SECONDARY EDUCATION OF EXPATRIATE CHILDREN THROUGH INTERNATIONALLY SUPPORTED SELF-STUDY: THEORY AND PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes the creation and evaluation of a model for the education of expatriate secondary age children in an international setting. The model allows each student to follow a course of study which permits easy re-entry into the student's parental culture, yet takes advantage of the unique learning environment created through learning in a multinational group in an exotic culture.

Three interactive variables or components of the international supported self-system are described; Technology - the learning materials, resources and physical surroundings, Structure - the management, control and assessment systems, and People - the students, staff, parents and community.

This leads to the development of some theory of learning within the system and a function and practice for the various components.

Finally the need for the development of an international network of supported self-study centres is identified. Further research is suggested for the improvement of learning materials, for the development of sophistication in learners and for the identification of the crucial role played by teachers in the maintainance of an innovatory learning system.
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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1A

THE EXPATRIATE/TRANSCULTURAL CHILD AND THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM

1 Abbreviation

Throughout this thesis I will use the abbreviation KISC for the Kathmandu International Study Centre. This is the school in Nepal where I developed the learning system I describe in this thesis.

1.1 The Educational Problem facing Expatriate Children & their Parents

I have worked outside the UK for some years. From 1974 to 1980 in the Seychelles as Head of the Mathematics Department in the Seychelles College, this was an expatriate position with the Overseas Development Administration of the British government. From 1982 to date I have been working in Nepal with the Methodist Church Overseas Division as a missionary working in education seconded to the United Mission to Nepal. During these years I have spoken to many missionary and expatriate parents of children either of secondary age or approaching secondary age. Most of these parents expressed concern about the availability of a suitable education option for their children. This felt need or concern has been investigated by some researchers; Kress (1984) claims that polls taken of missionary parents invariably list education of children at the top of the list of difficulties encountered.

Hill (1986) documents one such example when he surveyed seventy-five families from over a dozen different national backgrounds serving in as many different national placements. He reports that 52 respondents were satisfied with the form of primary school available and 23 were not. For the junior secondary years, the position changes slightly, with the number satisfied with the available options dropping to 46 and the dissatisfied rising to 29.

My own survey of parents in Nepal (See Appendices III & IV) asked parents whose children had not yet reached secondary age which of the available secondary options they were considering. Some parents ticked more than one option, hence the figures shown in Appendix IV. These figures were broken down and showed that around 20% of the families who responded were considering leaving Nepal as their only suitable option. A further 40% indicated that leaving Nepal was one of the options they were considering. Thus 60% of the respondents mentioned leaving Nepal as at least one of the options they were considering. At
the time of the survey there were about 520 adults and 230 children with the United Mission to Nepal and the International Nepal Fellowship, the questionnaire was completed by the parents of 140 of these children. Those who did not return the questionnaire were mainly parents of very young children.

1.2 The Existing Options

What are the options usually available at secondary level? First, I will look at the general position on a worldwide basis, and then look at the position as it was in Nepal in 1984. I have tried to include all the options that are available, but there may well be some options that I do not know about.

Generally available options:

- Overseas boarding school
- Boarding school in the home (parental) country
- Correspondence Course
- Single mission school in the host country
- National school in the host country
- International school

I shall discuss each of these options briefly before detailing the options available in Nepal.

1.2.1 Overseas boarding schools

These are usually Christian foundations set up specifically to answer the needs of missionaries' children. They are usually located in countries with a long history of missionary activity, e.g. India, Kenya, Philippines. They usually have a student body drawn from many nationalities but offer only a single country's national system of education. For example, Hebron School in South India is a British school, Woodstock School in North India is American. Rift Valley Academy in Kenya, and Faith Academy in Manila are both American system schools. In my survey of parents in Nepal, parents of children at boarding schools in India (Hebron & Woodstock) listed the strengths of these schools as (given in order of descending frequency):

- Good peer group
- Christian environment
- Good social environment
- Wide variety of subjects taught
- High academic standard
- Good preparation for home country
The weaknesses mentioned were:

- Distance from Nepal
- Separation of families
- Poor preparation for home country
- Disjointed existence for parents
- Materialistic pressures
- Too exclusively Christian to be a good preparation for living in the real world

Unfortunately my survey was only able to cover those parents of secondary age children who had decided to remain in Nepal. No clear record has been kept of why people decide to leave Nepal.

1.2.2 Boarding schools in the home (parental) country

The problem of being educated in the wrong national system does not exist in this situation, but a child who has lived in another culture may not necessarily fit easily into his home culture. Kress (1984) in discussing the situation as it exists for American children whose parents work in Japan writes:

...parents often opt to place their children in an American or international school, even if it involves long commuting or boarding. .... Ironically, if a child has already spent several years in Japan, whether or not he has attended a Japanese school, he does not find that a fellow country man of his own age is automatically an acceptable peer. At least until considerable adjustment has taken place, the American who has experienced only American culture is no more suitable than the Japanese friend. There is a certain kinship among foreign children living in Japan which is hard to duplicate.

This problem is more widespread than Japan and in Section 1.3 I look at the cultural problems facing missionary and expatriate children.

The distance/separation problem is great as the cost of travel to the home country limits the time that families can be together. In the Nepal situation it actually takes longer to reach the two boarding schools in India by train than it would to fly to any home country, but parents say that they feel closer to the children in India than if they were in their home country.
1.2.3 Correspondence courses

Correspondence courses may well be able to provide for a child’s academic needs, but in other areas there are obvious drawbacks. Parents in Nepal cited as weaknesses (listed in order of descending frequency): little peer contact, restricted possibilities for practical work in certain subjects especially the sciences, limited possibility for cooperative events and the lack of competition. Closeness between parent and child was the only strength of correspondence courses mentioned in my survey.

Correspondence courses by their nature require a large commitment of time and energy by at least one parent to their children. Some parents may see this as a positive argument for correspondence courses, but others may resent the time taken away from their other activities.

Some parents I have spoken to have mentioned a fear of being able to cope with subject matter, especially at secondary level, as a reason why they would be unwilling to use correspondence courses.

1.2.4 Single mission schools

These schools are normally open only to children of parents who work for the organizing mission. Most normally they operate at primary level and are based on large mission compounds. There appears to be a trend away from missionaries living on the traditional mission compound (although I cannot document this), making the viability of the single mission school suspect as its pupil supply pool shrinks. Mission also seem to be becoming international in character and any one country’s educational system no longer satisfies the educational needs of all the personnel in a mission station.

1.2.5 National schools

Occasionally it is possible for expatriate children to attend national schools in their host country. For example, until recently there were two schools in Seychelles offering "O" and "A" levels. These schools were open to any children, expatriate or Seychellois, and a number of British expatriate children did attend them. Nepal also has two schools offering "O" level courses in English medium, but these schools are open only to Nepali nationals. Some parents are happy to send their children to local schools and are not concerned that their children may not fit easily back into their home/parental culture. In Hill’s survey parents placed an emphasis on guaranteeing their children an education which would enable them to get back into the career structures of the country of parental origin. A few
parents spoke of their children having viable futures in either culture, but the school curriculum they sought for their children, even at primary level, was decisively Western.

1.2.6 International schools

These schools are located in most capital cities. They offer only one country's system of education, usually American. Their name "international" comes from the fact that their student and staff enrolment are multinational in make-up. They often operate on a profit basis, or at least pay western level salaries to their staff. This results in fees which are considered too high by many missionary parents.

1.2.7 The secondary options available to parents working in Nepal

In 1984 in Nepal, there was one international day school, Lincoln School in Kathmandu. This offered an American education for grades KG to ten. The Norwegian school was a joint church/Norwegian government-sponsored boarding school offering education to the Scandinavian community. There was no national school open to expatriate children, but the other options I have mentioned; of boarding school in the home country, boarding school in a neighbouring country (India) and correspondence courses were all available. In my survey parents were asked which school or option they were currently using. Because Lincoln, Hebron, Woodstock and the Norwegian Schools all operate at both primary and secondary level it was impossible to separate the options being used at secondary level only. The expatriate primary options available in Nepal took about 48% of the responses. Hebron School (India) 16%, Correspondence Courses 14%, Lincoln School 11%, Woodstock School (India) 5%, Home country boarding schools 4% and the Norwegian School 3%.

1.3 The Transcultural Child

Before I attempt to define the educational needs of an expatriate child, I feel it is important to examine the cultural areas within which such a child operates. Hill 1986 gives four clear definitions which clarify the educational issue. The parental culture (PC) is the culture within which the children have to operate during periods of leave in their home country, they will probably take their higher education in this culture, and parents often claim that they try to recreate something of this culture in their private homes in the host country. But children of long term missionaries will often have spent most of their formative years living in the indigenous culture (IC) of their host country. Some children may have to
cope with two different ICs, for example, the expatriate children from Nepal attending boarding schools in India. Hill argues that the curriculum of a school catering for missionary children should include studies related to both the PC and IC.

Hill then points out that Western curricula are becoming increasingly multicultural (MC) and that our thinking would be dated if we think we must be doggedly monocultural to be credible. The fourth aspect of culture for the missionary child, who is neither entirely at home in the IC or PC, comes from the need for the individual child to be given a more over-arching frame of reference. Hill calls this "transcultural studies" (TC).

I will use the term "transcultural child" for expatriate and missionaries' children to reflect the unique cultural nature of these children.

1.4 The educational needs of the transcultural child

Hill’s aim in his discussion of the transcultural child was to produce a curriculum model compatible with Christian values and adopted to their special needs. I reproduce Hill’s model below as I feel it to be an excellent framework upon which to develop an educational model. I also list the needs which parents in Nepal expressed in a rather less theoretical manner than Hill.

1.4.1 Hill’s curriculum model

The educator should aim to provide a controlled exposure to the cultural backgrounds (PC and IC) of the students, with a view to enabling them to:

(a) maintain a stable and positive self-image while learning new things;
(b) acquire survival skills appropriate to both cultures (PC and IC);
(c) identify and develop one's personal creative gifts;
(d) gain access to the major fields of human thought and experience;
(e) become aware of the dominant world-views and value stances influencing one's social world, with special attention to biblical Christianity (MC and TC);
(f) develop capacities to think critically and transculturally, and to choose responsibly (TC); and
(g) develop empathy, respect and a capacity for dialogue and Christian apologetics with other persons, including those whose primary beliefs differ from one's own (MC).

1.4.2 Parents' expression of needs

Using the strengths and weaknesses of the available options as expressed by parents in my survey, I produced the following list of parent expectations. They expressed the need for a good peer group, learning within a Christian and good social environment. There should be a wide variety of subjects taught to a high academic standard. There should be good preparation for re-entry to the home country and there should be exposure to non-Christians. The system should keep the children within Nepal and not cause a disjointed existence for the parents. There should be opportunity for cooperative events. Finally, the system should not be too expensive.

In 4.7, I further discuss these needs and how the KISC model attempts to meet them.
CHAPTER 1B

GUIDE THROUGH THE THESIS

1.5 Introduction

In Chapter 1A I introduce the educational problem facing many expatriate parents wishing to give their children the best education possible without disrupting the family unit. I describe the traditionally available educational options and their inability to completely solve the problem. Finally, I define the concept of the Trancultural Child and describe their educational needs.

1.6 Part A

In Chapter 2 I describe my early attempts to find a practical solution to the educational problem facing expatriate parents. Some form of self-study appears to offer a solution and this leads to Chapter 3 in which I describe my literature survey of the field of self-study. School level self-study systems I describe include; Project IMPACT, the Dalton Plan, PNEU, CHED and Supported Self-Study. I also look at university level experience and, in particular, the Keller Plan.

The model of international supported self-study which I finally evolved consists of three interactive components; the Technology, the Structure and the People. In Chapter 4 of Part A, I describe the Technology of KISC, that is the physical facilities, the learning materials and resources, the Structure, that is, the learning system and the structure of the system for monitoring work and progress, and I describe the People, that is, the enrolment and staffing.

I finish Part A by discussing in Chapter 5 another aspect of the Structure, that is, the assessment and grading system.

1.7 Part B

In this part I discuss some of the problems inherent in my triple role as headmaster-innovator-researcher. I discuss the evaluation in the light of action research literature and develop a theoretical basis for my research methodology, which includes the use of a time-on-task observation matrix, evaluation workshops, and the interview of myself by an outsider. I finish Part B with a critical look at my research instruments.
1.8 Part C

In Part C I describe in detail the three main research instruments. In Chapter 7 I analyse and comment on the results of the three Evaluation Workshops involving parents, students and staff. I also describe the results of a student questionnaire. In Chapter 8, I describe the time-on-task observation matrix and discuss some of the observations. In Chapter 9 I give the full transcript of an interview of myself by an outside observer.

Finally in Chapter 10 I identify and discuss some issues, concerns and questions which arose during the first two and one half years of KISC. These include; motivation of learners, sophistication of learners, materials, self-direction versus tutor direction in learning, length of self-study time, noise control in the learning centre, peer groups in a small school, and optimum numbers of students in the learning centre.

1.9 Part D

In Part D I concentrate upon the People in the system. In Chapter 11 I discuss matters concerning tutors, that is; tutor not teacher, tutor versus material, teamwork, interpreting non-verbal messages, content and pacing of group tutorials and training of tutors. In Chapter 12 I turn my attention to the parents and community; the responsibilities of parents and community involvement. In Chapter 13 it is the turn of the students. I examine their adjustment to self-study, their need for active involvement in their learning, their use of the openness of the system, doubts they have about progress and finally I discuss students with learning difficulties.

1.10 Part E

In Part E, I return to the Structure and Technology of the model. I discuss some theory of learning (14.2.1) and develop a function and practice for the components of the learning and administrative systems (14.2.2 & 14.3).

1.11 Part F

In 15.1 I conclude that the system has been largely successful but would benefit from a support system in the parental countries and a worldwide network of supported self-study centres (15.3). In 15.2 I summarise the practice of the KISC model under the heading; STRUCTURE, TECHNOLOGY and PEOPLE. In 15.4.1 I identify the need for further research into the nature of learning materials for self-study, in 15.4.2 I discuss the development of sophistication in learners and finally in 15.4.3 I discuss the need for research into the crucial role played by tutors in the maintenance of an innovative self-study system.
PART A

CHAPTER 2

EARLY ATTEMPTS AT A SOLUTION LEADING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF KISC

2.1 The Early Papers

In 1983, I produced the paper (An alternative to Boarding School for Missionaries' Children) given in Appendix I. The paper was not designed to be an academic paper and was distributed just to missionary friends and acquaintances to test their reactions. These friends represented a fairly broad spectrum of missionary workers including teachers, mission administrators and experts in radio broadcasting. The majority indicated that they agreed the problem of educating the transcultural child was worth investigating and that the proposals in the paper had potential which should be further explored and developed.

I collected the criticisms and questions together and chose representative questions which I felt could form the basis for further discussion. I then used these to write a second paper in June 1984. An edited version of Paper I together with all of Paper II has been published. (McIlhenny, 1986)

In addition to sending this paper to all those who had received the first paper, I also sent it to a number of missionary society executives in the United Kingdom, including the personnel secretaries of these organisations. I also gave the paper to a small number of people outside missionary organizations, including the personnel officer in a government agency which has a large number of personnel serving outside U.K., and the principal of a correspondence college.

Again, the response from both missionary and secular organizations was that they agreed that the education of transcultural children is a problem, that there exists a need for additional education options and that the REBLAST proposal in Paper II should be further researched and developed.

At this stage, my attention was drawn to the First International Conference on Missionary Kids (I.C.M.K.) which was to be held in Manila in November 1984. Even though the closing date for submission of papers had already passed, papers I and II were accepted by the organizers in the USA and I was invited to present my ideas at the conference during a symposium entitled "Emerging Educational Options".

Unfortunately, due to an editorial error, my actual presentation at the conference was not printed in the
proceedings of the conference, this volume contains just an edited version of papers I and II. (McIlhenny 1986) For a summary of my actual presentation see Appendix II.

2.2 Comments on the early papers.

After the Manila Conference, I circulated the summary paper (Appendix II) to a number of professional educators and the paper was also presented on my behalf at a conference in London (May 1985). This conference (on the education of missionaries' children) was attended by representatives from most of the UK missionary societies and a number of other interested persons. Unfortunately, I was unable to present the paper personally as I would have liked to have followed up some of the questions asked on the spot.

I received written comments from a number of people after the two conferences and the wider circulation of the paper. Many of these were critical, but there was also encouragement:

The American Chairman of the I.C.M.K.:

The REBLAST program has a great deal of potential and I'm encouraged by the parallels that seem to exist between it and other programs currently being developed.

Some encouragement included practical suggestions:

The Open Tech projects in UK may throw up some useful packages.

An Australian professor of education:

I think the (REBLAST) proposals have a lot to offer, especially in the light of the stresses and strains which the Manila Conference showed up in traditional models of educating the children of missionaries.

At the same time, as an educator, I would like the curriculum process to be spelled out in somewhat more detail, especially with regard to the needs of missionary children for something more than just "O" and "A" levels, and the learning outcomes hoped for, beyond the level of mere gains in factual knowledge and theoretical understandings.

There was concern about how children would cope with the proposed system.
A member of HMI compared REBLAST to the Open University:

There must be some doubt regarding the capacity of adolescents to adapt to a system of learning that is normally regarded as suitable for the mature and highly motivated student.

Another inspector was very concerned about the lack of teacher/pupil relationship which she feels is essential both in regard to personal tuition and also to promote stimulus and interest in the subject. The secretary to a group of boarding schools and colleges of education wrote:

With odd exceptions children are gregarious beings with educational and social needs which cannot be met in full within the family. Their process of learning is enriched by the presence of their peers - conversation, cooperation and competition in the sense that the good work and enthusiasm of A is likely to have a beneficial effect on B. There are so many activities essential to aesthetic, spiritual, moral and physical development that are impaired if undertaken always alone - music, art, drama, worship, games.... and I could go on. It's hard to get excited about learning if you are always alone.

It was recognised that REBLAST attempted to overcome some of the problems associated with the remote learner and indeed proposed to take advantage of his environment, but there were also some concerns expressed.

The executive tutor of a correspondence college:

I could not agree with you more that correspondence courses at secondary level fail to take advantage of the student's unique learning environment. ....... Of course at upper secondary level there are so many factors to be considered, examinations being at the forefront.

The same correspondent was encouraging about the proposed residential period:

Incorporating a residential aspect into the academic year seems to me an excellent approach. This would help to break down the social isolation of these young people and at the same time help to ensure that the appropriate quality of academic work was being maintained. ....... I also feel that it would be reassuring for parents to know that they were sharing some of the responsibility with
tutors at a residential course as well their correspondence tutors.

But two members of staff in a college of education had a number of concerns about the residential period:

Is six weeks long enough for the ambitious programme set out in 3(i) i.e. music, sports, art, craft. What kind of standard of attainment or achievement could be reached in that period given the need for settling down, acquaintances, group relationships, teacher-pupil relationships, necessary introductions etc... 

and

There would be large social consequences for such a short visit in another culture especially regarding the amount of time a child would spend with his peers.

The principal of a correspondence college pointed out some practical difficulties:

The idea of a residential period in the UK is a good one and we have discussed this on several occasions with parents. Invariably, however, the cost has been so great that they were not prepared to consider this. There are also difficulties in arranging a suitable period of 6 weeks when all the students could be in the UK.

The use of computers, video and radio were a cause of concern to some correspondents. There were problems with the overall concept as expressed by the secretary of the group of boarding schools and colleges of education:

Who will ensure that computer programmes will meet a pupil's individual needs? Computer learning is basically concerned with the completion of set tasks. How will open-ended learning take place? What happens to child centered interests? It takes a skilled teacher, on site, to see and develop children's potential.

Another correspondent, a reader in Education at a Scottish university, was one of a number who expressed concern about the limitations of computers:

There are considerable problems of compatibility and I think we have to say quite bluntly that as
yet the criticism of microcomputer provision is that it hasn't been tied closely to any curriculum either in the primary or secondary school - the same is true for video.

The same writer went on to suggest that REBLAST should rely very much more heavily on print and more traditional distance learning techniques.

The principal of a correspondence school again:

We have considered the use of microcomputers and video, but have not done anything about it at this time because most of the parents do not have equipment which would be compatible and because the cost would be prohibitive.

He continued:

The cost of a series of radio programmes would be even more prohibitive, ....... In any case, we consider that cassette tapes are more useful and this is an area where we intend to expand our operations.

The director of a worldwide Christian radio broadcasting organisation felt that the type of radio programme suggested in REBLAST, with it's emphasis on the social link between learners, could be financially feasible. Correspondents also saw problems with financing and staffing REBLAST, and pointed out the problems in organizing and controlling such a complex system. Even so, the overall impression given by the correspondents was that the REBLAST proposal was worth investigating further and the London conference on the education of missionaries' children called for a feasibility study of REBLAST.

2.3 The Development of KISC

At this time I was working in Nepal with the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). The mission had seconded me to Nepal's university to work in teacher training. In fact, it was while I was doing research in preparation for writing a booklet on teaching mathematics to large classes (McIlhenny et al 1985) that I first realised the potential of self study for the education of missionaries' children. It seemed impossible to carry out the feasibility study of REBLAST requested by the London Conference from the remoteness of Nepal and the idea was set aside. But my discussions with parents and others had drawn the attention of the UMN administration to the concern which parents had over the lack of choice of secondary education options. They asked me to set up a working party to study the extent of the problem
and to propose a solution, possibly using some of the REBLAST ideas.

The Working Party consisted of six persons, including myself as chairman. Four of us were working in education at the time and the other two members were concerned parents. (3 of the 4 educationalists are also parents.) We were of Australian, British and German nationality and represented both the United Mission to Nepal and the International Nepal Fellowship (a sister mission in Nepal who asked if they could join with UMN in attempting to find a solution.)

I modified the original REBLAST proposals to suit the conditions in Nepal and presented these ideas to the working party. They were accepted as a suitable starting point for a "school" in Nepal. We then designed a questionnaire (Appendix III), to survey the extent of the concern of parents over the existing education options, to test their reaction to the proposed alternative and to request certain information which would be useful if the "school" became a reality. A brief outline of my proposal was printed as an introduction to the questionnaire.

In Appendix IV I give detailed results from the questionnaire, but here I give the most important points, concerning the establishment of KISC.

As I have already mentioned in Chapter 1, about 20% of the respondents whose children had not yet reached secondary age indicated that the whole family would leave Nepal when they needed secondary education given the existing options. A further 40% were considering leaving Nepal as an option. Of those who chose leaving Nepal as their only option, about 90% were interested in the new "school". Of those who chose leaving Nepal as one of the options they were considering, almost 95% were interested in the proposed "school".

The working party then submitted the questionnaire results together with plans and a budget for the "school" to the UMN and INF Executive Committees. As it seemed likely that these proposals were going to be accepted, I decided that I would like to establish the "school" on a sound academic basis through the research and evaluation of the development. I enquired about the possibility with a few universities and my research proposals were accepted by the University of Surrey. The two missions also accepted the proposals, I was appointed as Principal, a management committee was formed and a suitable building found. The Government of Nepal was approached and permission received in April 1986 to operate the school.

I was able to spend the period of January to September 1986 in full time study at the University of Surrey. During this time I was able to search for suitable self study and resource
materials for the students, purchase equipment, prepare for the evaluation of KISC, and continue a literature survey first started in 1983 (See Chapters 3 & 6). The management committee, in correspondence with myself, recruited students and staff and had alterations to the building carried out. I returned to Nepal in October 1986 and in February 1987, the "school", (which now had the name, Kathmandu International Study Centre) was formally opened.
CHAPTER 3
SUPPORTED SELF-STUDY AND OTHER RELATED MODELS:
A LITERATURE SURVEY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In preparation for this thesis my literature survey had two thrusts. In one, I had to decide upon a research method and, in particular, investigate the problem of a headmaster researching his own innovation. This survey was used as a basis for the writing of chapter 6.

In the other main thrust, my survey investigated what had been written in the related areas of open learning, self study, etc. In this chapter I describe this survey and discuss Supported Self-Study and other related educational models which contributed towards the development of KISC.

It is important to state at which stage in the development of KISC each reference was studied. I will commence with materials studied before KISC opened.

3.2 Beginnings

During the years 1982 to 1985, I lectured in "Methods of Teaching Mathematics" in the B.Ed course of the Institute of Education, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. This work involved visiting student teachers on teaching practice in Nepali schools. This was a rather depressing experience as I came to realise that much of what was taught in the B.Ed course was irrelevant in the very overcrowded and primitive conditions that prevail in many parts of Nepal. A number of my students were faced with the problem of teaching classes of 120 students. At this stage I recalled the work of L C Taylor (1972). Reading this book again reminded me that the traditional perception of the teacher as the main source of educational input could and should be challenged. As I set aside my limited vision of education, I became excited by the possibility of resource based learning and, as my reading progressed, systems of self-study. I started a literature survey with the purpose of finding something to help my students in the Nepali school system, but then realised that resource based learning and self-study might have something to offer in the area of the education of transcultural children. In the Nepal context, my research, in collaboration with two Nepali colleagues, led to the publication of a booklet entitled "Teaching Mathematics to Large Classes in Nepal: A study with practical suggestions" (McIlhenny et al, 1985).

In carrying out my literature survey, looking at what had or was
being done in the areas of self-study, open learning and resource based learning, I had a number of questions in mind: What where the problems? Was there a common theme? What age groups had used the idea? Was there any experience in the developing world? In fact, I started the survey convinced in my own mind that self-study, given the correct support system, was a practical solution to the problems of the teacher shortage in Nepal and could also satisfy the educational needs of the transcultural child. In my survey, I was looking for confirmation of my conviction and searching for ideas to help develop a successful study support system. I needed to know what others had done, where they had succeeded and where they had gone wrong. The material I found at this stage in my research was largely practical in nature, I found no completely theoretical material. The material I found most useful as I planned for the opening of KISC was largely related to particular systems of self-study and I describe these below. A useful and very practical book is "Teaching through Self-instruction" (Rowntree 1986), because this is not related to any particular system I will not describe it below, but I refer to it in 6.10.

3.3 Descriptions of some self-study systems

I start by describing self-study experience in the developing world.

3.3.1 The IMPACT System of Mass Primary Education

Socrates (1983) and Sanger (1977) give full descriptions of this system, which was developed by INNOTECH (The Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology, Manila, Philippines) as an effective and economic delivery system for mass primary education. The Project for the Instructional Management by Parents, Community and Teachers is called project IMPACT in the Philippines and Proyek PAMONG in Indonesia.

IMPACT enables an average of 100 children of different grade levels to learn under one professionally trained teacher and is a deliberate attempt to bring together a school and its surrounding community. It attempts to open the school to use by the community, and at the same time, it attempts to use the community as a learning resource. In order to highlight this change in nature, the schools operating IMPACT have been renamed as Community Learning Centres (CLC). The CLC becomes a learning resource centre from which the children obtain their instructional materials, sit tests, meet with their supervisor, and study individually or in groups. The written materials mainly take the form of self-instructional booklets called modules.
The students form themselves into groups of the same grade or level, and help each other along with their self study modules. The lower grades have a "programmed teacher", a student from the higher primary grades, to lead them in reading and mathematics. Upper grades have a peer tutor from their own group to guide them. High school students come for a day each month as tutors on a rotating basis. Members of the community with special skills, such as carpenters and tailors, take over the tuition of groups in applied skills either at the CLC or at their own place of work. Home tutors, either parents, siblings or neighbours, are recruited for as many students as possible. The students work on their modules, either at home in the afternoons, or during the day at school in "Learning Kiosks" built by community volunteers.

The classroom teacher becomes an "instructional supervisor" (IS). Since nearly all routine duties are taken care of by others, more time can be spent on individual tutoring of the children who are slow to learn.

Tests are important in the control of the system. Some tests are corrected by the students themselves, some by an aide or registrar, but the major tests are checked by the instructional supervisor. The study modules consist of a list of the educational objectives to be mastered, followed by a readiness (or pre-) test which checks that the student understands the concepts and keywords necessary for continuing with the module. The module is then divided into "chunks" of learning, which are written in the simplest possible language. After each chunk there is a self-test with feedback for the student to check that he has mastered the particular lesson. After completing a module, the student sits a post-test at the CLC which is marked by the IS.

Students are organised in groups of 5 to 6 members all studying the same module, each taking turns to lead their group. The groups are heterogeneous in that they contain children of different ability levels. To reinforce the "learning from each other" or "helping each other" objective of heterogeneous groupings, a contract system is used. The group promises, in writing, to complete a number of modules each week. The contract is worked out with the IS who discusses the target with the group to make sure the contract is realistic. Completion of a contract is recorded on a progress chart conspicuously displayed.

Flores (1981) gives further insight into the IMPACT system. While INNOTECH (1974) gives a "how-to-do-it" approach to the writing of self-study materials from which the IMPACT modules grew.

In addition to Project IMPACT, INNOTECH has been active in other learning projects involving teachers in nontraditional roles;
Project RIT (Reduced Instruction Time) in Thailand, PPSI (Procedure of Instructional System Development) in Indonesia and VISTAC (Visual Tactual Aids in Teaching-Learning Modern Math in the Primary Level) in the Philippines. Project NTR (Nontraditional Roles of teachers) studied teacher behaviours in these INNOTECH projects. An initial report is given in Ceniza (1981). INNOTECH have also produced a number of handouts about IMPACT which are very informative. Those I have studied are: "Instructional Management in IMPACT" and "Project IMPACT: Some questions and answers" both prepared by the Research Division of INNOTECH; "IMPACT: An alternative to existing delivery systems" by Rosetta Mante, Project Director of the IMPACT Naga project, and "Concomitant Learning in IMPACT" by J B Socrates, reprinted from INNOTECH Journal, II, June 1978.

IMPACT was developed in the 1970's, but self-study methods have been used at school level in earlier times. The Dalton Plan dates from the 1920's.

3.3.2 The Dalton Plan

In 1920 Helen Parkhurst introduced her "Laboratory Plan" in the high school of Dalton, Massachusetts. The Dalton Plan, as it later became known, was based on a system of subject laboratories (or workshops) and assignments.

Each student was free to choose which subject he would study at any particular time. He would report to the particular subject laboratory and use the resources there (apparatus, books and subject teacher). The students were also free to consult with each other in the subject laboratories. The student moved on to a different subject and subject laboratory when he wished.

Taylor (1972) quotes Helen Parkhurst;

The basic principle of the Dalton Plan is that the pupil is made responsible for his own work and progress; he is made to feel that it is his own concern rather than the teacher's, that it is his own job, the success of which depends on his skill, initiative and industry. Having made him responsible for the job he must be allowed freedom to organize his work, his materials and his time (in short, his school life) and to secure whatever help from his teachers, his books, etc., he finds necessary for the successful completion of his task.

The assignments were designed by the subject teachers, with the curriculum usually divided into portions designed to take one month's work. These units of work were then set out in the form of assignments which detailed step-by-step exactly what each student had to do. Often a teacher would design more than one assignment on a particular topic, grading and assigning the work according to his students' abilities. There was no central
agency preparing assignments, so as the Dalton Plan spread the quality of the assignments become very varied. Some teachers producing detailed and well organised assignments, others producing very skeletal instructions (Taylor 1972).

Students' progress under the Dalton Plan was controlled through the use of individual progress charts completed by the student as each unit of work he had contracted to do was finished and by conspicuously displayed progress graphs maintained by the teacher in each subject laboratory. Students met as form groups for 15 minutes each morning after assembly and at these sessions individual progress charts were checked and advice given by the form teacher. Traditional classes (or conferences as they were called) were given from time to time as subject specialists collected together those who had arrived at the same point in their work. No homework was given or considered necessary. Assignments were usually worked on during the morning sessions. The afternoon was set aside for subjects such as music, art and sport.

From the USA the Dalton Plan rapidly spread through many countries, being used in Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Norway, Sweden, Holland, Russia, India, China and Japan. Kimmins and Rennie (1932) describe how the plan was used in India to help teachers in one-teacher schools cope with large groups of students of widespread ability. They also describe a modified Dalton Plan, involving the use of monitors, which coped well with a time of rapid turnover in teaching staff. In fact, this modified Dalton Plan seems very similar to IMPACT, though the IMPACT literature makes no acknowledgement of any debt to Helen Parkhurst!

My material on the Dalton Plan has been gathered from two sources, Taylor (1972), who gives a short but comprehensive and objective overview of the plan, and Kimmins and Rennie (1932) who give a much more detailed look at the plan, but as their title, "The Triumph of the Dalton Plan" suggests, it is a rather glowing report characterised by Helen Parkhurst herself writing in the introduction, "There is, in fact, no limit to the application of this principle which will, I confidently believe, transcend in course of time, the frontiers of school life and bring about in the world of men and women a regeneration of human society that will be the triumph of the future, possibly of the far future."

3.3.3 Charlotte Mason and PNEU

Helen Parkhurst advocated a very structured system of self-study, an open learning system only in the fact that student had the freedom to choose when and for how long to study each subject. The actual assignment was very carefully described step-by-step. Charlotte Mason on the other hand made no attempt
to define what a student should learn from a task, but believed strongly in structured and disciplined work habits.

Charlotte Mason, the founder of the Parents' National Education Union (PNEU), started teaching in England in 1861. She is described by Taylor (1972) as probably the first person to make a systematic effort to adjust the balance in education - to make the book weightier and in consequence to move the teacher further from the centre. Charlotte Mason's work was aimed mainly at improving home education, but many schools, both primary and secondary, used her methods. But even when her methods were used in school, she did not assume the presence of a qualified teacher. Taylor quotes from Charlotte Mason's book "Home Education" which is unfortunately long out of print and difficult to obtain:

Too much faith is commonly placed in oral lessons and lectures; "To be poured into like a bucket," as says Carlyle, "is not exhilarating to any soul"; neither is it exhilarating to have every difficulty explained to weariness, or to have the explanation teased out of one by questions. ... perhaps it is not wholesome or quite honest for a teacher to pose as the source of all knowledge and give "lovely" lessons. Such lessons are titillating for the moment, but they give children the minimum of mental labour, and the result is much the same as that left on older persons by the reading of a magazine. We find on the other hand that in working through a considerable book the interest of boys and girls is well sustained to the end; they develop an intelligent curiosity as to the causes and consequences, and are in fact educating themselves. ....

For his intellectual diet the child wants more meat, stronger meat, meat more various in quality than any teacher can afford, and he is unfairly dealt with if he is not from the first brought into touch with great minds through their own written words.

Having found the right book, let the master give the book the lead and be content himself with a second place. The lecture must be subordinated to the book. ...

Do teachers always realize the paralysing and stupefying effect that a flood of talk has upon the mind? The inspired talk of an author no doubt wakens a response and is listened to with tense attention; but few of us claim to be inspired, and we are sometimes aware of the difficulty of holding a class. ... We cannot do without the oral lesson - to introduce, to illustrate, to amplify, to sum up. My stipulation is that oral lessons should be few and far between, and that the child who has to walk through life - and has to find his intellectual life in books or go without - shall not first be taught upon crutches.

The teacher's job was to select the books that were to be used, to arrange the day and ensure certain work habits were
It is desultory, unorganized work which fatigues both body and brain, while the rhythmic regularity of prescribed effort is wonderfully easy... as a matter of fact a number of subjects and a variety of subjects make for relief and refreshment and not for fatigue; the things that tire a child are too long lessons and too long school hours. ... As knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced, children should "tell back" after a single reading or hearing, or should write on some part of what they have read. A single reading is insisted on, because children have naturally great power of attention; but this force is dissipated by the re-reading of passages, and also by questioning, summarizing and the like.

I suspect that Charlotte Mason would be horrified by the American SQ3R programme for improving study skills (Robinson, 1961). The first S in the formula is to Survey the contents of a chapter by skimming the sector headings. The Q is to pose some 5 to 10 Questions to yourself. R is to Read the text, seeking answers to the questions posed. The next R is to Recite in your own words the contents of what you have just read and perhaps write it down in outline form. The final R is to Review the outline and reread the chapter to refresh its major points. This very repetitive approach is in direct opposition to Charlotte Mason's insistence on a single reading.

Charlotte Mason was concerned that nothing was done which would remove any joy there was to be found in learning and that the teacher should encourage a child to read his books with delight. Macaulay (1984) quotes from "Home Education":

Once the habit of reading his lesson-books with delight is set up in a child, his education is not completed, but ensured; he will go on for himself in spite of the obstructions which school too commonly throws in his way.

One area in which Helen Parkhurst and Charlotte Mason would have found agreement was that academic lessons should only occupy the mornings.

From Macaulay:

Charlotte Mason's ideal world for children had nature at the doorstep. She felt that organized lessons should only take up the morning, so that children could freely play in and enjoy the gardens, meadows, woods, and lanes of England every afternoon. ...

In the PNEU school (attended by Macaulay's own child) all children went out for a nature walk one afternoon a week, the six- to eighteen-year-olds included! Charlotte Mason advises us that this should be especially striven for in the
case of urban children whose daily lives are cut off from nature. . . .

As in other areas, Charlotte Mason tells us not to get in the child's way. The walk should not be a nature lecture.

Charlotte Mason's ideas can be summarized in what she calls the three instruments of education; the atmosphere of environment, the discipline of habit, and the presentation of living ideas. Or as Macaulay writes:

Charlotte Mason gives us a plan which is beautifully balanced. The children have certain set tasks so that they learn the basic skills. Their minds are nourished; they are put in touch with the whole of reality. They have structure, and yet they are given time (half the day) for freedom. (This was up to the age of thirteen years in the PNEU school, without homework.) They can develop their own affinities. They can "be", imagine, play, ponder, create, read. They can move, be noisy, quiet, social, or alone. This growing time produces integrated people who understand their own limitations, desires, interests, gifts, and tendencies.

The children are respected and accepted as valid persons. But they are not left on the island of their own limited resources. Through careful choice, they are nourished with the best we human beings have to offer; mind is introduced to mind, child to nature and activities.

Charlotte Mason's work is still alive today. The World-wide Education Service of the PNEU provides a range of services which are largely used by expatriates living outside the United Kingdom. There are a number of PNEU schools still operating in the UK and Macaulay's book (1984) is the first of a series of publications to come from Child-Life. Child-Life is a Christian organization which has been set up in UK and USA to produce educational guides for schools and parents based on Charlotte Mason's principles.

3.3.4 CHED's Field Education System

A much more recent self-study system also produced by a Christian organisation is the "Field Education System" of the Children's Education Department (CHED) of the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

A pilot project for this system was started in Guatemala in 1984 involving two itinerant teachers, a resource centre located at the Christian Academy of Guatemala, and four families with a total of six children.

The programme is described by Noack (1986) as follows:
1. Each family is supplied with a microcomputer.

2. Individually prescribed lessons for each day are completed by the student utilizing the microcomputer along with correlated supplementary material.

3. After 45 days (9 weeks) on location with the system, students assemble with their peers in a regionally central location for 15 days (3 weeks).

4. An itinerant teaching team works with these students in group-orientated, interactive learning experiences.

5. During these 15 days, student progress is evaluated and instructional goals set for the next 45 days in the village.

6. After 15 days with the itinerant teaching team, the students return to their homes with new courseware for the next 45 days.

This pilot programme covered grades kindergarten to three in the American system and it was hoped to expand it up to grade 6 in 1985. I do not know of any further written material about CHED published since my source for this material: Noack (1986). (NB. Though this information about CHED was not published until after KISC started, I had heard the paper presented at the Manila conference in 1984.)

3.3.5 Supported Self-Study

During 1980 the Council for Educational Technology investigated the role educational technology might have in alleviating the problems caused in British schools by falling rolls (Beckett 1981). The main problems were those associated with minority subjects and minority groups. The report demonstrated that self-study was helpful in these situations. It also pointed out that the school-age student needs a teacher more than anything else, thus the emphasis should be on teacher support in self-study. This led to the introduction of the CET Supported Self-Study Project in 1981.

The project had three phases:


Phase One led to two publications: Waterhouse (1983a), which is a "how-to-do-it" handbook for teachers, and Waterhouse (1983b) which sets out the possibilities of SSS for schools and local authorities.

Waterhouse (1983a) defines SSS as usually all or most of these following things.

1. It is a way of studying for a whole course or a small part of a course.

2. The pupil is provided with learning materials that have been very carefully chosen for self-study. Ideally these would be multi-media.

3. The pupil is carefully briefed beforehand and given frequent intensive tutorial support.

4. The pupil studies wherever and whenever the conditions for self-study seem best - in the library, in the resource centre, at home, during the day, or in the evening. The choice is largely his. A supported self-study programme could be written into his normal timetable, but it is often left for him to organise independently.

5. The pupil's self-study is supported by occasional special events, usually organised on a group basis - visits, lectures, debates, discussions."

The CET Information Sheet No 12 on SSS, CET (1986), points out that there are three main components in such a scheme.

They are:

- Learning material specially chosen for the independent learner,

- Strong support from regular tutoring organised in small groups,

- A strong management system for monitoring and control.

At the end of Phase Two, Philip Waterhouse prepared a book of case studies of school experience during the period 1983 - 1984. I was fortunate to obtain a copy of this (Waterhouse 1986) as it was published only for limited circulation by the Council of Educational Technology. The schools who took part in the Phase Two study did so for a number of reasons: some saw its potential as a help in coping with the problems caused by falling rolls, others introduced the system entirely because of its intrinsic
educational value. Others felt that SSS had a vital role to play given the (then pending) curriculum and assessment initiatives of GCSE which place considerable emphasis on pupil self-development.

Waterhouse (1983b) further expands upon the intrinsic educational merits of SSS when he describes four concepts which SSS promotes: autonomy for the learner; individualization of study programmes; a more personal relationship between learner and tutor than in the traditional classroom setting; and finally, promotion of learning to learn. Waterhouse considers that learning how to learn is a true preparation for life-long education, thus making a very similar claim for this aspect of SSS as Charlotte Mason made for the habit of reading with delight. Although these four concepts all arise from a commitment to the needs of the individual, Waterhouse cautions that group and class work should not be neglected:

Individual work, small-group work and whole class work should be regarded as the elements in a coherent plan, not as competing systems.

Waterhouse (1986) identified four common threads in the reports from the participating schools.

1. The problems of tutoring in SSS. These range from the simple problems of allocating sufficient time on the timetable, through to those concerned with the ways in which tutoring is conducted.

