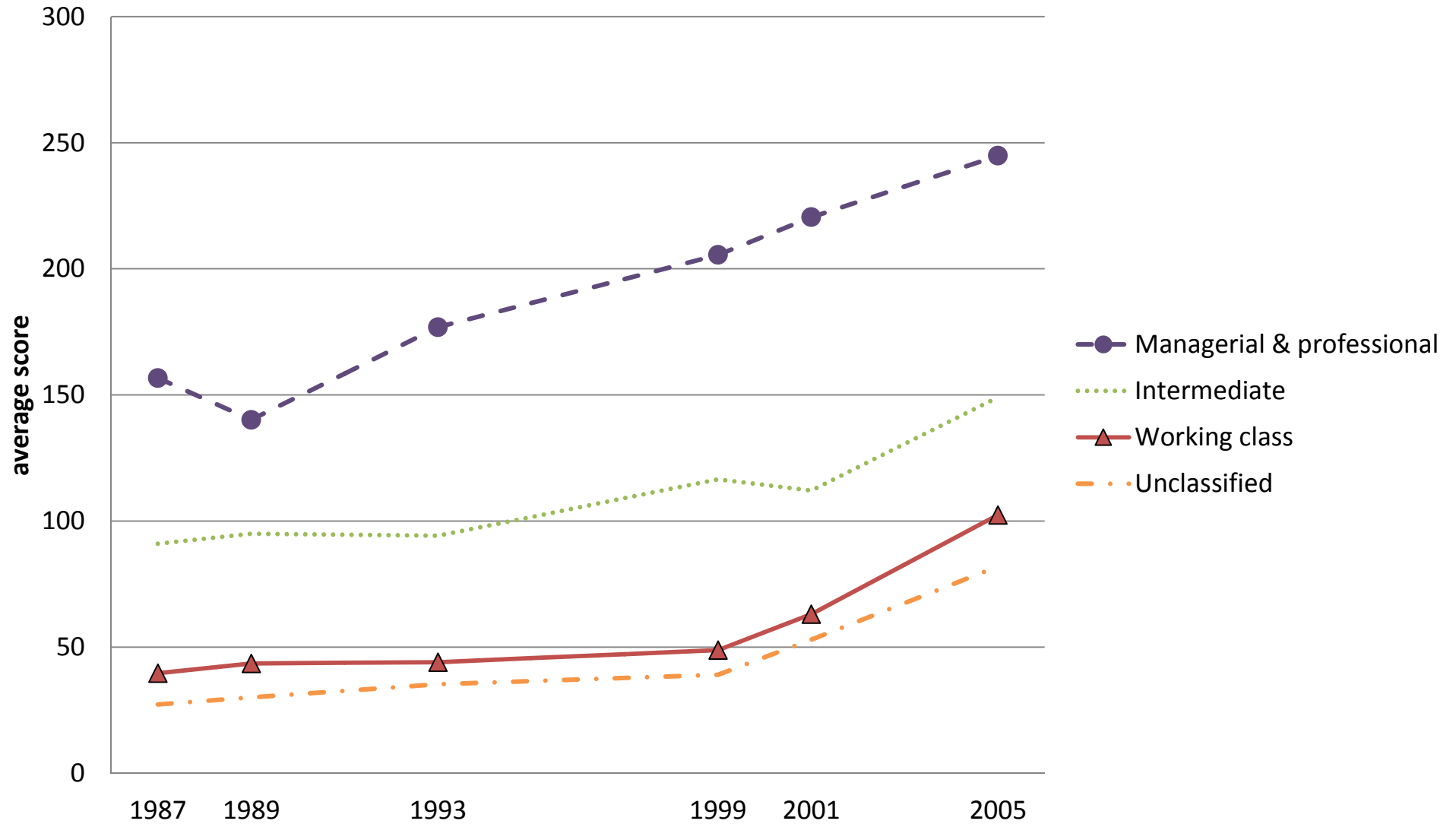
Changes in probabilities of obtaining an O/S award in mathematics, 1984 compared with 1990



Social class differences in attainment at the end of compulsory stage (S4), 1984-2002



Social class differences in attainment at the end of post-compulsory schooling (S5-S6) 1987-2005



Attainment at ages 16 and 19, 1984-2005

- Persistent inequality in attainment by social class
- at age 16, attainment gap associated with social class slightly reduced over time
- but gap at 18/19 - where more positional advantage - increased
- attainment at school is the main determinant of young people's future careers & life chances

EQUALITY OF VALUE

'Tell Them From Me': 1977

*At our school we were put into groups one's who can sit there 'O' grades and ones who can't which is unfair. **The one's who did not sit there 'O' grades the teachers never Botherd to learn them anything.** The only Good thing about the school was p.e. as that was the only class the teachers Botherd about us. **The one's who were not in 'O' grade classes never got to see anybody about a job for advice so no wonder pupils stade off as much.***

Pupils' attitudes to school

Data from surveys to 2005 show:

- Increased % said that “school work was worth doing”, “teachers helped me to do my best”, “my friends took school seriously”.
- Greatest increase among pupils in the lowest attainment quartile
- Compared with 1977, lower-attaining pupils have greater sense of inclusion in the school community.