2. Few schools attempted to create their own self-study courses completely. Those who tried this found it very time consuming. Most schools adapted commercially published materials, supporting these with their own assignments and study guides. There were some complaints about the lack of suitable resources.

3. Before introducing an SSS scheme, time is needed to find suitable resources and make adequate plans for tutoring. Waterhouse suggests at least two terms.

4. Little use was made of technology during the trial period. Waterhouse expects that to change as the use of computers in schools enters a more sophisticated phase.

(I made a literature survey investigating the use of computers in schools and also concluded that the full potential of computers in schools has yet to be realised. While much exciting work has been done, very little of it is related to existing curriculum demands and is irrelevant to the actual need for support material. Material which is related to the curriculum is often in review or drill type form. Surely computers could be used to present topics in visually exciting ways, thus helping
those who find little affinity with book or verbal presentations.)

I was fortunate to be able to visit a number of schools using SSS, all of which had been involved in the CET project. Every member of staff I spoke to was enthusiastic about SSS. It was also useful to be able to inspect the self-study courses used in these schools and to see the varied ways in which each school made these learning packages available to their students. I spent a great amount of time writing to publishers and correspondence schools, inspecting their materials and deciding which resources to purchase for KISC. I describe the actual material decided upon in 4.4.

Supported Self-Study is the closest existing learning system to what has developed at KISC. There are some important differences and I identify these in 4.1.

In the development of SSS, Waterhouse points out that much had been learnt from the experience of self-study in adult level education. I also looked at what was happening in self-study at adult level in universities and in further education. The work of the Open University is well known and documented, therefore I will only report on some less well known systems.

3.3.6 University experience including the Keller Plan (PSI) and other adult level systems.

Early work in a British university aimed at shifting the emphasis from a teaching to a learning situation is described by Elton, Hills and O'Connell (1970). Six learning strategies were used in addition to traditional lectures and tutorials in a Physics course at Surrey University. These strategies were described as self-teaching situations and included: the issuing of printed lecture notes, pre-knowledge surveys, self tests, tape and tape/slide presentations of lectures, programmed learning in lectures and a self-service laboratory. The self-service laboratory in particular became an important strategy in independent learning and is described in O'Connell, Penton & Boud (1974) and O'Connell & Penton (1975).

At around the same time other work was being pioneered in the USA. In a well known article, "Goodbye Teacher", the psychologist Fred Keller (1968) presented a method of course instruction often referred to as the personalised system of instruction (PSI) or the Keller Plan. After many years as a university lecturer, Keller became convinced that lecturing was a poor means of delivering information to students. His plan has five basic features:

1. Self-paced. Students are able to pace their movement through the course according to their ability.
2. Students are only permitted to move onto new material after demonstrating mastery of the preceding material.

3. Lectures and demonstrations are given as rewards to motivate students rather than provide information.

4. The use of written word is stressed in teacher-student communication.

5. Proctors (undergraduate tutors) are used for testing, scoring and tutoring, introducing a more personal social aspect into the educational process.

The Keller Plan was first introduced into the UK by Elton at the University of Surrey in 1972. Elton was encouraged by the possibilities of self-study through personal observation of a sixth form student taking one of her three A levels through a correspondence course: "she settled down to work which was essentially self-paced, though other-directed, and in the process gained in self reliance and work satisfaction to quite a remarkable extent." (Elton 1973). Elton et al (1973) describe the experiment at Surrey University using the Keller Plan. Staff and student reactions to this experiment were such that they concluded that the experiment should be continued and extended. After three years experience of using the plan some innovations had been introduced into it, See Elton, Willoughby & Bridge (1974). In fact Boud, Bridge & Willoughby (1975) in discussing the use of PSI throughout the UK identified a general trend of diversification to the point of questioning to what extent any of Keller's principles were left. Self-pacing seemed more widely accepted than mastery, and amongst the other of Keller's five points (listed above) the use of the written word in the form of study guides had become widespread. PSI seemed to be most successful when it was used as an addition to the repertoire of teaching methods that were available.

Boud and Bridge (1974) discuss the relevance of the Keller Plan to the achievement of independence in learning. They distinguish four kinds of freedom in learning.

a. Freedom of pace - a student can work at his own pace and learn at times and places that he chooses.

b. Freedom of choice - a student can choose to work or not to work at a particular course or part of a course.

c. Freedom of method - a student can choose the learning methods that he finds most suitable.

d. Freedom of content - a student can choose what he learns.
The Plan continued to spread: Elton (1979) describes the use of the plan on a course in Spain. Again many innovations had been added to the original plan, the idea of adding group work being one of the most unusual. Combining group work and individual work introduces the difficulty of when and what material to present when the students may be individually at different points in the course. This problem also arises in group tutorial work in SSS, and is one we have since experienced at KISC. Who decides the time and content of a group activity? Cryer & Manwaring (1977) indicate that combining group and individual work necessitates a switch from self-pacing to teacher-pacing.

Although originally introduced at university level, the Keller Plan has also been used successfully in schools, Daly and Robertson (1978) give case studies of the use of the plan in UK schools. Again flexibility and innovation in the use of the original plan seems to be the key to success.

3.4 Flexibility the Key to Success!

I found sufficient encouragement in all that has been outlined above to feel that KISC could be a success. Although I drew on many of the systems described above to design the KISC system, I find it impossible to attribute each and every idea used in KISC to any particular source. It may appear obvious to the reader which source was used to develop a particular idea used in the KISC system, but often I felt that I already had the idea and the literature only confirmed that it was workable. This may be due to the fact that I first read L C Taylor's "Resources for Learning" some years ago. I was very impressed with this little book at that time and many of the ideas reported in it may have remained at "the back of my mind"!

There is one caution that arises from my survey - all the systems described above, with the possible exception of SSS, seem to demand adherence to one single approach to learning. In the innovator's evangelistic zeal they appear to overlook the fact that a single approach cannot possibly work for every single student. Taylor (1972) cites this as a possible reason why so many of these apparently successful systems eventually failed. The great strength of a system involving traditional teaching is that it exposes a student to a variety of teachers who each offer a variety of approaches, within which most students are able to find their own affinities. In designing the KISC model I felt the need to be flexible and offer an environment within which as many students as possible would be facilitated in their learning. In an attempt to visualise the variety of learning opportunities involved I made a list of my own personal needs while learning. No attempt was made to put these in any order of importance, I just wrote them down as they occurred to me. I do not claim that my list is representative of a majority, but at the same time I do not feel that I am an odd
or unusual person, therefore my list must mean something.

I need help from teachers and fellow students at times, but mainly I am a private person.

I enjoy freedom in my use of time, but do not always make good use of it. There are occasions when I need to have my time structured for me.

I need to follow some sort of syllabus or programme, but I respond better to those topics in which I have little interest, if I have the freedom and facilities to investigate those topics I see as really interesting or enjoyable to my own satisfaction. This may well take me outside the stated syllabus boundaries.

Although I need silence at times, I think I need noise or music at other times.

I need to know how I am doing in comparison with other students.

I am irritated by oversimplification in writing, especially where it involves step by step explanations which allow no use of my intelligence or imagination. I like a point stated once only and not endlessly repeated in different words. At the same time, I sometimes need simple, detailed and repeated explanations.

I find reading much more profitable than listening. It is the exceptional speaker who can hold my attention for a long time unless I am extremely interested in the topic, however I have been inspired by a good speaker.

I could go on with this list, but I hope it illustrates that I need a learning system which allows for a wide variety of learning experiences often at opposite ends of the theoretical spectrum. Thus I feel the most important aspect of any self-learning system is to create an environment within which the learner can find learning experiences pertinent to his needs; that is of the four freedoms of choice outlined in 3.3.6 above, the freedom of method could be the most important.

3.5 POST KISC

Before opening KISC in February 1987, I concentrated my literature survey on "how-to-do-it" type material. After KISC had been operating for some months, I was able to turn my attention more to theoretical aspects. Using my observations and experience in KISC, noted in my research diary, I reviewed the literature studied before KISC opened and referring to new material as it was published (or as I discovered it), I looked
for common themes and experiences. These will be discussed in
detail in later chapters, therefore below I just note themes and
their sources which appear in literature not already discussed
above. Before outlining these themes and experiences, I will
describe briefly six texts I studied during this period which
were particularly helpful.

3.5.1 New Material Studied after KISC opened

In the field of Supported Self-Study, Waterhouse (1988) is a
guidebook aimed at teachers "approaching Supported Self-Study
for the first time. It shows how a simple trial can be conducted
and provides further reference about techniques and some of the
possible areas of application". Rainbow (1987) is an excellent
account of the use of Supported Self-Study in one particular
school.

Another "how-to-do-it" book is Lewis (1986). This is a guide for
anyone interested "in providing more flexibility and choice for
learners" in primary or secondary schools. Lewis discusses the
benefits of open learning and describes ways in which these may
be brought about. The book is written in an interactive style
that gives the reader an experience of open learning. Bagley and
Challis (1985) is a report of a research project in further
education. The "project set out to gather evidence
systematically on what it is actually like to study and work on
an open learning scheme: how and why the schemes were set up,
what dilemmas were experienced by staff, what strategies were
adopted by students. No precise recommendations are put forward
in this report ... what we offer is an analytical account of the
range of experience and practice of the schemes' participants so
that the reader can gain some insights into the operation of
open learning schemes and the difficulties and satisfactions
which they can create". Although this is a further education
research report, I was struck by the many similarities
experienced in KISC at secondary level.

Christian-Carter & Burton (1988) points out that the underlying
philosophy of GCSE means that the learner has moved from the
periphery to the centre of the educational model. This book
discusses the role of educational technology in assisting
teachers to adopt and realise the philosophy underlying GCSE.

There appears to be very little written about the theoretical
aspects of self-study and open learning. Skager (1984) is a
report of a research project which discusses principles and
theories involved in encouraging self-direction in learners.
3.5.2 Themes and Experiences relevant to KISC

Lewis (1986) discusses a management system that makes sure the learning materials and support work together to create the conditions for successful learning. He considers two aspects of management:

a. Organisation of learning resources.

This considers where and how students will gain access to learning materials and resources, and also where they will carry out individual work.

b. Management of the learning process.

Lewis suggests a management cycle consisting of:
briefing - contract - assignment completion - review (including assessment & feedback) - briefing etc.

These management processes are aspects of the total learning environment. There are purely physical considerations; Bagley & Challis (1985) suggest that the spaciousness of the study room is important to the effectiveness of learning. This has certainly been the case in KISC, see 10.8. There are more philosophical considerations; Skager (1984) suggests that there could be two types of environment depending on the "readiness" of the student. "For children who are already capable of self-directed learning, the environment would be highly open and flexible, with the guiding principle of organisation being that of providing a maximum number of choices ... the principles of teaching as a facilitating activity and democratic relationships could be fully applied." For children who were not yet self-directed, the environment could be less open with more teacher support and guidance. See also 10.4

Waterhouse (1988) divides the management cycle into a two stroke system: the tutorial, and self-study. The tutorial consists of two parts; a review and assessment of the work done during the previous self-study phase, and a briefing for the work that is to be done during the next self-study phase. He states strongly that "the small-group tutorial is so powerful and so effective as a learning experience that no effort should be spared to achieve it as a regular feature of the students' school experience". Rainbow (1987) states that the experience at Holyrood School wholly supports this: "Tutoring is the key to self-study ... It is already apparent that rather dull resource material is quite acceptable to students if the quality of tutoring is good. It is the tutorial session which enables the student and teacher together to structure the course of study; abandon unnecessary sections; reinforce important points; straighten out difficulties and negotiate a programme of work."

This emphasis on tutoring leads to a change in role for the
teacher and I discuss some aspects of this in chapter 11. Lewis gives the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customary</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching groups of students face-to-face</td>
<td>Individual tutorial work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching; emphasis on product</td>
<td>Focus on learning rather than on teaching; emphasis on process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject teacher</td>
<td>Consultant to students - e.g. helping them to decide objectives and methods of working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher usually works alone</td>
<td>Teacher may be working in a team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work is set for a class</td>
<td>Work is set for an individual or group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendency to give learners the answer when they are stuck</td>
<td>Teachers help learners to resolve problems themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard textbook taken as it is</td>
<td>Thought and time given to providing a range of materials, including those produced by the teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He suggests that teachers, in supporting students to become more independent learners, can help students to:

- develop the personal relationships necessary for learning (e.g. with peers, with the librarian)
- define the objectives of their learning
- understand the task
- find and use resources
- synthesise material
- design and carry out practical work (e.g. experiments, surveys)
Christian-Carter & Burton (1988) feel that "the traditional model of teaching sits very uneasily with the objectives of GCSE and current educational philosophy." They claim that the "the traditional model of education as practised in the classroom all too often leads to a learning experience which is teacher-centered and teacher constrained. Classroom practice often reinforces the skills of the teacher at the expense of the development of the skills of the learner. At its worst, such practice may lead to a situation where the answers to problems are limited by the teacher's knowledge and the learners' experiences are shaped largely by the experience of the teacher."

They go on to suggest that learning should be seen as a partnership between teacher and learner. This has two major advantages. "First, it offers the possibility of a rate of growth for students which is not limited by the knowledge and experiences of the teacher. Second, once developed, this relationship then allows for a more rapid response to changes in society because it 'short-circuits' the problem of the amount of time required by the educational system to produce a teacher with the relevant extensive and in-depth knowledge."

This change extends the role of a teacher from that as a facilitator, a mediator, and a motivator into a fourth dimension, that of a learner who operates alongside and with a student at their frontiers of combined knowledge. This involves change in how a student perceives a teacher and causes role conflict as others continue to regard a teacher as a 'fount of all knowledge'. I discuss this further in 11.1.

Bagley & Challis (1985) (Chapter 6) dedicate a complete chapter to "Issues for Teachers". They point out the danger to a teacher's self-concept if he continues to feel he ought to know the answer to everything he is asked for help with. At the same time, Bagley & Challis claim that in remedial tutoring there was an important place for the good, empathetic teacher who not only was not a specialist in the subject, but who may even have experienced difficulty in learning the subject. Bagley & Challis observed this in a mathematics teaching situation, at KISC we feel it may be applicable to other subjects also.

Once a teacher has accepted the need to change to student-centered learning then according to Christian-Carter & Burton the following needs of the teacher become apparent:

- to accept that a teacher need not be an authority figure all the time;
- to appreciate that a student will not respond to and accept responsibility if he is not trained to do so and if he does not respect and trust a teacher;

- for openness and honesty in order to achieve a mutual trust;

- to be able to admit one's mistakes and to abandon any authoritarian stance in order to gain confidence in the teacher-learner partnership;

- to acquire and use 'new' management skills which involve the learner in the organisation of his work;

- to identify the needs of the learner;

- to help learners to become aware of their needs and to suggest or point them in appropriate directions in order to give them a feeling of achievement;

- to accept that students will make some mistakes and for both parties to value these mistakes as part of learning;

- for individual student assessment if the learner is to achieve independent progress; and

- for feedback and communication between a teacher and a learner if a true, two-way partnership is to develop.

The authors go on to describe a similar set of needs from the learner's point of view:

- to develop self-discipline because more informal environments and less teacher direction call for greater self-direction;

- for relationships with teachers so that work can be openly and honestly discussed;

- for a feeling that what is on offer to be learnt is meaningful and worthwhile;

- for personal success to provide encouragement and to reinforce progress;

- for feedback and reassurance from teachers that he is meeting the agreed objectives;

- for independence and the right to pursue a personal line of enquiry and to reach a personal conclusion;

- to make decisions and to take responsibility for these decisions;
- for help in managing time, space and resources;
- to develop the skills required for independent learning; and
- for privacy or other kinds of suitable places for his learning.

Bagley & Challis also point out the need for reassurance that students have in an open-learning situation. In an evaluation many students expressed doubts as to their progress on their courses and said that they would have liked some 'normal' classes so that they could find out how they were doing. This situation also arose at KISC, we responded by designing a 'progress chart' so that each student could keep a visual display of progress before them. Tutors also took more care to ensure that students were kept aware of their progress.

Another feature described by Bagley & Challis, which was common to the KISC experience, is that of the learning centre atmosphere: "A feature particularly striking to one used to observing classroom transactions was the complete absence of any feeling of tension or of the fragile disciplinary atmosphere that is sometimes present in student-teacher relationships." I discuss this further in 14.3.

Before leaving the topic of student concerns, I describe seven personal characteristics of the self-directed learner identified by Skager (1984):

1. Self-acceptance

A positive view of self as a learner and as an entity worthy of improvement.

2. Planfulness

Ability to diagnose own learning needs, set appropriate personal goals in the light of those needs, and devise effective strategies for accomplishing the learning goals.

3. Intrinsic motivation

Persistence in learning activity in the absence of external controls in the form of rewards or sanctions.

4. Internalised evaluation

Acting as one's own evaluation agent.

5. Openness to experience

Engaging in new kinds of activities that may result in learning or goal setting. "Curiosity, tolerance of
ambiguity, preference for complexity, and even playfulness represent motives for entering into new activities and imply openness to experience”.

6. Flexibility

A willingness to change goals or learning modes and to use exploratory, trial-and-error approaches to problems. Failure is countered with adaptive behaviour rather than by withdrawal.

7. Autonomy

Autonomous learners are able to question the normative standards of a given time and place as to what kinds of learning are valuable and permissible.

Finally, in this survey of literature studied after KISC opened, I report some comments made by teachers experienced in open learning. (Lewis 1986) They suggest that:

- "students initially need a secure framework and that the move to greater independence must be a gradual one
- students need help in acquiring the learning strategies important for independent working
- students initially resist taking on greater responsibility for their learning but that once they take the plunge they enjoy it
- exam results gained by open learning are as good as, or better than, results gained by the conventional routes (though exam results are by no means the only criterion of success)
- sensitive, personal tutoring is essential
- students learn a lot from each other."
In this chapter I describe the educational model which has evolved at KISC, the physical facilities, students and staff involved and the learning materials used. I then discuss the educational task as I perceive it. Much of this chapter has been published, see McIlhenny & Taylor (1989).

4.1 The System

The medium of study at KISC is through home country self-study materials. This study is supported through tutorial help by the KISC staff. While the system is an open learning system it could best be described as "Supported Self-Study" (SSS) because of the stress placed on the support of the learners. I have already described SSS in 3.3.5.

During the first two and a half years of operation KISC differed from the normal usage of SSS in two important aspects. Initially, tutoring was offered only to individuals, students could ask for tutorial help as and when they needed it, although occasional group tutorials were given when a common need was identified. In the normal usage of SSS, tutorials are given in small groups at a time scheduled by the tutor. From August 1989, each student was given the opportunity to be involved in a small group tutorial each week in each of his core academic subjects. Individualised tutorials continue to be available on demand. The other important departure from SSS practice still continues in that in KISC self-study is not just being applied to part or a whole of any one course of study but throughout the school curriculum as the chief instrument of learning. In fact, Waterhouse (1983b) feels that it would not be practical to apply supported self-study on such a school and subject wide basis!

Waterhouse (1983a) advises schools adopting SSS not to attempt to create their own learning materials, but to modify, supplement and support existing commercial material in order to increase its effectiveness. This has been done at KISC, though since not every country provides suitable material, some material prepared for adult learners has had to be used. Ideally since none of the existing material takes advantage of the unique learning environment of an expatriate teenager living in an exotic culture in an international group setting, nor of the freedom inherent in the KISC system, we would prefer to develop our own materials if the resources (personnel and financial) were available. These materials could be prepared in modular form, each student choosing to study those modules appropriate to his home country's curriculum needs.
Good self-study materials are considered by many to have the following features:

- course objectives are clearly stated, (although I personally find this irritating)
- visually appealing,
- careful sequencing of information and tasks,
- material provides a variety of student tasks: problems to solve, experiments to perform, questions to answer, paragraphs to write, open-ended assignments which require the use of other resources, etc.,
- self-assessment questions so that the pupil is aware of his or her comprehension of the course material,
- instruments for evaluation for use by subject tutors in the study centre or for use by correspondence tutors in the home country,
- a target work schedule organised on a daily, unit or fortnightly, and yearly basis.

An advantage of a structured course is that it allows students freedom of where and when to study. Students may attend KISC full time or part time, either as day students or boarders. Families who live outside Kathmandu and prefer to keep their children with them as much as possible can choose to send their children in to board at KISC for only part of each term. These part-time boarders usually come into KISC for about half of each 10-week term, spending the remaining five weeks studying at home with their parents. Family holidays, furloughs, trekking, illness and many other situations can be accommodated through part-time study. Most self-study courses require 170 to 190 days per year to complete. Course work can be done wherever a student is and each family can plan a yearly schedule which fits their individual needs. Our experience has been that most families take advantage of this flexible scheduling and many of our students do at least part of their academic work away from the study centre. Students who attend KISC full time (approximately 38 weeks per year) should be able to complete a year's self-study course in school time with 1 to 2 hours homework per evening. How much work is required outside scheduled study times will depend on the rigour of the material and the individual student's motivation and ability.

Pupils need a lot of privacy to become really effective students. But they also need to share their ideas with others, cooperate and compete with others and have an opportunity to develop non-academic interests and skills. During the first two and a half years of KISC, students worked 12 to 16 hours per week on their individual self-study materials and spend 9 to 13 hours per week in group and option activities. The time allocation varied depending upon the rigour of the self-study course and the age of the student. From August 1989, when more emphasis was given to group tutorials, self-study time for each
student dropped to about three sevenths of their total time in school.

Students participate in Physical Education three times per week. Depending on the season they play volleyball, basketball, table tennis, swimming, or soccer, as well as fitness activities and other games. The students have participated in inter-school soccer competitions with the other schools in Kathmandu.

Group discussion times are provided in Religious Education and Current Events classes each week. Students practise their oral language skills by presenting book reports to other students and participating in formal debates.

Fine Arts education is provided for in group music and singing lessons and through drama productions. The students sing at the International Protestant Church at least once per 10 week term, and produce at least two drama productions per year. One talented parent provides formal instruction one hour every week for those who are interested in drawing and painting. Another interested parent provides instruction in crafts, and yet another in woodwork.

In small groups, students study Nepali and French. The Nepalese instructor also teaches a course in horticulture using the school garden for practical work. Each term at least one or two activities are organised for the students to learn more of life in Nepal. These have included visits to local museums, cottage industry displays and the Leprosy Mission Hospital. Speakers have told the students about the history of the United Mission to Nepal, and spoken on aspects of Hinduism and Buddhism with guided tours of local Hindu and Buddhist shrines. Once a year, all the staff and students (and some parents) take part in a week-long trek in the Himalayan foothills. Each student chooses a project for investigation during the trek and these are written up afterwards. Projects studied have included toys and games played by Nepali children, educational facilities in remote areas, land use, deforestation, and tribal differences in care of animals. Students working towards GCSE Geography take a longer (two week) trek and use this for the preparation of their GCSE geography coursework.

Students also are scheduled to use a micro-computer each week. The main focus is on using utility packages to supplement course material, although some are learning to program in BASIC.
MATERIAL REDACTED AT REQUEST OF UNIVERSITY
4.2 KISC Facilities

The school and boarding department are located in one large building. (See plan, Appendix V). For the first two and one half years there was one main library/study room, (called the Learning Centre), brightly decorated and carpeted, with seating at individual study carrels and tables for 36 students. An archway through the book stack led to a smaller study room with carrels for 10 senior students and a quiet testing area used by everyone. In August 1989 a second learning centre was opened, this provides study space for 30 students. The small senior study room was turned into a staff/boarding-student common room and some furniture was removed from the original learning centre as it had become overcrowded. The two learning centres now provide very comfortable study facilities for up to 50 students. All students are provided with locker space for storing their study and personal materials. The library currently has about 2000 volumes and a growing collection of non-book resources, such as audio tapes, video tapes, slides, posters, and software.

Group lessons, music, and video viewing take place in an room with seating for approximately 30 people. In this room are a piano and a VHS video-cassette recorder and television. The VCR and the TV are multi-system to enable us to view cassettes from a wide variety of national sources. In August 1989 we also opened a gym/hall, an art/craft room and a small room for tutorials. There is a science lab which can accommodate up to 16 students, but we try to restrict all group classes to less than 8 students at a time. In a separate room there is a BBC Master 128 computer and an Archimedes 310 computer for student use. Both computers are fitted with IBM PC emulators to enable us to run British and American software. There is also an administrative office.

The boarding facilities consist of 3 bedrooms for girls and 4 bedrooms for boys, each of which can accommodate up to 3 students. There is a kitchen and dining room for the boarding students. The kitchen is also used for Home Economics classes and the dining room doubles up as a group activity room. Above the boys' dormitories, is located a 3-bedroom flat for the boarding parents.

There is a woodwork workshop next to the art/craft room. A small paved sports and play area and a small sports field complete the facilities located in the school grounds.

Very near to the school is a two-storey house with two family flats for use by the teaching staff. The school garden and vehicle storage are also provided on this property.
4.3 Enrolment and Staffing

When KISC opened in February 1987 there were 14 children enrolled; by January 1989 this figure had reached 37, and by August 1989 there were 45. We plan to keep this number of 45 as a maximum for at least the next year in order to provide a period of stabilisation for everyone. The students range in age from 11 years to 16 years and come from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Netherlands, France, India, United Kingdom, and the USA. Ten of the original 14 are still attending KISC. The four who have left have all done so for reasons unrelated to KISC.

As far as possible, all our students are working on self-study programmes from their home countries, with the exception of the French, Dutch and Indian students who are working on materials from the UK. The self-study material used by each student is chosen by the parents in consultation with me. We were unable to find material which suited the peculiar needs of our French (2 students) and Indian (2) students. I discuss the Dutch experience in section 4.4.3.

We admit students to KISC at the beginning of the term after they attain the age of eleven. This allows for a small number of entrants for each of the four terms of the year, thus providing us with the opportunity to give individual attention to each entrant. This 4-entry point also provides the flexibility essential to parents on variable leave schedules. Most of the parents of our students are missionaries of the United Mission to Nepal or the International Nepal Fellowship, but other children can be admitted at my discretion. In practice, I try to maintain a ratio of 3 to 1, mission to non-mission children, as I feel this provides for a healthy social balance.

The full-time staff members are all missionaries of UMN. As such they receive no salaries from KISC nor indeed UMN. The organisation in their home country which seconds staff members to UMN is responsible for salaries. This is of great benefit to KISC in terms of running costs. In 1987/88, we had 3 full-time staff members: myself, responsible for administration, Mathematics and computing, an American, responsible for the Arts subjects and Sports, and a Canadian, responsible for the sciences. A Danish couple worked full-time as boarding parents. All other areas were covered through part-time staff. These part timers helped with administration, library, extra-curricular activities, and group options. They were mainly parents with specialist training and interests. We have also benefitted from short-term visitors to Nepal, usually university students, who give up part of their holiday time to work with us. These short-termers have helped with music, drama, project work and even in the preparation of supplementary study materials. During 1989 one more full-time member of staff joined us as a general subjects tutor.
4.4 Types of Self-Study Materials.

The self-study materials used at KISC can be grouped into three types:

4.4.1 Open Learning Material.

This is used by students from the UK and USA. The material comes with answers either provided with the material for self-marking or separately for tutor marking. For their first three years of secondary education our UK students use the "Foundation Skills for 11-14 year olds" published by Letts. These are used for English, French, Geography, History, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. French is supplemented through the use of tapes, recorded locally by French expatriates, readers and tapes/workcards published by Mary Glasgow Publications, and conversation group classes led by a KISC tutor. The History course is supplemented heavily through study units prepared by a KISC tutor. We have also prepared our own progress tests for regular use with the Letts books. For the final two years of GCSE, we use open learning material from Wolsey Hall, Oxford. Courses purchased to date are, English Language, English Literature, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The Wolsey Material comes with progress tests and sample answers for both student marked assignments and tutor marked tests. GCSE French is taught using a traditional textbook, adapted for self-study use, supplemented by tapes, tests and conversation classes prepared at KISC. Throughout the 5 years of secondary studies, our UK students use the Kent Mathematics Project (KMP) for Mathematics. KMP has proved so popular, that workcards from it are used by other nationalities to supplement their work in Mathematics. For all their subjects, our USA students use material provided by the International Institute, Illinois. This material comes as a complete package with study programme, textbooks, answers for student-marked assignments, and tutor guides with answers for progress tests.

4.4.2 Traditional Correspondence School Material.

We currently use material from the New Zealand Correspondence School, South Australia Correspondence School and the Alberta Correspondence School, Canada. All students using these schools are required to send their work to the appropriate school for marking. In practice, our KISC tutors check this work, but make no alterations, before it is sent away for marking. This enables us to provide immediate help with difficulties and eliminates the feedback delay, a serious drawback normally associated with correspondence schools. Having work marked in the home country provides us with a check that we are maintaining standards at a level acceptable to that country. One disadvantage of using correspondence schools is that they
all insist on a lock-step system and tie our students to a set timetable. This is frustrating for some of our more able students, a frustration which we have partially alleviated through the use of enrichment material from Letts, KMP AND other sources. Some students have also commented that their correspondence school "overfeeds them with information". They find the British materials with their emphasis on finding out information for oneself (particularly the Letts and KMP courses) much more motivating and interesting to use.

4.4.3 Non-English Medium Courses.

For the first 1 1/2 years of KISC we had two Dutch students who followed courses from the Netherlands written in Dutch. Their mother came in once a week for a full day to KISC both to tutor and to help her sons plan their work. At all other times, these students received help from the regular tutors by translating and discussing their problems in English. Both boys have excellent English and join in all the group activities with the other students. Unfortunately, the course the boys were using does not extend beyond age 14 and we have been unable to find a suitable course to continue their studies in Dutch. Both boys have now switched to the British material.

4.5 Timetable

Each term, I prepare a master timetable on which group activities (such as, music, art, sport, etc.) and individual access time to the computers and piano are shown. The students are divided into groups for science; lab time for each of these groups is also indicated on the timetable. At the weekly meetings between the Study Supervisors (SS) and students, scheduled for the first 30 minutes of each Monday, the student and the SS together plan how the remaining blocks of time on the timetable are to be utilized for self-study. The SS looks at progress in each subject and gives advice as to which subjects need increased study time and which subjects can have their time decreased. This daily plan is noted on a timetable blank and study objectives for the week written in the student's contract book. The plan for self-study is treated as a guide only, and the student is free to alter this plan if he finds he is unable to meet his contracted objectives.

Each student has his own individualised programme, the following table (Fig. 4.1) shows a typical time allocation before group tutorials were introduced in 1989.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>TIME in hours per week</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE of week (approx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning Assembly</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-study subjects</td>
<td>15.75</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives (No more than 5 electives allowed per week)</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Events</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music &amp; Singing</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS Session</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27.75</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1 Division of time in a typical week

The Electives are designed both to add enrichment to the self study programme and to give our students experience of group or traditional classroom activity. As much as possible, we allow the students to choose which electives they will take each term, but room sizes and timetable problems sometimes cause restrictions on choice. The number of electives taken by each student depends on the demands of their self study course and how well they are coping. The best students can take three electives, every student must take at least one. The actual subjects offered each term depend upon the availability of teachers to lead them. Astronomy, Chinese Cooking, Craft, Drama, Home Economics, Horticulture, Nepali Language and Piano have all been offered by members of the KISC staff over the last two and a half years. Parents with appropriate training have taught Art, Craft, Sewing and Woodwork.
Pre August 1989, most students allocated their self-study time as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 14.5 hours

Figure 4.2 Allocation of self study time per week

This usually left 1.25 hours each week which were used as a floating (or catch up) time given to those subjects which needed extra work.

The introduction of weekly tutorials in each subject in August 1989 reduced the amount of self-study time available to each student by about two hours per week.

4.6 Monitoring Student Work and Progress.

Monitoring of a student's work and progress through a careful system of assessment and record keeping is vital in a self-study programme. As mentioned above, each student at KISC is allocated to a Study Supervisor (SS). At the beginning of each week the SSs meet with their students. Progress made in the preceding week is discussed, and together the student and SS agree on the study programme for the week ahead. The student notes in a "contract book" the units/workcards he contracts to complete each day. In this way, an individualised programme tailored to the student's needs, and agreed upon by both student and supervisor is developed. During the week, students have their contract books signed by the subject tutor as they complete each unit of work. Points are awarded to the student for each unit completed within the contracted time. Tutors deduct points, or award no points, if the work is not considered to be of an acceptable standard. This allows for some competition between students as occasional awards are given for those with the most consistent high performance, or to students showing improvement in quality and quantity of work.

Subject tutors are responsible for maintaining records of performance in their own subjects. The introduction of weekly tutorials, as mentioned above, facilitates greatly the keeping of these records. At the weekly tutorial, tutors check on progress made during the preceding week and assist each student to plan their next week's work. Opportunity is taken to involve the whole group in some activity which will be of benefit to
all the members of the group. The tutorial groups consist of three to eight students who are working at approximately the same place in their study programme. Students may therefore find themselves in different groups for each subject depending upon their ability and progress.

During the first term of 1989, we were short one full-time member of staff. It was felt by the staff that each study supervisor would have more students than he or she could cope with. The study supervisor system was dropped, although the contract system continued. It was felt that the tutors could be responsible for monitoring progress of students in their own subjects. A timetable was designed and displayed showing when each subject tutor would be in the Learning Centre. The students were divided into three age groups, Juniors (11-year olds), Inters (12 & 13-years) and Seniors (14 and over). Each group of students were encouraged, though not required, to study the subject of the tutor on duty with their group. While this system encouraged some students to work longer at subjects they did not like, the subject tutors found that they were too busy with personal tutoring and marking to take time to monitor student progress and give the counseling required to encourage those in danger of slipping behind. Interestingly, when some tutors found themselves alone with a group of students all doing their subject, they could not resist the urge to start giving classroom style teaching even though the content of their lessons was not relevant to all the students present in the room. (See also 15.4.3)

During the second term of 1989, the staffing situation improved slightly and the study supervisor sessions restarted. These now take place during the first 15 minutes of Monday morning and for 15 minutes before the sports session on a Friday afternoon. The Monday morning session is a planning time for the week's work. The Friday session is a review of the actual progress made. A strong motivating factor has been introduced at the Friday session: any student who has not accumulated sufficient points to satisfy his study supervisor is not allowed to take part in the sports session and must remain in the Learning Centre during this time to catch up with his work.

The contract system is also used to control homework. A unit contracted for completion on a certain day can still earn full points if completed at home and handed in at start of school the next day. Parents are encouraged to check their children's contract books and ensure that uncompleted units are done as homework.

At different times during the first two and one half years of KISC I changed the format and mode of operation of the contract book and point system. These changes were made in response to concerns expressed by staff members both informally in conversation and formally at staff meetings. Concerns were also expressed by the students and their parents at the evaluation
workshops (See, for example, 7.1 A1). In Appendix X I include examples of the different formats and discuss the changes.

Formal tests are included with all the material we use with the exception of the Letts series, where we had to prepare our own. A quiet corner of the senior learning centre contains a testing area which is used by the students when they have completed a set of work and are ready to sit a test. The test results are used to prepare reports sent home at the end of each term. In a self-study scheme it is important that a student can readily assess his progress through the material. We are in the process of introducing a grade level scheme which we hope will aid the students in this assessment. It is simpler to describe the scheme by giving an example.

A test which occurs about one quarter of the way through the material to be studied in one subject in the fourth year of a national system, say, will be assigned the grade level 4.25. This level is then corrected according to the student's score in the test. This is to discourage students from neglecting quality in a bid to rush through the course! The score is corrected as follows:

Students who achieve 80% or more are awarded the full grade level (4.25 in our example). For scores below 80% a simple percentage is calculated e.g. A student who achieves 60% in the level 4.25 test will be awarded a corrected grade level of 4.15 (60% of 0.25 = 0.15).

In this way students working on different national schemes but in similar age groups, can compare their progress through their year's work. One of the difficulties in introducing the scheme has been agreeing upon standards of marking amongst the different nationalities of tutors involved. To a British teacher, 80% is a high mark awarded to only the best students, to our American teachers, 80% is more commonly awarded to average students. The development and introduction of a unified assessment and grading system is discussed in the next chapter. Unfortunately the staff shortage I have already referred to has meant that we have not had time to fully develop this grade level scheme, and at the time of writing it has only been tried by two tutors. It may be that the introduction of a group tutorial system will make this idea redundant.

4.7 The Educational task

Having described the physical side of KISC, I now turn to a more philosophical level and attempt to define the educational task.
4.7.1 Standards and Dimensions

In a handout given to parents enquiring about enrolling their children at KISC I quote from G K Chesterton.

"to train a citizen is to train a critic. The whole point of education is that it should give a man abstract and eternal standards by which he can judge material and fugitive conditions."

This statement needs examining in more detail, but I certainly take as a prime aim at KISC the desire to place our students in a position where they are able to "judge material and fugitive conditions". I differ from Chesterton when he states that education should give a man abstract and eternal standards. I see the role of education as enabling a person to develop their own set of standards, abstract and eternal, by which they can judge material and fugitive conditions. I see these standards as having five dimensions; intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and social.

Miller & Melton (1986) in discussing the problems facing missionary parents attempting to educate their children at home consider these five dimensions and suggest that "parents can provide for the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of their children at home. But it is in providing for intellectual and social needs where the family’s resources generally become inadequate, particularly during teenage years when academic demands are more specialised and the child’s need for broader social interaction with peers is developing." At KISC, we use much of the same learning resource material that parents attempting to educate their children at home would use. It is in our support system that we have to provide for the needs of our students in these five dimensions.

Of course, any school has to consider the five dimensions in planning their programmes, but they can normally expect a large amount of input from the society outside their school. Nepal, as a developing country, has a more restricted environment in terms of facilities outside school which are available to our students compared to their home countries. For example, facilities for many sports and hobbies are non existent, TV is in an early stage of development, not available to many people and offers a restricted choice of programmes, etc. If KISC is to enable our students to become critical adults, they must be able to operate in cultures other than that of Nepal. We have a responsibility, therefore, to provide a rich environment within which our students interact in all five dimensions.
4.7.2 Constraints

During the 1984 conference on "missionary kids", I presented six constraints within which an adequate system for the education of missionaries' children should operate. These constraints remained important to me when the KISC model was designed. Unfortunately they were edited out of my paper printed in the proceedings of the Manila Conference.

The constraints used in designing the KISC model were:

1. The system should offer an education of comparable standard, covering the same range of subjects, as is available to the student in his/her home country.

2. The system should provide a healthy environment for the learner in the areas of peer, social and academic interaction.

3. The system should demand minimal supervision and academic input from the parents.

4. The system should keep the family unit intact for the maximum period possible each year.

5. The system should allow for the individual needs of the learners and should take advantage of their unique cultural and learning environment.

6. The system should allow the learners to continue with their studies wherever they may have to travel, particularly during furlough times.

4.7.3 Supported Self-Study, the Constraints and Dimensions.

At KISC we decided to use Supported Self-Study (SSS) chiefly because it enables each student to cover the same range of subjects at a similar standard to what would be available to them at home. The self-study aspect of SSS is particularly valuable during times when our students are travelling outside Kathmandu with their parents. But SSS also has some intrinsic educational merits which contribute towards our aim of enabling our students to develop their own set of judgement standards. As I have already mentioned briefly in 3.3.5 Waterhouse (1983a) gives four related components in the thinking which underlies the commitment behind schools using SSS.

- a belief that it is the responsibility of secondary education to educate the whole person, to treat people as individuals, and to help people to become autonomous.
- a conviction that individualisation will result in more effective learning.

- a desire to enjoy personal relations with pupils that are supporting in style, rather than confronting and domineering.

- a belief that an important task for secondary school is to help pupils to learn how to learn.

4.7.4 Different Perspectives

As I discuss in Chapter 6, our success or otherwise in meeting the educational task is viewed through the perspective of each of the actors in that task, students, parents and teachers. Each actor will be influenced in his judgement of KISC by what he perceives as the education task. You, the reader, will have your own perception of education at secondary level. I have outlined what I perceive as the task facing myself and the staff of KISC in the hope that it will illuminate some of the decisions and actions that are evaluated in this thesis.
CHAPTER 5
ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

5.1 Introduction

Before I discuss the assessment/grading system used at KISC, I feel it is important to declare what we expect to achieve through the assessment procedure.

Elton (1982) writes "Since our aims for assessment are many and competing, this is an optimization process in which we have to declare values and exercise judgement. In other words, it is a normal human activity." The optimization process which has led to the development of a unified grading system at KISC will be much better understood if I first declare our value priority. Whether our activity can be labelled as "normal" is left to the reader, but we can at least claim it is human!

Harris & Bell (1986) give some of the reasons most commonly advocated for assessing learners.

- increasing the motivation of learners.
- prediction of an individual's potential.
- diagnosis of learning
- diagnosis of teaching
- certification, classification and comparison with other learners.

They further discuss these reasons under the headings:

- Assessing for Mastery
- Assessing for Motivation
- Assessing for Prediction
- Assessing for Diagnosis of Learning
- Assessing for Diagnosis of Teaching
- Assessing for Certification, Classification and Comparison
- Assessing for Whom? Learners, Teachers and Outsiders

Rowntree (1977) gives a somewhat similar list of reasons to Harris and Bell, whereas Jones (1986) puts them in tabular form, but again largely agrees with them.

I will use Harris and Bell's headings to discuss the KISC value system.
5.2 Assessing for Mastery

The self-study system in use at KISC frees students (and teachers!) from the lock-step time demands of the traditional classroom model. The "fixed time, variable learning" of the traditional system can be replaced by "fixed learning, variable time". In other words, there is time available (within reason, of course) for those aspects of learning which require mastery on behalf of the learner. In KISC, we expect to assess for mastery in those aspects of learning where mastery is appropriate.

5.3 Assessing for Motivation

It is well known that while the results of assessment may increase the motivation of a learner, the assessment process can be a source of stress. In addition, constant poor performance in tests etc., can be a demotivating factor. Maintaining motivation in a self-study system is obviously a major concern. In designing the assessment procedure for KISC, we placed importance on ensuring that the system does not have to be rigidly applied and that it leaves a way out for the poor performer. At the same time, we have to balance this against the need to introduce some experience of assessment stress as preparation for public examinations. We try to ensure that the procedure produces positive and immediate feedback for the learner in a constructive motivating manner.

5.4 Assessing for Prediction

This aspect of assessment did not consciously play any part in our design of the system. But certainly with our more senior students, who have public examination performance and future career prospects in mind, there is a need to provide some element of prediction. In practice, the Wolsey Hall courses provide trial examination papers complete with marking guides and the state correspondence schools, Australian & New Zealand, give examinations marked at the schools. Our USA students have no public examination system to worry about.

5.5 Assessing for Diagnosis of Learning

Here Harris & Bell do not mean the diagnostic assessment instruments used by specialists, but the "more usual assessments used by teachers and learners in a diagnostic way, focusing upon either individuals or groups.... During (traditional) teaching, teachers constantly attempt to assess learning from asking direct questions to receiving non-verbal communication from learners." At KISC, this feedback comes in similar ways to the traditional model, but there are some
slight differences. Perhaps more importance has to be given to
the use of written work for assessment while our teachers gain
experience in their changed role in KISC. During tutorial
/consultation sessions we can attempt to assess learning
through the usual techniques, ranging from asking direct
questions to receiving non-verbal communication from learners.
But during most of the time when our students are involved in
self-study they are working in study carrels, with their backs
to the tutors. In this situation we have to develop new ways of
reading non-verbal communication from our learners. I discuss
this changed role of tutors more fully in chapter 11.

5.6 Assessing for Diagnosis of Teaching

In the KISC self-study system, assessment has a role to play in
the effectiveness of the self-study material as well as the
effectiveness of individual tutoring activities. (Here the
differences between assessment and evaluation become blurred.)
Comparison of learners performance on the same activities can
have something to say about the effectiveness of the learning
material and tutors. It is more difficult for us to use
feedback here to improve our teaching materials, especially if
they come as a complete package from a correspondence school.
We use the tutorial sessions to overcome shortcomings in the
self-study materials, and sometimes are able to provide
supplementary learning materials from alternative sources to
reinforce the tutorial session.

5.7 Assessing for Certification, Classification and Comparison.

Assessing for Certification is not a role we need to take on at
KISC. All our students are assessed at some stage for
certification by an outside body, either through a public
examination system, or through the correspondence school which
provided the learning materials.

Assessing for Classification is necessary at KISC even though
our students do not work in groups or classes for their
academic work. We need to be able to produce termly reports for
the parents and this involves some classification of our
students into categories, such as, good workers, well motivated
students, or even those needing extra tutorial help.

Assessing for Comparison is a difficult task when our students
use such a wide variety of study materials, but it is necessary
for our students to have some means of comparing progress with
their peers. I have already discussed the method we use for
this in 4.6

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5.8 Assessing for Learners

Harris and Bell write "rarely is assessing organized with the learners as the main audience for the results, yet if assessing is to be a real aid to learner's learning they must be an important audience whatever the purpose, mode or technique of assessing."

In KISC, great importance is placed on enabling the learners to learn. The teachers are called "subject tutors", emphasising their tutorial role as part of the self-study support system. With this move in emphasis from the teachers' central role in traditional schooling to the learners' central role in KISC, we give maximum importance to the role of assessment as part of the support system enabling the learner to learn. It is important that the learners are fully involved in the assessment through feedback and self-assessment.

5.9 Assessing for teachers

A quote from Harris & Bell describes the KISC attitude to this aspect of assessment very well - "Results of assessing, whether they be marks in a mark book, informal impressions or detailed comments arrived at during collaborative assessing are there to be used to help the learners, not just to be kept in a file."

5.10 Assessing for Outsiders

Parents, of course, need to know how their children are progressing. In an innovative scheme such as KISC this becomes even more important than in a traditional setting.

The extra mobility of our students means that we must be able to provide information about them if they move on to another school, sometimes at short notice.

5.11 The Overriding Purpose of Assessment

Throughout all I have written above, I have placed strong emphasis on the fact that we, as tutors in KISC, look upon our students as learners whom we support and that any system of assessment we design must be part of the support system. Elton (1982) declares this overriding purpose of assessment when he writes

I require an assessment system to be such as to conflict as little as possible with my aims. To me, the overriding purpose is that it should encourage learning in consonance with my declared student learning aims.
5.12 The Development of an Assessment and Grading System

In discussion at the staff meeting which developed our assessment and grading system, not all of the topics discussed in this chapter so far were explicitly stated as we made our decisions. However the ethos of the school is such that I can safely claim that they influenced our thinking. I should also declare that the work of Rowntree (1977) and Harris & Bell (1986) was familiar to me at the time of the staff meeting and, in particular, Harris & Bell influenced my thinking. I did not read Elton (1982) and Jones (1986) until after the system was designed. Present at the staff meeting were the Arts/Humanities Tutor from USA, the Science Tutor from Canada and myself from N. Ireland. Normally those of the part-time staff who are available take part in the staff meetings, but this particular staff meeting took place at a time when none of them could attend (not by design!).

The differences between the educational philosophies of the three tutors is much too large a subject to tackle here (see Anderson (1986) for an informative and amusing discussion of working in a multinational faculty). Suffice it to say, that without the unifying factor of the desire to design a system to enable the learners to learn, we would have made little progress in our discussions. The fact that KISC is an innovative scheme also released us from some of our cultural influences.

5.13 The Assessment Procedure

The assessment procedure followed by each student depends upon the nature of the self-study material used. Obviously, there has to be one approach for the open learning material (described in 4.4.1) which is entirely assessed at KISC, and a different approach for the traditional correspondence course material (described in 4.4.2) which is returned by the student to the correspondence school for marking. Before discussing these differences I describe the common procedure we use for both types of material when answers are provided for self-marking by the student.

All of the Letts Foundation Skills books and the KMP workcards provide answers for use at the completion of each unit of work, where this is possible. The correspondence schools provide some answers for self marking by their students. When a student finishes a unit of work, he first marks it himself using the answers provided. We encourage our students to attempt to think about any mistakes they have made before they bring their work to the subject tutor for confirmation of their marking. This enables our tutors to concentrate on tutoring areas of difficulty and to make comments on the quality of work. In most cases, the tutor is able to confirm the marking immediately,
give a grade, and provide immediate feedback to the student. The work, if it meets the criteria, is signed off as completed in the student's contract book and the grade and comments entered in the subject tutor's mark book.

The procedure followed for open learning material with no self-marked answers is similar in many ways to that which takes place in traditional schools. Once a student has completed a unit of work he hands it to the subject tutor for marking. I encourage tutors to return marked work to their students as quickly as possible and to give feedback, either through a one-to-one tutorial or in a small group tutorial. (The desire to return marked work quickly to the student has to be held in tension with the fact that I discourage tutors from marking while they are on duty in the learning centre. I believe that the sight of a tutor deeply involved in marking discourages some students from seeking immediate help at a time when they really need it.) The possibility that exists at KISC of being able to give an individual student almost immediate feedback must give us a great advantage over a traditional school situation where it is more appropriate for the teacher to give whole class sessions on the difficulties common to the majority of students. Many of our students appreciate this feedback from the tutors. In the student questionnaire (7.4 Qu.19) when asked what features of their contact with tutors did the students find helpful, 64% found receiving a different explanation of a difficulty helpful and 61% found working on an area with which they had difficulty through an extra activity suggested by a tutor helpful. 61% also found receiving comment on the quality of their work helpful. All these are activities which take place during tutorials following up on graded work.

The procedure becomes more difficult when the student has to return work to his or her correspondence school. We insist that all such work should be shown to the appropriate subject tutor before it is posted to the correspondence school. The tutor then has to make the decision as to whether or not the work should be corrected, altered or rewritten before it is sent to the correspondence school. There is a conflict of interests here. The student wants to correct his work and thus give the best possible impression to the correspondence school, where as the subject tutor wants to present a more honest position to the correspondence school in order that the student may obtain the help most appropriate to his needs. I have suggested that if a tutor has difficulty in deciding the level of correction, if any, that should be made before work is submitted to a correspondence school, he should remind himself of the following. Our role if KISC should be primarily that of providing immediate feedback, assistance and guidance to the student in his task of learning. Assessment for grading should be the primary task of the correspondence school. If it becomes obvious to the tutor during a tutorial session that the student has overcome an area of difficulty then it is probably better
for all concerned if a corrected version of the work is submitted to the correspondence school. If at the end of a tutoring session there is doubt about the student's understanding or it is clear that the student still has a difficulty then it seems advisable that the original uncorrected version of the work should be returned to the correspondence school. Most students see the logic of this argument and accept the tutor's decision, but some resent having to return uncorrected work.

There exists the possibility that difficulties could arise if work corrected in a correspondence school is returned with advice which contradicts or disagrees with that given by the KISC tutors. So far this conflict has not arisen and there have been only minor and acceptable differences in assessment and advice by KISC and correspondence school tutors. On one occasion we did feel that a correspondence school was providing work of too low a standard to challenge a particularly bright student. The school did respond favourably to our suggestion that they provide more challenging and advanced material.

5.14 The Unified Grading System

We decided that we could only safely grade the work using four broadly defined bands - A, B, C, or D. Any attempt at fine grading using A-. C+ being considered much too subjective. Also given the small number of students enrolled at KISC and the great variety in learning materials and sources, there was no possibility of establishing a norm-referenced grading system, therefore, the system had to be criteria-referenced. The following table shows the grade and the appropriate criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt;90%</td>
<td>Very few or no mistakes&lt;br&gt;Neat presentation&lt;br&gt;Original work&lt;br&gt;Imaginative ideas&lt;br&gt;Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>75 - 90%</td>
<td>Few mistakes&lt;br&gt;Neat Presentation&lt;br&gt;Pleasing but not outstanding&lt;br&gt;Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60 - 75%</td>
<td>Some mistakes&lt;br&gt;Acceptable presentation&lt;br&gt;Average (= not good, not bad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>Many mistakes&lt;br&gt;Poor presentation&lt;br&gt;Work needs repeating&lt;br&gt;Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The system is still very subjective, especially when the criteria are mixed, eg., if a student has produced imaginative work which is untidily presented, the tutor has to make a judgement. A percentage mark is included in the table to give broad guidance in subjects, such as Mathematics, where a percentage is more appropriate than criteria. The system is used for all the self-study subjects; English, History, Geography, Maths, French and the Sciences.

The problem that we now face is how do we ensure that all the tutors are following this system and interpreting the criteria consistently? When the number of students attending KISC was low it was relatively easy for me as principal to monitor the grading decisions made by tutors. (This was done informally.) The school has now grown too large for this to be practical. I do get some feedback by comparing our grading with that of the correspondence school tutors. It would appear that (with the exception of one of our tutors) the KISC tutors demand a higher standard than that of the home country tutors. This is consistent with my statement in 5.2 that we can expect our students to achieve a high level of mastery. This feedback from the correspondence schools does give us some help but we need to develop a system to monitor our grading performance covering all our students. Later in this thesis (11.7) I mention that I will be editing part of this thesis to form the basis of a tutor’s handbook (See Appendix IX). I will be suggesting in that handbook that regular discussion of the use of the grading criteria takes place at staff meetings. Samples of work and the grading made could be used for discussion and comparison of grading decisions.

A deliberately high level (60%), at least in British terms, was selected below which work is rejected. This was done for two reasons:

- the possibility of aiming for mastery (as I discuss above)
- students have access to answers and may have made some attempt at correcting their work before presentation.

In practice, to date very little work has been rejected. When it has been unacceptable, it has usually been because of untidy presentation. On the few occasions that work was rejected because of the quality of the answers, there has always been an immediate follow-up through an intensive tutorial time.

The criteria system is used for daily work units, tutor marked tests, and project work. In all cases, our assessment and grading is aimed at enabling and supporting our students in their learning.
5.15 GCSE Coursework and the Unified Grading System

In November 1989 our first two GCSE candidates sat their examinations. These students entered as external candidates because the staff of KISC did not feel capable of carrying out internal coursework assessment at such an early stage in the development of KISC. (Overseas students can enter Southern Examining Group GCSE as external candidates. This means that the internally assessed coursework component is replaced by an additional examination paper in each subject.) Because of the underlying philosophy of GCSE, which has moved the learner from the periphery to the centre of the educational model (Christian-Carter & Burton 1988), is entirely consistent with the philosophy of KISC, we would like to introduce internal assessment of coursework as soon as it becomes feasible and practical given the limited experience of our staff. This could lead to adjustments becoming necessary in our unified grading system, although we need to be careful that the needs of one particular nationality do not dominate our thinking.
6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss the research techniques used in the evaluation of KISC. I assume throughout that the reader is familiar with the "new paradigm research" and in particular "illuminative evaluation". (For a useful discussion of the approach see Parlett (1981)). In this chapter I discuss those aspects peculiar to an illuminative evaluation of KISC, paying particular attention to the possible conflict caused by my triple role as Headmaster/Innovator/Researcher.

6.2 REASONS FOR THE RESEARCH AND THE ISSUE OF VALIDITY

The problems which arise in an illuminative evaluation of KISC cannot be properly placed in context without a brief preliminary outline of the rationale for carrying out the research.

(1) There is a responsibility for any innovator to continually assess the performance of his innovation. In education, of course, there is a particular responsibility for an innovator and headmaster to ensure that the pupils involved do not suffer in any way through the effects of the innovation (or indeed, through the effects of the evaluation). There is also the headmaster's responsibility to keep the funding body, the management committee and the parents (who have entrusted their children to an untried situation) informed of progress.

(2) Making the evaluation public through publication of research progress opens the system to the possibility of input from knowledgeable outsiders.

(3) One hopes that the system can be used elsewhere.

For any of these aims or responsibilities to be achieved, it is important that the validity of the evaluation can be demonstrated.
Reason & Rowan (1981b) give heuristic guides which may be used to increase the validity of an inquiry. I will discuss only those which are applicable to my study.

Valid research cannot be conducted alone: To do research one needs people who will offer support and people who will challenge and confront.

This was the role taken by my fellow postgraduate students, my supervisor and other staff members in the University of Surrey. In addition, working in Nepal were colleagues with experience in education research, one of whom was a member of the working party which conceived KISC but then ceased direct involvement. These colleagues adopted the role of "devil's advocate" as well as being supportive.

The validity of research is much enhanced by the systematic use of feedback loops and by going round the research cycle many times.

Reason & Rowan give the example of Madison (1969) who went round the research cycle many times. He interviewed, theorized, fedback his theories, interviewed more, theorized, fedback, tried out, interviewed, etc.

Instead of a single cycle of data collection, there need to be multiple cycles, where the theory, concepts, and categories are progressively extended and refined, differentiated and integrated reaching towards a theoretical saturation.

Later in this chapter I develop the instrument of an evaluation workshop. As a result of this guide from Reason & Rowan a number of evaluation workshops were held. The questions developed in the initial workshop were exposed, reformulated, refined, added to or rejected at subsequent workshops.

Convergent and contextual validity can be used to enhance the validity of any particular piece of data.

The need for multiple viewpoints in new paradigm research has been well argued by many writers, eg., Cohen & Manion (1980) discuss the use of "triangulation". From traditional research we can borrow the ideas of convergent and contextual validation. The value of evidence from different sources can be compared and assessed. A number of schools in the UK have projects involving some use of supported self-study, I have visited some of these, interviewed the teachers involved and observed the projects in operation. The Council for Educational Technology has published case studies of some of these projects and this has been a useful source of evidence. (Waterhouse 1986)
The research can be replicated in some form. A tightly controlled experiment in the traditional research mode can be reproduced for verification purposes, but it is clear that in an educational situation where there are many complex and dynamic variables it is impossible to exactly reproduce research. (I have not justified my use of "illuminative evaluation" to research the KISC system, as I believe the method is becoming widely accepted. If challenged I would point to the many changes which have occurred in KISC in the past two and a half years and ask how the traditional research mode could cope with them). As Elton & Laurillard (1979) have pointed out, it is not so much things and events which are important to study but the relationships and systems of relationships between them. The need to establish generalisability becomes apparent.

Guba (1978) discusses several positions that might be taken in regard to generalisability and concludes that the evaluator should do what he can to establish the generalisability of his findings by: insure internal validity; repeating observations in each locale and attempting to identify the interactive elements which can change the meaning of the generalisation; using Denzin tactics for building credibility. The Denzin tactics or approaches (Denzin (1971)) described by Guba are:

The investigator locates himself in a "representative" situation and argues generalisability to all who pass through that situation. Thus the findings of my research could be generalized to all who pass through an international study centre similar to KISC.

The investigator argues that his findings hold for all persons in a particular time frame. This study of KISC has taken place over a period of two and a half years, sufficient time for any effects caused by the novelty of the system to have worn off. I therefore place no restriction of time frame on the generalisability.

The investigator generalises to a class of social organization. In the KISC setting this will be expatriate children.

Thus I claim generalisabilty for the conclusions I discuss in chapters 14 & 15 to any expatriate child in an international study centre similar to KISC. I will also discuss the appropriateness of extending this generalisability in certain cases.

Tuckman (1978) gives four factors that should be taken into account when considering generalisability. They are: the
reactive effects of testing; interaction effects of selection bias; reactive effects of experimental arrangements; and the multiple treatment interface. There is no selection of subjects in the KISC study, and an "illuminative evaluation" was chosen because it does not involve experimental arrangements and multiple treatment. But the first factor (the reactive effects of testing) is of more relevance. Tuckman points out that subjects often try to help the researcher by providing the result they think he or she is anticipating. This brings into question the relationship between the researcher and his subjects and in the next section I turn my attention to that.

6.3 THE TEACHER-RESEARCHER ROLE

If the teacher-researcher is to conduct observational research, he will use two of the four master roles described by Gold (1958), namely, those of complete-participant and participant-as-observer. Burgess (1980a) argues that teachers should be engaged in research. He points out (1980b) that in this situation the role adopted would be that of teacher-as-researcher (cf., participant-as-observer) meaning that the research activities would be subordinate to teaching duties. Pring (1978) points out that this leads to research in the form of self-criticism and evaluation becoming a formal part of the teacher's duties and extends the teacher role. Hargreaves (1967) adopted another of the master roles, that of researcher-as-teacher (observer-as-participant), where his teaching duties were subordinate to his research. In fact, as his research developed his teacher role assumed less importance. As Hargreaves points out, when his study was planned it was not foreseen that his assumption of a teacher role, whilst facilitating his relations with the staff, would seriously inhibit his relations with the pupils. Thus he had to abandon his teacher role to improve his relationships with the boys.

Hargreaves was fortunate in that he was able to change his role emphasis in order to facilitate his research needs, but for the teacher, of course, his research must always come second. What are the problems associated with the teacher's formal role?

Hargreaves suggests the following:

Pupils may view the teacher-researcher more as a teacher-spy than a researcher. This raises questions regarding the accuracy and reliability of pupils' responses. The personal relationship that exists between the pupils and teacher might be an important factor.

Some pupils might question the extent to which they should give teacher-researchers access to their
private world since questions of confidentiality could be raised.

The teacher-researcher might be confronted with an ethical dilemma in terms of his allegiance i.e., questions about loyalties which the researcher has to his informants and a teacher to his pupils and colleagues. Hargreaves gives the example of finding out about colleagues who did not set homework.

In KISC, I am not just a teacher, but the Headmaster, this could be expected to compound the above difficulties, but in practise, the small size of KISC (physically and in terms of staff and pupil numbers) has placed me in a much less remote position than would be expected in a more traditional school. The use of self-study, with its emphasis on giving more autonomy to each individual student, places the tutors and myself in a supportive relationship with the students rather than the more traditional confronting and domineering role. As a result I claim that none of the above problems have intruded significantly in my research.

Role conflict is another area which Hargreaves discusses. He defines role conflict thus:

Role conflict is the exposure of an actor to conflicting expectations which cannot be simultaneously filled.... When the barriers separating the various components of the role set break down, a conflict will arise if the role performance becomes simultaneously observed by two or more members of the role set with different expectations.

Fortunately, during the normal routine in KISC, my role as headmaster is expected by the members of the role set (staff and students) to include the duties of researcher and innovator. It is normally expected that a headmaster is responsible for evaluating his staff, pupils and systems, encouraging or even taking a lead in the introduction of any innovative measures and keeping tabs on the progress of these innovations. During specific evaluation exercises care was taken to ensure that all those taking part were aware that I was acting in the role of headmaster, evaluating my innovation in order to ensure that our students are receiving the best possible education in line with their parents' and teachers' wishes. You, as reader of this evaluation, will be observing my three roles simultaneously. During the collection of data, the interpretation of observations and at the write-up stage I have taken care to be consciously alert for possible role conflict and am confident that bias from these different roles has not distorted the findings.
6.4 BIAS OF THE PARTICIPANT RESEARCHER

Burgess (1980b) points out that the teacher's formal role in some situations may make him predisposed towards studying some topics rather than others. He gives the example of a deputy head of a middle school who as a teacher researcher questioned pupils about the subjects they liked and disliked in the school. The responses showed that some subjects were disliked because of the teachers and their style of teaching and not because of the subject matter. This research should have been followed up with the teachers and pupils but the deputy head's formal role prevented him from doing this.

Cohen & Manion (1980) indicate three perspectives on the interview as a research tool. Indeed, I believe that these perspectives could be taken on almost any research tool involving human interaction. In what follows, the word "interview" could easily be replaced by almost any of the techniques common in illuminative evaluation.

**First Perspective:** Interview is a means of "pure information transfer". This assumes that "accurate" data is obtained if the researcher asks the proper questions in an acceptable manner and the respondents are cooperative and sincere in their responses. Sources of bias are eliminated by using certain questions to test the consistency of response and to act as lie detectors.

**Second Perspective:** The interview transaction inevitably has bias which is to be recognised and controlled. Cohen & Manion suggest that by using a range of interviewers with different biases some degree of control for bias can be exerted.

**Third Perspective:** No control of bias need be attempted since the interpersonal encounter which occurs is the only valid data.

Dean & White (1969) list the following factors as likely to be important in influencing the informant's reporting of the situation under interview circumstances:

1. Ulterior motives. The example is given of the foreman who expressed interest in being interviewed and ended with the hope of being given a good recommendation to the management!

2. Bars to spontaneity which might inhibit free expression by the informant eg. where an informant feels that the affairs of his organisation should be put forward in a good light for public consumption, he will hesitate to bring up spontaneously the more negative aspects of the situation.
3. Does the informant have desires to please the interviewer so that his opinions will be well thought of? eg. an interviewer known to be identified with better race relations might well find informants expressing opinions more favourable to minority groups than they would express among their own friends.

4. Are there any idiosyncratic factors that may cause the informant to express only one facet of his reaction to a subject?

My own perspective is that while most respondents will be sincere and cooperative, there may be some who will not be honest and open in their responses. One has to be suspicious in every case therefore that bias may be present. This has to be looked for, recognised and controlled. Dean & Whyte's list helps with this. An advantage of the compactness of the KISC situation is that responses which are "out of character" with the respondents' normal observable behaviour are clear and obvious. After these precautions are taken, the data should be recognised as "accurate".

Parlett (1981) writes:

Unthinkingly to include some points of view and not to take others into account has profound consequences for a study.... Both the quality of the findings and the ultimate acceptability of the report depend on people viewing the study as fair, detached, honest, broad-based and plain speaking.....

In a school which has been established for some time it would be difficult for a headmaster to carry out a study which could be seen as fair, detached, etc., as inevitably some members of staff are going to see themselves as being under personal evaluation and will not want to be detached, honest or plain speaking in their interaction with the headmaster. Because the system/school being evaluated in my research is completely new, with each student and each member of staff, including myself, seeking to find his role, a pioneering spirit has existed in each participant. Within this pervading pioneer spirit one would expect evaluation of the system as natural and desirable. That is, it is clear to each participant that it is the innovation, the system, which is under study and evaluation, not their own performance within it. Thus, I have taken as a priority the need to establish an atmosphere of cooperation and excitement in the innovation right from the first day of operation. As Headmaster and Innovator of the project, I have tried to make clear to all the participants that I am open to, and indeed encourage, comments and suggestions. I point out that these are not seen as personal criticisms, but accepted as
genuine concerns towards the greater good. I also point out to all the participants that the system being used is felt by myself and the innovating committee to be the best possible system under the pervading circumstances, but we are making no claims to perfection and therefore will feel no personal hurt if criticisms are made or suggestions for change offered. Another source of bias or cause for concern in a participant evaluation is that caused by the personal involvement of the researcher in the evaluation.

6.5 FAMILIARITY V DETACHMENT

Millar (1969) indicates that it is essential for the fieldworker to step outside the situation under study if he is to avoid complete identification or over-identification with the individuals who are being studied, as this can result in some lines of enquiry being overlooked. Or as Burgess (1980b) puts it:

The fact that the teacher is already a participant in the situation under investigation may mean that he overlooks some problems because he is so familiar with the structure of the institute and its personnel.

When expatriate workers first come to Nepal they are often advised by the "old-hands" to take many photographs in their first few weeks as the apparent "oddities" very soon become common place and unnoticed.

Parlett (1981) writes:

Individuals are inevitably caught up in the formal thinking of their programme or setting, much of which they take for granted. As insiders who have become habituated to their environment, they no longer realize how much thinking governs what transpires in the organization.

Greer (1964) according to Burgess demonstrates how early field experiences have to be scanned for questions and concepts that can be used to organize data. This has been done.

We are fortunate at KISC to receive many visits from outsiders, a research diary has been kept and note taken of any comments from these strangers. In addition, I develop later in this chapter the techniques of an evaluation workshop and interview by an outsider. Both of these instruments allow for input from outside the system.
6.6 SHOULD MY STAFF AND STUDENTS KNOW THEY ARE BEING RESEARCHED?

McCall & Simmons (1969) point out that one of the most critical decisions the participant observer must make concerning his role is the degree to which it will be openly defined as a research role or will be concealed beneath a performance of some existing role in the organization.

Hargreaves (1967) quotes Dr. R. J. Frankenberg as writing:

If the observer cannot participate with the knowledge and approval of the people to be studied he should not be there at all. The observer has a positive duty to be open that his intentions are to observe, to report and to publish an account of what he sees.

But Hargreaves feels that Frankenberg oversimplifies the practical situation:

In light conversation with a teacher one cannot suddenly point out that what he has just stated is sociologically important, for this would seriously inhibit future relations. If the observer really does have a "positive duty to be open in his intentions" then he must constantly remind the people he observes of this fact, whereas in reality they adjust to the researcher's presence and cease, in part, to treat him as such.

King (1969) presented himself as an agent, rather than an investigator, of an investigation using a questionnaire in a school in which he was already a member of staff. His purpose in doing this was "to promote honesty and directness of response on the part of the subject, which might have been inhibited if the subject-investigator relationship had been apparently overlaid by the pupil-teacher relationship". King took care to explain to his staff colleagues the purpose of any actions, he thanked them and gave the results of the investigations but "only towards the end of the survey period did any pupils know of the general situation and its links with (King). The few who knew the situation were sympathetic sixth form pupils, mainly those that (King) taught."

Heron (1971) takes a similar stance to Frankenberg, he writes:

The researcher interacts with the subjects so that they contribute directly both to the hypothesis-making, to formulating the final conclusions, and to what goes in between ...(therefore).... the researcher will also be co-subject, participating fully in the action and experience to be researched.
He argues that the basic explanatory model for research behaviour is that of intelligent self-direction combined with relative determinism. (The human being has a significant degree of freedom and can bring intelligent, rational principles to bear on the direction of his or her activity within nature where antecedent conditions delimit and determine a range of possible outcomes. This is combined with a commitment to purposes in the light of principles. A detailed discussion of this can be found in Heron (1971)).

If the researcher is committed to such a model to explain his own research behaviour then he cannot, without gross inconsistency, apply to his subjects a model which is logically at odds with the one he applies to himself. Thus the researcher must see his subjects in principle as self-directing and intelligent agents.

Heron continues:

Hence my subjects become my co-researchers: together we decide what possibilities for intelligent self-determination are to be investigated through action. If the subjects are not privy to the research thinking, they will not be functioning fully as intelligent agents. For a self-determining person is one who generates, or takes up freely as his own, the thinking that determines his actions.

Heron's thinking ties in well with the ethos of KISC and the emphasis of supported self-study on the autonomy of the pupil. Teachers and students are seen as working together in the quest for education, and indeed, working together to make the KISC system successful. In practice though, I feel that if one was constantly to remind pupils and staff that they were in a research situation (especially if there exists an implied pressure to make intelligent decisions or comments) this would lead to an artificial environment where people feel constantly on show, restricted in their actions, with their performance under examination by the headmaster-researcher. Instead I have adopted an action research stance, involving everyone in the search for action that will improve the KISC model. Bell & Colbeck (1984) describe the creation of an "open institute where comments, criticisms, new ideas and personal feelings can be aired and shared in a supportive atmosphere and where key members of staff can exercise cooperative leadership". This describes the research environment that I have tried to create at KISC, but one important group that Bell & Colbeck seem to have omitted in their "whole school" research is the parents. They have a vital role to play and I discuss this in chapter 12. Simons (1980) also writes about the importance of involving the whole school in the research - "the climate in the school is ideally one in which everyone is a potential contributor to
the study and everyone is committed to reviewing the findings as a basis for decision making".

6.7 POWER, RESPONSIBILITY AND VULNERABILITY

A headmaster-innovator-researcher finds himself in a contradiction of terms. As headmaster he is powerful with strong influence over his staff and pupils, as innovator he is vulnerable and open to criticism from his staff and pupils, and as a researcher he needs to be completely powerless in his relations with the same staff and pupils! Throughout all this there has to be balanced his responsibility to his staff, pupils, parents and management committee!

Ethical and political problems have arisen, such as, how much use can be made of information obtained during a headmaster-parent interview, a headmaster-pupil interview? Of course, confidential information obtained as a headmaster cannot be published but impressions etc., which are obtained in the course of confidential interviews will to some extent influence the headmaster-researcher's thinking.

There is a responsibility to ensure that no harm should come to any of the individuals involved in KISC and great care has been taken in the writing of this report.

These problems face any participant-researcher, as Hargreaves writes:

I do not think that the difficulties encountered make it necessary to rule out all forms of participant-observation as unethical. The moral question is one of the uses of the material so obtained. Everything one learns in a participant-observer situation assists in the analysis, but the researcher has a duty to use only non-confidential evidence in a published report, and this may mean that there are some aspects of the situation which cannot be published at all because all the evidence must be regarded as confidential information.

As already pointed out, the size and unique structure of KISC have meant that as headmaster, I am not the remote power figure that is more usual in a traditional school setting. But even so during the development of the research instruments precautions were taken to limit any possible effects my position could have on the quality of my research findings. Before turning to a discussion of these research instruments, I examine my evaluation of the KISC system in the light of the action research literature.
6.8 WHAT IS ACTION RESEARCH?

The literature on action research is growing, but few writers commit themselves to a definition of action research. Some do so with reluctance - Hustler, Cassidy & Cuff (1986) write:

What follows is as close as we would wish to come to a definition of action research where teachers are the practitioners. They subject themselves and their practice to critical scrutiny; they attempt to relate ideas to empirical observations; they attempt to make this process explicit to themselves and others through the written word. Their prime concern is to improve their own practice in a particular situation from the standpoint of their own concern or worry. For them action research seems to be a practical way forward given their concern in that situation. They use and/or design aspects of their action as teachers to find out more about effective teaching and, in our view, they do so rigorously.

Keiny (1985) and Gibson (1985) give definitions which are similar to each other. As Gibson writes, action research is "self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants to improve both the rationality and justice of their own practice, and their own understanding of that practice and its context."

Clark (1972) writing from a sociological perspective suggests that action research must possess an aspect of direct involvement in organizational change, and simultaneously it must provide an increase in knowledge. In Clark's view the role of the action research practitioner is to document the change process and provide feedback on the organizational change process so that it might be stopped, modified or accelerated. It is essential that the practitioner be involved in the implementation of the change.

Combining these insights from Sociology and Education leads to my own definition of the nature of the specific action research task involved in the evaluation of the KISC system:-

To subject the KISC system, the staff, students and my own practice in that innovatory system to critical scrutiny; to relate ideas to empirical observations and hence to provide feedback on the system so that action might be taken to stop, modify or accelerate it; to make this process explicit to myself and others and to make the system open to outside critical comment or adoption through the written word.
6.9 A THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Keiny (1985) calls for a new conception in which a school is regarded as a system, suggesting that perceiving the school as a system leads to a deeper understanding of the flow variables: the different processes of personal and organizational change.

In order to develop a model of change relations within KISC I start with Clark (1972). Clark refers to Leavitt in Cooper et al (1964) who suggests that a classification can be constructed by viewing organisations as multi-variate systems within which there are four salient interacting variables.

![Diagram]

**Figure 6.1**

**TASK** refers to the objectives of the organisation. Leavitt intends the definition to include the large variety of different but operationally significant subtasks that exist in major enterprises.

**TECHNOLOGY** refers to equipment, plant and buildings. Leavitt includes problem-solving interventions such as work study, and is consequently uncertain about the distinctions between technology and structure. Clark restricts his usage to "raw materials, machine technology, its spatial and temporal configurations".

**STRUCTURE** refers to systems of authority, workflow, information systems, coordination and communication.

**PEOPLE** refers to the actors in the enterprise, to their attitudes and expectations.

Leavitt states that these four variables are highly interdependent so that a change in one will almost certainly elicit change in the others; however he observes that each may be thought of as having an associated change strategy.
I will now redefine Leavitt’s variables in terms of the KISC system.

TASK: KISC, like any other educational establishment, exists to educate its students. I have already discussed the task of education as understood by myself and the staff of KISC in 4.7. This perception may or may not be shared by the parents or pupils. Indeed while most people may not be able to give a comprehensive definition of education, they will have a clear idea when their perception of education is, or is not, being met. I suggest therefore that we can only examine the success or otherwise of meeting the task through feedback from the people involved. This leads me to modify the position of TASK in Leavitt’s model.

TECHNOLOGY in the KISC setting refers to the learning materials, resources and physical surroundings. (See Chapters 4, 10, 14 & 15).

STRUCTURE refers to the system of authority, system for the use of learning materials, etc. I include here the infrastructure for the application of the action research findings. (See Chapters 4, 10, 14 & 15).

PEOPLE refers to the teachers, students, parents and management committee involved in KISC. (See Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15).

In KISC we stress that the student comes first. If a problem arises with any one student’s progress with his or her learning materials we check first that the material meets the student’s needs. As Rowntree (1982) points out, a confusing ambivalence of purpose often sabotages our discussions of evaluation, assessment and grading. If a student fails his course, has he really failed it or has it failed him? Rowntree proceeds to point out that since the introduction of Programmed Learning many teachers have come to realize that, as far as humanly possible, the learning system should be adapted to the student rather than vice versa. Rowland (1986) continues this theme of putting the student first, when he emphasizes the importance of grasping the children’s viewpoint in a teaching situation. We also need to involve others in the process of examining our systems. Stenhouse (1975) points out that there are often substantial perceptual disparities between pupils and teachers and that action research can lead to attempts to resolve these. Winter (1982) and Hustler et al (1986) discuss the importance of inviting the reflection of others from their different perspectives. Bringing these ideas together leads to the conclusion that when the system does not appear to be succeeding in the TASK as perceived by the actors, consideration for change should be given to the STRUCTURE, TECHNOLOGY or the PEOPLE rather than the TASK.
Leavitt's model can now be modified in that we treat the TASK as viewed through the PEOPLE. In any consideration for change, STRUCTURE, TECHNOLOGY and PEOPLE are examined. TASK is considered invariate.

The methodology developed in the next section will be based on this model of change relations given below.

![Change Relations Diagram]

**Figure 6.2**

### 6.10 THE METHODOLOGY

Rowntree (1982, 1986) points out that continuous monitoring of a course takes two forms:

- Casual evaluation (micro-evaluation)
- Deliberate evaluation (macro-evaluation)

Casual evaluation arises from things we "just happen to notice" from day to day. In order to collect and utilise data from these daily happenings, three research sources were employed.

1. A Research Diary
2. Records of Staff Meetings, Management Committee Meetings
3. Students' Contract-books

Three major themes were used in keeping the research diary as suggested by Burgess (1981):

- **The substantive account**: a detailed chronological record of the events observed and informants that have been interviewed or engaged in conversation, organized around the questions: where? what? who? when?
The methodological account: organized around questions such as: under what circumstances were observations made? what role was taken by the researcher? etc.

The analytical account: recorded here were initial questions and the way in which these questions were modified over time by the collection of data. Also recorded were conscious attempts to derive meaning from the substantive account.

In practice, notes taken were given a subscript: O.N. meaning Observational Notes (the substantive account); M.N. meaning Methodological Notes (the methodological account) and T.N. meaning Theoretical Notes (the analytical account) as suggested by Dearden (1979).

Minutes of Staff Meetings and Management Committee Meetings were studied after each meeting and at a later date. Extracts were then taken from these minutes, added to the research diary and annotated with one of the above subscripts. The Staff Meeting Minutes provided a particularly valuable record of the cycles involved in action research.

Each student was provided with a contract-book in which to keep a record of contracted work, completion dates and points awarded for learning tasks. The exact nature of these contract-books changed somewhat during the course of the evaluation. (See Appendix X). Again observations from this source were recorded in the research diary.

As mentioned above, I felt that the creation of a research environment was important to the success of the above strategies. James and Ebbut (1981) tell of the importance to their own particular research of the correct environment. Stenhouse (1975) points out that in order for a teacher to be an observer-researcher, he needs to teach that definition of himself to his pupils. This is possible if the teacher makes it clear that the reason he is playing the role of researcher is to improve his teaching and make things better for them.

Three deliberate macro-evaluations were planned:

1. Interview of myself by an outside observer
2. Evaluation Workshops
3. Time-on-task Observation Matrix

Hustler et al (1986) state that some form of dialogue with an outsider is not only desirable for action research, but almost one of its defining characteristics. As I mentioned in section 6.5, I attempted to see KISC from a stranger's perspective by
having myself interviewed on tape by a colleague who was sufficiently interested in KISC to ask intelligent questions, yet sufficiently removed from the day to day affairs to be objective.

The evaluation workshops were based upon Cryer (1986). Before the first workshop, participants were notified of several broad topic areas under which their comments would be invited. These topics fell under the broad categories of TECHNOLOGY, STRUCTURE and PEOPLE as I have discussed in 6.9 above. Participants in the first workshop were the staff, parents and members of the management committee. Comments on each of the topics were collected, turned into a questionnaire and completed as suggested by Cryer. In addition, questionnaires were sent to those parents unable to attend the workshop. A workshop for the students was held shortly afterwards. Again comments were invited from the students, but the procedure diverged slightly from that suggested by Cryer. The comments were turned into a questionnaire by myself and the staff and the students given an opportunity to complete the questionnaire anonymously. I felt that this enabled the students to express their opinions without fear. The data from both these workshops was discussed at both staff and management committee meetings.

I feel that this form of evaluation workshop allowed the participants freedom to express their opinions without fear of influence from my power position of headmaster, and was a more appropriate instrument than the more commonly accepted technique of interview. The workshops also allowed topics to be suggested for discussion by the participants and resulted in issues opening up that I had not expected. This may not have occurred if I had used a structured interview technique to gather data!

I describe the Evaluation Workshops in Chapter 7.

In addition to the qualitative instruments outlined above, I felt it useful to develop a quantitative instrument, the time-on-task observation matrix:-

The position of student work stations in the Learning Centre made it feasible to observe each student in a brief anticlockwise scan of the room. Such a scan was made every three minutes and the activity being undertaken by each member of staff and student noted using a code letter on a grid. The observations were carried out at separate times both by myself and a research assistant. This instrument is fully described in Chapter 8.
6.11 STRUCTURE OF THE EVALUATION

Figure 6.3 attempts to show the structure of the illuminative evaluation of KISC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MACRO EVALUATION</th>
<th>MICRO EVALUATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time-on-Task Observation Matrix</td>
<td>Daily Observation (Recorded in diary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Workshops</td>
<td>Minutes of Staff &amp; other meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview by Outside Observer</td>
<td>Examination of students work &amp; contract books</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.3

The research diary acted as a sort of clearing centre for input from all the instruments, both formal and informal. Issues and concerns noted in the research diary were tested in the time-on-task observation matrix, discussed at staff meetings and at the evaluation workshops, further developments of these issues and concerns going back into the research diary, and so on round the cycle. In this way a dialogue was set up between the different research instruments in an attempt to focus and illuminate issues and concerns.

6.12 CRITIQUE OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Before I take a critical look at the research instruments I used in my illuminative evaluation I should explain why I did not use the, by now, traditional instruments of interview and questionnaire. I begin by examining the obstacle to the use of interviews which arises through my position as headmaster.

Headmaster/parent, headmaster/student or headmaster/staff interviews normally take place for a rather different purpose and on a different level that those of evaluator/subject interviews. It would have been possible to explain to an interviewee that my purpose was purely one of evaluation, but I interviewee that my purpose was purely one of evaluation, but
believe my power position as headmaster could not be forgotten and would have a strong unmeasurable influence on anything said during the interview.

I was also concerned about abuse of privilege. As headmaster, I have the privilege of requesting interviews with staff, students or parents and of knowing that most people would feel obliged to grant that interview no matter what the purpose. I also have access to confidential material about all these people. These are privileges of access which an evaluator is not normally burdened with. I may have been oversensitive in my decision, but I would have construed it as an abuse of privilege if I had become involved in and used interviews with people over whom I have power.

My position as headmaster also influenced my decision not to use questionnaires entirely developed and administered by me. It would have been impossible to assess how much my position as headmaster, or indeed innovator, would influence the reply my staff and students would feel comfortable in giving.

At an early stage in the development of KISC I felt it possible to develop a questionnaire which was entirely related to the students' self-study materials. These materials were developed outside KISC, therefore I felt that the students would not feel inhibited in their ability to answer the questionnaire which was incorporated with their contract sheets. Unfortunately, this exercise proved to be much too demanding on students' time and although it may have produced some useful information I abandoned the idea after a few weeks. (See Appendix X for an example and further discussion.)

Throughout this thesis I have taken great care not to reveal any information of a confidential nature. I have also been careful to write in a way which conceals the identity of any individual member of staff, parent or student. This has meant that I have not felt free to write in a detailed way about some issues, particularly those related to staff and student performance. I have made a great effort not to include material which is based on information I cannot divulge, but, I cannot completely clear my mind of background knowledge (nor would I want to do so) and this must have influenced what I have written.

I am happy that the research instruments I did use produced reliable and adequate information covering a wide range of topics. If I had developed questionnaires and used interviews, my research would possibly have been more focussed in certain topics but at the same time it would have been restricted to my understanding and overview of the system and the reliability or bias of some of the data may have been questionable.