Has comprehensive education promoted equality?

- Greater success in terms of equality of opportunity and value
- Less success in equality of outcomes
- Schools operate within a very unequal society
- Comprehensive reforms – “open door” not “targeted support”
- Schools have a selective function
- Conflicting expectations society has of schools

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Uniformity and diversity

Cathy Howieson

Centre for Educational Sociology (CES)

Challenge for education systems

- How comprehensive schooling in Scotland has sought to accommodate the full range of young people with their varied interests and abilities
- Questions of differentiation, selection and choice and balance between uniformity and diversity of provision
- How can comprehensive system do so in way that balances the principles of liberty and equality?

The common school approach

- First three decades - common school - incl all pupils with access to common curriculum and certification arrangements
 - Exemplified in development of SG system
 - national assessment based on common curriculum guidelines for nearly all pupils
 - differences dealt with by different levels of study not different provision
- extended opportunities for national certification and helped narrow attainment gap

Post –compulsory stage: unified approach

- Diversity and choice more acute questions in post - compulsory schooling
- But generally avoided separate provision taken by different groups
- AP National Certificate modules used widely by pupils of all abilities for range of purposes - academic and vocational; knowledge as well as skills
- Howie Report 1992 – twin track proposal rejected as incompatible with comprehensive principles
- Higher Still - combined aspects of curriculum and assessment of SCE and SCOTVEC systems, catering for all pupils via 5 levels

Move to greater flexibility and diversity

- Late 1990s onwards criticism of uniformity of Scottish comprehensive schooling
 - E.g. National Debate - support for comprehensive schools but call for more diverse and flexible system
- Move to greater diversity represented politically as reinterpretation of comprehensive schooling not a move away from it:

“I am committed to that [comprehensive] ideal ... The modern comprehensive is diverse, not uniform or standard... modern comprehensive schools need variety, ambition, leadership, flexibility and pupil choice. In other words, they must be diverse.”

(McConnell, 2003)

Benefits of uniformity and standardisation

- Uniformity and standardisation → perceived as negative aspects of Scottish system
- But lesson from comp experience - significant benefits of relative uniformity:
 - low level social segregation across schools and consistency of standards

and

“ A uniform system is more transparent, more easily navigated by learners, and more open to democratic control ...Above all, diverse systems can easily turn into hierarchical and unequal systems.” (Raffe 2015)

Impact of diversity on inequalities?

- Responsiveness to local need, diversity and choice – laudable- but need to consider consequences and monitor impact
 - Model that prioritises school-based innovation and diversity has potential to reinforce inequalities:
 - more socially stratified schools?
 - new selection effects?
- e.g. pupils and families differ in their ability and resources to negotiate a diverse set of opportunities and make the best choices

Lack of data and analysis of the impact of CfE

- But we do not know the impact of greater diversity under CfE on inequalities:
 - no national picture of nature and extent of diversity
 - no analysis of impact on inequalities in participation and attainment or on social segregation of schools
- Need system-wide, independent research on the impact of a more diverse system
 - recent OECD review of CfE is not sufficient

Need for principles for diversity

- Re-interpretation of comp education from common approach to diversity within the mainstream
- CfE - diversity within coherent framework but what does this mean?
- Need explicit principles of diversity-
 - how much diversity is desirable?
 - what is balance between response to local needs and level of coherence and consistency needed at system level?

Managing diversity

- Graduation certificate – practical way to help manage diversity
- All young people complete a **programme** of study:
 - rules to guarantee breadth of study
 - include all types of qualifications
 - provide recognition for range of experiences and activities
- Provide some structure and esp useful for less advantaged/lower attaining learners
- Challenges re credibility and currency of whole award
- Careful design to avoid exclusion

From comprehensive schooling to comprehensive education system

- Comprehensive reform is incomplete – is comprehensive *schooling* system not comprehensive *education* system
- Timely re Senior Phase of CfE and Developing The Young Workforce
- Graduation cert could help by including achievements in FE, work-based training, volunteering etc.
- Challenges – how we think about academic and vocational learning; trust between sectors; divided governance of school and post school provision