There were some minor real or potential problems that I
observed with the evaluation workshops and the observation matrix. I discuss these below.

6.12.1 Critique of the Evaluation Workshops

I believe that the evaluation workshops fulfilled their main purpose of providing a vehicle for parents, students and staff to freely express their opinion on any aspect of KISC they chose. There were some minor problems which did not detract from the overall success of the instrument.

At least one statement was not clearly defined and could be interpreted in more than one way. In the first workshop 7.1 A7: "Teachers should do more actual teaching" does "actual teaching" mean "traditional classroom teaching" or "more teaching" mean more of the type of teaching we do, i.e., one-to-one or small group tutoring, or does "more actual teaching" mean that in the tutoring sessions tutors should adopt a more traditional domineering "teacher-as-master" role? The parents were almost equally divided in their response to this comment; 53% agreeing and 48% disagreeing. Perhaps this reflects their confusion over it's meaning. I had encouraged the participants to query the exact meaning of any comment before the wording was finalised and voting took place. Some groups prepared their statements much quicker than others and there was pressure on the slower groups to get finished. I think it is inevitable that some ambiguous statements will occur. Given the large number of statements that were generated in each workshop I feel pleased that there was only one obviously ambiguous statement.

Some of the suggestions made were statements of existing KISC policy. I assume these were made either through ignorance on the part of the person who formulated the statement or because the person wanted to gauge strength of opinion on a policy. For example, the first workshop 7.1 B5: "The house parents need at least one day off a week". The house parents have always had at least one day off a week. (They have every Wednesday and every third weekend free.) There has never been any suggestion of a need to change this (as far as I know!) The workshop participants endorsed the policy (95% agreeing, 5% neutral). I still do not know why the statement was made and feel frustration because of this. This type of problem is not really one of workshop procedure but introduces problems of interpretation after the workshop. When an evaluator formulates a questionnaire himself he knows why he has asked a question and therefore is in a much better position to interpret the response.

I felt frustration with the fact that participants were not always expressing their opinion from an informed background of knowledge. For example, A2 and A3 in the first workshop (7.1)
raised the issue of homework. Before the third workshop, I talked to the parents about our homework policy. This probably led to the rather different and to me, more understandable, response to the homework topic (7.3 C3). See my comments on this in the second paragraph of Chapter 7 and in 12.1 for further discussion.

The influence of group pressure in a workshop is difficult, if not impossible to assess. The second evaluation workshop showed very obvious signs of group pressure. At the time of the workshop, 80% of the students worked in what is now the Lower Learning Centre and 20% worked in the present staffroom then know as the Senior Room (See Appendix V). Some rivalry existed between the two groups, so it is not surprising that to the statement, "Noise from Senior Room disturbs the Juniors" (7.2 B7), the opinions expressed reflect closely the distribution of the students within the two rooms. 85% agreed to the comment, 15% disagreed. Compare this with 80% of the students being juniors and 20% seniors!

There was no obvious group pressure in the parents workshops and I felt it possible to hold a second workshop for the parents with the addition of an introductory talk. My aim in giving this talk was to provide parents with a more knowledgeable base from which to express their opinions. (See second paragraph of Chapter 7). With the students, I felt that I needed to follow up their workshop with something that had more focus on the concerns and issues which I had identified through the various research instruments. It may have been possible to develop a workshop with clearly defined and restricted topics within which I could have encouraged the students to develop their questionnaire statements, but when the opportunity arose to develop a questionnaire through a relative outsider I felt this gave a better opportunity to focus more directly on some issues and concerns. (See my introductory remarks in Chapter 7)

6.12.2 Critique of the Observation Matrix

In 8.2 I discuss in detail two areas of potential difficulty in using the observation matrix. I give just a brief outline of them here.

Perhaps the most important of these is the unknown effect of the presence of an observer on the behaviour of the students. If the observer was known to the students solely as an observer then I believe his presence would strongly influence their behaviour, at least in the initial stages of an observation. I would suggest therefore that the initial observation sessions should be ignored in any analysis of data. In the unique situation at KISC, the students were well used to my almost continual presence in the Learning Centre before I carried out
any observations therefore I did not need to ignore initial data to allow for a settling in period. The same situation was true for the research assistant who carried out some observations for me.

The other problem arose because of the unique situation in KISC. Both myself and my research assistant were involved in tutoring duties when we were not observing. Because the school was short staffed during many of the observed sessions, students often interrupted the observer to seek help with their work. This led to gaps in the observation. If there had been a sufficient number of tutors to cover the tutoring duties, it would have been better to instruct the students not to interrupt the observer. Of course, this singles out the observer as being involved in something special and it would become important again to ensure that initial observations, where the presence of the observer may strongly influence behaviour, be ignored in the analysis of data.

6.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

I have discussed some of the problems inherent in the triple role of headmaster - innovator - researcher. I felt that the development of a pioneer environment, in which evaluation was seen as a cooperative venture to the benefit of all concerned, negated any bias introduced by my power position as headmaster. I discussed the evaluation in the light of action research literature and developed a theoretical basis for the research methodology. I have described the research instruments and the links between them. I have described a time-on-task observation matrix, interview of the researcher by an outside expert and an evaluation workshop, all of which are additional research instruments to those normally used in an illuminative evaluation.

(I wrote the bulk of this chapter in 1986, but revised and changed some of my ideas a little as my work evolved. In 1988 the book "Evaluating Open & Distance Learning" (Thorpe 1988) was published. This book offers many ideas to practitioners of open and distance learning wishing to evaluate their innovations, unfortunately it came too late to be of help to me!)
PART C
CHAPTER 7
EVALUATION WORKSHOPS AND STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The first evaluation workshop was held in August 1988 and was attended by parents, staff and members of the management committee. A second workshop was held a few days later for the students. I give the results of these two workshops below (7.1, 7.2), with my comment, or reference to comments elsewhere, about most statements. I make no comment where I consider the statement to be self-explanatory or trivial.

In August 1989, I held a third workshop, attended by parents, staff and members of the management committee. This workshop had a slightly different format from the previous two, in that before the participants started to make their comments on cards I spent some time addressing the meeting. I felt this was a good time to review our systems, outline the changes and remind parents why we used Supported Self-Study. I went into the history of how KISC was formed and I reviewed the constraints and aims I had set when designing the KISC system. I felt this address was necessary because although most of the parents of students who joined KISC in the first year were well acquainted with the reasoning which lead to the founding of the school many of our new families had come into the school just because it was the only available option. After the workshop some of the parents whose children had been at the school since its foundation commented that it was good to be reminded of the aims and constraints of the system.

I also raised the topic of homework as there had been some confusing comments made about this subject at the first workshop (See 7.1: A2 & A3, 6.12.1 and 12.1). I pointed out that homework is traditionally given in order to expose students to the experience of working alone. This is not a necessity within the KISC system with our emphasis on self study. Therefore the role of homework within the KISC system is that of enabling students to meet target completion dates for their work.

I give the results of the questionnaire developed at this workshop (7.3) below with my comment as in 7.1 and 7.2.

Finally, in this chapter I give the results of a student questionnaire completed in September 1989 (7.4). This questionnaire was developed, in consultation with me, by a student, Richard Ross, of Stranmillis College, Belfast. Richard spent three months of his summer vacation tutoring history, RE and sport at KISC. As part of his B.Ed coursework he prepared a report on the KISC self-study system based on the results of
this questionnaire.

In 6.10 I argued that the evaluation workshop provides a more appropriate and less biased form of research instrument for me as a headmaster researching my own evaluation than a direct questionnaire. At the same time I can see no problems attached to using the results of a questionnaire carried out by a more independent observer. I helped with the formation of the questions but was not present while the students completed them. Again I give the results of this questionnaire below with my comment as before.

I will refer back to all three workshops and the student questionnaire in later chapters.

It is normal practice to place questionnaires and their results in an appendix. I have chosen to place the results of the Evaluation Workshops, the Student Questionnaire and the transcript of my interview by an outside observer within the main text because I feel they give some important insights into the KISC system which might be missed if I relegate the material to the appendix. I have selected some topics which I discuss later, as innovator-headmaster-researcher this selection may be from a biased position. Therefore I feel it important that my readers have immediate and total access to all the data from the research instruments.

7.1 The First Evaluation Workshop.

Twentytwo persons participated in the workshop, including four non-parent staff members and two non-parent members of the management committee. One additional postal response is included in the count of responses to the questionnaire. The participants were asked to make comments under the following titles; A. Study System, B. Boarding, C. Fees, D. Electives, E. Motivation, F. Expectations: Parent vs. Teacher responsibility, G. Communications: KISC - Parents, reports, H. Study Materials, J. Tutors, K. Location, Building and Facilities, and L. Any other comments.

The comments developed and the percentage of participants agreeing with each comment under each heading are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. STUDY SYSTEM</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al. Contract system should be revised</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix X.
A2. Homework should be given


A3. Homework should be checked and monitored


A4. There should be a means of assessing work as compared to home country

This is actually available, either through comments from the correspondence schools or from KISC staff. It could be that some feel our system is not adequate. See 7.3 D5, 7.4 Qu.14 and my comments in 13.5.

A5. There is a need for more group tutoring

This comment was made before the level of staffing made it possible to provide group tutorials in every subject. Even though parents were equally divided over the necessity to introduce more group tutorials, once this happened the parents (82%) agreed that the tutorial system provides a valuable learning experience (7.3 C7).

A6. Total reliance on correspondence course-work is all that is necessary

I take this as encouragement that our support system is appreciated and necessary.

A7. Teachers should do more actual teaching

See 6.12.1.
A8. There should be yearly achievement testing

A long term aim of KISC but difficult to achieve. In reality it means preparing individual tests in every subject for every student. One way to achieve this might be through the use of a question bank from which questions appropriate to each individual student's need are chosen.

A9. KISC should change to a more traditional style of teaching

An endorsement of our system!

A10. Weak students should be given extra teacher attention

We try to give each student the individual attention they need.

A11. The teacher/student ratio is adequate

At the time of this workshop all the staff felt stretched but we coped with the load. By the time of the third workshop, the parents had become more aware of this problem area. See 7.3 C14.

A12. The students are not monitored closely enough

Improvements in the contract system have been aimed at monitoring students more closely. See Appendix X.

A13. Students with special abilities or needs should be given closer attention

See A10 above.
B. BOARDING

NB. While the boarding situation is a genuine concern of the parents and myself I consider it to fall outside the scope of this thesis. Therefore I give comments only on B4 & B5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1. The boarding system is not structured enough for the children</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2. The boarding system is not structured enough for the house parents</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3. More planned activities needed</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4. The boarding house should be in town</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school and boarding department are located 15km from the locality of Kathmandu in which the majority of our day students reside. This has both advantages and disadvantages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B5. The house parents need at least one day off a week</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 6.12.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B6. More help from day students' families is needed at weekends</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7. The freedom for boarders to stay out or have friends at weekends is good</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. FEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1. Fees are too low</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C2. Fees are acceptable</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C3. Fees should be the same as fees at the British Primary School</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### D. ELECTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D1. Students should be allowed to choose how many terms they work on each elective</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is not a practical proposition. The enrolment possible for each elective is limited by physical constraints such as room size, availability of materials, etc. In order to allow all students an opportunity to take each of the popular electives sometime during their time at KISC we have to rotate students in their options, usually once a year, sometimes every two terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D2. Younger students (12-13 yrs) can handle less elective study material than older students</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am surprised that 76% agreed with this comment. It is my experience that the younger students face less demanding academic material and therefore have more time for electives. It may be that the words "elective study material" caused some confusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D3. Variety of subjects is good</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 12.4.
D4. Longer electives are more valuable

Possibly, but see my comment on D1 above.

D5. Electives are essential for a broad educational base

An endorsement.

D6. Electives must take second place to core subjects

See D7 below.

D7. For each student a ratio of time spent on core/electives is needed

This is, in fact, done. Some students are allowed more electives than others. The ratio is decided by the study supervisor in consultation with the student, parents and myself.

D8. Time spent on electives may result in extra homework in core subjects

D9. Electives of two terms only do not have much educational value

See D1 above.

D10. Electives should be voluntary

The staff feel that each and every student should take part in at least one elective. (Decided at a staff meeting.)
D11. The selection of the electives should be the students. This is allowed within timetable and other practical constraints (See D1 above).

E. MOTIVATION

E1. The KISC system does cope adequately with children who lack motivation.

Response to this probably depended upon how the parents felt we coped with their own particular children. 41% seems a high level of dissatisfaction. From my conversations with parents, I think that many worry too much about apparent lack of motivation. The student who appears to lack motivation in his work at home under parent supervision often displays a rather different level of motivation in school.

E2. System of awards and merits is good.

E3. Students need much greater motivation to excellence, not just "good enough".

I do not think that "imposed" motivation can produce excellence, rather I think excellence comes when the motivation is self-imposed or generated. Imposed motivation can only produce "good enough". I am interpreting "greater motivation" here to mean "greater imposed motivation".

E4. The system at KISC requires self-motivation but doesn't necessarily teach how to go about it.

In fact, we do try to encourage the growth of self-motivation. See 13.6.2.
E5. The KISC system does not cope adequately with younger children who lack motivation

I have seen no evidence to support this statement. I suspect it comes from the vulnerability of parents exposing their children to an innovative system. In fact, the younger children (11 & 12 years) all display more motivation than many of the difficult 13, 14-year olds. Since they are new to the school and keen to succeed, I do not see motivation as a problem for the younger students.

E6. The contract system does not provide sufficient motivation to encourage good quality work

See E8 below.

E7. Constant parent checking on individual course progress and motivation from home is important

E8. There should be sanctions/penalties for work which is incomplete or unsatisfactory

Changes in the contract system, particularly the introduction of weekly contract point totals and sanctions for those failing to meet targets, were designed in response to this comment. See Appendix X.
F. EXPECTATIONS: PARENT vs. TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY

F1. The breakdown between the responsibilities of teachers and parents needs to be fully clarified in writing.

See 12.2.

F2. Extra teaching assistance is required from all teachers for those students for whom English is their second language.

See A10 above. See also my comments in 15.1 about two Dutch students who have just returned to Holland.

F3. More able students should have closer supervision in order to extend them.

See A10 above.

F4. The teachers should give more individual supervision.

Some parents would like their children to have non-stop individual attention. See J8 below and A10 above.

F5. The parents should give more individual supervision.

See 12.2.
F6. As parents we expect better behaviour from the students even if the staff don't agree

The disagreement on responses to this probably reflects the different national approaches to discipline and behaviour expectations.

G. COMMUNICATIONS KISC - PARENTS, REPORTS

G1. Frequency of reports is good

G2. School is always happy to meet parents and talk

G3. Sometimes teachers are on the defensive

G4. Teachers are not open to what is being said by parents

G5. Reports are too vague

G6. Could be more parent/teacher meetings

Formal parent/teacher meetings to discuss students' progress take place every other term. But I make it clear to parents that they are welcome to visit the school and discuss their children's progress at any time. See G2 above.
G7. Would like quantitative (ie marks) type report as well as qualitative

Staff feel that a grading system is more meaningful than percentages. Parents prefer percentages. I believe this is true in any school.

G8. Most talks with parents seem to be rushed

G9. Communication insufficient

See 7.3 D7 for one possible area where we need to work on improving communication.

G10. Negative reports are not motivating

G11. Would be good to have general report on student's behaviour and attitude

This is now done.

G12. Reports are not detailed enough in some subjects

Some of our subject tutors are not accustomed to writing detailed reports since this is not the norm in their home countries. Indeed one tutor had never written a detailed report in over twenty years of teaching. I strongly encourage all the tutors to produce detailed less vague reports.
H. STUDY MATERIALS

H1. A list of available curricula, with assessments of strengths & weaknesses, should be available to prospective parents.

I would like to do this but I have not yet had the time to produce a written report on strength and weaknesses, instead I discuss the available options with parents seeking to admit their children.

H2. Parents should be responsible for providing individual's courses before school entry.

We are not able to hold stocks of correspondence courses, all the correspondence schools require students to enrol directly with them. We have had problems through students arriving on their first day at KISC with no or inadequate correspondence materials. Nepal's unreliable postal system means that courses have to be ordered well in advance of a student's starting date at KISC. It was encouraging that the parents agreed that it was their own responsibility to ensure their children had adequate study material.

H3. Where a student's own country's courses are inadequate, KISC staff should construct curricula to fill the gaps.

We try to do this within the constraints of tutors' time and energy.

H4. KISC should ensure that adequate study books are in supply for the KISC based courses.

We do try to do this.
I agree, but this takes time and money. We have just completed a purpose-built laboratory and are now building up the resources.

A very good library is being developed.

Study Centre provides a broader base than purely home teaching could achieve.

See A6.

The library at present is too orientated to British publications.

The library is largely stocked with British publications since most books available for purchase in Nepal come from Britain via India. We are trying to ensure that the needs of all nationalities are met and do purchase some books from countries other than UK.

The library resources are not always relevant to studies from non-British countries.

We are building up a Dutch collection.

Some study material is very British and may not be relevant to non-British children.

I agree, but then few non-British students use the British study materials.
H11. Some study material is difficult to adapt to local facilities

H12. Staff are not as familiar with study material as the students

See 11.1.

J. TUTORS

J1. Tutors often have insufficient knowledge of the specific material studied by each student

See 11.1 and 12.1.

J2. KISC is too science/maths biased

J3. A stronger English/History/Literature component is needed

We now have the staff to provide this.

J4. KISC needs more full-time tutors

See J5.

J5. Extra tutors should be employed even if they must be paid a salary

While 89% agreed that we needed more full-time tutors only 40% were prepared to pay them a salary! (All our full-time tutors are seconded to KISC from organisations who pay their salaries.)
J6. A French tutor with opportunities for conversation is needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have now recruited (and pay) a part-time French tutor.

J7. Tutors whose first language is not English are needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have a Dutch (Dutch language, RE and general tutor) and a Norwegian (Maths, Current Events & Sports) tutor. I see this statement as an endorsement of our policy of recruiting a multi-national staff including those whose first language is not English.

J8. More supervision of individual students is necessary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to F4 but expressed more strongly.

J9. Tutor student relationship is well balanced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

79% agree that the tutor student relationship is well balanced, while 78% (J8) want closer supervision of individual students. Is this a contradiction?

K. LOCATION, BUILDING, FACILITIES

K1. The toilets are a mosquito trap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K2. More study space is needed now

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K3. More study space will be needed in the future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K4. More sports space needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This was supervised by other members of staff. The commenters
were given a list of the position and development of the commenters.
I then left.


Student. The workshop explained the system and invited the
20 students to comment in the workshop. In August 1998, I

2.7. The Second Evaluation Workshop

See 10.7.

activities.
out of school
teaching centre is
not very good

I. There is a good

discipline in the

II. Order and

I. ANY OTHER COMMENTS

This statement was made at a time when one of our short-term

tutors was having difficulty maintaining order and discipline.

I suggest I know why this comment was made but can make no

infanture is not

K.6. Case of the

K.7. Generator needed

K.8. Excellent - I

K.5. A difficult

mathematical area

distance from the

K.3. Generator needed

K.5. A difficult

were then placed on a questionnaire by myself with help from members of the KISC staff. Each student then completed the questionnaire privately at his own desk.

The comments developed and the percentage of participants agreeing with each comment under each heading are given below.

A. STUDY MATERIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. Too many students on the Letts Course</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British students are in the majority at KISC but I do not know why this statement was made!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2. I like the Letts Course</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3. Some of the material does not make sense in Nepal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4. Don't find the Maths Group Classes helpful</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These classes were the forerunner of the small group tutorials in every subject. We were able to offer these classes through the services of a short-term volunteer tutor. Only 55% of the students found these classes helpful. The situation has since changed; in Qu.4 of the student questionnaire (7.4) 82% of the students found the tutorials helpful or very helpful.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5. N.Z. Correspondence Course is too easy</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See 10.3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6. I like the way you can work at your own pace</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See 13.1.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

103
A7. The Letts French course is not helpful  

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<tr>
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<th>SA</th>
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<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students seem to find self-study more difficult in French than most other subjects. See All below and 7.4 Qu.20.

A8. Letts History is too much about being a historian, not history  

|    |  50|  5| 45|  0|  0 |

We have now changed to a different History course.

A9. The Letts course is a bit too English for the non-British kids  

|    | 20 | 30| 45|  0|  5 |

See my comment on 7.1 H10 above.

A10. Too many mistakes in the Wolsey Hall books  

|    | 15 |  0| 85|  0|  0 |

See 11.2.

A11. Too many words to learn in some units of the Letts French  

|    | 10 | 20| 50|  5| 15 |

See A7 and 7.4 Qu.20.

A12. My course is just right  

|    | 20 | 35| 15| 20| 10 |

See 13.1 and 10.3.

B. STUDY SUPPORT SYSTEM

B1. Need more teachers specifically trained for all the subjects  

|    | 10 | 55| 25| 10|  0 |

See 13.1
B2. Need more time for science

The variety of opinions on this probably reflects the very different amounts of time devoted to science in the various national systems. We try to give each student the appropriate amount of laboratory time to fulfil their course requirements.

B3. Need more time for personal study

See 7.4 Qu.11 and 10.3.

B4. The senior room is too noisy

This reflected the situation at the time of the workshop (See 7.1 L1). See also 10.6 and 7.4 Qu.18.

B5. We should chose our own topics for project work

See 13.2.

B6. Learning Centre Junior Room is too noisy

See B4.

B7. Noise from Senior Room disturbs juniors

See 6.12.1.

B8. Don't like doing tests in the Senior Room

At the time, there was spare desk space in the senior room. We set this aside as a quiet area for students wishing to take tests. 40% of the students did not like doing tests in this area possibly because of the situation mentioned in B4 above.
B9. Contract System needs to be revised to allow for days off sick

This statement arose from a misunderstanding on the part of the students. They assumed they would be penalised if they did not reach their points target due to time off school. I have clarified this point with them and they now understand that their points target is reduced for the week if they miss some days off through illness.

B10. Contract System is good

A majority of the students are happy with the contract system (65%).

B11. Timetable is good

B12. Debates are good

See 13.2.

B13. Projects are good

See B15.

B14. Computer is good

See 13.2.

B15. I don't like making big reports for projects

45% of the students (B13) agreed that projects are good but only 10% like making big reports for projects!

B16. I want more debates

See 13.2.
B17. I want more computer time

SA  A   N   D   SD
45  15  25  15   0

See 13.2.

B18. I like visiting speakers

5  30  50  15   0

See 13.2.

B19. The teachers should be stricter

15  30  25  10  20

The variety of response probably reflects the different national expectations of teacher behaviour.

C. ELECTIVES

C1. Too many electives/Sports on my timetable to get my work done

0  20  25  40  15

See 7.4 Qu.11 and 10.3.

C2. A wider range of electives is needed

25  30  35  10   0

55% want to see a wider range of electives and only 10% disagree; this conflicts somewhat with C9 where 40% agree they have lots of choices of electives and 35% disagree. The parents (who probably have a better understanding of the difficulties involved in providing a range of electives) strongly agreed (100%) that the variety of elective subjects is good (7.1 D3).

C3. Longer sessions needed

5  35  35  20   5

Most electives take up a double period, that is 90 minutes. I believe this is adequate for most subjects given that 73% of the students find that the system of electives, tutorials etc., interferes often or sometimes with their self-study time (7.4 Qu.11).
C4. Electives should last at least two terms

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<tr>
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<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% endorse our policy of rotating electives at no less than 2 term intervals. See 7.1 D1.

C5. Should have three electives

|   | 25 | 20| 30 | 20 | 5  |

45% agree that they should have three electives but see also my comment about interference in C3.

C6. Should be no time limit on electives

|   | 25 | 20| 15 | 20 | 20 |

See C4.

C7. Should have one elective a term

|   | 5  | 0 | 10 | 35 | 50 |

See 7.1 D7 and 7.1 D10.

C8. I think the electives are good

|   | 30 | 55| 10 | 5  | 0  |

C9. We have lots of choices of electives

|   | 10 | 30| 25 | 20 | 15 |

See C2.

C10. We should all have a chance of going on every elective

|   | 25 | 55| 15 | 5  | 0  |

See 7.1 H5.

C11. Nepali should be for three terms

|   | 0  | 30| 45 | 10 | 15 |

A realistic distribution of responses. Those who enjoy Nepali realise they need a reasonable period of time, at least three terms. Those who dislike Nepali want to change electives as
early as possible.

D. LOCATION, BUILDING AND FACILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D1. Need more Sports space</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D2. Toilets are horrible</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D3. Too far out of town</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D4. Nice quiet place for a school</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D5. Too far out for boarders</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D6. School is very nicely set up</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D7. Science lab should have more equipment</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 7.1 H5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D8. I think the school is in the right place</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. OTHER COMMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E1. The food is terrible</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E2. Holidays should be like Lincoln or Norwegian School not British Primary School</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E3. Boys need hot showers in their bathroom</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

109
SA  A  N  D  SD

E4. We have a good Sports teacher 40  35  15  5  5

E5. Need a tennis court 35  20  20  15  10

E6. We should be allowed in the boarders' rooms if invited 40  50  10  0  0

E7. KISC is turning into a normal school 5  20  40  20  15

I do not understand this comment; those (40%) who expressed neutrality were probably similarly confused. The 25% who agreed possibly felt that the introduction of Mathematics group classes (which took place shortly before the workshop) was the first step towards turning KISC into a "normal" school.

E8. KISC should turn into a normal school 10  5  10  30  45

See 13.1.

7.3 The Third Evaluation Workshop.

Thirty-six persons were present at this workshop on the 25th August 1989. Eight of these were KISC staff of which two were also parents of children at KISC. Thirty parents therefore took part in the workshop. Comments were invited under four broad headings; A. Aims (ie. the aims and constraints which I discussed at the beginning of the workshop), B. The Students, C. The System (again I described the KISC system of Supported Self-Study at the start of the workshop) and D. Any Other Comments.

The comments developed and the percentage of the participants agreeing with each comment under each heading are given below.
A. AIMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. The system will produce a complete and balanced upbringing.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 15.1.

| A2. The system will produce a complete and balanced education. | 0 | 60 | 20 | 20 | 0 |

See 15.1.

| A3. The system will not cope with individual needs because it will always be modified to suit the group. | 0 | 9 | 5 | 45 | 41 |

Happily, 86% disagree with this statement. The system is designed first and foremost to cope with individual needs!

| A4. Judging from what our children bring home KISC is no different from other schools | 0 | 5 | 0 | 59 | 36 |

I wonder what the children of the 5% who agree to this statement bring home or say to their parents!

| A5. We would like to be more involved with KISC. | 0 | 11 | 58 | 26 | 5 |

See 12.2.

B. STUDENTS

| B1. Students settle in quickly | 46 | 50 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

See 13.1 and B3.
B2. Student is happy  
SA | A | N | SD | D  
---|---|---|----|----  
65 | 23 | 4 | 4 | 4  
See 15.1.

B3. Knew some of other students before joining.  
SA | A | N | SD | D  
---|---|---|----|----  
86 | 10 | 0 | 5 | 0  
The fact that 96% stated that their children knew some of the other students before joining KISC must have helped their children settle in quickly (B1).

B4. Older students dominate recreational equipment  
SA | A | N | SD | D  
---|---|---|----|----  
5 | 21 | 74 | 0 | 0  
Parents can only base their opinion on what is reported to them by their children. While 74% were neutral, I am concerned that the senior students do appear to dominate the recreational equipment when staff members are not present.

B5. Students enjoy studying at KISC  
SA | A | N | SD | D  
---|---|---|----|----  
83 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0  
See 15.1.

B6. Pre-orientation is good  
SA | A | N | SD | D  
---|---|---|----|----  
5 | 32 | 55 | 9 | 0  
Only 9% disagreed here but then in D7 68% agreed that we need an improved orientation programme!

C. SYSTEM

C1. The system teaches students to learn with minimum directed input.  
SA | A | N | SD | D  
---|---|---|----|----  
10 | 65 | 15 | 10 | 0  
See 15.1.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2. In this study system some students miss the competition element of the class system</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have tried to introduce some element of competition through the contract points system.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C3. There is not enough homework</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 12.1.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C4. Tutors are unavailable when students need work checked</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

See 14.2.1 and 7.4 Qu.2.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C5. There is opportunity for debate and discussions among students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C6. To prevent chattering in class, mid-class 5-minute breaks should be scheduled.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I believe this would be disruptive.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C7. Tutorial system provides students working in all courses with valuable learning experience.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 7.1 A5.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C8. The tutorial system provides all students with the opportunity to participate in group activities.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The contract system is still not working to everyone's satisfaction. It is under constant review at staff meetings as we seek to improve the system. See Appendix X.

Students need more supervision during self-study time to make them work.

See 7.1 A10 and 7.1 F4.

The tutors can identify the student's weak areas.

This enables us to give more immediate help than is possible from the correspondence school tutors.

We now seem to have the balance between tutorials and self-study correct as only 15% agree that students need more tutorials.

Children doing correspondence courses find conflicts between school and KISC expectations.

At the time of this workshop the staffing level had only just reached a point where we were able to begin addressing this problem.
D. ANY OTHER COMMENTS

D1. KISC provides a superior education system that prepares people for life.  

See 15.1.

D2. There should be an alternative motivation besides the sports programme.

*I agree, but so far we have not found an effective alternative to the threat of losing sport if the points target is not met!*

D3. Nepali class is not helpful for beginners due to heavy concentration on script writing.

*We hope to employ a teacher of Nepali next year who has more experience of teaching young people than our present teacher.*

D4. Students from non-English speaking families need more help with English.

*See 7.1 F2.*

D5. There should be regular exams and more graded papers.

*See 13.5.*

D6. The boys toilet should be to the same standard as the girls toilets.
Parents should be aware of the amount of time necessary in order to help students with correspondence courses, i.e. improved orientation programme.

The difficulty here is that the amount of time input which each parent has to give depends on the student, the parent's attitude and the correspondence course. The KISC system does encourage more involvement from the parent than a traditional school although for certain courses a student could "get by" without any support from his parents.

7.4 The Student Questionnaire September 1989.

Thirty-three students completed the questionnaire on 6th September 1989. Each student was asked to complete the questionnaire without consulting with friends. Before completing the questionnaire, they were asked to read the following instructions:

"On the following pages there are some questions asking for your opinion of KISC. Some questions will be statements about which you will be asked to give written answers. Others will require you to place a tick in the box you feel gives the most appropriate answer. Think carefully before answering each and try to be as accurate as possible in your answers. Remember it is not you that is being tested, but the KISC study system! All answers will be treated as strictly confidential."

The questions and the results were as follows:

QU.1 What things do you most like about the KISC self-study system?

Seventy-eight comments were made under this heading, categorised as follows:

Twenty-two comments about pace, eg, "You can work at your own speed".

Thirteen comments about independence, eg. "Its fun to do things alone".
Nine comments about the environment, eg. "Everyone is friendly and not scared of the teachers, one big family".

Seven comments about freedom, eg. "Timetable flexible compared to a class system".

Seven comments about improvement in learning skills, eg. "Teaches you to research without the help of a teacher".

Six comments about the interest generated, eg. "More interesting than everyone doing the same thing at the same time".

Four comments about individualised attention, eg. "Teacher help available at all times".

Four comments about enjoying the school, eg. "It is often quite fun".

Two comments about the lack of competition, eg. "You don't have to worry that your standard of work isn't as good as other peoples".

Plus four other unrelated positive comments.

See 10.4 and 14.2.1.

Qu.2 What things do you dislike about the KISC self-study system?

Fifty-eight comments were made under this heading, categorised as follows:

Fifteen comments disliked the distractions in the learning centre, eg. "Sometimes people who don't have much work keep talking to you when you have a lot".

Ten comments about the staff, eg. "Teachers interrupt (self-study) at times".

Seven comment about loneliness, eg. "I'm the only person doing my course and I wish there was someone else".

Four comments about self-motivation, eg. "Sometimes it is hard to keep working".

Four comments about the points system, eg. "Some people feel backwards because don't achieve same number of points".
Three comments worried about standard in comparison with other students, eg. "Not sure of my place in comparison with other people at home".

Three comments on the environment, eg. "It is new and systems keep changing. I find this bad and disturbing".

Two comments about limited subjects and resources, eg. "There are limited subjects and materials".

Two comments about classroom activities, eg. "We miss out on class discussions".

Two comments about sports, eg. "Sports should improve with having proper school teams and proper uniforms - at least tops".

Four unrelated negative comments.

Two persons commented that they had no dislikes.

See 11.5 and 14.2.1.

QU.3 In the self-study periods, do you find it difficult to concentrate?

a. ALWAYS 2 (6%)
b. OFTEN 5 (15%)c. SOMETIMES 20 (61%)d. RARELY 5 (15%)e. NEVER 1 (3%)

A normal distribution.

QU.4 The tutorials at KISC are a. VERY HELPFUL 6 (18%)b. HELPFUL 21 (64%)c. FAIRLY HELPFUL 5 (15%)d. UNHELPFUL 1 (3%)

See 14.2.1.

QU.5 On average, how often would you ask a tutor for help during self-study periods in one day?

a. 0-2 times 10 (30%) d. 6-8 times 1 (3%)b. 1-3 times 14 (42%) e. More than 8 times 0c. 4-6 times 8 (24%)
QU.6 Do you think you have a better idea of how to find things out for yourself as a result of the KISC system?

a. YES 16 (48%)
b. NO 4 (12%)
c. UNSURE 13 (39%)

I am surprised and somewhat concerned by the relatively high percentage of unsure comments (39%).

QU.7 Do you feel more independent and capable of working on your own as a result of studying at KISC?

a. YES 23 (70%)
b. NO 1 (3%)
c. UNSURE 9 (27%)

See Qu.20 below for my subject by subject comments.

QU.8 Do you find it difficult to work on your own?

a. ALWAYS 1 (3%)
b. OFTEN 0
c. SOMETIMES 21 (64%)
d. RARELY 8 (24%)
e. NEVER 3 (9%)

I find it encouraging that 33% rarely or never find it difficult to work on their own and only 3% often or always find it difficult.

QU.9 Would you recommend the KISC system to students in another country thinking of starting a similar school?

a. YES 23 (70%)
b. NO 0
c. UNSURE 10 (30%)

See 51.1.

QU.10 Do you think the KISC self-study system is:

a. BORING 0
b. UNINTERESTING 1 (3%)
c. FAIRLY INTERESTING 15 (45%)
d. INTERESTING 12 (36%)
e. VERY INTERESTING 5 (15%)

It is encouraging that only 3% think the KISC self-study system
uninteresting. I do not know if this is the same 3% who find it always difficult to work on their own.

QU.11 Does the KISC system of compulsory electives, tutorials, sport, RE & current events interfere too much with your self-study time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. ALWAYS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. OFTEN</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. SOMETIMES</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. RARELY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. NEVER</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 10.3.

QU.12 If you find that group activities do not leave enough time for self-study in school, would you prefer to take option a or b?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Attend group activity only when there is time</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Do more homework and attend all activities</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(39%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A predictable response; a small number of students regularly ask permission to miss some group activities (usually sport) in order to complete their self-study work.

QU.13 I find the fact that I have to attain a points target in my self-study contract, helps me to study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. ALWAYS</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. SOMETIMES</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. NEVER</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is encouraging that 61% find the contract system a motivation sometimes and 24% always.

Qu.14 Do you feel the KISC system offers a way of judging your work and progress in comparison with other students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. YES</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. NO</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. UNSURE</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(55%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 7.1 A4 and 13.5.
QU.15 Would you feel happier in a more conventional school setting.

a. YES 4 (12%)
b. NO 16 (48%)
c. UNSURE 13 (39%)

See 14.2.1.

QU.16 Place in order of preference, by numbering from 1 to 7, your reasons for attendance at KISC.

The order of preference was calculated from the votes by two different methods.

Method A: The number of first preferences for each statement was counted and the comments ordered.

Method B: The preferences were assigned values in ascending order, i.e., First preference = 1, second preference = 2, etc. Statements which were given no order of preference were assigned a value of 8. The total of assigned values was then calculated for each statement.

There was close agreement for the first three preferences by both methods. The statements are listed below in order of preference under both methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Method A</th>
<th></th>
<th>Method B</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>order</td>
<td>Number of</td>
<td>order</td>
<td>total of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st Preference</td>
<td>votes</td>
<td></td>
<td>assigned values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To aid my self-study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get help from tutors</td>
<td>2=</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To meet friends</td>
<td>2=</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To use the school resources</td>
<td>5=</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To attend sport</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents make me</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To attend electives</td>
<td>5=</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"To aid my self-study" comes a strong first under both methods of calculation with "to get help from tutors" second. Students must feel that KISC aids their self-study by more ways than just tutor help.
QU.17 Do you think you would learn more successfully working under a more traditional class and teacher system with only a few subjects or topics being studied through self-study?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNSURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15%)</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(58%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large percentage of unsures. In fact many of our students have no experience of traditional classes at secondary level.

QU.18 Do you find the atmosphere in the learning centres enables you to work to the best of your ability?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ALWAYS</th>
<th>OFTEN</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>RARELY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(55%)</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 10.6.

QU.19 What features of your contact with the subject tutors do you find helpful. Tick in the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNSURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Being able to check explanations in the self-study material</td>
<td>22(67%)</td>
<td>3(9%)</td>
<td>8(24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Receiving a different explanation of a difficulty encountered</td>
<td>21(64%)</td>
<td>1(3%)</td>
<td>11(33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Working on an area with which you have difficulty, through an extra activity suggested by the tutor</td>
<td>20(61%)</td>
<td>5(15%)</td>
<td>8(24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Extending work already done through various sorts of enrichment activities suggested by the tutor</td>
<td>11(33%)</td>
<td>10(30%)</td>
<td>12(36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Receiving comment on the quality of your work</td>
<td>20(61%)</td>
<td>6(18%)</td>
<td>7(21%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See 5.13.
QU.20 During extended periods away from KISC (eg. furlough), which subjects would you feel able/unable to continue to work at through self-study with the aid of your parents? Tick the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Able</th>
<th>Unable</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English / Language Arts</td>
<td>22(69%)</td>
<td>4(13%)</td>
<td>6(19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>27(84%)</td>
<td>2(6%)</td>
<td>3(9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>12(36%)</td>
<td>10(30%)</td>
<td>11(33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>17(55%)</td>
<td>5(16%)</td>
<td>9(29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>19(59%)</td>
<td>3(9%)</td>
<td>10(31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>9(27%)</td>
<td>14(42%)</td>
<td>10(30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students were thanked for their help at the end of the questionnaire.

Mathematics appears to be the subject which most students (84%) feel able to study through self-study. English/Language Arts, History and Geography all have low percentages of students who would feel unable to cope through self-study.

The low percentage able to cope with science (27%) and high percentage (42%) feeling unable to cope may be due to one of the following reasons:
- lack of apparatus in a home situation
- lack of confidence in the study material
- our present science teacher places a strong emphasis on teacher-centered lessons.

French also appears difficult for the unsupported learner. Possibly those who feel able to cope with self-study in French have better course materials than the majority or perhaps they have parents who can help. See also 7.2 A7, 7.2 All and 7.1 J6.
CHAPTER 8

TIME-ON-TASK OBSERVATION MATRIX

8.1 The Matrix

The position of workstations in the Learning Centre (See plan of LC in Appendix VI) made it possible for me to observe each student in a brief anticlockwise scan of the room. Such scans were made every 3 minutes, timed by the clock in the LC, starting when the second hand was at the 12-o'clock position. I noted staff and student activities on squared paper using the following codes. (See Appendix VII for a sample page from the observation matrix.)

- **W** = working, reading, writing
- **N** = chatting to neighbour, reason unclear to observer
- **NW** = chatting to neighbour, obviously work related
- **NI** = chatting to neighbour, obviously not work related
- **T** = thinking, reason unclear to observer
- **TW** = thinking, obviously work related
- **TI** = thinking, obviously not work related
- **K** = walking about, reason unclear to observer
- **KW** = walking about, obviously work related
- **KI** = walking about, obviously not work related
- **R** = using reference/resource material away from work station
- **P** = using computer (NB. P = patrolling when referred to tutors)
- **C** = consulting tutor
- **QC** = queuing to consult tutor

Note that thinking includes incidents of students staring into space!

On each observation matrix, I also made notes about matters which might be of interest, such as: points of intervention by a tutor, outside disturbances, temperature in the LC. When a student chatted to a neighbour, I linked their names together on the matrix. In addition to these observational notes, I also made occasional theoretical and methodological notes, according to the classification developed by Dearden (1979).

8.2 Observation Sessions

I have always tried to be in the LC as much as my other duties as headmaster will allow. This is for a number of reasons: I am the Maths tutor, therefore need to be available; there is a
very small staff at KISC, so in order to relieve staff for other duties, I need to take my share of supervising the LC. During these times in the LC, when not actually tutoring Maths or working with a student, I would either work at a desk on some administrative work or make observations on the matrix.

An advantage of this is that the students are familiar with my presence in the LC. In a traditional classroom setting, the entrance of the headmaster causes a distinct change in the atmosphere and the behaviour of the students. But as I have mentioned in Chapter 6, the small size of KISC and the supportive role adapted by the staff have resulted in a relaxed, informal, relationship between students and staff. Coupled with the familiarity of the students with my presence in the LC, I feel that my position as headmaster has not influenced the students' behaviour during the observation sessions. In order to verify this, a research assistant, trained by myself, observed in the LC for a few weeks in 1989. Unfortunately, the staff shortage became acute during this time and this assistant was unable to make as many observations as I had hoped for, as he often became tied up with helping students. Between my original observations and this research assistant's observations, many changes had taken place, including the learning centre becoming overcrowded and understaffed. I had hoped to make a comparison between this assistant's observations and my observations to verify my observations. But, in practice, too many changes had occurred between the situation at the time of the original observations and this later period. I feel therefore that I cannot verify my results by comparison with those of my assistant, even though there seems to be close similarity in the two results.

A disadvantage of my frequent presence in the LC is that students take it that I am free to offer tutorial help. This resulted in many gaps in my observations, while I was tied up with helping those with problems.

It is not always clear when an activity is work related. I am relying upon twenty years experience as a teacher to interpret non-verbal signs. But as I have already pointed out in Chapter 4, and discuss further in 11.4, most of the students sit at study carrels with their backs to the tutors. This causes some change in the non-verbal signs I had to look for, but nevertheless, I was able to make decisions about work or non-work related activities in most cases. Where there was any doubt the W (for work related) or I (non-work related) suffix was omitted.
8.3 Analysis of Matrix

For each student, codes from the matrix were transferred to a sheet of squared paper, and listed for each day for each of the sessions 9.15 - 10.30am, 10.45 - 12.45 and 1.30 - 3.00pm. The frequency of Is, Cs and the total number of observation points were counted and from these \( I \), \( O \), \( T \), and \( W \) for each student for blocks of time were calculated, where

\[
\begin{align*}
I &= \text{percentage of observed time in non-work related activities} \\
O &= \text{percentage of observed time in consultation} \\
T &= \text{percentage of total study time during the block for which the student was observed} \\
W &= 100 - I = \text{percentage of observed times in work related activities}
\end{align*}
\]

(I was chosen rather than \( W \) for counting as it occurs less frequently.)

The matrix for each student was then divided into blocks of 15 minute time intervals and the frequency of Is per block counted.

8.4 Results

An average \( I \), \( O \), \( T \), and \( W \) was calculated from all the results. This suggests that on average, students were engaged in work related activities 87% of the observed time. They consulted with tutors 8% of the time. I achieved a rate of being able to observe 73% of any session in the LC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>9.15 - 10.30</th>
<th>10.45 - 12.45</th>
<th>1.30 - 3.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( W )</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( O )</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8.2

Figure 8.2 shows \( W \) and \( O \) for each of the three sessions. There appears to be little difference between the rate of work for each of the three sessions lasting 1.25 hours, 2 hours and 1.5 hours, although there is a slight easing off in the rate of work in the midmorning session.

It is perhaps more interesting to look at the differences in individual rates. Rates for work related activities ranged from 68% to 100% per session. (100% was achieved by a part-time New
Zealand 6th Form student, who only came into school when she needed help. She also achieved the highest consultation rate of 32%, thus suggesting that part-time students make prime use of their visits to KISC).

Consultation rate ranged from 0% to 32%. It is interesting that the student with the lowest consultation rate, 0% (during one time block of 8 days), was also the student with the lowest work rate (68%) during that same block of time. (This particular student had been causing concern to her Study Supervisor as her lack of progress was showing in her contract book, but her reluctance to seek help had not been identified by the subject tutors. The subject tutors now instigate consultation sessions with this student and she is making much better progress.)

I calculated the frequency of Is during each session for each 15 minute interval, totalled over all the students and produced the distribution of Is graph (Fig 8.3). This suggests that the frequency of non-working activities increases during the mid part of each session. That is, students work harder at the beginning and end of a session. This is similar to what happens in a normal lecture situation.

In order to see if the same sort of pattern emerged over a week, (that is, more work related activity from the students at the start and end of the week) and over a day, (that is, more work related activity in the first and last session of each day) I calculated the average W per session per day. This is shown in figure 8.4 below. No clear pattern emerged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thur</th>
<th>Frid</th>
<th>Session Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.15 - 10.30</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.45 - 12.45</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30 - 3.00</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No c?ear pattern emerged.

Daily average| 80% | 87% | 89% | 89% | 90% |

Figure 8.4

Finally, from daily observation not using the matrix, it was suspected by myself and other members of staff that successful students had developed a pattern in their study consisting of regular sessions of concentration interspersed with short breaks. In particular, we suspected that more able students were able to concentrate for longer periods than the less able students. In order to check this, I compared the individual patterns of work of two students who were coping successfully with their work with two students considered by the staff as a whole to be much less successful. None of the students'
matrices displayed any regular pattern. I then investigated the length of concentration spans. Using the matrix, I counted the frequency of each period of concentrated work. I consider a period of concentrated work to be the interval between interruptions caused by a consultation, a talk with a neighbour, a use of reference material, walking about or any occurrence of a non-work related observation. I also ignored any time interval which I was only able to observe partially. I then plotted the results on frequency charts, which I show below in Figure 8.5. Students A & B are the successful students, students C & D are the much less successful students. I also include in the diagram $I_0$ and $C_0$ for each student.

\[ I_0 = 19\% \quad C_0 = 7\% \]

\[ I_0 = 15\% \quad C_0 = 7\% \]
To my surprise there appears to be little difference in the shapes of the frequency distributions for the four students. All four students show a surprisingly high occurrence of short concentration intervals. There is also a surprising similarity in $I_0$ and $C_0$ for each of the four students. I discuss this topic again in 10.2.

The mode of each frequency distribution is 3 minutes. As this can scarcely be considered a useful study period, I looked for the second most common interval. For all four students it is 9 minutes.
CHAPTER 9

INTERVIEW BY AN OUTSIDE OBSERVER

In July 1989 I was interviewed by Kath White who is an Australian with long experience in many facets of education. White is currently working with the United Mission to Nepal in non-formal education, but has experience of formal education at both school and teacher education level. In addition to her work with the United Mission to Nepal in non-formal education, White has tutored English to the GCSE students at KISC two mornings each week for most of 1989. These two three-hour visits to KISC each week provide White with sufficient knowledge to ask intelligent questions, but she is not and has not been involved in any way with the development of the learning systems of the school. I therefore believe she was the ideal person to conduct an intelligent and unbiased interview.

I give a full transcript of the interview below without major comment. I believe this interview provides a great deal of information and should not therefore be relegated to an appendix. I will refer to this interview in later chapters. I identify Kath White's questions by KW, I refer to myself as AM. Before conducting the interview White read a draft copy of this thesis, I have added to the thesis since then. I give the page numbers as they are mentioned by KW and appeared in the draft followed by the new correct page numbers in brackets. During the interview we discussed certain students, for obvious reasons I will not name these students, calling them Student A, B etc.

9.1 The Interview

KW: Alan, I start off with a question about the sorts of kids who go to KISC. My observation is that they are the children of educated parents and parents who have a thoughtful approach to life. And I can see that the KISC self-study method can work with such children who've been given presumably a sort of serious background. Do you think that this would work with children who don't come from a cultured background? I am thinking of say, children who might be residing internationally, but perhaps the offspring of soldiers in the regular army posted abroad.

AM: I have often pondered over this one myself. The trouble is that we have no real experience of children who are not from educated backgrounds. So any answer just has to be a guess. I feel that in self-study, we can give more support to a learner more often than in a normal teaching situation where a child who does not fit into the norm in the class can be ignored and left out. So in a way we can pick these people up. But that's just a guess.
KW Is that dependent upon, the proportion of tutors, the ratio of tutors to students?

AM Have you worked that out? We haven't actually calculated it, but it has been quite obvious recently that in this last two terms we've been understaffed badly and we haven't had the face-to-face tuition that we would have liked. The first year, year and a half, in KISC, we did a lot of this and it was very successful with one or two children who really needed help. In fact, I can think of two children in particular who needed help and one of those was from a parent who is not in the normal professional style that the rest of the children were in. But that is just one person we have had experience of. So I can't really claim anything. I'm hoping next term, with double the staff, we can go back to a lot more face-to-face tuition. I think this support is very important for self-study. Self-study on its own, I have severe doubts about. It's the tutorial support that makes the difference.

KW When I worked in a self-study centre in Australia with adults who were returning to learning, we had a ratio of one teacher to sixteen students, but we found, if you had, as came in, poorly literate learners, whose intention was to learn to read and write, then that whole system pretty well collapsed. And we then, our whole department, went over to a different mode for helping them.

AM I think also the number of tutors must be subject specific. I think in English you possibly need more tutors per student than you do in Maths. Certainly, I find I can cope with all the Maths students at the moment quite easily whereas our English tutors get bogged down with marking and have no time for tutorial support. Part of that was because we don't have full time tutors in English, or we didn't have, and I couldn't possibly ask them to mark after school.

KW That is usual.

AM But not when you are part-time. So next term, when we have a full-time English tutor, we can do more marking after school. We can go back to much more tutorial and face-to-face help.

KW That's a problem for face-to-face teachers in conventional schools. That with English teaching, to give some adequate response, the writing then just stands in lieu of a discussion. So the teacher/student interaction takes some time, whether its the teacher writing at home these comments, or the teacher sitting with the student trying to make the comment. So I don't know any way of helping an English student to overcome weaknesses within their English expression other than putting interactive times with them.
KW What of the slow or poor reader, a reader who doesn't comprehend well? Have you got any of those?

AM Yes, the student I just referred to that last year needed a lot of one-to-one. His first problem was he was a slow reader, and we did find that he came on tremendously with a lot of one-to-one work. (One of the tutors) spent a lot of time with him. He'd been tested, he was from The States, when he was home four years ago and was considered very far behind. And, after a year at KISC, when he went home he was tested again and was classified as average in The States. Since coming back, he hasn't had the one-to-one help and has now slipped back again. Which means that the one-to-one is extremely important.

KW I know. I have worked a lot with slow readers and poor readers and I think, where you are depending so much on written materials, and on research skills, their being able to locate material, then if they are not able to cope with this they would be very lost.

AM (I decided not to print this comment as it could lead to the easy identification of the above student)

KW Ill-disciplined kids?

AM Yes. That has become a problem recently. I would say about a year ago we had very much a strong family atmosphere. And the ill-disciplined kids were singled out by the others and more or less told to behave themselves. And the others would meet them after class and have quiet words with them. Again, with this last couple of terms, with the shortage of staff, that whole problem has arisen again. And the two people you know well who are causing these problems have become much more difficult. Again, I am hoping that when we can improve the staff to student ratio that it will be much better. Ideally, the way we used to work in the library was that one person would be on patrol moving around the students, checking if they were working and asking if there were any problems, looking for those who were either misbehaving or were afraid to ask for help. And the other teacher was free to take some of them and work with them for ten or fifteen minutes. And while we had sufficient staff that worked well. Hopefully, that will happen again.

KW I suppose I wonder whether philosophically the assumption about the self-study method is rather a humanistic one that children are intrinsically good and given interaction and that seems to me Charlotte Mason's that "the world is beautiful, books are wonderful, and you just bring those and the pristine mind of the child together and magic happens". Whereas, the mind of the child is very often on quite other things and they are destructive. I think that adolescence is
a time when a lot of trialing is being done and a lot of
determining of who you are. And often that's in relation to
authority and it is in relation to peers. And there's a
certain sort of jostling for that.

AM Charlotte Mason's work was mainly with primary school but it
did extend to secondary. I think her ideas work better with the primary level.

KW Yes, I suspect that.

AM But she does start from a Christian perspective, which is interesting.

KW I just think that we have to come to terms with evil in young people as well as ourselves. Sometimes we have a kid who is just out to make a disturbance or is sort of contrary. And I think it's that contrariness that I've seen some times in action. As well there is indiscipline. Now if this works for a child, then I think he or she becomes a very disciplined learner. If it doesn't, is that child confirmed in his laziness or slackness or escapism?

AM I am not sure that traditional school copes well with the lazy or ill-disciplined worker either. Some very special teachers do, but the average teacher doesn't really. A difficult one to answer.

KW This would lead on to a question about the types of punitive or motivating actions that you take. You've got the mark system?

AM Yes, there is the contract system where if they haven't succeeded in producing sufficient work of sufficient quality they don't get playing sport.

KW That's okay as long as you've got kids who like sport.

AM For some reason the majority of our kids are that way. It does work well, but it tends to lead to a frantic rush on Fridays to get everything completed and marked up. We have actually started recently, if the work is not finished in the day it was actually set for, then it doesn't receive the full amount of points, that has encouraged a few.

KW That is dependent then on whoever sets that work being able to assess what is the proper pace for the work. I have sometimes set work that has been unrealistic, both ways. They have got through it very quickly in some cases or its taken much longer than I had assessed.

AM That is something that is always going to happen in any teaching situation. One thing I have noticed is, in the
other room from the one you're normally in, the first two sessions in the morning we normally have complete quiet times, for a while we allowed that to relax and we have now started clamping down on that. The children are expected to do no talking whatsoever for the first one and a half hours. Most children who are not particularly well motivated, after a while of sitting doing nothing and watching their friends working, they do tend to pick up a pen and start. They may not do very much but they do something. And then a number of children have said to me they appreciate actually being told that there is an hour and a half when they can't talk or move around and they get a lot of their work done for the day in that time. So, in theory, the first two periods are meant to be complete quiet periods, and then the three periods from break to lunchtime are a bit more relaxed, but are still meant to be working periods, and then the afternoon sessions tend to be very relaxed.

KW Have you looked at things like concentration span? Research?

AM Yes. I have done a bit of looking into research. There are some interesting patterns arising. It is not in this (the draft thesis) but in some material at home. Some of the good workers, Student A & Student B (names deleted), some of these, they work very steadily, twenty minutes hard work, five minutes messing around and talking to their neighbours, and then another good twenty minutes. Quite a few of those are into this twenty minute pattern. Some of it may be only fifteen minutes and then a break of fifteen minutes.

KW Do you instruct them on how to handle their own physiology?

AM Yes, we have had a session when we talked about it. I spent one whole period with a group of students who had had experience of working on their own. And we talked about what they should do when they lost interest and couldn't work and how to take a break without disturbing everyone else and the necessity for doing so rather than trying to keep on doing something which they had lost interest in.

KW In teacher training, you probably had it as I did, we were told that people seldom took in things that were being absorbed by the same method. So that the teacher's voice could only be tolerated for something like 4 minutes and then you had a question time and then some writing and then open discussion. And that allowed, within the forty minute period, that you were taking face to face for perhaps five different types of activity. If a young person is sitting for an hour and a half at what is basically just one sort of activity does that mean that you have a real trough in the middle. I was interested in these troughs that seem to show up. Does it mean really that the neurological and physiological reactions have set in there?
AM What I have suggested to them is that they get up and go look up a book in the library or take a walk for five minutes, ask to go to the bathroom, change the subject. Some of them like to work a long time at one subject and cope with that and others find that ten minutes at one subject and they need to move on to something different. Each child seems to establish their own pattern. The use of walkmans, for example, we allow that because we found that some of them found they could work with this distraction. I don't see how they can, but some of them found they could and then they found after listening for a while, they would take it off and do some good work. And maybe this distraction gives that little bit of break.

KW I am not buying into the walkman one. I have got really nothing to say about that. But this other one of, say, focussing for forty minutes on one subject, which I think is a very helpful thing to do and in life it is something we will have to be able to do, but being given various approaches to that same subject, so that the attention can be sustained.

AM They always have the option of going and talking to a tutor at any time and some......

KW Somebody else might be talking to them.

AM Well that can happen. I did a survey of waiting time and very few have to wait more than three minutes or four minutes. So there is the option of talking to a tutor. We are also trying to develop computer programs and other things, other resources. There are boxes of resource material there with posters and all sorts of things, and some of them are using those. They've discovered what's in them and when it is appropriate to use them.

I've also worked with one or two on improving their concentration span. Student E had absolutely no concentration. He is computer game mad. So we had a bribe that if he could increase the amount of time he could work at one subject he would get a free computer game session. And he started timing himself and he was working for three minutes then losing interest. He had increased that to fifteen minutes by my timing. I would talk to him, and send him off, he was instructed, that when he lost interest, lost concentration, to come back. He was managing to get up to fifteen minutes.

KW Yes "E" is an interesting educational case.

Now a question about the ease in Briggs-Myer's terms; the people who are very strongly motivated by, and sensitive to, other people's reactions and encouragement or socialising.
Do you feel that they benefit from this as much as they would if they were in a more....

AM No. To be honest, it would be better if they were in a normal classroom situation where they can get this reinforcement. It is very noticeable that when we do have normal classes, which we try to do from time to time, these particular children are very active and enjoy these very much much. They do get a little bit from the tutors; these children will seek tutorial support more often, and very often it is not really a problem that they come with but its for a bit of a chat, reassurance that they are on the right line.

KW I have noticed that both "F" and "G" in class contribute well. In a discussion, they make intelligent comments and the rest of the group are inclined, when they say something, to laugh, to assume that it is going to be stupid. But it is not, and I feel that even that demonstration to the others, that the remark really has a lot of good sense in it, then helps to build up their concept of themselves and their peers' concept of them. So I wonder whether classroom interaction builds up a new self concept.

(Our conversation was interrupted at this stage by the arrival of a visitor to KW's office)

What about infection by enthusiasm? I think that many people pick that up from a good teacher, or from anyone who is in love with the subject and able, somehow, to pass that on.

AM A little bit if this comes from other students. I have noticed when one of the students gets enthusiastic about something the others want to know what is going on. That has happened. Again this one-to-one tutor session is a good time to do that. We don't have specialist teachers for every subject so there is a problem. I try to get enthusiastic about Maths, the students think I'm crazy. I hope some of it rubs off.

KW Alan, I am sure that there will only be these few who pick up from you that, they will pick up something else from someone else. But I have seen, in a school that I taught at where we had a wonderful history teacher, almost the entire year became brilliant history students and going on to do history at university. She was an extraordinary teacher.

(Another brief interruption)

AM The other side of that; if we can get good learning material written by an enthusiastic teacher then that is possibly better than a mediocre lesson from a very average teacher. Some of our material is good, some of it is not so good.
What about the oral tradition, Alan, where in a corporate situation, social situation, students are being exposed to more formal English in the classroom, expected to use it in the classroom.

I have noticed that quite strongly actually. We had a tape that I wanted the kids to listen to. They had great difficulty in concentrating on that. It was very well done, but they were just not used to listening. I think this is true of a lot of children in a normal school at home. They are so used to television and the visual presentation, that even with the teacher presenting orally a lot of colloquialism comes into the teacher's talk, to communicate with kids. I'm not putting this very clearly. One thing we have tried is having debates. And we have had a couple where the staff have been the debaters and the students have been supporting speakers. The staff have tried to show something of what it is like to debate in a formal atmosphere. And actually the children enjoyed that very much.

I thought that the presentation down stairs after the trek, (NB the senior students presented a slide show and display of their GCSE coursework done on a high-altitude field trip to the Langtang region of the Himalayas, to the parents, other students and interested persons.) the written work was beautiful but the oral work was...nobody could hear and they became tongue tied in a way that I think children used to that sort of question-answer from the back of the room in a classroom wouldn't.

Possibly there was another circumstance there. They had expected to rehearse and in fact the slides didn't arrive in time. So they were actually talking without having seen any of the slides. So it was completely open for the children and none of them knew who was meant to talk about which slide. They weren't ready to talk then. And I think for young people, in front of an audience to be suddenly presented with a picture, not even sure if it was your turn to talk, was a difficulty.

One area we want to explore more is using the kids to take morning assembly. We have had a little bit of that, but it is not an easy thing to organise. When you are in a normal class situation, you can spend a few minutes working on that. When you have to interrupt self-study to bring someone out to prepare something for assembly, it is difficult. It is an area that we are lacking.

Then Socratic dialogue. Can you have that type of interaction, sustained interaction, where a student's presuppositions or prejudices can be pursued to have that student really think through?
AM Again it depends on tutor time. It is done obviously much more privately than would be in a normal classroom situation. Which may not be a bad thing.

KW Yes, but on the other hand, in the classroom situation, you get a range of responses.

AM That's true, which then stimulates others.

KW Which then stimulates. I think there is something very enriching in a good class discussion.

AM It is an area that we need to develop. I am very aware that we would like to give the students opportunity to attend some classes. I have tried to do this, in Maths I has a series of statistics classes which worked fairly well. But it tended to be just for the British kids because I knew which course they were on. The others were left out. So what I have been thinking of is having advertised lectures. (NB. This conversation took place before I was aware that we would have sufficient staff to offer weekly group tutorials in each subject. These tutorials are largely fulfilling the role I envisaged for regular advertised lectures.)

KW I think that is a good idea.

AM Next week, there will be a talk on such and such - those interested come along! We tried this with Peter Stafford (NB. A short term member of staff) on the First World War history course and that went done very well even though it was out of order in a lot of people's work. But they appreciated very much the opportunity.

KW I think that would be very good. Similarly, getting things like British Council films on art and architecture.

AM We aim to have at least one speaker a term. We have had that in the past and have invited someone from outside. They may show slides or they may just speak. Usually there is a question and answer time at the end. That has gone well.

KW Now to your point on page 28 (now page 30) about freedom of method and content. How free is the student to choose a preferred method? How free is the student to choose content?

AM I have listed four freedoms: pace, choice, method and content. And I am not claiming that these are available in the KISC system. Freedom of pace is very much there.

KW By the end of the day they must have finished their work.

AM What I am saying; we have made a contract between the student and the tutor and it is an agreed pace. The student has to make the decision as to how much he is going to try
to complete that week. So we do allow a freedom of pace. But at the same time, if the tutor feels that they are going too slow, the tutor is there to encourage them to improve the speed of work.

Freedom of choice, again this last term because of short staff, we have encouraged students to work at a particular subject at a certain time so that there could be a tutor available. But in previous terms, we have not specified that and because we had more tutors available, that worked fine. So they chose when they were going to work at a particular subject and I was pleased with the way that went.

Method is a difficult one. Some of the materials allow a bit of freedom of method, some don't. Some are very restricted. I don't know whether you have looked at much of the Letts' courses? the first three years?

KW Only that English one, that Jill (name altered) was using. That's Letts, isn't it?

AM That's Letts.

KW I didn't think much of that! .....It did not seem to me to be very substantial.

AM I think it gives quite a lot of freedom of activity. Five or six activities listed at the end of each section.

KW Ah yes, maybe I am thinking of activities. Whatever she did seemed to be pretty sparse, and it didn't seem to me that she was skimping. There was very little direction given to a fourteen year old.

AM The Letts, on the whole, do put out a lot of alternative activities. From simple things like drawing a picture, you have to use your imagination after reading the text to produce the picture, through to much more complicated and lengthy reports. There is a fair amount of choice in method. Some of them suggest that they go off and talk about what they have been reading and imagine the situation. Some get them to write a little play and to find some friends and go a do a play together. And the kids will do that. They will get a couple of their friends and go off with a tape recorder (we have half a dozen cassette recorders)...

KW And what's the audience for that then?

AM They would play it back to a tutor afterwards, or to some of their peers. A couple of times we actually got, if we felt it was one that was worth sharing with others, we got a group together who were doing that particular unit and we sat down and listened to what two or three of them had come
That in the normal classroom is usually very enjoyable to both the kids and the teachers - to have a public demonstration. Student F said he wrote, (I gave him an essay topic to write on, one of the free essays rather than a literary essay) and he said, "Are we going to hear each others?" Which I thought was an interesting comment. He had actually, (I didn't realise it at that stage because they hadn't yet written them) he wrote what was a very nice piece, very simple and well controlled and I read that out to the group. But I think that is part of the magic of creation when you have done something which works and you see the effect on the audience, your own peers. If it is all just between you and me and my book, he never gets to see that I can do that.

Have you ever been in on any of the book, reading, sessions we do. We have these with the junior age group and the intermediates. (NB. That is students up to age 15) and often they will give oral reviews of a book they have read in front of all the others, and sometimes, they will design a bookjacket and sometimes it is a written review. But the oral reviews are very popular and some are really quite good and some will actually get some of the excitement of the book and leave the others wanting to read the book because they felt the excitement of the book. Some are very dry and boring.

And then this freedom of content, the student can choose what he learns and my question is can he choose from a position of ignorance?

That of course, that freedom of content, is one I don't think a student can have either. It is one of these four freedoms but I don't think it is necessarily one that I think a student should have.

And with courses determined by the home country often for assessment. That complicates it.

Arts and Craft is my next question. Is there any built in encouragement in visual arts and other creative arts?

That is a difficult one because of staff and I would like to see more of it. We have this list of electives and the students are allowed to choose as far as possible what they would like to take as their elective. We have art, craft, woodwork, Nepali language, horticulture, some others. Next term we will have sewing as well. The art one is actually very popular. But because the art teacher can only offer one session a week ..., it is a shame. Next term, we hope to have the offer of a second artist. So hopefully, we can then
run two sessions.

KW Now if you say, Alan, that this depends on the availability of the tutor, does that mean actually the self-study method is being tipped always back to a sort of conventional teacher directed?

AM Oh no! Certain subjects lend themselves to self-study......

KW This might be a relevant point.

AM And others are teacher dependent. And I think art is very much a teacher dependent subject. Its also, we have it for a number of reasons, its a break from self-study. I think it is very important to have normal style classes to give the children exposure to that situation. And also for the sake of the subject itself, it is worth having, very much so. Art, woodwork, some of these practical subjects are obviously better with a teacher.

(Interruptation)

KW Yes, I give art an extremely high place in the curriculum, much higher than most people would. Because I see it as essential for design related fields, like architecture, engineering or mechanics or dress design or graphic design.

AM One thing I am very aware that we lack at KISC is prints of good art work. At my old school, I was at, we always had lots of art work around that was changed regularly. I enjoyed that. I think the kids miss out on that.

KW And perhaps it is even more important in this international community where they are not surrounded by the cultural artifacts of their own culture.

AM That is something actually I would like to follow up with some of the consuls here. The provision of materials from British Council, etc.

KW It could be a changing exhibition.

AM But it is not something they have been too keen to provide, unfortunately, we have tried.

KW Now, your diagram on page 60 (now page 76). You're saying that the technology and the structure can be changed, I ask, perhaps of those components within the self-study system, that maybe it is the people who need to change. How do you change people? Children or tutors?

AM This, particularly the tutors, has become more and more pressing and the tutors we started KISC with were very
familiar with the idea because we discussed it a lot before we actually started. As other tutors have come in, there hasn't been time to get them completely familiar with the idea. And there is a very necessary adjustment to be made by a tutor to work in our system. It is something I would like to work on in the future. Again, the students have to adapt to the system. I think, what I am trying to say in that diagram is that once you have made an adjustment to the system, which happens fairly quickly. For the students it is about three weeks and they are fairly well settled. The questions that they come to the tutors with in the first three weeks are often about the system and after that they tend to be on their subject. So that I feel that after three weeks the students have changed. I would like to do more work with the tutors before they actually start at KISC but it has just not been possible. But I think that once they've got the idea and settled into it, and after that, I am talking about looking at the technology and other areas, and viewing them through the people.

KW And what about the Fs and Gs (Names of two difficult students, mentioned earlier)?

AM You mean changing their attitudes?

KW Yes, well, all of the things which are required for helping them to be able to use the, if your assumption is that if it is not working with this person, then it will be the technology or structure which is deficient. I don't agree with that. I think all your four components are interacting and your technology and structure may be fine but it is the person for whom the whole thing exists.

AM Actually in my diagram, if I remember rightly, the person, structure and technology are in a triangle, which means that the three are interacting and then the task is one that is viewed through the person. The normal diagram for that is all four in a box or the corners of a diamond, but I feel that, for many, the educational task is fairly fixed, for example, in the British system it is the final examination. Whatever else we like to bring into it, the final judgement is this exam that they all have to face. So there is a certain aim there, a certain task which must be accomplished. So the other three areas are the variables. And so my diagram is intended to show that people do vary and the task is then seen through people.

KW So you are implying that....

AM Yes, I think possibly the diagram is a little bit misleading. I will have to tidy up on that. But I am changing from this traditional idea of the task being a variable. I feel it is not.
KW And in this case the task is seen as separate from the book or medium through which the student is learning. That is the technology.

AM Oh yes.

KW That is the end of my prepared questions. Just one other question that has come and that is about organisation and maintenance which is one of the big time consuming things within a normal school. Things like bells. I mean my main irritant in KISC is that kids are so slow to come and I am often standing around for 10 minutes, quarter of an hour, as they are having a chat, or having a shower, or doing other, to me, irrelevant things. Is that part of the way in which the students are being trained to organise their time so that there is a deliberately low key organisation and maintenance and structure?

AM That is something that has crept in in the last 2 terms and again because of the tutor shortage. Particularly with the senior group. Because often that room is left unattended by a tutor and they have got into this sloppy habit. The Intermediates and Juniors are much quicker at getting to class because I usually go and hassle them. The only time when they are slow is after sport and that's partly a physical problem because there are only two showers for 20 kids. And in hot, sweaty weather, do you say come to the classroom smelly, or do you encourage them to have a shower?

KW Yes, yes. In normal schools they come smelly.

AM I think they do!

KW I just wondered whether that was also a philosophical thing. It seems to me that the school is low on visible signs of discipline.

AM Yes, it is low on that. That was a deliberate choice.

KW Yes, I thought it was.

AM But as the school grows, it is going to have to change. We started off with 7 children and they made the rules which was great and worked really well and as other kids came they accepted those rules. But now we've grown to 45 next term, the rules have to change, more law enforcement, unfortunately.

Bad habits creep in. The same sort of thing on the bus. The bus has twenty children. It needs to be tightened up. It is sad because I think one of the features of the first year and a half of KISC was the family atmosphere. And the kids respected that very much and there was no messing around and
missing class and skiving off and coming late. Because it was very obvious when someone did it but in greater numbers it is easier to do.

KW And also I think that there is the nature of innovation and this is why I asked the question about moving toward more a teacher directed one and why you've said in the history of other self-directed learning there tends to be a cessation of the experiment or a move towards the traditional thing. But that seems in most organisational development to go from a stage of enthusiasm and idealism and innovation and those who are involved with the innovation share that zeal but then, as the race that doesn't know Joseph comes in, then there is a drawing in of lines and a shift much more to the conventional.

AM It takes a lot of energy to keep an innovation going and I am finding that I am running out of steam. I just don't have the energy left. (NB. This interview took place at the height of the Trade and Transit dispute between India and Nepal. The resulting restrictions and difficulties made even just trying to keep the school operating extremely difficult. I don't think I would make this statement now.)

KW So how do you maintain the vision as the first visionaries move on? And as people come into something that is already an existing activity? (See 11.6 & 15.4.3)

AM I would like to know the answer to that myself.

KW I keep asking that myself about lots of things.

AM Personally I feel that a couple more years is all that I can give and then it is time for someone else to take over. I don't think I can keep going at the rate I have had to in the last few years. It is a big thing.

KW And, Alan, you are putting your own children through this experience. Do you believe that this is, that if you had your choice of the very best education in the world which you want for your own daughter and son, that this is the very best education.

AM Its not a simple answer because ideally I don't like teaching in the same institute where my daughter is. There are problems there. (NB. My son is still of primary age and has not yet entered KISC.)

KW Assuming that you are not there.

AM Assuming that I wasn't there. If I was given the choice of schools available at the moment, I would go with KISC. But then I am enthusiastic about what is happening. It has had
its problems, but overall I am excited by the successes. And for my own daughter, a small school suits her very well. She would be overwhelmed by a large school. She is a very shy and quiet person and book work suits her tremendously. For my son, he is very different, I am not sure. I think that a normal school may be more for him.

KW So, what you are saying there is that you are matching the temperament of the child, the learner, to the environment. In which case, perhaps, it would be helpful to try to define the type of student whom you see as most benefitting.

AM I have that down as one of the research projects for the future, the characteristics of the learner who does well in a KISC situation. Obviously no school is perfect for any single child, but I think you can find a school where you can find some affinities. I think KISC is providing that atmosphere for certain children, I think that the majority of our children are coping well with the system and are at home in it. There are some problem kids.

KW How long do you think the research will take, Alan, before you submit it.

AM This has to be submitted before November.

KW If you had a long range then looking at the kids who leave. (NB I do not feel I should publish this next part as we discussed some students in a detailed and personal way. It would be very easy to identify them and this would be an intrusion into their privacy)

KW Now this is something that you say here, the possibility of senior students coming for some time and then....

AM That has worked well with two students in the past. They both came in just when they needed tutorial help and it worked really well for them. But they had been working on correspondence courses for a good number of years and were well established in learning skills and they enjoyed coming to school for some of the other activities as well as the tutorial support. They found they could work at home adequately.

KW So would you make any generalisation as to whether you would advise parents to keep their children.

AM It depends very much on the child and the reasons why they want to keep them home. I think parents are very vulnerable about their children's education, especially in this setting. (NB. I meant living in a developing country such as Nepal) Sometimes they expect too much from their children and too much from the school. And then they try to do it
themselves, this is where there are problems. These other two students, their parents were very relaxed, because their kids were coping well, they had accepted the standard their children could work at. And they had accepted that their children were not wonderful at some some subjects and at others they were good. Some of our parents are wanting their children to be brilliant at everything. Because they themselves were high achievers. I can't generalize.

KW I think I have run out of questions.
CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS

During the first two and a half years of KISC the following issues, concerns and questions have arisen. Although I identified most of these issues, concerns and questions through entries in my research diary, I will indicate at the end of each section the original source of the issue.

10.1 Motivation of Learners.

How do the students influence each other in their study habits? Can motivation improve through observation of others, that is, if a well-motivated student is placed next to a poorly motivated student, does the poor student improve or the good student suffer? There appears to be no clear answer to this, I have observed cases of a poor student improving while sitting beside a good student, this especially appears to happen if the friendship is long term. I have also observed cases of good students suffering because of poor students sitting beside them. This tends to an immediate and obvious deterioration although the good student quickly regains good study habits if the poor student is moved away. Do well-motivated students gravitate towards each other? It has been impossible to study this at KISC as the small size of the peer group restricts the friendships that can develop.

(This issue was identified from entries in my research diary and from comments made at staff meetings when the placement of individual students in the Learning Centres was the topic for discussion.)

10.2 Sophistication of Learners.

Perraton (1987), in discussing theory and practice in distance education, suggests that the need for face to face tuition varies inversely with the motivation and sophistication of learners. This appears to happen at KISC, as time progresses study skills improve and tutor contact time decreases. I am equating improved study skills with increasing sophistication. I define improved study skills in terms of observable behaviour noted on the observation matrix, that is, increased attention span (shown by decrease in the number of non-working observations and a lengthening of the time between them), and increased use of resource materials (book and non-book). This use of resource material and reduced tutor contact time appears to be subject specific in that not all subjects lend themselves to self-help. I am thinking particularly of Mathematics where it
is easier and most probably more effective for a student to seek help directly from a tutor rather than a reference book.

I had hoped that the observation matrix would provide sufficient evidence to verify the above statement. As I have already mentioned, the staff shortage we have suffered form over the last two years has made it impossible to carry out sustained and regular observations. In my initial observations, made in June and November 1987, I managed to make regular and whole day through observations. My subsequent observations have been infrequent and rarely of more than one or two hours. My research assistant in June 1989 was also unable to make regular whole day observations (his services as a tutor were too much in demand). I have tried to analyse the observations that were made, but they are too few in number and no trend or pattern shows up. I had also hoped to verify that good students develop a rhythm in their study, consisting of regular periods of concentration interspersed with short breaks. I also suspected that successful students were able to concentrate for longer periods than less successful students. Through our casual observations both myself and some tutors believe this to be so, but so far no pattern has emerged in the observations (See 8.4). (At the time of my interview with KW, I had not finished my analysis of the observations and I mentioned this pattern to her fully expecting to be able to demonstrate it.)

One parent, in a casual conversation with me reported in my research diary, described the growing learning sophistication in his daughter as being evident in her more thoughtful approach to everything. He used as his example the fact that in her chess playing she had changed from being an impulsive, unthinking player to one who thought out the implications of every move. He attributed this change directly to her time at KISC. (He was not sure whether to thank us or not, as he could now no longer defeat his daughter at chess!)

(This issue originated through observations I noted in my research diary, I then discovered that it was documented in the literature (Perraton 1987) and I followed it up through use of the Observation Matrix.)

10.3 Materials.

We use a wide variety of study materials at KISC, but the one common factor for all our students is the support system. Unfortunately a conflict often arises between KISC expectations (eg. attendance at tutorials and taking part in electives) and the demands of the correspondence school or course. In the third evaluation workshop 37% of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed that children doing correspondence courses find conflicts between school (correspondence) and KISC expectations (C13). In the student questionnaire, question 11, (Does the KISC
system of compulsory electives, tutorials, sport, RE and current events interfere too much with your self-study time?) 18% responded often and 55% responded sometimes. We have tackled this problem by holding a meeting with the parents, staff and students concerned and making compromises in either the KISC expectations or the correspondence school programme or both. This compromise has proved to be different for each student and often has to renegotiated as the student's programme develops.

(This issue was identified through comments I noted in my research diary following interviews between myself and individual parents on visits to KISC. The extent of the concern was confirmed at the Third Evaluation Workshop (C13) and in the Student Questionnaire Qu.11)

Concern has been expressed over the nature of individual self-study materials. In the Student Evaluation Workshop while 55% of the students expressed satisfaction with their self-study materials (A12), 45% were unable to do so (15% were neutral and 30% disagreed that their courses were just right). One problem appears to be that correspondence courses often explain concepts at tedious length, introducing new ideas in very simple steps. This may be helpful for the less able student, but can be very frustrating to the more able. This problem becomes more acute if the student is studying through a correspondence course from a school in their home country which requires the student to submit all their work for marking and credit. If this demand from the correspondence school could be set aside then our tutors would be able to move their able students more quickly through some parts of their coursework, or even to give them alternative material. It would be even better if material could be tailor made for us. Students could be given a choice over what material they use. For most of our students on correspondence course their choice of study material is limited to that provided by the correspondence school, although sometimes we are able to supplement their work through material we have at KISC.

(This concern has been expressed by individual students both to me and their tutors, and was noted in my research diary. It applies particularly to students on the Australian and New Zealand courses. The concern was also expressed at the Student Evaluation Workshop (A5))

10.4 Self-direction vs Tutor direction in Learning

One of the aims of KISC is to enable our students to become autonomous learners. Not only do I see sophistication in learning being related to a decrease in tutor contact time caused by fewer queries about subject matter, but I would also link this with the learners becoming more responsible for the organisation of their own study - how they use their time and
materials. We always need to keep a balance between over helping our students, both in their organisation of their study and in understanding of their material and in not giving sufficient help. We are succeeding in this for at least one student, he or she made these three comments under question 1 in the September 1989 questionnaire (What things do you most like about the KISC system?):

- You are not held back in any way.
- You don't have an hour of some subject that you can do in half an hour.
- You aren't told things over and over again.

(This issue was discussed at staff meetings and was identified through notes I made in my research diary.)

10.5 Length of study time.

I have tried to design the master timetable so that no student is ever involved in self-study for longer than 90 minutes without a break. Even 90 minutes seems too long for some students, but it is difficult to arrange the timetable without some long sessions.

I suspect there is also a minimum session time that can be used for self-study, probably 30 minutes. My experience suggests that any student faced with a shorter time than this will not consider it worth his or her while settling down to work, even though 9 minutes seems to be a common concentration span. (See Figure 8.5)

(This issue was discussed at staff meetings and was identified through notes I made in my research diary. I further investigated it through the Observation Matrix.)

10.6 Noise level in the learning centre.

We allow our students to engage in some conversation with their neighbours during self-study sessions, except for the first one and one half hours of each morning which have been declared "quiet times". Not all talk is unhealthy; sometimes students talk in order to help each other with their learning, sometimes they talk to relieve tension as they express frustration or fulfilment in their work. It is difficult to decide on an acceptable level of noise in the centre and indeed some students prefer complete quietness while they work. Indeed, 18% of our students find the atmosphere in the learning centre rarely or never enables them to work at the best of their ability (See Qu.
18, Student Questionnaire). Just recently we have allowed students to use personal "walkmans" if they feel background music helps them concentrate. Those who find noise distracts them soon stopped using their walkmans, while the others claim that they really do help them concentrate. Certainly the overall noise in the learning centres has dropped since the walkmans were allowed.

(This issue was discussed at staff meetings and was identified through notes I made in my research diary. I further investigated the topic through use of the Observation Matrix and the Student Questionnaire.)

10.7 Peer Group

Before KISC opened, some parents expressed concern over the small size of the peer group. Since the school started, many of our visitors have commented upon the relaxed, family atmosphere in KISC and stated that the small group seems a much more natural learning environment than the large schools they themselves attended. One person pointed out that throughout the average person's working life they will only have a small number of colleagues to work with, and that the trauma of surviving in a 1000+ more normal school environment is a largely unnecessary experience. At the First Evaluation Workshop, 90% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed to the comment that there is a good social group for out of school activities. (L3)

(This issue arose through discussions with parents noted in my research diary. It also arose at the First Evaluation Workshop and from comments which were written in the Visitors Book by visitors to the school.)

10.8 Optimum number of students in the learning centre.

Before the new upper learning centre opened in August 1989, the original learning centre had become overcrowded with seating for 36 students. This led to a deterioration in study habits of many students. I tried to organise the timetable so that no more than about half the students were in the learning centre at any given time. We found that if too many students were in the room then the tutors were always kept busy helping someone. The other students took advantage of the fact that the tutors were too busy to patrol the room to keep order and so concentration levels dropped. The design of the study carrels and layout of the lower learning centre meant that when a tutor was working with a student he lost "contact" with what the other students were doing. A number of different arrangements of the room were tried in an attempt to enable the tutors to supervise it better without taking away the privacy that many students appear to
need to study effectively. The only satisfactory solution came when the opening of the new upper learning centre enabled me to reduce the total student population in the lower learning centre to a maximum of twenty. I discuss this topic further in 14.3 (This issue was discussed at staff meetings and arose through notes in my research diary.)

10.9 Other issues

In chapter 11, I discuss issues which concern the changes in role facing tutors at KISC. In chapter 13, I discuss changes facing students and in chapter 12, I discuss changes facing parents.
PART D

CHAPTER 11

TUTOR ROLE

In this chapter I examine changes in the traditionally accepted role of teachers which face tutors working in a supported self-study system such as KISC.

11.1 Tutor not teacher

The tutors have to face a change in role from "teacher as authority" to "tutor as supporter", no longer are they to be the providers of information but they have to become fellow searchers with their students for knowledge. This can make the teacher vulnerable, open to criticism, as he may appear to the student, and therefore to the parents, to be lacking in knowledge. Certainly in the first evaluation workshop (7.1) parents (69%) stated that tutors often have insufficient knowledge of the specific material studied by each student (J1), and 86% stated that staff are not as familiar with study material as the students (H12).

Some teachers may have to contain their urge to teach, to provide an immediate answer, as they work with a student to help the student find out for him/herself. Christian-Carter & Burton (1988) see two major advantages in making this effort to work in partnership:

First, it offers the possibility of a rate of growth for students which is not limited by the knowledge and experiences of the teacher. Second, once developed, this relationship then allows for a more rapid response to changes in society because it short circuits the problem of the amount of time required by the educational system to produce a teacher with the relevant extensive and in-depth knowledge.

Christian-Carter & Burton thus imply that it is not necessary for the teacher to have the knowledge the KISC parents demand in their responses in the first evaluation workshop.