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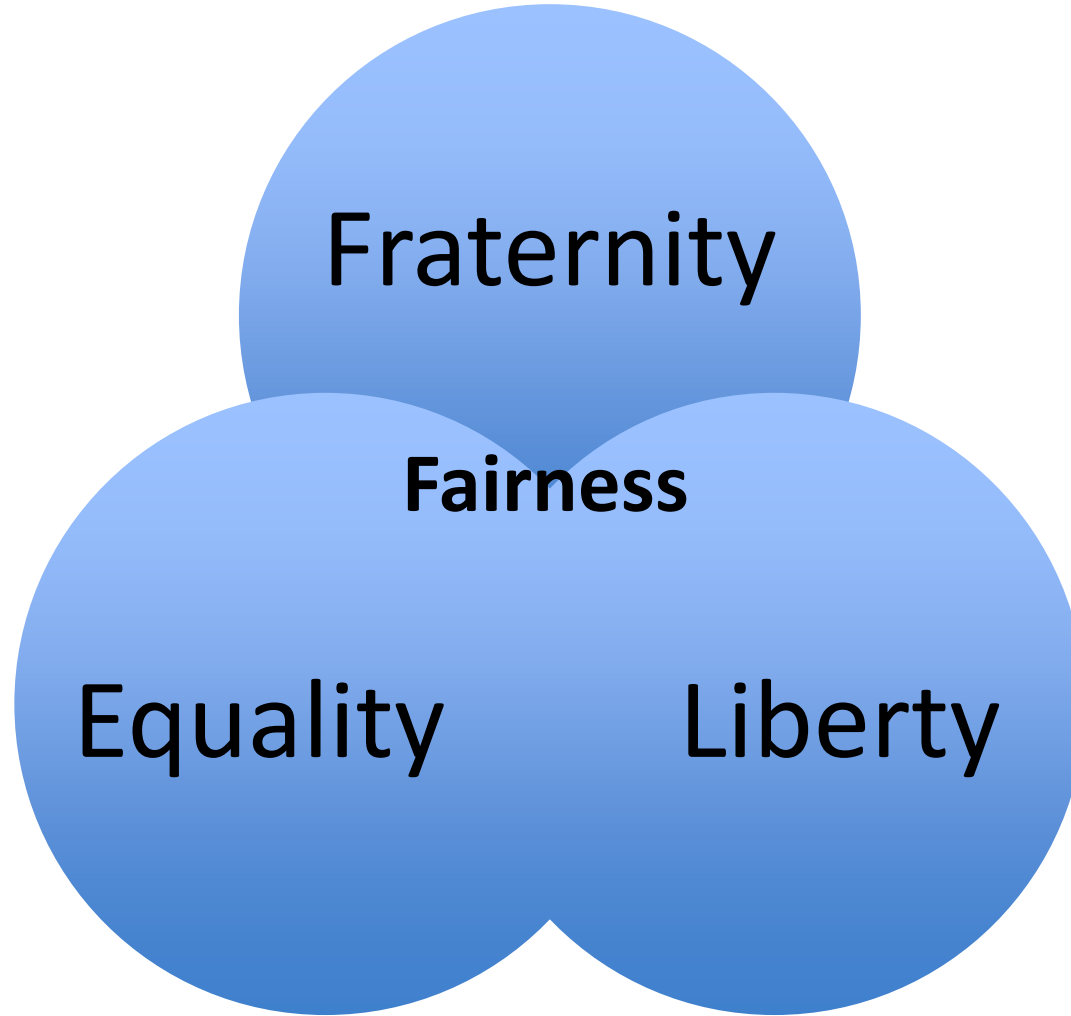
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Fraternity

Fairness

Equality

Liberty

Issues for Consideration

1. Closing the Gap
2. Positive Sustained Destinations
3. Education Governance 15-18
4. Positive Influences
5. Clarity of Vision and a Liberating Curriculum for All
6. A Broad Civic Debate

Closing the Gap

- Never mind the outputs, what about the unequal inputs?
- Balance of influence – state and parent – equality and liberty

Positive Sustained Destinations

Not graded

Confer equal value within the education system (though not beyond)

But not part of a coherent curriculum design and governance is fragmented and messy

Governance 15-18

- Many providers, not all working with each other or to a common educational script
- Complex map of provision, responsibility and accountability
- Balance of top-down/bottom-up skewed
- Too much political 'fudge'

Positive Forces

- Equal value
- National teaching force with higher standards of conduct and clear values
- Improvements in pedagogy
- Recognition of diversity in achievement (+ve destinations)
- Political commitment to reducing inequality

Curriculum Design 15-18

- What counts as and educated 18 year old?
- Senior Phase does not articulate with Broad General Education
- Clear well understood pathway to Higher and beyond
- Complex web of other pathways and routes with uncertain end destinations
- Unifying framework 15-18 required

Clarity of Vision

- Clarity of definition e.g. limits of equality / liberty
- Education is not just a destination – “the educated 18 year old”
- A ‘Graduation Certificate’? (*Schooling Scotland*) as a key part of a unifying framework

A possible Scottish Secondary Graduation Certificate

Category

Learning pathway

Academic progress

Community service

Skills

Working life

Challenging experience

Personal assessment

Learning Pathway

Examples of qualifying activities

Different blends of school, college, work, voluntary and community activity and learning within the different pathways, some leading to employment at age 18, some to College and some to University.

Notes

This section sets out the individual's broad post-school pathway in accordance with Wood Commission recommendations.

Community Service

Examples of qualifying activities

Voluntary Service

Participation in community enterprise and activity of various kinds

Sub-elements of other awards (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award, John Muir Award, ASDAN...) or through Scouts, Cadets etc.

Young carers

Notes

A progression across the secondary years can be shown.

A broad civic debate

- Framework for Improvement Stage 2 (15-18) not till 2017
- A perfect opportunity for a national civic debate on how we can develop our comprehensive schooling system 15-18 into a comprehensive **education system 15-18**
- Find the right balance between the benefits of uniformity (equality) and the need for diversity (liberty), while retaining the benefits of fraternity (community)

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