Some teachers do not fully accept the contract system and its aim of enabling student self-pacing. They prefer to set work rather than reach agreement over a contracted amount of work with a student. White reveals this in her interview with me when she declares that she finds it difficult to assess the proper pace for the work and sometimes sets work that has been unrealistic. (See page 115) Conversations in the staffroom
reveal that other teachers set work rather than agree contracts. This is probably caused more by the teachers being concerned to ensure that their students maintain progress rather than the teachers wishing to retain and exert their authority. (See also Taylor 1972).

11.2 Tutor vs. material

Who has the greater authority in a self-study system - the tutor or the written materials? Mistakes do occur in written material, but some students have shown reluctance to accept that these are mistakes. When a tutor always assumes the role of fellow passenger in the quest of knowledge does this produce a lack of confidence from the student in the tutor's ability to judge correctness of written material? This problem disappears with time, as the students get to know their tutors then their confidence in them grows. The senior students at KISC who started on their GCSE courses after a year's experience with their tutors immediately accepted the tutor's word that there were a number of mistakes in their new GCSE coursebooks. (See Second Evaluation Workshop, comment A10. The 85% who ticked neutral on this comment were probably those who were not working on GCSE material.)

(This issue was identified through notes I made in my research diary.)

See also my comments about parents and their recognition of the power of written course content over tutor-directed course content (12.2).

11.3 Teamwork

The learning centre often has two or more tutors on duty unlike a classroom where there is usually only one teacher present. In a traditional classroom the teacher decides on order and discipline in his classroom. In the learning centre with two or more tutors on duty it can be difficult to agree on an acceptable level of noise and order amongst the students, but unless there is agreement no one will take responsibility for maintaining law and order. Teachers are not used to working as members of a team.

(This issue was identified through notes I made in my research diary and through discussions at staff meetings.)

11.4 Non-verbal messages

Most experienced teachers learn to read non-verbal messages from their students. They know when students are bored, not maintaining concentration or have lost the theme of an
argument. Much of this communication, and indeed, maintenance of discipline, takes place through eye contact. In the learning centre, where the majority of students are sitting at study carrels with their backs to the tutors this eye contact is lost. Tutors have to develop a whole new set of skills in this situation. Bagley & Challis (1985), had this same experience:

Staff......new to the ways of working in the workshop environment, had to make considerable modifications to their style and role. At first many of them waited for students to hold up their hands seeking assistance.... Later it was noticeable that the staff looked for students who may have required help, and many became adept at reading signals more subtle than an upraised hand.

A young teacher, spending his college vacation helping at KISC, mentioned that he did not like to stop behind students as they worked at their desk in case he interrupted their thinking. Yet he had no other way of telling if a student was working or not. This feeling of disturbing students meant that the teacher concerned was reluctant to patrol the study room. (The young teacher appears justified in his concern about disturbing students, in the student questionnaire ten dislikes about KISC were along the lines of "teacher interrupts self-study at times") Unfortunately this meant that he often did not notice when a student had stopped working and needed encouragement, nor was he in a position to help those students who were shy in asking for tutor help, yet it would appear to be very important for a tutor to actively seek out those students who are not asking for help sufficiently often. (See 14.2.1)

(This issue was identified through observations I noted in my research diary and through notes made after personal discussions with staff members. It was later discovered in the literature.)

11.5 Giving Group tutorials, decision on timing and content.

A difficulty in giving small group tutorials is that of making decisions on timing and content of the tutorial. This problem arises if not all the members of the group work at the same pace. If the members of the group become too spread out in their rate of progress through a course of work then it becomes necessary to split the group, but if the group is already small this may not be possible. The teacher therefore has to adjust his content and pace to the average as happens in the traditional classroom situation. (See also 3.3.6)

A particular difficulty we face at KISC is dealing with students on unique courses. We feel it important that every student is able to take part in a group learning activity but if there are only one or two students on a particular course
from a particular country, where do we fit them in? In the September 1989 questionnaire in their response to question 2 (What things do you dislike about the KISC self-study system?), seven students commented about the loneliness of being the only student on a particular course (See 7.4 Qu.2). As we become more familiar with all the different courses it should become easier to fit students into appropriate subject groups, but the problem of pace still arises!

(This issue was identified through notes I made in my research diary following comments made by staff members and my own observations. It also arises in the literature (See Cryer & Manwaring 1977).)

11.6 Role of tutors in maintaining the innovation

In her interview with me Kath White drew attention to the problem of keeping an innovation going. "How do you maintain the vision as the first visionaries move on?" (P126)

In 11.1 I have already discussed the problems facing teachers moving from a teacher-centered system to a student-centered self-study system. I suspect that in the future, when the original staff are no longer working at KISC, if teachers join the staff who are not able to make the necessary adjustment in role, or who are not convinced of the need to use self-study or indeed of the benefits of self-study, then these teachers could exert pressure on the leadership to move to a traditional teaching model. If the members of the teaching staff are not fully behind an innovation then I suspect there will be little chance of the innovation succeeding. I discuss this topic further in 15.4.3

11.7 Training of tutors.

For the first 2 years of KISC, we maintained the same members of staff. We had learnt a lot about operating the system and had grown in knowledge together. Although I have made every effort to do so, it could be that not all that we have learnt has been written down. Since those first two years we have started to face staff changes. It will be necessary to develop a system for passing on knowledge about operating KISC to our new tutors therefore I have edited some chapters of this thesis to use as a basis for a tutor's handbook. This trial version will be discussed at a staff meeting early in 1990 and hopefully this will lead to the development of an effective handbook for the training of new tutors. (See Appendix IX for the trial version).
CHAPTER 12

PARENT AND COMMUNITY ROLE

In this chapter I examine the role of the parents and community in a supported self-study system.

12.1 Misunderstanding of tutors' role and the KISC system.

As I have already mentioned, during the first evaluation workshop, a number of parents (69%) criticized the tutors as "often having insufficient knowledge of the specific material studied by each student" (7.1 J1). I believe this to be related to the supportive role adopted by the tutors as I have discussed above in 11.1. I am careful to explain to new parents the differences in KISC, but despite this many parents seem to expect to judge KISC using the same criteria they would use to judge a traditional school.

Another misunderstanding which was shown up by the first evaluation workshop was related to homework. 80% of the parents commented that homework should be given (7.1 A2). In a traditional school, homework is usually given to give students practice in working on their own and to ensure that a course is covered in the time available. In the KISC system, the students have plenty of practice in working on their own, therefore only need homework to enable them to cover their course in the set time. If a student is completing all his work in KISC, there is no need for homework, and this is the case for many of our students. Parents need to adjust to the different approach used in KISC and adjust their expectations accordingly. The Third Evaluation Workshop in 1989 showed a change of attitude towards homework, with only 10% of the parents stating that there was not enough homework, the other 90% disagreed! (7.3 C3)

12.2 Responsibility of parents

One of the constraints I imposed in designing the KISC model was that the system should demand minimal supervision and academic input from the parents (See 4.7.2.). The exact nature of this input needs to be clarified. In the first evaluation workshop 95% of the participants commented that "the breakdown between the responsibility of teachers and parents needs to be fully clarified in writing" (7.1 P1). 60% commented that "the parents should give more individual supervision" (P5). The individual comment cards from which the first evaluation questionnaire was developed showed that parents wanted to share some responsibility for the progress of their children with the tutors. By the third evaluation workshop most parents seemed to be more comfortable with their role, 11% stated they would like
to be more involved with KISC, 58% were neutral and 31% disagreed (7.3 A5). When difficulties have arisen over the exact breakdown between parents and teacher responsibility, I have invited the parents to come out to the school and meet with the tutors concerned and discuss the breakdown of responsibilities. It has been impossible to clarify this in writing in a general way as suggested by the first evaluation workshop as the breakdown of responsibilities seems to differ according to the nature of the correspondence or self-study course used.

Some nationalities seem to demand more involvement in their children's study programme than others. As I have discussed in 10.3 there is sometimes a conflict between a correspondence school's requirements and what is considered best for a student by a tutor. This same conflict has arisen with some parents whose children use the American International Institute materials. The International Institute do not require us to send students' work to them for marking. They have provided us with sample answers and teaching guides (See 4.4.1). In theory therefore, the KISC tutors should be able to help individual students plan their progress through the self-study material, omitting material which is unsuitable, too advanced or too simple, and they should be able to help their students progress by suggesting alternative more suitable material. In practice, some parents are unhappy when any part of the material is omitted. This is could be due to a stronger "faith" in the correspondence school as opposed to our tutors. That is, to some parents, the correspondence material is more powerful than our tutors. Some parents have even gone to the extent of overriding suggestions made by our tutors. I have tried to resolve this problem by calling meetings between myself, the parents and the tutors involved and we have usually come to an acceptable solution for all.

12.3 The family unit

Another constraint I imposed in designing the KISC model was that the system should enable the family unit to remain intact for the maximum period possible each year (See 4.7.2). This concern is aimed at parents and students who live in Nepal outside the Kathmandu valley and who are uncomfortable with the long periods of separation normally associated with boarding schools. Thus the possibility is available at KISC of part-time boarding (See 4.1). The idea is that students can board at school for only part of each term, to receive help with their coursework and to have peer interaction. They can then spend the other half of each term with their families where they work through the correspondence materials. Over the first two and one half years of KISC only four students (from three families) have used this facility. Two students stayed at home for half of two terms only. The other two students remained at home for
a full term, mainly because of family illness. The two students who stayed at home for the full term enjoyed the experience but have expressed no interest in repeating the idea. By mid-term they wanted to return to boarding but stayed at home to please their parents. The other two students, and indeed their parents, had mixed feelings about the half term in boarding/half term at home experience. They enjoyed being together as a family but felt that their academic work suffered through the feeling of not being settled anywhere and through not feeling as if they completely belonged to the school or even their village community.

12.4 Community involvement

We have a small number of full-time staff members at KISC, yet we still wish to offer our students a wide variety of enrichment activities or electives. In order to do this we have drawn widely upon the expatriate community in Kathmandu and found many parents and friends interested and happy to offer their services part-time. Parents and friends have taught the following at the school on a part-time voluntary basis: Art, Craft, English, French conversation, Sewing, Sports, Study Skills and Woodwork. In addition, we have no difficulty in finding parents and friends willing to come into the school and give occasional lectures and talk about their particular skill or knowledge of Nepal. At the first evaluation workshop 100% of the parents strongly agreed that the variety of subjects offered is good. (7.1 D3)
CHAPTER 13

STUDENT ROLE

In this chapter I examine the change in role and other factors affecting students working in a supported self-study system.

13.1 Adjustment to Self Study

In the second evaluation workshop (7.2), 75% of the students disagreed that KISC should "turn into a normal school" (E8). 80% commented that they "like the way you can work at your own pace" (A6). 55% felt that their course was "just right" (15% were neutral and 30% disagreed) (A12). Overall the students appear to have adjusted well to self-study and certainly 75% implied that they prefer KISC to a "normal school". At the third evaluation workshop (7.3) 96% of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that students settle in quickly (B1).

But students also seem to show the same misunderstanding of the tutor's role that the parents displayed. 65% commented that we "need more teachers specifically trained for all the subjects' (25% were neutral and 10% disagreed) (7.2 B1). This comment is probably due to lack of confidence in the tutor's knowledge of a particular topic through the tutor's adoption of the role of co-learner; "let's find out the answer to this query together" can imply to the student that the teacher lacks knowledge or training in the topic.

13.2 Active involvement

Students also like to be actively involved in their learning: 80% thought debates are good (B12), 70% wanted more (B16). The debates so far have been whole school activities involving both staff and student speakers, with the students choosing the topics for debate. They also like to choose their own topics for project work (90%) (B5), think the computer is good (90%) (B14) and want more computer time (60%) (B17). It is perhaps significant that no one made any comments about traditional school activities, there was no request for traditional style classes in any subject for example. The only comment made about the more passive activity associated with traditional style learning was when 35% commented that they liked visiting speakers, 50% were neutral and 15% disliked visiting speakers (B18).
13.3 Students and Open Learning

As our students mature in their approach to learning their need for tutorial support appears to decrease. Some of our older students find that they prefer to work at home, coming into KISC only when they need specific tutorial help, access to the laboratory, library, or computer, or want to join in certain group activities. The tutorial contact time tends to be a quality time, the student having thought over the problem and being in genuine need of help. The benefits of an open learning system appear to grow as a student matures in his learning skills.

13.4 Discernment of the need for tutor consultation

As I have discussed in 10.2 and discuss again in 14.2.1, the need for face-to-face tuition appears to vary inversely with the motivation and sophistication of the learner. Some of our less able students do not appear to recognise their need to seek tutor help. In 8.4 I have described the student who had the lowest observed consultation rate of 0% and whose work was causing concern to her study supervisor. In the interview between myself and Kath White we discussed another student, "F". This student has caused concern to all those members of staff who have worked with him. (Identified through notes I made in my research diary after consultation sessions with the student, and after discussions with his teachers both individually and at staff meetings.) He came to the school fairly recently, so was not observed in many of the observation sessions using the Observation Matrix. In those sessions in which he was observed, he had a consultation rate CO = 4%. This is half the average for the whole school CO = 8% (See 8.4). Another less able student consults tutors too often. She often comes with trivial questions which show that she has given no thought whatever to her work. (Identified through notes I made in my research diary after consultation sessions with the student and after discussions with her teachers both individually and at staff meetings.) The consultation rate for this girl was CO = 23%.

It appears, therefore, that able students know when to seek help, less able students lack this ability.

13.5 Doubts about Progress, examinations

Bagley & Challis (1985) describe the doubts that students on a self-study course had about their progress.

Many students expressed doubts as to their progress on their courses and said that they would have liked some "normal" classes so that they could find out how they were doing.
A similar situation appears to be true at KISC. In the student questionnaire, question 14 (do you feel the KISC system offers a way of judging your work and progress in comparison with other students?) only 27% responded yes. (18% said no and 55% were unsure). Now that the staffing situation has improved we need to introduce a more regular testing system at KISC. The parents also feel this need, in the third evaluation workshop 88% agreed or strongly agreed that there should be regular exams and more graded papers (D5).

One of our tutors has always been concerned about the lack of formal examinations at KISC, not because of the need to assess progress, but because of the need to expose our students to the fear that examinations generate. She feels that the KISC system is much too gentle with the students and that this could lead to problems when our students face public examinations for the first time. Other tutors feel there is no need to introduce this fear element until the students are close to their examinations. We started regular formal practice examinations with our GCSE candidates six months before the examination.

Another aspect of self-study which possibly affects examination performance is that since their work is largely self-paced our students are not used to working under externally imposed time constraints.

13.6 Students with Learning Difficulties

Kath White in her interview asked me how we cope with the slow or poor reader. I answered that question by stating that it was important for our tutors to give as much one-to-one help as possible. I think this comment applies to any student with learning difficulties. We have had quite striking success with at least two students who, according to their parents, had been "written off" and largely ignored in their former traditional style schools. One major frustration our tutors have in trying to give individualised one-to-one help is the lack of self-study materials designed for slower learners - these do not appear to be available. If the slow reader or learner is to be weaned from his dependence on a tutor, then we need to find simple material suitable for self-study.

In the interview I mention a student (student "F" also mentioned above in 13.4) who appears to have a short concentration span. This student joined us fairly recently, so has only been observed briefly using the Observation Matrix by my research assistant (3 sessions of 90 minutes each). His consultation rate CO was 4%, half the average for the whole school. This supports my belief that poor students do not seek tutorial help often enough. The longest period this student was observed working for without a break was just 12 minutes and this was only on one occasion. As I mentioned in the interview,
I have started working with this student to try to help him improve his concentration span. It remains to be seen if he can maintain the improvement he has shown, and if his increased concentration span leads to an improvement in the quality of his work.
14.1 Introduction

Much of what I write in this chapter is based around a framework used by Perraton (1987) when he writes on "Theories, generalizations and practice in distance education". He describes three related systems for analysing distance education. The teaching system (I prefer to call it the learning system), the administrative system, and the assessment system. I will analyse a theory and practice of learning using supported self study based on the KISC model using these same three headings. While I have found it convenient to use three heading to discuss the topics it should be remembered that all are closely interrelated. Figure 14.1 below shows these relationships.

Figure 14.1 The Components of Supported Self-Study (Based upon a diagram in Waterhouse 1988, P.15)
At the heart of the KISC supported self-study concept lies the administrative system which balances and controls the three main elements which constitute the broad shoulders of the support system. I include the assessment system as an important part of the administrative system. Throughout this thesis I have described the various components of the model under the titles, TECHNOLOGY, STRUCTURE and PEOPLE. The Administrative System clearly belongs to STRUCTURE. The Materials, Enrichment Activities and Tutorials belong to TECHNOLOGY. I now bring these three components of TECHNOLOGY, which form the support for self-study, and discuss them and self-study under the heading of the Learning System.

14.2 The Learning System

14.2.1 Some Theories

As I have mentioned in 8.2 staff shortages made it impossible to carry out a satisfactory number of observations using the time-on-task observation matrix. Linking this with the short time that KISC has been operating and the small number of students we have, I feel that I cannot claim proof for the theory I discuss now. I put these ideas forward as apparent trends.

Students appear to make a rapid adjustment to self-study (See 7.3 Bl). The staff have stated from their observations of new students that during the first two or three weeks at KISC many of the questions asked by these students are concerned with learning about the system. After that, system related queries tail off rapidly.

A major source of motivation to self-study probably comes from providing an environment conducive to learning. This environment includes the physical surroundings, an adequate supply of good learning resource materials, and the tutorial support system (including a system of punishments and rewards).

I will discuss the physical environment later, but now look at the learning environment created by the tutors. This is based around a theory I have already discussed. That is, that the need for face-to-face tuition appears to vary inversely with the motivation and sophistication of the learners with the possible exception of work in Mathematics. In all subjects, sophisticated learners appear to know when they need to seek tutorial assistance. Our observations at KISC suggest that these students only approach tutors when they have a real need for assistance. It may well be that sophisticated learners would resent or be irritated by unrequested tutor interference, thus we need to provide for these learners an environment which allows immediate tutor access with minimum tutor interference. Less able learners do not appear to possess this discernment,
they seek help too frequently before they have really thought about a problem, or they fail to realise that they need help. Thus they may learn better in an environment where tutors offer more leadership and take the initiative in suggesting a consultation. In some circumstances it may benefit the learner for tutors to refuse to give tutorial help when it is requested unnecessarily. (See 10.2, 11.4 13.3 and 13.4)

There appears to be a third type of student. These students appear to recognise their need for tutorial assistance but for some reason fail to seek help. In the September 1989 questionnaire, four students stated that they would feel happier in a more conventional school setting. I compared the responses of these four students and there were three common threads. As would be expected all four found tutorials helpful or very helpful. More interestingly, three of the four in their response to question 2 (What things do you dislike about the KISC self-study system?) made comments about the lack of help available from tutors. There is always at least one tutor available and willing to give help in each learning centre, (four students refer to this in 7.4 Qu.1), so the only reason for lack of tutor help is that the students themselves are not seeking it. All four students stated that on average they asked for help between one and three times a day. It would appear that these students need an environment similar to the second one described above, where it would be important for the tutors to actively encourage students to seek help when they have difficulty.

Skager (1984) in discussing the self-directed learner also suggests two types of environment, depending on the readiness of the students. He suggests that for children who are already capable of self-directed learning, the environment would be highly open and flexible. For those children who are not yet self-directing there needs to be much more help and guidance. In KISC, we have two learning centres. The Lower Learning Centre contains students who are in their first or second year of secondary education. The Upper Learning Centre contains third year students and up. Generally we try to provide an environment in the Lower Learning Centre in which there is more guidance and active tutorial support than that in the Upper Learning Centre. At the same time there are students in the Upper Learning Centre who need a great deal of support and there are students in the Lower Learning Centre who have very quickly become sophisticated learners. The Tutors need to identify these students and interact with them on an individualised basis.

The attitude of the students as a collective group must have some effect on learning (10.1). Certainly, on a trivial level it is clear that the relaxed quiet studious atmosphere which often exists in KISC can be very quickly destroyed by just one student who feels like causing trouble. As I have mentioned in
10.8 and discuss further in 14.3, spaciousness is an important factor in creating a quiet atmosphere. It is useful to have more study carrels than students in a learning centre. This enables staff to move troublesome students to positions where they can be less distracting to others. It has not been possible to study how students influence each other as they work side-by-side, but undoubtedly the sitting of students in relation to others is important.

Training can provide a student with the necessary skills for success in learning but cannot necessarily provide the motivation. At the same time, lack of study skills can be a demotivating factor. Each student entering KISC is given a course to develop their study skills.

14.2.2 Function and Practice of the Learning System

KISC could be described as a "Resource Based Learning" system. There are three main resources or practices used at KISC, each of which has a function:

The power of print to give permanence.

The power of tutoring to relate subject matter to individual response and to stimulate enrich and motivate.

The power of the computer and other audiovisual media to stimulate and motivate.

Perraton points out that an adequate theory and practice of learning needs to specify what type of learning is being considered. He refers to Stenhouse (1975) who distinguishes between four types of educational activity: training, where we are concerned with skills; instruction, where we are concerned with information; initiation, where people are being initiated to social norms; and induction, where people are being introduced to thought systems enabling induction. These activities are all in sympathy with the educational task as I see it at KISC, I have already discussed this in 4.7. The commercial course materials we use at KISC concentrate mainly, though not exclusively, on the first two activities, training and instruction. The support system we are developing at KISC has a complementary emphasis on initiation and induction.

There are two types of tutorial activity at KISC (one-to-one tutoring and group tutorials) and these share five functions: to encourage; to correct errors; to tackle difficulties faced by the learner; to give feedback so that the commercially-prepared learning materials can be improved through the use of supplementary material; and to allow the learner and teacher to take off in directions which had not
been forecast. It is this last function which gives the tutor the greatest opportunity to become involved in induction. In addition the group tutorials offer group interaction and peer competition which provides stimulation and motivation to individuals. The group tutorials also offer students working in a self-centered, self-study environment the opportunity to learn how to work in cooperation with others.

The enrichment programme consists of the elective subjects chosen by the students. In addition to providing enrichment subjects over and above those in the core self-study academic programme, the electives provide further opportunity for individual students to be involved in group interaction and activities.

14.3 Function and Practice of the Administrative System

There are eleven functions of the administrative system at KISC:

- the acquisition of main learning materials from the students' home countries (correspondence course or self-study materials), the collection and organisation of learning resources (library books, software, etc.), the development and production of supplementary teaching materials.

- storage and distribution of materials

- an information system (for potential students, parents and other interested bodies)

- an assessment and grading system

- a record system (of students, tutors, materials, processes)

- tutoring, counselling of students

- creation of a environment conducive to learning

- a financial system

- a system for research and evaluation

- a planning system for the future

- a communication system with parents, correspondence schools and examination boards.
With the exception of the physical aspect of "creating an environment conducive to learning" all of the above functions are either self explanatory or have already been fully discussed in previous chapters. Bagley & Challis (1985) in describing the Mathematics and Communications Workshops at Bradford College state:

The spaciousness of the accommodation was important to the effectiveness of the workshop. Even well-populated it never appeared crowded and the noise level was lower than in a normal classroom, a feature encouraged by the workshop staff but permitted by the size and physical characteristics of the main room.

This has certainly been our experience at KISC. As I have already discussed in 10.8 when the school opened in 1987 with only a few students, the learning centre seemed bright and spacious and the staff had little difficulty encouraging the students to maintain a low level of noise. As the student body increased the room started to appear overcrowded and it became increasingly difficult to maintain a quiet pleasant atmosphere in the room. Even the noise generated by two or three tutors working with students was found distracting by some. In August 1989, we opened a second learning centre and shifted half the student body to that new room. There was an immediate and noticeable difference in the atmosphere in the learning centre. We returned immediately to the former relaxed but studiously quiet atmosphere which we had enjoyed in the first year of KISC. This atmosphere is such that many of our visitors remark upon it as one of the most striking features of the school. Bagley & Challis seem to be describing the atmosphere at KISC when they describe their experience at Bradford College of the "complete absence of any feeling of tension or of the fragile disciplinary atmosphere that is sometimes present in student-teacher relationships".

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15.1 Conclusions

The KISC experiment in attempting to provide a quality education to an international mix of students suitable to each student's national needs has so far proved very successful, that is, if I measure success in terms of student and parent satisfaction (See for example comments A2, B2, B5, C1 & D1 in the third evaluation workshop (7.3)).

In November 1989, our first two GCSE candidates sat their examinations, some will want to judge KISC on the results obtained in those examinations. It would be unfair to the two students concerned to give full details of their results, but I can state that 69.3% of their results in all subjects were A, B or C grades. The statistics for the Southern Examining Group Winter 1989 GCSE results are not yet available, so I can only compare our results with those given for the Winter 1988 examinations. UK schools in all subjects had 42% A, B or C grades, with 6.3% grade A, 9.2% grade B and 26.5% grade C. (Southern Examining Group, Statistics, Winter 1988, page 18). The KISC results of 7.7% grade A, 30.8% grade B, and 30.8% grade C compare favourably. Both students were considered by the KISC staff members to be fairly average students. It would be ridiculous to claim that the KISC system is successful on the results of just two students. But these results do confirm the judgement of the KISC staff and therefore add credence to our judgement as a staff that the KISC system provides an education for our British students which is at least as good as that available in the UK.

Throughout the three years that KISC has been operating, staff members have given tests in their subject speciality and maintained records of results. Because of the need to maintain confidentiality in so small a group of staff and students and the wide variety in course material and national expectations in performance which exists, I have found it impossible to document these results in a meaningful form. As I discussed in 5.13, our tutors did agree to a unified grading system. This appeared to work for a time, but unfortunately some of our tutors seem to have quickly slipped back into using the grading system they were familiar with in their home countries. At staff meetings I remind all the tutors of the grading system from time to time, but I need to become more insistent that the system is actually used consistently. Although I cannot produce a table of figures to demonstrate students' performance I have confidence in the judgement of my staff who claim that the
majority of their students are making satisfactory progress in their learning. Of course, there are students over whom we have had some concern. During 1989 there were three students who caused major concern and two others who featured from time to time in staff meeting discussions. Our enrolment in 1989 averaged 45 students. The staff have agreed during discussion of these difficult students, that with one exception, they were progressing as well at KISC as they would in a more normal setting. Indeed we felt that we were able to give these difficult students more individualised help and encouragement than would be possible in a traditional classroom setting. In the case of the one exception we recommended to his parents that he be placed in a traditional style school.

Typical students complete their work ahead of time in some subjects and are up to target in all their other subjects. For example, five of the new entrants out of seven in the British group who started KISC in January 1989 had moved on to form two work in mathematics by the end of their second term in KISC. All of our students who return work for marking to correspondence schools in their home countries are receiving more than satisfactory reports from these schools.

Seven students have returned to their home countries in the past three years. All were able to enter the educational institutions of their choice. I have received feedback from five of them. All report that they found they had better study skills than their peers and this was a considerable advantage. Three were tested as being ahead of their peers in academic achievement. This is particularly pleasing as two of these students are Dutch and most of their study had been through English medium. I understand that both Dutch students have been placed in classes one year above their age.

A quite different measure of success will come when someone tries to replicate the model elsewhere. I have just returned from the Third International Conference on Missionary Kids held in November 1989 in Nairobi, Kenya, and attended by 850 delegates. I was excited to hear that the headmaster of a new school, scheduled to open in Cameroon in 1991, plans to use a system based largely on the KISC model. I hope to hear how this school develops. In the September 1989 student questionnaire, 70% of the students stated that they would recommend the KISC system to students in another country thinking of starting a similar school (Qu.9)!

15.2 Recommendations for practice

The KISC model and recommendations for practice within an internationally supported self-study system can be summarised under the three headings I have used throughout this thesis; STRUCTURE, TECHNOLOGY and PEOPLE.
15.2.1 STRUCTURE

Without suitable learning materials, a self-study system cannot begin. The administrative system has to facilitate the choice and acquisition of the main learning materials. These could be complete packages from a single correspondence school in the student's home country, or could be individualised programmes consisting of individual subject packages chosen from a variety of sources. At KISC the choice of self-study materials is agreed at a meeting between myself as headmaster and the parents of a student, before the student starts the school. The main learning material needs to be supplemented with resource material, such as, library books, computer software, etc. In turn there needs to be a system to catalogue, store and distribute these materials.

In any self-study system it is important that careful records are kept of students' achievement and progress. In an international setting it is very important that tutors agree on a standard of marking and grading achievement and that the students understand how this operates.

A vital part of a supported self-study system is the tutorial support offered to the learners. The actual conduct and content of a tutorial belongs under the heading TECHNOLOGY, but the STRUCTURE has to provide for adequate tutor contact, both through formal group tutorials, and through one-to-one tutorials. One-to-one tutorials should be available to the student on demand or at the insistence of a tutor.

It is necessary to create an environment conducive to learning. Physically, the learning centre needs to be an uncrowded spacious area where students can have privacy for self-study. It is also necessary to provide students with an area for interactive work with other students working on the same courses. All unnecessary distractions should be removed. (In KISC at one time, we had the computers in the Learning Centre because we felt that they were part of the learning resources and should be immediately available to the students. They proved to be too much of a distraction and have now been removed to a room nearby the Learning Centres.)

In an innovatory system such as KISC, it is important to have a system for research and evaluation. I have found that an "Action Research" cycle through an "Illuminative Evaluation" has provided the flexibility necessary for the successful development of the KISC model.

Finally, as in any school, a necessary part of the structure is the information system (for potential students, parents, new staff members, and other interested bodies). There should be a financial system, a planning system for the future and a communication system with parents and outside organisations.
such as examination boards.

15.2.2 TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY involves the self-study materials. It would be useful to have a variety of materials involving different approaches and levels of difficulty, but this depends on the correspondence school or source of the material. In-house production of materials is too expensive in terms of time, people and money. (See 4.1)

Students benefit from peer interaction and enrichment through group activities. These can be provided for through electives, that is, group activities in subjects not necessarily part of the academic curriculum required by a student's home country. These group activities can also aim to take advantage of an international student mix such as that at KISC and allow for interaction with the community and the unique learning environment surrounding the school.

Motivation is important in a self-study system. This can be encouraged through external pressures. In KISC we use a system of contracts individually agreed between study supervisors and students. Failure to meet the contract can be punished, fulfilment of the contract can be rewarded.

15.2.3 PEOPLE

In each of the three types of people involved in an internationally supported self-study system there is a change of role to be made from that usually found in a conventional school.

Students have to learn how to plan their work and to work largely unsupervised. They seem to adjust to the system rapidly. Able students are able to use all the resources provided and can seek help from resources other than tutors. For them, tutor contact time tends to be prime learning time. Less able students have more difficulty discerning when to seek tutor help and thus need more active tutor supervision.

Tutors have to adjust to a role which assumes that of co-learner with the students. This can place them in a more vulnerable position than that of the normal authoritative, "fount-of-all-knowledge" role. They have to learn to work in a team situation as they share supervision of a learning centre with other tutors. They also have to learn to interpret a whole new set of non-verbal messages from students who are working in study carrels instead of desks. Finally they have to decide on conduct, content and timing in small group tutorials, this is not necessarily the same skill as conducting a traditional
classroom lesson.

Parents need to make an effort to understand that a supported self-study system is different from a traditional approach. They need to negotiate their role in the system with the school. The surrounding community has much to offer a small school with restricted staff.

15.3 Recommendations for future development

As I have mentioned earlier in this thesis, two of the greatest difficulties we have faced have been that of finding a variety of suitable self-study material (10.3) and recruiting suitable staff (we have been short-staffed for most of the last one and a half years (8.2, 10.2)). The problem has been caused mainly by our remoteness in Nepal. There is a need for some sort of support organisation in the home countries. I was invited to present a paper at the Third International Conference on Missionary Kids held in Nairobi in November 1989. This paper described the KISC model and its extension into a worldwide network of International Study Centres and Supported Self-Study Centres in existing International Schools. If this network is to become a reality, then it will be essential to have support bases in each of the countries supplying self-study materials. I have included both papers presented in the appendix (See Appendix VIII).

15.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

15.4.1 Self Study Materials

Self-Study materials are often presented in graded levels of difficulty in an attempt to cater for the needs of different students, eg the Kent Mathematics Project provides workcards graded at F, M, and S levels of difficulty, with F as the most difficult. Helen Parkhurst recommended that Dalton assignments should be graded. IMPACT uses material graded at two levels of difficulty. But it could be that it would be more appropriate to present material through very different approaches rather than just at different levels of difficulty.

Through my observation of the students at KISC, I can suggest three different approaches; an open approach, a closed structured approach, and an approach depending much more on verbal interaction than the written word.

The New Zealand correspondence course adopts a very closed, structured approach, much of the material takes the form of completion type material, eg., sentences to be completed,
blanks to be filled in, correct words to be underlined. We had 
three students working on this material at one stage. Two of 
the students enjoy it, find it helpful and are not concerned 
that they are rarely challenged to be creative. They are still 
using the course. One of the three found the material much too 
dull and lacking in creative challenge, she moved to the 
British Letts course and now thrives on the challenge these 
books offer to those who appreciate their open, creative and 
investigative approach.

Then as Kath White points out in the interview with me, there 
are some very voluble students at KISC who need to talk about 
what they are learning, they need some sort of verbal 
interaction to learn and need to be involved in group 
activities. Maybe a self-study system cannot really 
successfully cater for this type of student. Our two most 
extreme examples of this type of student have been away from 
Nepal for some months on furlough and have not been at the 
school since the introduction of weekly group tutorials in 
every subject. After their return, it will be interesting to 
see if the weekly tutorials offer them sufficient group 
interaction to enable them to cope more successfully with their 
written self-study material.

Taylor (1972) feels that the PNEU and Dalton Plan lost their 
popularity because they demanded that everybody used their own 
particular system. KISC exists to meet a particular need and 
self-study seems the only answer to that need. If we had our 
own material development centre we could attempt to satisfy the 
majority of our students through producing material of these 
three types suggested. But first, is my idea correct? Are there 
just three categories of presentation needed? Do we then need 
to produce material graded in levels of difficulty for the 
structured material?

15.4.2 Training in self-study: Application and Discernment

As I have discussed in 10.2, it was thought by myself and the 
tutors that successful students developed a rhythm in their 
studies. This did not show up in the observation matrix (8.4). 
If this pattern does not exist, what is it that gives the 
successful student an edge over the others and appears on 
casual observation as a pattern? The photograph of the students 
in the lower learning centre (P.43) provides one possible clue. 
The student seated on the right is one of the more successful 
ones. His whole appearance seems to me to be that of deep 
application to his work. The other students in the photograph 
all appear to display a more relaxed attitude, but on the 
Observation Matrix those seated would still be noted as 
working. (NB: The fact that I have singled out this student as 
successful does not mean that the other students shown in the 
photograph are not successful). It seems that when the
successful students are working they have the ability to apply themselves much more deeply to their study. Is this because they have an affinity with the subject being studied, or is it an affinity with the method of presentation of the material or is it an ability to ignore distractions? Can less able students be trained to ignore distractions?

As I have discussed earlier (10.2, 14.2.1) some students lack discernment over when to seek tutorial help. Once the tutors have identified these students who seek tutor help too frequently involving trivial problems or seek help too infrequently, they can actively encourage these students to increase or decrease their rate of consultation. Will this lead to the students developing discernment over consultation needs? Can students be taught when to seek tutorial help?

15.4.3 Tutor role and the success of self-study

"IMPACT is in danger of failing because teachers are afraid of losing their jobs!" This is an unexpected practical aspect of an apparently academically successful self-study system mentioned by Flores, 1984.

It is most unlikely that the KISC system will be threatened by an overabundance of teachers, but there are other dangers. During the first term of 1989 in order to cope with a staffing shortage, students were encouraged to study the subject which was the speciality of the teacher on duty in the learning centre at the time. Some teachers very quickly took this opportunity to actually teach their subject in a traditional way, even though the subject content was not suitable for every student in the room at the time. PNEU had a similar experience; while PNEU schools had few books the system worked, when they got class sets of books, the way opened up for teachers to teach in the traditional way and they soon did so (Taylor 1972).

Does this happen simply because teachers enjoy teaching and need to feel satisfaction from a lesson well presented, or, as Taylor (1972) suggests, they worry for their students' progress, especially because of public examination pressure. There may be little faith in the self-study material, in the system, or in the ability of the student. Maybe teachers feel that the traditional method is the only way which keeps them in charge, the only method where they feel comfortable with the responsibility involved in educating young people.

To some extent a group tutorial system introduces some of the satisfaction and control gained in a normal class situation, but is it sufficient?

Project NTR has done some research into teacher behaviour in
non-traditional delivery systems, in an attempt to define the type of training to be given to such teachers. Maybe we not only need to define the type of training necessary, but also look at what is lost to the teacher in a self-study system. Is there any way of replacing loss of satisfaction caused to those who like the group interaction of a classroom situation. It is said that good teachers are actors at heart, is there any way to replace the satisfaction gained from a good performance in front of a class? Keller (1968) points out that in the military training situation, (which was one of the formative ideas which led to the use of proctors in PSI), the duties of guiding, clarifying, demonstrating, testing, grading, and the like were restricted to the non-commissioned classroom teacher, whereas the commissioned teacher, the training officer, dealt with matters of course logistics, the interpretation of training manuals, the construction of lesson plans and guides, the evaluation of student progress, the selection of non-commissioned cadre, and the writing of reports for his superiors. Much work remains to be done in the role of teacher/tutor in self-study systems.
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Appendix I: The First Paper

An Alternative to Boarding School for Missionaries' Children

Education of missionaries' children, especially at secondary age, is a big problem for many parents. The Christian boarding schools are doing an excellent job, but there are many children who are not suited temperamentally to the boarding situation. In many countries, like Nepal, where the closeness of the family unit is more important than in the West, sending one's children away for most of the year may be a negative Christian witness. There are many other reasons that can be given why parents feel that boarding school is not the answer for every child.

The other alternatives at the moment are correspondence courses or parents teaching their own children. These have not proved to be viable alternatives to many parents because of the amount of time and input demanded of them. Also, of course, not many parents feel that they are capable of teaching to an appropriate level the whole of the wide range of subjects children need to study. Parents leave the mission field then, often just when their experience and usefulness is reaching its peak. I have felt a concern about this for some years and feel the Lord is prompting me to suggest an alternative. My proposal falls into 3 parts:

1. A "correspondence course" taking advantage of the many recent advances in Educational Technology. This would involve using personal computers, cassette players, handheld super 8 viewers or video (if equipment accessible) and projects, experiments, etc., depending upon the individual child's situation. Care would need to be taken that the course did not become too machine orientated and personal correspondence with teachers would still play an important part. The course would be designed to make as little demand on the parents' time as possible.

2. Using a Christian Radio Station (for example FEBA) to broadcast at least one programme weekly. This would have a number of aims:
   a) to provide a social link for the children by playing record requests and information of interest to the children about each other's countries and situations
   b) to be a vehicle for education, giving play and novel extracts, classical music etc.
It would be hoped that the programme could be made interesting enough to attract listening by other young people not involved in the school.

This radio link among the children could be backed up by distributing an occasional newsletter/magazine including contributions by the children. This all attempts, not only to educate, but provide social interaction for children who might find themselves in fairly isolated places - an element sadly missing in traditional correspondence courses.

Sections I & 2 would take place while the children lived on the field with their parents.

3. The children would come to a centre for 6 to 8 weeks each year. (Possibly using a boarding school in the UK or elsewhere hired during the long vacation.) This would give a chance for personal contact with the corresponding teachers, opportunity to work on difficulties which had arisen, progress could be compared with others in the peer group: The interests and advances among young people at home could be kept up with. Industrial and cultural visits could be made, etc. Of course, there would be plenty of opportunity for social and sporting contact. Local church youth activity could be participated in and the children given every opportunity to see what normal life for young people at home was like. The programme outlined in this section would be a very important aspect of the whole schooling experience and most parents and children could cope with the short separation involved.

I have discussed this with a number of parents here in Nepal and they have shown interest in the idea. To make it viable children whose parents are working in a number of countries would need to be involved. Some encouragement has been given already, in that a group has offered to provide the first four computers. The financial implications have not been investigated, but it could be that the courseware/software developed could be sold on a wider commercial basis and therefore help to support the scheme. One suspects there must be a large market for quality education programs for personal computers.

At the moment all this is just an idea, I am committed to serving in my present position with UMN (lecturing in Maths in the university's Institute of Education) for another 2 years. Even so, I would be grateful for your comments. Does your mission feel the need for an alternative to boarding school? Have you any suggestions as to how the idea could be developed further and made into an actuality?
Appendix II

Summary of paper presented by Alan McIlhenny at the First International Conference on Missionary Kids, Manila, November 1984

For ease of reference, the acronym REBLAST is used for the system. REBLAST = Resource Based Learning and School Tuition.

1. BACKGROUND

Education of their children, especially at secondary level, is a great concern for many missionary parents. The traditional options of boarding school or correspondence course do not necessarily fill the needs of every parent or child. Boarding schools are doing an excellent job, but there are children who are not suited temperamentally to the boarding situation. Correspondence courses work well with the right children at primary level, but secondary level courses demand an input of time and knowledge from the parents that few are in a position to give. Many other reasons can be cited why a boarding school or correspondence course is not the answer for every child.

The need is apparent, REBLAST attempts to provide an option which will make it possible for more families to remain in overseas service.

2. AIMS

To develop an alternative secondary level education system to meet the goal of an adequate education for the children of British missionaries while remaining within the following constraints:

1. The system should offer an education of comparable standard, covering the same range of subjects, as is available in the U.K.
2. The system should provide a healthy environment for the learner in the areas of peer, social and academic interaction.
3. The system should demand minimal supervision and academic input from the parents.
4. The system should keep the family unit intact for the maximum period possible each year.
5. The system should allow for the individual needs of the learners and should take advantage of their unique learning environment.
6. The system should allow the learners to continue with their studies wherever they may have to travel, particularly during furlough times.
3. THE PROPOSAL

The proposed system divides the academic year into two parts:
(i) A residential period in a school in the U.K.
(ii) With the parents overseas, learning through a resource based learning system.

3(i) Residential Period in the U.K.

This could be achieved in two ways:
(a) Using an existing boarding school during the long vacation. In which case the residential period would be restricted to about six weeks each year.

or

(b) Using purpose built premises. In which case the residential period could be increased each year as the learners needs increase, culminating in full length boarding terms for the A-level years.

In either case, the aims of the residential period are to provide:-
(a) personal contact with the corresponding tutors
(b) opportunity to work on difficulties
(c) peer interaction in the social, sport, musical and academic spheres
(d) contact with the home culture through sport, industrial and cultural visits.

3(ii) The Resource Based Learning System to be used overseas

The traditional approach to education is teacher based and the teacher will occasionally use resources to help him teach. In a resource based learning system, the teacher (in this case, corresponding tutor) is only one of many resources the student will use to help himself learn.
The resources that could be used are:
(a) Text
(b) Projects
(c) Experiments
(d) Microcomputer
(e) Film/video
(f) Radio
(g) Cassette tapes
(h) Science Packs
(i) Corresponding tutor
(j) Parents & Community

The student will be guided through these resources using a module approach. These modules would consist of small booklets on each subject issued at appropriate intervals. The student will contract with his subject tutor to complete each module within a certain time restraint. Each module could follow the simple format shown in the flow chart below.

---

Flow Chart

1. Pre-test:
   - Study "How to get ready" portion of module
   - No
   - Yes

2. Study first block as instructed
   - Answer Self Test
   - Self remediation
     - Wrong
     - Correct
   - Study second Block

3. etc., as for first block, until all blocks are finished

4. Take Post Test and mail to tutor

---

Notes:
- To establish readiness for this module.
- Self marked.

Study material presented in the most appropriate form e.g. computer, film strip, tape, video, text book, project, experiment or combination of methods.

Self marked

Self remediation by following feedback instructions or seek help, if desperate from parents, friends or tutor.

Tutor marks and gives remediation or advice as needed. There could be two levels of module, S = standard and E = enriched. Tutor would advise student which level to study next.

N.B. This is only one way of approaching the problem and may not be what eventually evolves.
After every group of, say, five modules a revision module containing essential examination material would be studied. This would be followed by an examination marked by the tutor. A progress report would then be sent to the parents.

The Resources

Most of the resources listed above are self explanatory, but some require further comment:

(b) Projects - These would be designed around the unique learning environment of each student. The student is living in a culture and country different from his own. He is not confined to a classroom 9am - 4pm five days a week. He is often living "closer to nature" and therefore in an excellent position to observe and learn. See also (j) below.

d) Computer - Each family will be provided with a microcomputer. This would be used in the now traditional modes of drill and practice and as an electronic blackboard. Simulation programs will be used to duplicate science experiments which could not easily be carried out without access to a laboratory. The students will also be encouraged to use the computer as a tool (possibly through use of a language such as Forth or Logo). Thus the computer will be more than just an expensive workbook. It is important that children studying overseas become familiar with computers to facilitate their eventual re-entry to Western society, where computer literacy is becoming increasingly vital.

The type of computer chosen will need to be fairly portable and easily adapted to battery power supply.

e) Film/video - Video may be too expensive yet for individual use, though much benefit could be derived from a computer controlled video system. Cheap hand-held battery powered super-8 viewers are available which could be used in conjunction with a sound track on cassette tape.

(f) Radio - A Christian radio station will be used to broadcast at least one programme weekly. This aims to:-

(i) provide a social link for the learners by playing record requests and information about each other and their countries of residence;

(ii) be a vehicle for education, giving play and novel extracts, classical music, etc.

A Christian radio station has already expressed interest in this type of programme.

This radio link would be backed up by distributing an occasional newsletter/magazine including contributions by and photographs of the learners. This all attempts, not only to educate, but to provide social interaction for children who might find themselves in fairly isolated places.
Science Packs - The practical content of science courses, which normally requires access to a laboratory, will be covered by a combination of computer simulation and portable science packs which contain equipment suitable for home experimentation. Experiments will also be designed around easily obtainable local materials. During the residential period, actual hands-on experience will take place with expensive, bulky or dangerous equipment which needs close supervision.

Parents & Community - Deprived of our Western conveniences, missionaries often have to become knowledgeable, adaptable and ingeneous about a wide variety of matters, just to survive. A student who has freedom from the restrictions of traditional school can become more involved with his parents and community and through doing things together with them, will learn in a much more natural and satisfying way. Reblast aims to take advantage of the learners unique learning situation and not to regard it as a hindrance.

4. APPLICATION

Reblast has been designed particularly for the children of British missionaries, but obviously it could be more widely applied.

The system could meet the needs of:
(a) Any British family living away from the U.K.
(b) Families in U.K. wishing to educate children at home.
(c) Overseas Nationals, particularly those in mobile professions, wishing to give their children a British education.

Missions are becoming increasingly international in character. For example, the United Mission to Nepal currently has workers from twenty nations. The module approach used in Reblast could easily cope with international needs. A library of modules could be developed covering all the topics normally studied at secondary level, a student would then select the particular modules he requires.

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Appendix III

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The IUF/WIN committee set up at the UMN Workers' Conference to investigate alternatives for our children's secondary education has now met several times. Below we give an outline of our vision for a "school" we feel would be feasible in Nepal and which would meet our multi-national needs.

We would be grateful if you would read the outline below, think carefully and prayerfully about it, and then fill in and return the questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation in this study which is so important for the future of our children.

The Proposed "School"

This would be a resource/learning centre at which the children would study through individualized systems (e.g., correspondence courses) from their home country. There would be subject specialists to give help to the children as needed. Subjects, for which group activity or personal tuition is beneficial (e.g., music, arts & craft, P.E., etc.), would be taught by specialized teachers in the traditional manner. Each child would be allocated to a supervisor, who would keep an overall eye on their progress and meet with them weekly and individually.

The benefits of using supervised correspondence courses for the core academic subjects are:

(a) The child can study, in his own language, the same material as his peers in his home country.
(b) The system could be brought into operation quickly and with a minimum of teaching staff.
(c) There would be some flexibility of time. The child could continue his correspondence study during furlough without going through the trauma of changing schools.

It would be possible to provide for 3 types of student attendance.

1. Day student
   Attends the "school" daily in the traditional manner.

2. Boarder
   Board at the "school"

3. Part-time boarder
   Alternates between periods of boarding in the "school" and periods of home study with the parents in their village, e.g., for a 1/4 week term, there would be cycles of 3 weeks in "school", 1 at home.

The correspondence materials would be supplemented by library, science and computing facilities. Given the right staff, we would also hope to develop core material for group activity and project work, so that, the child would not always be studying academic work through written material.

The individualized academic study would be enriched through peer group interaction which would take place in the subjects studied in the traditional manner, with a teacher.

We would hope to be able to offer as full a range of extra-curricular activities as possible in Nepal.

This is just a brief outline of the idea to help you answer our questionnaire. Alain McIlhenny will be more than happy to discuss any aspect with you.
THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Ages of your children

2. Nationality

3. Parents' Native Language

4. Children's first language

5. How proficient in English is/are your child/children? Please tick the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native speaker or like one</th>
<th>Reads &amp; writes well. Could understand an English-speaking tutor</th>
<th>Enough English to cope with simple everyday matters</th>
<th>Little or no English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. Please list the subjects your child would normally study at secondary level (age 11+) in your home country.

7. Please list the subjects which you feel your child must study.

8. How and where are your children educated at present?

9a. If your children have not yet reached secondary age, which of the following presently available secondary options are you considering?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Correspondence Course</th>
<th>Teaching the children yourself</th>
<th>Boarding school in India</th>
<th>Boarding school in your home country</th>
<th>Lincoln school</th>
<th>Norwegian school</th>
<th>Whole family leaving Nepal</th>
<th>Other please specify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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9b If the "school" described above is started, please indicate your degree of interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very interested</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interested, but have a few reservations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested, but have many reservations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 For parents of children of secondary age.

a. What are the strengths and/or weaknesses associated with your present system of education?

b. If this new "school" is set up, would you consider changing from your present system to this new system?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11 For parents of children at Hebron School.

If Hebron is able to continue normally, will that change your answer to question 10?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12 For all interested parents (questions 12-16)

Would you send your child/children to the proposed "school" as:

a. day student  

or a  

or a  

boarder  

part-time boarder (e.g., alternating between periods of 3 weeks in boarding and 4 weeks with parents)
Appendix IV

Results of the Children's Education Questionnaire

Thank you to all who responded so promptly. 119 questionnaires were sent out and at the time of preparing this report, we had received 55 replies, involving 130 children. To those who have not yet replied, please do so, we would value your opinion.

Responses:

1. Ages of children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Nationality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>43.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>18.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Parents Native language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Children's first language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizo</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. English proficiency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English proficiency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native speaker or like one</td>
<td>86.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads &amp; writes well. Could understand an English-speaking tutor</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enough English to cope with simple everyday matters</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little or no English</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Listed the expected wide variety of subjects. These lists will be useful when detailed planning commences.

7. Current school or system of education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Primary P.S.C. Pokhara Hebron School Correspondence</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln School Boarding in home country Juwa Tut.Grp. Norwegian School</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence School</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching yourself</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding school in India</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding school in your home country</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln School</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian School</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole family leaving Nepal</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Presently available secondary options being considered for the future:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Correspondence Course</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching the children yourself</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding school in India</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding school in your home country</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln School</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian School</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole family leaving Nepal</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

194
9b. Degree of interest in the proposed "school":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Interest</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very interested</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested, but have a few reservations</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested, but have many reservations</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total interested 87.6%

10a. Strengths and weaknesses of present secondary options:

Strengths (listed in order of descending frequency):

- Boarding schools in India: Good peer group
- Christian environment
- Good social environment
- Wide variety of subjects
- High academic standard
- Good preparation for home country
- Lincoln School: Exposure to non-Christians
- Correspondence Courses: Closeness between parent & child

Weaknesses:

- Boarding schools in India: Distance
- Separation
- Poor preparation for home system
- Disjointed existence for parents
- Materialistic pressures
- Too exclusively Christian to be a good preparation for living
- Lincoln School: Poor preparation for home country
- Expensive
- No boarding
- Too academic
- Correspondence Courses: Little peer contact
- Certain subjects suffer
- Limited cooperative events possible
- No competition

10b. Would you consider changing to the proposed "school":

- YES 57.9%
- NO 42.1%

11. If Hebron School is able to continue 50% would continue to send their children to Hebron, 50% would change to the new "school". Some families would continue to send their older children to Hebron, but as their younger children reach secondary age, they would consider sending them to the proposed "school".

12. Type of student attendance at the proposed "school":

- Day student 18.8%
- Boarder 18.8%
- Part-time boarder 16.7%
- Still to decide depending on future assignment and the location of the school 29.1%
- Undecided 16.7%
Question 9a: Further Analysis

This question was addressed to parents whose children have not yet reached secondary age, i.e., 81% of the respondents.

Many parents are considering more than one option for the future. The figures given in the results table above show the frequency of each option as a percentage of the total number of options chosen.

Below the responses to the option "Whole family leaving Nepal" are analysed in more detail.

20.5% of the respondents chose this as their one and only option.

A further 40.9% chose this as one of their options.

Thus 61.4% of respondents mentioned leaving Nepal as at least one of the options they are considering.

Of those who chose leaving Nepal as their only option, 88.9% are interested in the proposed school.

Of those who chose leaving Nepal as one of their options, 94.4% are interested in the proposed school.
Appendix V

PLAN OF THE KATHMANDU INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE 1989

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Appendix VI
Plan of Lower Learning Centre
|                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| **Time-on-Task** |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| **Observation**   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| **Weather**       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| **Temperature**   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
1. CONSTRANTS AND AIMS

1.1. INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF SOME IDEAS FROM MANILA

In Ireland, when a lost traveller asks for directions he is often treated to the reply, "Well if I were you, I wouldn't start from here." We are on an educational journey, but maybe as the Irishman says we have started from the wrong place! If you reflect for a time about the process of educating missionary children you will realise that our starting point has always been firmly rooted in traditional educational methods, these methods were designed for the non-missionary child in their home country situation. Yet the first two ICMKs have identified very clearly just how unique the missionary or expatriate child is. I wish therefore at the beginning of this workshop to briefly discuss some foundational issues, most of which date back to the first ICMK in Manila, in an attempt to define more clearly our starting point. Through discussing the educational task and the unique constraints within which it is applicable to missionary children, I hope to demonstrate that unique educational methods become necessary. I will then explore two possible functional models in the light of my defined task.

1.1.1. Hill's Cultural Perspective and Curriculum Model:

In Manila Prof Brian Hill gave four clear definitions which clarify the educational issue. The parental culture (PC) is the culture within which the children have to operate during periods of leave in their home country, they will probably take their higher education in this culture, and parents often claim that they try to recreate something of this culture in their private homes in the host country. But children of long term missionaries will often have spent most of their formative years living in the indigenous culture (IC) of their host country. Indeed, some children may have to cope with two different indigenous cultures; for example, secondary age children of FEBA missionaries working in the Seychelles attend Rift Valley Academy here in Kenya, and spend their holidays with their parents in Seychelles. Hill argued that the curriculum of a school catering for missionary kids should include studies related to both the
the parental culture and the indigenous culture.

Hill then pointed out that Western curricula are becoming increasingly multicultural (MC) and our thinking would be dated if we thought we must be doggedly monocultural to be credible.

The fourth cultural perspective for the missionary child, who is neither entirely at home in the indigenous culture or the parental culture, comes from the need for the individual child to be given a more over-arching frame of reference. This is a really exciting concept, Brian Hill is challenging those of us who are educators to open up a world Christian view for our students, and indeed, ourselves. We are being challenged to step outside our own cultural conditioning, both our national cultural conditioning and our Christian sub-cultural conditioning, in order to give ourselves a new transcultural overview. Hill calls this Transcultural Studies (TC).

How do we do all this? Hill challenged us with a curriculum model which was compatible with Christian values and was adopted to these unique cultural needs of missionary children. I quote direct from Brian Hill's paper at Manila:

"The educator should aim to provide a controlled exposure to the cultural backgrounds (PC and IC) of the students, with a view to enabling them to:

(a) maintain a stable and positive self-image while learning new things;

(b) acquire survival skills appropriate to both cultures (PC and IC);

(c) identify and develop one's personal creative gifts;

(d) gain access to the major fields of human thought and experience;

(e) become aware of the dominant world-views and value stances influencing one's social world, with special attention to biblical Christianity (MC and TC);

(f) develop capacities to think critically and transculturally, and to choose responsibly (TC);

(g) develop empathy, respect and a capacity for dialogue and Christian apologetic with other persons, including those whose primary beliefs differ from one's own (MC)."
1.1.2. Paul Nelson's Criteria

While agreeing with Hill's model, I feel a need to add some practical considerations. Paul Nelson at ICMK Manila suggested certain criteria which should be met by any new educational model:

-the programme must be practical - practical in terms of finance, the expertise required to carry it out and the geographic regions involved.

-the curriculum to be used must be international enough to meet the needs of the multinational community.

-it must not be overdemanding on the parents' time.

-the programme must meet the complex educational system to which our children are becoming orientated and the technological world in which they are moving.

1.1.3. McIlhenny's Constraints for the REBLAST and KISC models

At the First ICMK I presented my vision of an educational model called REBLAST, Resource Based Learning and Summer Tuition. REBLAST has not been developed in the form I presented then, but I have incorporated many of the ideas in the system we use at the Kathmandu International Study Centre (KISC) which opened in February 1987. In designing both the REBLAST and KISC models, I used the following constraints, which were gathered together after talking to a large number of missionary and other expatriate parents:

-the system should offer an education of comparable standard, covering the same range of subjects, as is available to the student in his/her home country.

-the system should provide a healthy environment for the learner in the areas of peer, social and academic interaction.

-the system should demand minimal supervision and academic input from the parents.

-the system should enable the family unit to remain intact for the maximum period possible each year.

-the system should allow for the individual needs of the learners and take advantage of their unique cultural and learning environment.

-the system should allow the learners to continue with their
studies wherever they may have to travel, particularly during furlough times.

1.2 SOME ADDITIONAL CONSTRAINTS:

I have been working away from my home country of Northern Ireland since 1974. My first 6 years were spent in a tentmaker style ministry working with the British Government's Overseas Development Administration in the Seychelles. Since 1981 I have been serving as a missionary of the British and Irish Methodist Churches. Initially, I was seconded through the United Mission to Nepal to train mathematics teachers in the Tribhuvan University of Nepal, more recently I have been serving as Principal of the Kathmandu International Study Centre - the United Mission to Nepal's "school" for secondary age expatriate children.

During all this time I have observed four problems faced by both my missionary and expatriate colleagues and friends which I feel cannot be ignored. First there is the problem of re-entry.

1.2.1 Home Country re-entry - planned and unplanned

Those of us who have attended previous ICMKs have heard a lot about this problem. The re-entry process is a traumatic experience and it becomes more difficult if a child does not fit in academically with what is happening in his home country. Parents often plan to return to their home country when their eldest child reaches the limit of the available educational option in their country of service. The eldest child may have finished a course of study, but this means that most likely the younger children will be only part way through their programme which might be very different from that being followed by their peers in their home country. These younger children will have a more difficult re-entry task.

If the re-entry is unplanned and unexpected the experience will be even more traumatic and it becomes even more important to ensure that the children slot easily into a school in their home country.

Therefore to facilitate home country re-entry we need to ensure that our curriculum matches as closely as possible the home country curriculum in content, order and pace.
1.2.2 Non-English Medium MKs

Mission is not the sole preserve of English speaking missionaries, yet in so many parts of the world the only school available for missionary children is English medium. What are we doing to support our Dutch, German, Japanese, Korean and Scandinavian brothers and sisters in mission?

1.2.3 Specialist Teacher Availability

This is a problem that even those who have never visited a mission field must be aware of. One has only to glance through any Christian magazine with an interest in mission to see the large numbers of adverts which appear each year as mission school administrators struggle to recruit and retain an adequate number of staff to keep their school operating.

We need an educational model which can survive times of specialist teacher shortages.

1.2.4 National Examinations

There is a very large spectre which looms over certain nationalities, particularly the British, European, Australian and New Zealand students. That is the spectre of national examinations. I cannot stress enough just how demanding and stressful these examinations are on students, teachers and parents. Are the children going to receive sufficiently high results in their examinations to enable them to enter the higher education institute of their choice? The competition for university entrance is intense in most countries and our missionary children have to compete with their peers at home who attend well equipped schools with specialist subject teachers and dedicated resources. Dare we expose our children to anything less than the same dedicated curriculum diet their peers at home benefit from?

As Principal of a school I am sometimes asked if British universities will consider entrance for students with qualifications other than British "A" levels. The situation as I understand is that they will if the student's school career is well documented, but, and this is a big BUT, there is no guarantee of acceptance. Compare this uncertain situation with the British student at home in UK studying for "A" levels who knows exactly what subjects and grade levels he has to aim at in order to ensure entrance to the university and course of his choice. If at all possible then our students should be given the opportunity to study a curriculum which will enable them to pursue the career of their choice, in the country of their choice.
1.3. SUMMARY OF AIMS AND CONSTRAINTS

Bringing all these ideas together we see that in the education of the missionary child we are concerned with:

- Development of basic skills
- Development of a critical mind
- Development of creativity
- Development of learning and study skills
- Development of social skills

all within a Christian setting where we look to developing a Christian world view for our unique transcultural children. At the same time there are very important practical issues concerned with furlough, re-entry to home country, availability of specialist teachers, keeping families intact and preparation for national examinations which we dare not neglect.

2. TWO POSSIBLE EDUCATIONAL MODELS

I have outlined my starting point, the boundaries within which my travel is permitted and my destination, I should also declare that my travelling companions are secondary age children (11 years to 18 say) and that everything I talk about from now on is most applicable to this age group. I can see two possible routes or functional models for the educational journey. Both elements involve the use of a concept called supported self-study. I will explain this concept shortly.

The diagram below (Fig. 1) represents the two models. One has a common taught core followed by all students, with individual student needs met through additional self-study material. The other involves individualised study of the core academic material needed by each nationality enriched by group activities. If you like, in the first model everyone drinks from the same cup of tea but adds his own sugar afterwards. In the second model each student has his own cup of tea but takes his sugar from a common sugar bowl.
Fig. 1

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2.1 International Common Core

2.2 Individualised National Cores

2.1. Traditional School using International Core Curriculum:

I will start with the international common core model because it is closest to what happens in a traditional school.

I envisage a conventional style school teaching an international common core curriculum through traditional teaching methods. National examination needs of particular students could be met through the use of supplementary materials studied by these individual students in a supported self-study centre.

This model meets most of the constraints and aims I have discussed earlier but falls short in five areas.

2.1.1 Furloughs

A common core curriculum studied by all the national groups cannot possibly cope with differing national requirements as to when certain topics should be studied. For example, in British secondary schools it is common to teach Geography throughout the five years leading up to GCSE. In the first three years, British, European and World Geography are normally taught in that order and at a foundational level. These topics are then re-examined at much greater depth in the two years leading up to GCSE. The broad titles of British, European and World Geography are used to teach many geographical skills and topics, such as map reading, climatic studies and physical features. The American system on the
other hand lays very little stress on the teaching of geography and detailed study may not start until grade 8. The student is then confronted with a problem during his furlough time. Where in his national system could he/she be fitted in during the furlough period? Furloughs for many missionaries are becoming shorter, so the student on a short furlough could just ignore school for a time, but there are still missionaries who have furloughs of over four months. What do their children do during these extended periods? If they have been following a curriculum out-of-step with their home country's norm they just do not fit in anywhere. This model does not therefore meet my aim of facilitating the student to continue with his/her studies during furlough or travel times.

2.1.2 Re-entry

Related to this problem is the even more difficult one of permanent re-entry. Re-entry is a traumatic enough time, especially if it is unexpected, without adding the extra difficulty of being out-of-step with expected educational norms! Thus this model does not facilitate re-entry to the home country.

2.1.3 Keeping the family unit intact

Using traditional teaching methods for the teaching of a common core curriculum implies the necessity of full time attendance at school which in turn implies full-time boarding if the family are remote from the school. Thus the aim of keeping the family unit intact as much as possible falls by the wayside.

2.1.4 Teacher Shortages

Again the use of traditional teaching methods implies times of difficulty when a specialist is not available to teach a particular subject.

2.1.5 Non-English medium students

Core curriculum taught by teachers implies use of a common language, most probably English, therefore this model offers nothing to the Dutch, German, Korean, Scandinavian, Japanese and other non-English-as-a-first-language students.
2.1.6 Existing Schools and the Common Core

I have now discussed five areas where I feel the cross-cultural common core curriculum fails to meet the criteria I have set myself. To me, these five areas are important, to some, maybe many, they will not seem so important and this common core curriculum concept becomes valid. But there may be another problem we should anticipate and discuss. There are many existing MK schools who have developed their own character and ethos over the years they have existed. They may well feel their unique identity threatened by the apparent sameness implied in a cross-cultural core curriculum. For these schools, supported self-study offers another approach.

Each of these existing schools could continue to teach the curriculum they have always used. That is, an American school continues with its American curriculum. A British school continues with its British curriculum. Students from other nationalities could take part in those parts of the taught curriculum that were appropriate to their needs and use self-study modules for the remainder of their programme. I will describe this idea more fully later this week.

2.2 International Supported Self-Study Centre.

I now turn to the system we have used at the Kathmandu International Study Centre since we opened in Nepal in February 1987. I call this the international supported self-study model. Each of our students studies their own home country's core academic curriculum through the medium of Supported Self-Study. The individualised study is enriched through group activities involving mixed nationalities.

Before I describe the system in a little more detail let me examine how the system meets my aims and criteria.

I feel that this model meets all the aims and criteria which are fully satisfied by the international core curriculum model. You can check that yourselves, I wish to concentrate now on the five areas where the international core curriculum model falls short.

2.2.1 Furloughs

The fact that each student in the KISC system studies through the medium of a self-study programme from his/her home country opens up two possible choices for furlough times. Either the student continues on self-study in a home schooling situation or they attend a local school secure in the knowledge that they will not be out-of-step with their peers at least as far as the curriculum content they have studied overseas is concerned.
2.2.2 Re-entry

Re-entry remains a difficult time but at least the fact that the returning missionary kid has studied a similar curriculum programme to the one followed by his peers who have remained at home eliminates difficulties caused through having a very different academic background.

In practice, in both the furlough and re-entry situation, we have found that students from KISC have usually been ahead of their peers at home academically and their re-entry or furlough times have involved times of consolidation and revision of material already studied at KISC. The supported self-study concept offers good students the opportunity to progress more rapidly through their course of study than they would in a lock-step traditional teaching situation.

2.2.3 Keeping the family unit intact

The use of self-study for the core academic work has enabled us to offer two types of attendance at KISC for those families who live remote from the school. Either full-time boarding at the school or part-time boarding. The part-time boarders have come into school for maybe only half of the normal ten-week term and have pursued their studies at home with their parents for the other half of the term. We have also had students who have attended KISC for alternative terms, home schooling with their parents for one ten-week term, boarding at the school for the next ten weeks and so on. This system offers flexibility to those families who do not like the idea of the family unit being split for 40 weeks a year. Families who are comfortable with the concept of boarding, can send their children into KISC for full-time boarding and such students benefit fully from the support programme we offer.

2.2.4 Teacher Shortages

The use of self-study material means that if a subject specialist is unavailable for a time it is feasible for the student to continue with his studies. In fact, some students have found that they prefer non-specialist tutors as they often explain topics more carefully and slowly than the teacher who is too familiar with his subject. This is particularly true for students in the lower secondary age range. As the difficulty and specialisation of work at higher levels increases it is better to have a subject specialist available.
Incidentally, the same situation occurs with tutor nationality. At the lower secondary levels it does not appear to be matter if the nationality of the tutor is different from the student he is tutoring. But at the higher levels, especially for those students preparing for national examinations, it becomes important to provide tutors with appropriate experience.

2.2.5 Non-English medium students

The KISC model does not offer a complete solution for the problem of coping with non-English medium students but goes a long way towards solving it. We have had a group of Dutch students at KISC who studied their core academic programme through Dutch medium self-study materials. They then joined in the enrichment programme with the other students. For their self-study sessions they had tutorial support from a Dutch tutor. If this tutor had difficulty helping with a query then he consulted in English with the appropriate subject specialist. The solution is not completely satisfactory in that these students still had to have sufficient English to be able to join in with the other students in the group enrichment activities. The experiment worked well for some time but then had to be stopped when the students reached the top level of the available Dutch self-study course. Unfortunately we were unable to find self-study material from Holland which was suitable for use by students older than 13 years. If suitable material could be found I see no reason why these students could not continue their core academic study in Dutch. There is a possibility that we might be able to repeat the experiment next year when our first German student starts KISC.

3. THE KISC CONCEPT

The basic idea which has made the KISC model possible is that of Supported Self-Study (SSS). Supported Self-Study was started in the UK earlier this decade to cope with teacher shortages in certain subjects and to enable students to take courses in minority subjects which could not demand specialist teachers. It was very quickly noticed that SSS also had some inherent educational benefits. SSS is normally used in schools in UK for just a few subjects, as far as I know KISC is the only place where SSS is used for the complete academic core. There are "schools" which use correspondence courses or self-study materials for their teaching but please note that the word SUPPORT has a very important role to play in the SSS system, it is not just Self-Study.
KISC started in 1987 with just seven students, now almost three years later we have 45 students. We have four full-time teaching staff members and receive some part-time assistance from parents and friends. It is difficult to compare financial costs in different parts of the world but in the Nepal context, charging a very reasonable fee of less than £600 per year, produced a break-even student enrolment of 20 students. Now that we have 45 students we are in the process of expanding our facilities without capital assistance from our two sponsoring missions.

I do not have the time to go into detail about all aspects of KISC now, but if any one is interested I have with me some copies of a paper I wrote on KISC. This paper was published earlier this year in the Bulletin of the International Council for Distance Education.

I do think it important to take some time now to explain the concept of Supported Self-Study as we have developed and adapted it for use in the international setting of the Kathmandu International Study centre.
3.1. What is Supported Self-Study

At the heart of the KISC supported self-study concept lies the management system which balances and controls the three main elements which constitute the broad shoulders of the support system. There is a need for a system to monitor student progress, to encourage and provide motivation. To coordinate the enrichment activities. I want to leave some time at the end of this talk for discussion so I will not describe all the different elements of the management system. I think it is more important to examine in detail some aspects of the support system.
3.1.1 Materials

It is important that the self-study materials are chosen with great care (that is if a possibility of choice exists!). At KISC we have two main sources for our materials, either complete self-study programmes from a correspondence school or our own package consisting of different self-study packages collected from the student's home country. Our Australian, New Zealand and Canadian students use correspondence courses provided by their home country or state. The USA students use material from the International Institute or University of Nebraska-Lincoln, depending on their grade level. Our British students use a variety of self-study packages collected from various sources and correspondence schools in UK. Most of the students' self-study work is marked at KISC, but some correspondence schools require the work to be returned to them for marking. In addition to the self-study packages we are gradually building up a collection of additional resources such as computer discs, cassette tapes and library books which can be used by students or teachers to supplement their basic packages.

3.1.2 Tutorials

Tutorials are the key to success in a self-study programme. It is the exceptional student who can maintain motivation solely through self-study materials, the majority of school level children need tutorial support. At KISC, each student has a tutorial session each week in each of his or her academic subjects. Ideally, these tutorials take place in groups of 5 to 8 students, but some are individual one-one sessions with a tutor. During the 45 minute tutorial session, the tutor will discuss work that has been done in the previous week, plan and discuss work for the next week and then engage in some sort of activity which is of interest to all the students in the group. We have found that a good tutorial can more than compensate a student whose self-study material is of poor quality.

In addition to the set tutorial sessions each week, students have immediate access to subject specialists on a individual basis while they are working on their self-study. We rotate the duty times of teachers in the learning centre so that at sometime throughout each day a subject specialist is available for consultation.
3.1.3 Enrichment Programme

Our students spend about three sevenths of their time on self-study, the reminder of their time is spent either in tutorials or in group activities. Each student is allowed to choose two group "electives" from the list of those available each term. The electives we offer depend very much on the interests of staff or parent volunteers. So far we have offered: Art, Astronomy, Country Dancing, Craft, Chinese Cooking, Drama, Gardening, Home Economics, Nepali Language, Piano, Recorders, Sewing and Woodwork. In addition to the electives there are compulsory group classes in Religious Education, Current Events and Sport. The RE and Current Events classes set out to explore a common Christian world view amongst our different nationalities. (The MC and TC perspective described by Hill). Each term we also set out to explore some aspect of the fascinating cultural surroundings we have in Nepal (Hill's IC perspective). Just giving a list like this sounds very dry and dull, but in fact, staff and students all greatly enjoy the various aspects of our enrichment programme.

3.1.4 The Educational Task

I wish now to return to the starting point of my journey and examine briefly how the KISC model meets the educational task I have set. In a handout given to parents enquiring about enrolling their children at KISC I quote from G K Chesterton.

"to train a citizen is to train a critic. The whole point of education is that it should give a man abstract and eternal standards by which he can judge material and fugitive conditions."

This statement needs examining in more detail, but I certainly take as a prime aim at KISC the desire to place our students in a position where they are able to "judge material and fugitive conditions". I differ from Chesterton when he states that education should give a man abstract and eternal standards. I see the role of education as enabling a person to develop their own set of standards, abstract and eternal, by which they can judge material and fugitive conditions. I see these standards as having five dimensions; intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and social.

Miller & Melton at the first ICMK in discussing the problems facing missionary parents attempting to educate their children at home considered these same five dimensions and suggested that "parents can provide for the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of their children at home. But it is in providing for intellectual and social needs where the family's resources generally become inadequate,
particularly during teenage years when academic demands are more specialised and the child's need for broader social interaction with peers is developing." At KISC, we use much of the same learning resource material that parents attempting to educate their children at home would use. It is in our support system that we have to provide for the needs of our students in these five dimensions.

Of course, any school has to consider the five dimensions in planning their programmes, but they can normally expect a large amount of input from the society outside their school. Nepal, as a developing country, has a more restricted environment in terms of facilities outside school which are available to our students compared to their home countries. For example, facilities for many sports and hobbies are non-existent, TV is in an early stage of development, not available to many people and offers a restricted choice of programmes, etc. At KISC if we are to attain our aim of enabling our students to become critical adults, we must somehow help them to attain the ability to operate in cultures other than that of Nepal. We need to expose them to up-to-date thinking in their home cultures. One way we do this is to encourage young people from our home countries to come out to Nepal and spend up to three months working in our school as volunteers. Not only does this expose our students to current thinking and trends in their home countries, but it can also change the lives of these volunteers. One of our first volunteer teachers has now returned to Nepal as a full-term missionary teacher!

I have now returned to my starting point with Brian Hill's cultural perspective and I have described our elective and other programmes which attempt to fulfil our responsibility to provide a rich environment within which our students interact in all five dimensions.

3.1.5 Supported Self-Study and the Educational Task

Earlier in this talk I described how I see Supported Self-Study as an educational tool which operates successfully within the constraints I have defined for missionary, and indeed, expatriate children. But Supported Self-Study also has some intrinsic educational merits which contribute towards our aim of enabling our students to develop their own set of judgement standards. Philip Waterhouse, the leading advocate of Supported Self-Study in the United Kingdom, gives four related components in the thinking which underlies the commitment behind schools using SSS.

- a belief that it is the responsibility of secondary education to educate the whole person, to treat people as individuals, and to help
people to become autonomous. (As Christians, we can say autonomous under God!)

- a conviction that individualisation will result in more effective learning.

- a desire to enjoy personal relations with pupils that are supporting in style, rather than confronting and domineering.

- a belief that an important task for secondary school is to help pupils to learn how to learn.

3.1.6 Evaluation of KISC

I have been describing an educational journey by two possible routes or functional models. One has just been surmise. The other has been a real journey that we have experienced at the Kathmandu International Study Centre. I have not been alone on the journey, I wish to finish my talk by sharing with you some results from an evaluation workshop and a questionnaire that allowed our students and parents to freely express their opinion of the KISC system. More than 75% of the students stated that they preferred KISC to the more traditional style of school. 70% stated that they would recommend the KISC system to students in another country thinking of attending a similar school. 65% of the parents agreed to the statement formulated by one parent that KISC provides a superior education system that prepares people for life.
A WORLDWIDE NETWORK FOR THE EDUCATION OF EXPATRIATE CHILDREN (A short paper presented during a workshop examining networking possibilities amongst expatriate schools)

Fig. 1

1 Components of a worldwide network

Please refer to the Figure (1) as I describe the different components of a worldwide network.

1.1 Individual students

Indicated on the diagram by I

This refers to individual students residing with their parents in remote areas, their parents not being comfortable with a boarding situation. Normally these students would study at home with their parents using correspondence or self-study courses but would come into ISC for short residential periods of tutorial help and peer group contact.

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1.2 International Study Centre

Indicated on the diagram by ISC

An International Study Centre based on the KISC model would be suitable for those countries where there is not a large MK population and a traditional school with a full range of teaching staff would not be viable. Learning would take place largely through the medium of supported self-study.

1.3 Traditional MK School

Indicated on the diagram by MKS

Existing traditional single system MK school using either British or American curriculum would cater for peculiar national needs of other nationalities through supported self-study provided in a KISC type learning centre within the school. All nationalities would meet together for regular enrichment activities in groups as per the KISC model.

OR

If a common core system is adopted, then peculiar national needs would be catered for through supported self-study modules provided in a KISC type learning centre within the school.

1.4 Senior Centres in the home country

Indicated on the diagram by SC

As I have already indicated, it is not an easy task to find suitable self-study material. The Dutch experiment failed only because no suitable material existed for students over the age of thirteen. It would be very useful to have some organised method for procuring self-study materials from each country.

There is a difficult financial situation which faces British parents in particular. It was pointed out at the Manila conference that it may be necessary for some British parents to spend a residential period in the UK in order to ensure that their children will be eligible for the normal state financial assistance for university education. In addition, those involved in British "A" levels will be well aware of the difficult task of coping with these. These two reasons may make it necessary for a student to undertake his "A" level study in the UK.
Therefore the Senior Centre in the home country would have the following functions:

- To provide residential learning facilities for senior level students such as "A" level students in the British system.

- To help students adjust to their home culture.

- To provide learning materials (Self study modules) for use in the ISCs and supported self study centres in MKSs.

- To recruit and train staff to work in overseas centres.

- To provide certification or assessment as necessary, e.g., USA Centre could award high school credits and diplomas, the British Centre could provide GCSE coursework assessment.

1.5 International Headquarters

Indicated on the diagram by IHQ

Finally, an International HQ could be set up to instigate and coordinate the worldwide network. Possibly this HQ could be located at a SC or be coordinated through an existing organisation. If we are serious about the use of the word "international" in ICMK, then we need to demonstrate to our non-English medium brothers and sisters that we care about them. Maybe this International HQ could be set up in a non-English medium country.

2. THE NEXT STEP

Earlier this week I described an educational journey, some of it real, some of it just speculation. A few years ago KISC was just a dream, just speculation, but I set out on my journey to develop KISC aware that the Lord was my guide. Maybe some of our dreams or thoughts here at ICMK can also become realities! ICMK has been a wonderful experience, we have shared many ideas, I am sure we will be inspired to find ways to work more closely together. We could do this on local levels, at KISC we are developing a good deal of experience in the use of high altitude treks in the Himalayas for British GCSE coursework. Next Easter a party of senior students from Hebron School in India hope to join some of our senior students for a trek to the Annapurna Base Camp. If any other school party would like to come to Nepal and use our facilities and experience, then they will be assured of a warm welcome. I am sure your school has some resources which could also be shared with other MK schools. But there is also a place for continued inter-mission, international cooperation. If this is to be the last
large-scale ICMK, then the next step in our journey may be for this conference to set up an international working party to investigate and promote the development of a worldwide network such as that I have just described.
INTRODUCTION

Since KISC was founded in February 1987 the staff have learned much about running an international supported self-study learning centre. In order to help those new to the idea (and indeed to remind those who have been at KISC for some time) I have collected together some of the things we have discovered. Much of what I have written below is extracted from my Ph.D thesis. I hope it will be of use to you as you work at KISC.

Alan McIlhenny
November 1989
1 The Educational task

1.1 Standards and Dimensions

In a handout given to parents enquiring about enrolling their children at KISC I quote from G K Chesterton.

to train a citizen is to train a critic. The whole point of education is that it should give a man abstract and eternal standards by which he can judge material and fugitive conditions.

This statement needs examining in more detail, but I certainly take as a prime aim at KISC the desire to place our students in a position where they are able to "judge material and fugitive conditions". I differ from Chesterton when he states that education should give a man abstract and eternal standards. I see the role of education as enabling a person to develop their own set of standards, abstract and eternal, by which they can judge material and fugitive conditions. I see these standards as having five dimensions; intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and social.

Miller & Melton (1986) in discussing the problems facing missionary parents attempting to educate their children at home consider these five dimensions and suggest that "parents can provide for the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of their children at home. But it is in providing for intellectual and social needs where the family's resources generally become inadequate, particularly during teenage years when academic demands are more specialised and the child's need for broader social interaction with peers is developing." At KISC, we use much of the same learning resource material that parents attempting to educate their children at home would use. It is in our support system that we have to provide for the needs of our students in these five dimensions.

Of course, any school has to consider the five dimensions in planning their programmes, but they can normally expect a large amount of input from the society outside their school. Nepal, as a developing country, has a more restricted environment in terms of facilities outside school which are available to our students compared to their home countries. For example, facilities for many sports and hobbies are non existent, TV is in an early stage of development, not available to many people and offers a restricted choice of programmes, etc. If KISC is to enable our students to become critical adults, they must be able to operate in cultures other than that of Nepal. We have a responsibility, therefore, to provide a rich environment within which our students interact in all five dimensions.
1.2 Constraints

During the 1984 conference on "missionary kids", I presented six constraints within which an adequate system for the education of missionaries' children should operate. These constraints remained important to me when the KISC model was designed. Unfortunately they were edited out of my paper printed in the proceedings of the Manila Conference.

The constraints used in designing the KISC model were:

1. The system should offer an education of comparable standard, covering the same range of subjects, as is available to the student in his/her home country.

2. The system should provide a healthy environment for the learner in the areas of peer, social and academic interaction.

3. The system should demand minimal supervision and academic input from the parents.

4. The system should keep the family unit intact for the maximum period possible each year.

5. The system should allow for the individual needs of the learners and should take advantage of their unique cultural and learning environment.

6. The system should allow the learners to continue with their studies wherever they may have to travel, particularly during furlough times.

1.3 Supported Self-Study, the Constraints and Dimensions.

At KISC we decided to use Supported Self-Study (SSS) chiefly because it enables each student to cover the same range of subjects at a similar standard to what would be available to them at home. The self-study aspect of SSS is particularly valuable during times when our students are travelling outside Kathmandu with their parents. But SSS also has some intrinsic educational merits which contribute towards our aim of enabling our students to develop their own set of judgement standards. Waterhouse (1983a) gives four related components in the thinking which underlies the commitment behind schools using SSS.

- a belief that it is the responsibility of secondary education to educate the whole person, to treat people as individuals, and to help people to become autonomous.
- a conviction that individualisation will result in more effective learning.

- a desire to enjoy personal relations with pupils that are supporting in style, rather than confronting and domineering.

- a belief that an important task for secondary school is to help pupils to learn how to learn.
2 Themes and Experiences from the literature relevant to KISC

Waterhouse (1988) divides the management cycle into a two stroke system: the tutorial, and self-study. The tutorial consists of two parts; a review and assessment of the work done during the previous self-study phase, and a briefing for the work that is to be done during the next self-study phase. He states strongly that "the small-group tutorial is so powerful and so effective as a learning experience that no effort should be spared to achieve it as a regular feature of the students' school experience". Rainbow (1987) states that the experience at Holyrood School wholly supports this: "Tutoring is the key to self-study ... It is already apparent that rather dull resource material is quite acceptable to students if the quality of tutoring is good. It is the tutorial session which enables the student and teacher together to structure the course of study; abandon unnecessary sections; reinforce important points; straighten out difficulties and negotiate a programme of work."

This emphasis on tutoring leads to a change in role for the teacher and I discuss some aspects of this later. Lewis gives the following table:

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<tr>
<th>Customary</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching groups of students face-to-face</td>
<td>Individual tutorial work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching; emphasis on product</td>
<td>Focus on learning rather than on teaching; emphasis on process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject teacher</td>
<td>Consultant to students - e.g. helping them to decide objectives and methods of working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher usually works alone</td>
<td>Teacher may be working in a team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work is set for a class</td>
<td>Work is set for an individual or group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendency to give learners the answer when they are stuck</td>
<td>Teachers help learners to resolve problems themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard textbook taken as it is</td>
<td>Thought and time given to providing a range of materials, including those produced by the teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He suggests that teachers, in supporting students to become more independent learners, can help students to:

- develop the personal relationships necessary for learning (e.g. with peers, with the librarian)
- define the objectives of their learning
- understand the task
- find and use resources
- synthesis material
- design and carry out practical work (e.g. experiments, surveys)
- present work in an appropriate format
- evaluate their learning

Christian-Carter & Burton (1988) feel that "the traditional model of teaching sits very uneasily with the objectives of GCSE and current educational philosophy." They claim that the "the traditional model of education as practised in the classroom all too often leads to a learning experience which is teacher-centered and teacher constrained. Classroom practice often reinforces the skills of the teacher at the expense of the development of the skills of the learner. At its worst, such practice may lead to a situation where the answers to problems are limited by the teacher's knowledge and the learners' experiences are shaped largely by the experience of the teacher."

They go on to suggest that learning should be seen as a partnership between teacher and learner. This has two major advantages. "First, it offers the possibility of a rate of growth for students which is not limited by the knowledge and experiences of the teacher. Second, once developed, this relationship then allows for a more rapid response to changes in society because it 'short-circuits' the problem of the amount of time required by the educational system to produce a teacher with the relevant extensive and in-depth knowledge."

This change extends the role of a teacher from that as a facilitator, a mediator, and a motivator into a fourth dimension, that of a learner who operates alongside and with a student at their frontiers of combined knowledge. This involves change in how a student perceives a teacher and causes role conflict as others continue to regard a teacher as a 'fount of all knowledge'. I discuss this again later.
Bagley & Challis (1985) (Chapter 6) dedicate a complete chapter to "Issues for Teachers". They point out the danger to a teacher's self-concept if he continues to feel he ought to know the answer to everything he is asked for help with. At the same time, Bagley & Challis claim that in remedial tutoring there was an important place for the good, empathetic teacher who not only was not a specialist in the subject, but who may even have experienced difficulty in learning the subject. Bagley & Challis observed this in a mathematics teaching situation, at KISC we feel it may be applicable to other subjects also.

Once a teacher has accepted the need to change to student-centered learning then according to Christian-Carter & Burton the following needs of the teacher become apparent:

- to accept that a teacher need not be an authority figure all the time;
- to appreciate that a student will not respond to and accept responsibility if he is not trained to do so and if he does not respect and trust a teacher;
- for openness and honesty in order to achieve a mutual trust;
- to be able to admit one's mistakes and to abandon any authoritarian stance in order to gain confidence in the teacher-learner partnership;
- to acquire and use 'new' management skills which involve the learner in the organisation of his work;
- to identify the needs of the learner;
- to help learners to become aware of their needs and to suggest or point them in appropriate directions in order to give them a feeling of achievement;
- to accept that students will make some mistakes and for both parties to value these mistakes as part of learning;
- for individual student assessment if the learner is to achieve independent progress; and
- for feedback and communication between a teacher and a learner if a true, two-way partnership is to develop.

The authors go on to describe a similar set of needs from the learner's point of view:

- to develop self-discipline because more informal environments and less teacher direction call for greater self-direction;
- for relationships with teachers so that work can be openly and
honestly discussed;

- for a feeling that what is on offer to be learnt is meaningful and worthwhile;

- for personal success to provide encouragement and to reinforce progress;

- for feedback and reassurance from teachers that he is meeting the agreed objectives;

- for independence and the right to pursue a personal line of enquiry and to reach a personal conclusion;

- to make decisions and to take responsibility for these decisions;

- for help in managing time, space and resources;

- to develop the skills required for independent learning; and

- for privacy or other kinds of suitable places for his learning.

Bagley & Challis also point out the need for reassurance that students have in an open-learning situation. In an evaluation many students expressed doubts as to their progress on their courses and said that they would have liked some 'normal' classes so that they could find out how they were doing. This situation also arose at KISC, we responded by designing a 'progress chart' so that each student could keep a visual display of progress before them. Tutors also took more care to ensure that students were kept aware of their progress.

Another feature described by Bagley & Challis, which is common to the KISC experience, is that of the learning centre atmosphere: "A feature particularly striking to one used to observing classroom transactions was the complete absence of any feeling of tension or of the fragile disciplinary atmosphere that is sometimes present in student-teacher relationships."

Before leaving the topic of student concerns, I describe seven personal characteristics of the self-directed learner identified by Skager (1984):

1. Self-acceptance
   A positive view of self as a learner and as an entity worthy of improvement.

2. Planfulness
   Ability to diagnose own learning needs, set appropriate
personal goals in the light of those needs, and devise effective strategies for accomplishing the learning goals.

3. Intrinsic motivation

Persistence in learning activity in the absence of external controls in the form of rewards or sanctions.

4. Internalised evaluation

Acting as one's own evaluation agent.

5. Openness to experience

Engaging in new kinds of activities that may result in learning or goal setting. "Curiosity, tolerance of ambiguity, preference for complexity, and even playfulness represent motives for entering into new activities and imply openness to experience".

6. Flexibility

A willingness to change goals or learning modes and to use exploratory, trial-and-error approaches to problems. Failure is countered with adaptive behaviour rather than by withdrawal.

7. Autonomy

Autonomous learners are able to question the normative standards of a given time and place as to what kinds of learning are valuable and permissible.

Finally, in this survey of literature I report some comments made by teachers experienced in open learning. (Lewis 1986) They suggest that:

- students initially need a secure framework and that the move to greater independence must be a gradual one.
- students need help in acquiring the learning strategies important for independent working.
- students initially resist taking on greater responsibility for their learning but once they take the plunge they enjoy it.
- exam results gained by open learning are as good as, or better than, results gained by the conventional routes.
- sensitive, personal tutoring is essential.
- students learn a lot from each other.
Tutors working in KISC have to face a change in their traditionally accepted role of teacher. Some of these changes are discussed below.

3.1 **Tutor not teacher**

The tutors have to face a change in role from "teacher as authority" to "tutor as supporter", no longer are they to be the providers of information but they have to become fellow searchers with their students for knowledge. This can make the teacher vulnerable, open to criticism, as he may appear to the student, and therefore to the parents, to be lacking in knowledge. Certainly in the first evaluation workshop carried out at KISC, parents (69%) stated that tutors often have insufficient knowledge of the specific material studied by each student, and 86% stated that staff are not as familiar with study material as the students.

Some teachers may have to contain their urge to teach, to provide an immediate answer, as they work with a student to help the student find out for him/herself. Christian-Carter & Burton (1988) see two major advantages in making this effort to work in partnership:

First, it offers the possibility of a rate of growth for students which is not limited by the knowledge and experiences of the teacher. Second, once developed, this relationship then allows for a more rapid response to changes in society because it short circuits the problem of the amount of time required by the educational system to produce a teacher with the relevant extensive and in-depth knowledge.

Christian-Carter & Burton thus imply that it is not necessary for the teacher to have the knowledge the KISC parents demand in their responses in the first evaluation workshop.

3.2 **Tutor vs. material**

Who has the greater authority in a self-study system - the tutor or the written materials? Mistakes do occur in written material, but some students have shown reluctance to accept that these are mistakes. When a tutor always assumes the role of fellow passenger in the quest of knowledge does this produce a lack of confidence from the student in the tutor's ability to judge correctness of written material? This problem disappears with time, as the students get to know their tutors then their confidence in them grows. The senior students at KISC who
started on their GCSE courses after a year's experience with their tutors immediately accepted the tutor's word that there were a number of mistakes in their new GCSE coursebooks.

3.3 **Teamwork**

The learning centre often has two or more tutors on duty unlike a classroom where there is usually only one teacher present. In a traditional classroom the teacher decides on order and discipline in his classroom. In the learning centre with two or more tutors on duty it can be difficult to agree on an acceptable level of noise and order amongst the students, but unless there is agreement no one will take responsibility for maintaining law and order.

We have decided that the periods before break each day should be complete quiet times. Students should not be allowed to talk during these periods except to consult with tutors. The periods from break to lunch should be a little more relaxed, but the noise level should be kept low so that students who are working are not disturbed. After lunch can be much more relaxed and the level of noise allowed is at the discretion of the tutor on duty.

3.4 **Non-verbal messages**

Most experienced teachers learn to read non-verbal messages from their students. They know when students are bored, not maintaining concentration or have lost the theme of an argument. Much of this communication, and indeed, maintenance of discipline, takes place through eye contact. In the learning centre, where the majority of students are sitting at study carrels with their backs to the tutors this eye contact is lost. Tutors have to develop a whole new set of skills in this situation. Bagley & Challis (1985), had this same experience:

> Staff......new to the ways of working in the workshop environment, had to make considerable modifications to their style and role. At first many of them waited for students to hold up their hands seeking assistance..... Later it was noticeable that the staff looked for students who may have required help, and many became adept at reading signals more subtle than an upraised hand.

A young teacher, spending his college vacation helping at KISC, mentioned that he did not like to stop behind students as they worked at their desk in case he interrupted their thinking. Yet he had no other way of telling if a student was working or not. This feeling of disturbing students meant that the teacher concerned was reluctant to patrol the study room. (The young teacher appears justified in his concern about disturbing
students, in the student questionnaire ten dislikes about KISC were along the lines of "teacher interrupts self-study at times") Unfortunately this meant that he often did not notice when a student had stopped working and needed encouragement, nor was he in a position to help those students who were shy in asking for tutor help, yet it would appear to be very important for a tutor to actively seek out those students who are not asking for help sufficiently often.

3.5 Giving Group tutorials, decision on timing and content.

A difficulty in giving small group tutorials is that of making decisions on timing and content of the tutorial. This problem arises if not all the members of the group work at the same pace. If the members of the group become too spread out in their rate of progress through a course of work then it becomes necessary to split the group, but if the group is already small this may not be possible. The teacher therefore has to adjust his content and pace to the average as happens in the traditional classroom situation.

A particular difficulty we face at KISC is dealing with students on unique courses. We feel it important that every student is able to take part in a group learning activity but if there are only one or two students on a particular course from a particular country, where do we fit them in? In the September 1989 questionnaire in their response to question 2 (What things do you dislike about the KISC self-study system?), seven students commented about the loneliness of being the only student on a particular course. As we become more familiar with all the different courses it should become easier to fit students into appropriate subject groups, but the problem of pace still arises!
4 PARENT AND COMMUNITY ROLE

The role of the parents and community in KISC.

4.1 Misunderstanding of tutors' role and the KISC system.

As I have already mentioned, during the first evaluation workshop, a number of parents (69%) criticized the tutors as "often having insufficient knowledge of the specific material studied by each student". I believe this to be related to the supportive role adopted by the tutors as I have discussed above. I am careful to explain to new parents the differences in KISC, but despite this many parents seem to expect to judge KISC using the same criteria they would use to judge a traditional school.

Another misunderstanding which was shown up by the first evaluation workshop was related to homework. 80% of the parents commented that homework should be given. In a traditional school, homework is usually given to give students practice in working on their own and to ensure that a course is covered in the time available. In the KISC system, the students have plenty of practice in working on their own, therefore only need homework to enable them to cover their course in the set time. If a student is completing all his work in KISC, there is no need for homework, and this is the case for many of our students. Parents need to adjust to the different approach used in KISC and adjust their expectations accordingly. The Third Evaluation Workshop in 1989 showed a change of attitude towards homework, with only 10% of the parents stating that there was not enough homework, the other 90% disagreed!

4.2 Responsibility of parents

One of the constraints I imposed in designing the KISC model was that the system should demand minimal supervision and academic input from the parents. The exact nature of this input needs to be clarified. In the first evaluation workshop 95% of the participants commented that "the breakdown between the responsibility of teachers and parents needs to be fully clarified in writing". 60% commented that "the parents should give more individual supervision". The individual comment cards from which the first evaluation questionnaire was developed showed that parents wanted to share some responsibility for the progress of their children with the tutors. By the third evaluation workshop most parents seemed to be more comfortable with their role, 11% stated they would like to be more involved with KISC, 58% were neutral and 31% disagreed. When difficulties have arisen over the exact breakdown between
parents and teacher responsibility, I have invited the parents
to come out to the school and meet with the tutors concerned
and discuss the breakdown of responsibilities. It has been
impossible to clarify this in writing in a general way as
suggested by the first evaluation workshop as the breakdown of
responsibilities seems to differ according to the nature of the
correspondence or self-study course used.

There is sometimes a conflict between a correspondence school's
requirements and what is considered best for a student by a
tutor. This same conflict has arisen with some parents whose
children use the American International Institute materials.
The International Institute do not require us to send students'
work to them for marking. They have provided us with sample
answers and teaching guides. In theory therefore, the KISC
tutors should be able to help individual students plan their
progress through the self-study material, omitting material
which is unsuitable, too advanced or too simple, and they
should be able to help their students progress by suggesting
alternative more suitable material. In practice, some parents
are unhappy when any part of the material is omitted: This
could be due to a stronger "faith" in the correspondence school
as opposed to our tutors. That is, to some parents, the
correspondence material is more powerful than our tutors. Some
parents have even gone to the extent of overriding suggestions
made by our tutors. I have tried to resolve this problem by
calling meetings between myself, the parents and the tutors
involved and we have usually come to an acceptable solution for
all.
5 STUDENT ROLE

In this I examine the change in role and other factors affecting students working in KISC.

5.1 Adjustment to Self Study

In the second evaluation workshop, 75% of the students disagreed that KISC should "turn into a normal school". 80% commented that they "like the way you can work at your own pace". 55% felt that their course was "just right" (15% were neutral and 30% disagreed). Overall the students appear to have adjusted well to self-study and certainly 75% implied that they prefer KISC to a "normal school". At the third evaluation workshop 96% of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that students settle in quickly.

But students also seem to show the same misunderstanding of the tutor's role that the parents displayed. 65% commented that we "need more teachers specifically trained for all the subjects" (25% were neutral and 10% disagreed). This comment is probably due to lack of confidence in the tutor's knowledge of a particular topic through the tutor's adoption of the role of co-learner; "let's find out the answer to this query together" can imply to the student that the teacher lacks knowledge or training in the topic.

5.2 Active involvement

Students also like to be actively involved in their learning: 80% thought debates are good, 70% wanted more. The debates so far have been whole school activities involving both staff and student speakers, with the students choosing the topics for debate. They also like to choose their own topics for project work (90%), think the computer is good (90%) and want more computer time (60%). It is perhaps significant that no one made any comments about traditional school activities, there was no request for traditional style classes in any subject for example. The only comment made about the more passive activity associated with traditional style learning was when 35% commented that they liked visiting speakers, 50% were neutral and 15% disliked visiting speakers.

5.3 Students and Open Learning

As our students mature in their approach to learning their need for tutorial support appears to decrease. Some of our older students find that they prefer to work at home, coming into KISC only when they need specific tutorial help, access to the
laboratory, library, or computer, or want to join in certain
group activities. The tutorial contact time tends to be a
quality time, the student having thought over the problem and
being in genuine need of help. The benefits of an open learning
system appear to grow as a student matures in his learning
skills.

5.4 Discernment of the need for tutor consultation

The need for face-to-face tuition appears to vary inversely
with the motivation and sophistication of the learner. Some of
our less able students do not appear to recognise their need to
seek tutor help.

5.5 Doubts about Progress, examinations

Bagley & Challis (1985) describe the doubts that students on a
self-study course had about their progress.

Many students expressed doubts as to their progress on their
courses and said that they would have liked some "normal"
classes so that they could find out how they were doing.

A similar situation appears to be true at KISC. In the student
questionnaire, question 14 (do you feel the KISC system offers
a way of judging your work and progress in comparison with
other students?) only 27% responded yes. (18% said no and 55%
were unsure). Now that the staffing situation has improved we
need to introduce a more regular testing system at KISC. The
parents also feel this need, in the third evaluation workshop
88% agreed or strongly agreed that there should be regular
exams and more graded papers.

Some of our tutors have always been concerned about the lack of
formal examinations at KISC, not because of the need to assess
progress, but because of the need to expose our students to the
fear that examinations generate. Some feel that the KISC system
is much too gentle with the students and that this could lead
to problems when our students face public examinations for the
first time. Other tutors feel there is no need to introduce
this fear element until the students are close to their
examinations.

Another aspect of self-study which possibly affects examination
performance is that since their work is largely self-paced our
students are not used to working under externally imposed time
constraints.
5.6 Students with Learning Difficulties

It is important for our tutors to give as much one-to-one help as possible. I think this comment applies to any student with learning difficulties. We have had quite striking success with at least two students who, according to their parents, had been "written off" and largely ignored in their former traditional style schools. One major frustration we have in trying to give individualised one-to-one help is the lack of self-study materials designed for slower learners - these do not appear to be available. If the slow reader or learner is to be weaned from his dependence on a tutor, then we need to find simple material suitable for self-study.

For example, I will describe our experience with a student who appears to have a short concentration span. The observed consultation rate of this student with tutors was 4%, half the average for the whole school. This supports my belief that poor students do not seek tutorial help often enough. The longest period this student was observed working for without a break was just 12 minutes and this was only on one occasion. We tried to help this student improve his concentration span by negotiating with him an increasing target time for his observed periods of concentration and rewarding him when he succeeded.
6 ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

6.1 Introduction

Before I discuss the assessment/grading system used at KISC, I feel it is important to declare what we expect to achieve through the assessment procedure.

Elton (1982) writes "Since our aims for assessment are many and competing, this is an optimization process in which we have to declare values and exercise judgement. In other words, it is a normal human activity." The optimization process which has led to the development of a unified grading system at KISC will be much better understood if I first declare our value priority. Whether our activity can be labelled as "normal" is left to the reader, but we can at least claim it is human!

What are we trying to achieve in the assessment process?

6.2 Assessing for Mastery

The self-study system in use at KISC frees students (and teachers!) from the lock-step time demands of the traditional classroom model. The "fixed time, variable learning" of the traditional system can be replaced by "fixed learning, variable time". In other words, there is time available (within reason, of course) for those aspects of learning which require mastery on behalf of the learner. In KISC, we expect to assess for mastery in those aspects of learning where mastery is appropriate.

6.3 Assessing for Motivation

It is well known that while the results of assessment may increase the motivation of a learner, the assessment process can be a source of stress. In addition, constant poor performance in tests etc., can be a demotivating factor. Maintaining motivation in a self-study system is obviously a major concern. In designing the assessment procedure for KISC, we placed importance on ensuring that the system does not have to be rigidly applied and that it leaves a way out for the poor performer. At the same time, we have to balance this against the need to introduce some experience of assessment stress as preparation for public examinations. We try to ensure that the procedure produces positive and immediate feedback for the learner in a constructive motivating manner.
6.4 Assessing for Prediction

This aspect of assessment did not consciously play any part in our design of the system. But certainly with our more senior students, who have public examination performance and future career prospects in mind, there is a need to provide some element of prediction. In practice, the Wolsey Hall courses provide trial examination papers complete with marking guides and the state correspondence schools, Australian & New Zealand, give examinations marked at the schools. Our USA students have no public examination system to worry about.

6.5 Assessing for Diagnosis of Learning

Here Harris & Bell do not mean the diagnostic assessment instruments used by specialists, but the "more usual assessments used by teachers and learners in a diagnostic way, focusing upon either individuals or groups.... During (traditional) teaching, teachers constantly attempt to assess learning from asking direct questions to receiving non-verbal communication from learners." At KISC, this feedback comes in similar ways to the traditional model, but there are some slight differences. Perhaps more importance has to be given to the use of written work for assessment while our teachers gain experience in their changed role in KISC. During tutorial /consultation sessions we can attempt to assess learning through the usual techniques, ranging from asking direct questions to receiving non-verbal communication from learners. But during most of the time when our students are involved in self-study they are working in study carrels, with their backs to the tutors. In this situation we have to develop new ways of reading non-verbal communication from our learners.

6.6 Assessing for Diagnosis of Teaching

In the KISC self-study system, assessment has a role to play in the effectiveness of the self-study material as well as the effectiveness of individual tutoring activities. (Here the differences between assessment and evaluation become blurred.) Comparison of learners performance on the same activities can have something to say about the effectiveness of the learning material and tutors. It is more difficult for us to use feedback here to improve our teaching materials, especially if they come as a complete package from a correspondence school. We use the tutorial sessions to overcome shortcomings in the self-study materials, and sometimes are able to provide supplementary learning materials from alternative sources to reinforce the tutorial session.
6.7 Assessing for Certification, Classification and Comparison.

Assessing for Certification is not a role we need to take on at KISC. All our students are assessed at some stage for certification by an outside body, either through a public examination system, or through the correspondence school which provided the learning materials.

Assessing for Classification is necessary at KISC even though our students do not work in groups or classes for their academic work. We need to be able to produce termly reports for the parents and this involves some classification of our students into categories, such as, good workers, well motivated students, or even those needing extra tutorial help.

Assessing for Comparison is a difficult task when our students use such a wide variety of study materials, but it is necessary for our students to have some means of comparing progress with their peers. See 6.13 below.

6.8 Assessing for Learners

Harris and Bell write "rarely is assessing organized with the learners as the main audience for the results, yet if assessing is to be a real aid to learner's learning they must be an important audience whatever the purpose, mode or technique of assessing."

In KISC, great importance is placed on enabling the learners to learn. The teachers are called "subject tutors", emphasising their tutorial role as part of the self-study support system. With this move in emphasis from the teachers' central role in traditional schooling to the learners' central role in KISC, we give maximum importance to the role of assessment as part of the support system enabling the learner to learn. It is important that the learners are fully involved in the assessment through feedback and self-assessment.

6.9 Assessing for teachers

A quote from Harris & Bell describes the KISC attitude to this aspect of assessment very well - "Results of assessing, whether they be marks in a mark book, informal impressions or detailed comments arrived at during collaborative assessing are there to be used to help the learners, not just to be kept in a file."

6.10 Assessing for Outsiders

Parents, of course, need to know how their children are progressing. In an innovative scheme such as KISC this becomes
even more important than in a traditional setting.

The extra mobility of our students means that we must be able to provide information about them if they move on to another school, sometimes at short notice.

6.11 The Overriding Purpose of Assessment

Throughout all I have written above, I have placed strong emphasis on the fact that we, as tutors in KISC, look upon our students as learners whom we support and that any system of assessment we design must be part of the support system. Elton (1982) declares this overriding purpose of assessment when he writes

I require an assessment system to be such as to conflict as little as possible with my aims. To me, the overriding purpose is that it should encourage learning in consonance with my declared student learning aims.

6.12 The Assessment Procedure

All of the Letts Foundation Skills books and the KMP workcards provide answers for use at the completion of each unit of work, where this is possible. The correspondence schools provide some answers for self-marking by their students. When a student finishes a unit of work, he first marks it himself using the answers provided. We encourage our students to attempt to think about any mistakes they have made before they bring their work to the subject tutor for confirmation of their marking. This enables our tutors to concentrate on tutoring areas of difficulty and to make comments on the quality of work. In most cases, the tutor is able to confirm the marking immediately, give a grade, and provide immediate feedback to the student. The work, if it meets the criteria, is signed off as completed in the student's contract book and the grade and comments entered in the subject tutor's mark book.

If no answer key is provided for self-marking by the student, then of course, the tutor must do the marking. This should not be done during the tutor's duty time in the Learning Centres but should be done in free periods or after school. It is important that tutors are free, and are seen to be free, to help students during their duty hours in the LC. Some students are reluctant to seek tutor help, this difficulty for them is aggravated if they have to interrupt tutors who are marking in order to have assistance.

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6.13 Monitoring Student Work and Progress.

Monitoring of a student's work and progress through a careful system of assessment and record keeping is vital in a self-study programme. Each student at KISC is allocated to a Study Supervisor (SS). At the beginning of each week the SSs meet with their students. Progress made in the preceding week is discussed, and together the student and SS agree on the study programme for the week ahead. The student notes in a "contract book" the units/workcards he contracts to complete each day. In this way, an individualised programme tailored to the student's needs, and agreed upon by both student and supervisor is developed. During the week, students have their contract books signed by the subject tutor as they complete each unit of work. Points are awarded to the student for each unit completed within the contracted time. Tutors deduct points, or award no points, if the work is not considered to be of an acceptable standard. This allows for some competition between students as occasional awards are given for those with the most consistent high performance, or to students showing improvement in quality and quantity of work.

Subject tutors are responsible for maintaining records of performance in their own subjects. The weekly tutorial is a good time to upgrade records. At this weekly tutorial, tutors check on progress made during the preceding week and assist each student to plan their next week's work. Opportunity is taken to involve the whole group in some activity which will be of benefit to all the members of the group. The tutorial groups consist of three to eight students who are working at approximately the same place in their study programme. Students may therefore find themselves in different groups for each subject depending upon their ability and progress.

Study supervisor sessions take place during the first 15 minutes of Monday morning and for 15 minutes before the sports session on a Friday afternoon. The Monday morning session is a planning time for the week's work. The Friday session is a review of the actual progress made. A strong motivating factor has been introduced at the Friday session: any student who has not accumulated sufficient points to satisfy his study supervisor is not allowed to take part in the sports session and must remain in the Learning Centre during this time to catch up with his work.

The contract system is also used to control homework. A unit contracted for completion on a certain day can still earn full points if completed at home and handed in at start of school the next day. Parents are encouraged to check their children's contract books and ensure that uncompleted units are done as homework.
Formal tests are included with almost all the material we use with some exceptions where we have to prepare our own. A quiet corner of the staff room contains a testing area which is used by the students when they have completed a set of work and are ready to sit a test. The test should be timed and the student required to report to the subject teacher at the beginning and end of the test. The test results are used to prepare reports sent home at the end of each term. In a self-study scheme it is important that a student can readily assess his progress through the material. We have introduced a grade level scheme which we hope will aid the students in this assessment. It is simpler to describe the scheme by giving an example.

A test which occurs about one quarter of the way through the material to be studied in one subject in the fourth year of a national system, say, will be assigned the grade level 4.25. This level is then corrected according to the student's score in the test. This is to discourage students from neglecting quality in a bid to rush through the course! The score is corrected as follows:

Students who achieve 80% or more are awarded the full grade level (4.25 in our example). For scores below 80% a simple percentage is calculated. eg A student who achieves 60% in the level 4.25 test will be awarded a corrected grade level of 4.15 (60% of 0.25 = 0.15).

In this way students working on different national schemes but in similar age groups, can compare their progress through their year's work. One of the difficulties in introducing the scheme has been agreeing upon standards of marking amongst the different nationalities of tutors involved. To a British teacher, 80% is a high mark awarded to only the best students, to our American teachers, 80% is more commonly awarded to average students. The development and introduction of a unified assessment and grading system is discussed below.

6.14 The Unified Grading System

Given our different national approaches to grading, the tutors at KISC decided that we could only safely grade students' work using four broadly defined bands - A, B, C, or D. Any attempt at fine grading using A-, C+ being considered much too subjective. Also given the small number of students enrolled at KISC and the great variety in learning materials and sources, there was no possibility of establishing a norm-referenced grading system, therefore, the system had to be criteria-referenced. The following table shows the grade and the appropriate criteria.
The system is still very subjective, especially when the criteria are mixed, eg., if a student has produced imaginative work which is untidily presented, the tutor has to make a judgement. A percentage mark is included in the table to give broad guidance in subjects, such as Mathematics, where a percentage is more appropriate than criteria. The system is used for all the self-study subjects; English, History, Geography, Maths, French and the Sciences.

A deliberately high level (60%), at least in British terms, was selected below which work is rejected. This was done for two reasons:

- the possibility of aiming for mastery (as I discuss above)

- students have access to answers and may have made some attempt at correcting their work before presentation.

In practice, to date very little work has been rejected. When it has been unacceptable, it has usually been because of untidy presentation. On the few occasions that work was rejected because of the quality of the answers, there has always been an immediate follow-up through an intensive tutorial time.

The criteria system is used for daily work units, tutor marked tests, and project work. In all cases, our assessment and grading is aimed at enabling and supporting our students in their learning.
7 SUMMARY OF THEORY, FUNCTION AND PRACTICE IN KISC

7.1 Introduction

The figure below shows the relationship between the various components of the KISC system.

Figure 7.1 The Components of Supported Self-Study (Based upon a diagram in Waterhouse 1988, P.15)

At the heart of the KISC supported self-study concept lies the administrative system which balances and controls the three main elements which constitute the broad shoulders of the support system. I include the assessment system as an important part of the administrative system.
7.2 The Learning System

7.2.1 Some Theories

Students appear to make a rapid adjustment to self-study. At KISC, in their first two or three weeks, many of the questions asked by new students are concerned with learning about the system. After that, system related queries tail off rapidly.

A major source of motivation to self-study probably comes from providing an environment conducive to learning. This environment includes the physical surroundings, an adequate supply of good learning resource materials, and the tutorial support system (including a system of punishments and rewards).

I will discuss the physical environment later, but now look at the learning environment created by the tutors. This is based around a theory I have already discussed. That is, that the need for face-to-face tuition appears to vary inversely with the motivation and sophistication of the learners with the possible exception of work in Mathematics. In all subjects, sophisticated learners appear to know when they need to seek tutorial assistance. Our observations at KISC suggest that these students only approach tutors when they have a real need for assistance. It may well be that sophisticated learners would resent or be irritated by unrequested tutor interference, thus we need to provide for these learners an environment which allows immediate tutor access with minimum tutor interference.

Less able learners do not appear to possess this discernment, they seek help too frequently before they have really thought about a problem, or they fail to realise that they need help. Thus they may learn better in an environment where tutors offer more leadership and take the initiative in suggesting a consultation. In some circumstances it may benefit the learner for tutors to refuse to give tutorial help when it is requested unnecessarily.

There appears to be a third type of student. These students appear to recognise their need for tutorial assistance but for some reason fail to seek help. In the September 1989 questionnaire, four students stated that they would feel happier in a more conventional school setting. I compared the responses of these four students and there were three common threads. As would be expected all four found tutorials helpful or very helpful. More interestingly, three of the four in their response to question 2 (What things do you dislike about the KISC self-study system?) made comments about the lack of help available from tutors. There is always at least one tutor available in each learning centre, so the only reason for lack of tutor help is that the students themselves are not seeking it. All four students stated that on average they asked for help between one and three times a day. It would appear that
these students need an environment similar to the second one described above, where it would be important for the tutors to actively encourage students to seek help when they have difficulty.

Skager (1984) in discussing the self-directed learner also suggests two types of environment, depending on the readiness of the students. He suggests that for children who are already capable of self-directed learning, the environment would be highly open and flexible. For those children who are not yet self-directing there needs to be much more help and guidance. In KISC, we have two learning centres. The Lower Learning Centre contains students who are in their first or second year of secondary education. The Upper Learning Centre contains third year students and up. Generally we should try to provide an environment in the Lower Learning Centre in which there is more guidance and active tutorial support than that in the Upper Learning Centre. At the same time there are students in the Upper Learning Centre who need a great deal of support and there are students in the Lower Learning Centre who have very quickly become sophisticated learners. The Tutors need to identify these students and interact with them on an individualised basis.

The attitude of the students as a collective group must have some effect on learning. Certainly, on a trivial level it is clear that the relaxed quiet studious atmosphere which often exists in KISC can be very quickly destroyed by just one student who feels like causing trouble.

Spaciousness is an important factor in creating a quiet atmosphere. It is useful to have more study carrels than students in a learning centre. This enables staff to move troublesome students to positions where they can be less distracting to others. It has not been possible to study how students influence each other as they work side-by-side, but undoubtedly the siting of students in relation to others is important.

Training can provide a student with the necessary skills for success in learning but cannot necessarily provide the motivation. At the same time, lack of study skills can be a demotivating factor. Each student entering KISC is given a course to develop their study skills.

7.2.2 Function and Practice of the Learning System

KISC could be described as a "Resource Based Learning" system. There are three main resources or practices used at KISC, each of which has a function:

The power of print to give permanence.
The power of tutoring to relate subject matter to individual response and to stimulate enrich and motivate.

The power of the computer and other audiovisual media to stimulate and motivate.

There are two types of tutorial activity at KISC (one-to-one tutoring and group tutorials) and these share five functions: to encourage; to correct errors; to tackle difficulties faced by the learner; to give feedback so that the commercially-prepared learning materials can be improved through the use of supplementary material; and to allow the learner and teacher to take off in directions which had not been forecast. It is this last function which gives the tutor the greatest opportunity to become involved in induction. In addition the group tutorials offer group interaction and peer competition which provides stimulation and motivation to individuals. The group tutorials also offer students working in a self-centered, self-study environment the opportunity to learn how to work in cooperation with others.

The enrichment programme consists of the elective subjects chosen by the students. In addition to providing enrichment subjects over and above those in the core self-study academic programme, the electives provide further opportunity for individual students to be involved in group interaction and activities.

7.3 Recommendations for practice

The KISC model and recommendations for practice within an internationally supported self-study system can be summarised under these three headings, STRUCTURE, TECHNOLOGY and PEOPLE.

7.3.1 STRUCTURE

Without suitable learning materials, a self-study system cannot begin. The administrative system has to facilitate the choice and acquisition of the main learning materials. These could be complete packages from a single correspondence school in the student's home country, or could be individualised programmes consisting of individual subject packages chosen from a variety of sources. At KISC the choice of self-study materials is agreed at a meeting between myself as headmaster and the parents of a student, before the student starts the school. The main learning material needs to be supplemented with resource material, such as, library books, computer software, etc. In turn there needs to be a system to catalogue,
store and distribute these materials.

In any self-study system it is important that careful records are kept of students' achievement and progress. In an international setting it is very important that tutors agree on a standard of marking and grading achievement and that the students understand how this operates.

A vital part of a supported self-study system is the tutorial support offered the learners. The actual conduct and content of a tutorial belongs under the heading TECHNOLOGY, but the STRUCTURE has to provide for adequate tutor contact, both through formal group tutorials, and through one-to-one tutorials. One-to-one tutorials should be available to the student on demand or at the insistence of a tutor.

It is necessary to create an environment conducive to learning. Physically, the learning centre needs to be an uncrowded spacious area where students can have privacy for self-study. It is also necessary to provide students with an area for interactive work with other students working on the same courses. All unnecessary distractions should be removed. (In KISC at one time, we had the computers in the Learning Centre because we felt that they were part of the learning resources and should be immediately available to the students. They proved to be too much of a distraction and have now been removed to a room nearby the Learning Centres.)

7.3.2 TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY involves the self-study materials. It would be useful to have a variety of materials involving different approaches and levels of difficulty, but this depends on the correspondence school or source of the material. In-house production of materials is too expensive in terms of time, people and money.

Students benefit from peer interaction and enrichment through group activities. These can be provided for through electives, that is, group activities in subjects not necessarily part of the academic curriculum required by a student's home country. These group activities can also aim to take advantage of an international student mix such as that at KISC and allow for interaction with the community and the unique learning environment surrounding the school.

Motivation is important in a self-study system. This can be encouraged through external pressures. In KISC we use a system of contracts individually agreed between study supervisors and students. Failure to meet the contract can be punished, fulfilment of the contract can be rewarded.
7.3.3 **PEOPLE**

In each of the three types of people involved in an internationally supported self-study system there is a change of role to be made from that usually found in a conventional school.

Students have to learn how to plan their work and to work largely unsupervised. They seem to adjust to the system rapidly. Able students are able to use all the resources provided and can seek help from resources other than tutors. For them, tutor contact time tends to be prime learning time. Less able students have more difficulty discerning when to seek tutor help and thus need more active tutor supervision.

Tutors have to adjust to a role which assumes that of co-learner with the students. This can place them in a more vulnerable position than that of the normal authoritative, "fount-of-all-knowledge" role. They have to learn to work in a team situation as they share supervision of a learning centre with other tutors. They also have to learn to interpret a whole new set of non-verbal messages from students who are working in study carrels instead of desks. Finally they have to decide on conduct, content and timing in small group tutorials, this is not necessarily the same skill as conducting a traditional classroom lesson.

Parents need to make an effort to understand that a supported self-study system is different from a traditional approach. They need to negotiate their role in the system with the school. The surrounding community has much to offer a small school with restricted staff.
Appendix X

Sample and Discussion of Contracts

Three major changes were made in the design and in the use of the contract system during the first three years of KISC.

Figures 1A - 1D illustrate the system used for the first five months. Each week each student was issued with a timetable blank (Fig: 1A). This was completed by the student with the help of his study supervisor during the first twenty minutes of the Monday morning programme. At the same time, subject blanks (Figs: B, C & D) were completed by the study supervisor, in consultation with the student, detailing the work planned in each subject for that week. During the Monday morning session of the following week, the actual work done by the student was noted by the study supervisor on the right hand side of each subject blank. The student and supervisor then completed the comment blanks (if they wished) at the bottom of the last sheet (Fig: 1D). (Figures 1A - 1D)

The system was reviewed at staff meetings from time to time. We decided to drop the weekly timetable as few students kept to their original plan of work. They appeared to need a more flexible approach which allowed them to adjust their work programme on a daily basis. We also felt the need to involve each student more directly in the making of his or her work contract. This led us to develop the form shown in Figure 2A.

This contract form was completed by each student personally and then shown to their study supervisor for agreement. The student contracted to complete specified tasks by agreed times each week. They had timetables which showed when they had group programmes to attend but no other times were detailed. In addition, I introduced a subject comment sheet (Figs: 2B & 2C) requesting each student to complete this questionnaire each week for a subject of their choice.

These subject comment sheets proved to be very unpopular with the students. After their initial curiosity had been satisfied, the students began to resent the time taken to complete the forms. I felt that the comments could be very useful but were not worth the negative feelings caused and hence quickly dropped the idea. We also found that many of the students could not handle the freedom of time given as to when and what to study and only a minority regularly completed their work within the target time. The staff therefore decided to return to a system which provided for a more structured working day for the students. The system (with a few minor variations) which is presently in use was designed.

The students now plan their week's timetable at the start of
the term for the whole of that term. With the assistance of
their study supervisors they decide which sessions of the
week they will use to study each subject. Thus if they decide
to study Mathematics during the first period of Monday
morning then they study Mathematics every first period on
Mondays. The work to be completed each day is written in a
contract book (a hard-backed exercise book). If the work is
not completed during the scheduled study session then it is
done as homework that evening. The work is signed off by the
subject tutor as it is completed. Only work satisfactorily
completed within the contracted time is awarded the full
point level score of two. Each student, in consultation with
his or her study supervisor, agrees a points total to aim for
each week. Figure 3A shows a sample page from one student's
work. This student had aimed for a total of 26 points that
week and actually attained 31 points.

Each Friday the student completes a contract points record
card (Fig: 3B) and these are kept by the study supervisors.
These records provide the tutors with a simple comparison of
the amount of effort/time/progress being put into each
subject.

When this system was first introduced the students met their
supervisors only on Monday mornings. This did not appear to
the staff to give them sufficient control over work being
done and, in particular, parents were concerned that it was
not always clear to them what work their children had to
complete as homework. Just recently we have introduced daily
15-minute study supervisor sessions. Tutors, parents and
students now all seem satisfied and we look forward to a
period without change in the system.
<table>
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<td>Home</td>
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Fig: 1A

254
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<td>1. EARLY DAYS IN AUSTRALIA</td>
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<td>2. GRIDE ON THE GLOBE</td>
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<td><strong>WRITING SECTION 1</strong></td>
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<td>1. STORY IN AN AIRPLANE</td>
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**Fig: 1B**

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Fig: 1C

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<td><strong>1. COMPOSITION, SEC. 9.</strong></td>
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**STUDENT'S COMMENTS**

I think I am doing quite well but my writing needs to be neater.

Mr. House is a very good teacher and he always marks my work well.

**SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS**

= Is working alone on his course of study.

Good progress this week.

U.H.

3/13/87.

---

Fig: 1D

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## Contract for Week Ending 4/9/87

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**Points Total**: 28

Signed: [Signature]

Contract completed successfully: 2 points per subject
Contract not completed: 0 points per subject
Contract exceeded: +2 points per unit/workcard

Fig: 2A
SUBJECT COMMENT SHEET

Comments for week ending: ........................................
Student's Name: ........................................... Subject: .............................

Please complete as much of this form as possible before meeting your Study
Supervisor.

Current week's study: Unit number(s): Unit 5, 6 ........................................
Title(s) or unit(s): Energy Types, Energy chains ........................................

Name(s) of any additional resource material used ........................................

1. On the following scales tick the box which most closely represents your
   feelings about your work with the self-study material on this subject
   this week.
   (a) How difficult did you find the work?
      very easy easy average difficult very difficult

   (b) How interesting?
      boring uninteresting average interesting very interesting

   (c) How confident do you feel about your understanding of the topic?
      confused uncertain fairly confident confident very confident

2. If you used additional resource material, how helpful did you find it?
   (Tick one box)
      very helpful helpful fairly helpful unhelpful very unhelpful

3. Please indicate which of the following might have helped you understand
   the topic better. (Tick all the appropriate boxes)
      Simpler explanation ........................................ More practice exercises ✔
      Fuller explanation ........................................ More practical work

Fig: 2B

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4. What sort of help/activity was NOT provided that you would have appreciated? Please be as specific as possible.

5. How much time did you have with the subject tutor this week?
   (Tick one box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>too little</th>
<th>barely enough</th>
<th>enough</th>
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   Please give the approximate total contact time with the subject tutor this week: 120 minutes.

6. What features of this contact with the subject tutor were helpful to your work this week? (Please tick all the appropriate boxes)
   (a) Being able to check explanations in self-study materials
   (b) Receiving a different explanation of a difficulty encountered
   (c) Working on an area with which you have difficulty, through one of the following activities suggested by the tutor.
      (i) spoken activities
      (ii) written activities
      (iii) spoken and written activities
      (iv) working together on a practical task
   (d) Extending work already done through various sorts of activities suggested by the tutor
   (e) Receiving comment on the quality of your work

7. Please feel free to write here any suggestions you have which might make your learning and our teaching more effective.

8. For students using courses not written in English. Did you have any difficulty communicating with the subject tutor this week? (Tick one box)
   (Tick one box)
   Yes
   No

Fig: 2C
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