

**SCOTTISH YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY 1987 (SPRING)  
FIRST SWEEP SURVEY OF THE 1985-1986 S4 COHORT  
TECHNICAL REPORT**

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# Scottish Young Peoples Survey 1987 (Spring)

## Technical Report

### Introduction

The Scottish Young Peoples Survey (SYPS) is conducted in Scotland by the Centre for Educational Sociology (CES), University of Edinburgh, in conjunction with the Scottish Education Department (SED). It is a postal survey in which questionnaires are initially sent to young people approximately nine months after they have left school or have completed their fourth year in secondary school.

The 1987 Survey is one of a series of such surveys whose broad purpose and design are alike, but which differ in detail. This survey was funded jointly by the Scottish Education Department, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), the Industry Department for Scotland (IDS) and the Department of Employment (DE).

### Population and Sample

The target population of the Scottish Young Peoples Survey of 1987 consists of three overlapping groups: a school-year group of people who had been in fourth year of secondary school (S4) in the session 1985-86; a school-leaver group of people who had left from any school year in the same session; and a school-year group of people who had been in S4 in the session 1985-86 *and* at one of the nineteen Scottish schools which started to pilot the MSC Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) in 1984.

The strict definition of the term 'left school in 1985/6' is that the pupil was in school in census week of 1985 (third week of September), but had not returned and had not signalled a clear intention to return by census week of 1986.

The 1987 Survey is a pseudo-random 10 per cent sample of the target population, obtained by choosing those born on the 1st, 11th or 21st of any month, together with a 100% sample of pupils in S4 from the nineteen Scottish TVEI schools described above.

Table 1 shows the size of the sample, split by the three groups.

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The names, addresses and other details of the sample were provided by the secondary schools of Scotland, who filled in forms sent to them by the SED in the autumn of 1986. This was the first sample collection exercise carried out under a modified SDF procedure in which the forms were preprinted for the schools.

### The Questionnaires

The questionnaires were designed to avoid asking inappropriate questions of the respondents. For this reason, five different questionnaire types were used:

1. The J questionnaire was sent to all those who left school in 1985/6 from S4.
2. The K questionnaire was sent to all those who left school in 1985/6 from S5.
3. The L questionnaire was sent to all those who left school in 1985/6 from S6.
4. The Q questionnaire was sent to all those in S4 in 1985/6 who stayed on into S5.
5. The T questionnaire was sent to all those who were in S4 in 1985/6 at the 19 TVEI schools, except for the 10% of pupils already included in the Cohort sample.

Thus the Q questionnaire was sent exclusively to Cohort members, including some who were also members of the TVEI sample but not members of the Leavers sample. The K and L questionnaires were sent exclusively to Leaver members, and the T questionnaire was sent exclusively to TVEI members. The J questionnaire was sent to any combination of Cohort, Leaver and TVEI members, being designed for S4 leavers in the 10% national sample.

In order to increase the range of questions asked without unduly lengthening the questionnaire, each of the questionnaire types was divided into two randomly

allocated versions.

The number of pages in each questionnaire is as follows :

- J 11 pages
- K 14 pages
- L 15 pages
- Q 14 pages
- T 12 pages

Details of the contents of the questionnaires are given in (1).

### **Allocating the Sample**

The sample collected from the school was, to the best of our knowledge, a pseudo-random sample of the populations described above. However, the issued sample was different from the ideal target sample. Some of the information from the school was inaccurate. People with overseas addresses (with the exception of BFPO) were not part of the issued sample, although they are retained as unachieved members of the target sample. Errors of definition that were discovered during the survey process have been corrected, so Table 1 show the correct target sample, to the best of our knowledge.

### **Questionnaires, versions and treatment**

The questionnaires described above were allocated to sample members according to the information supplied by the schools on the SDF forms. The J questionnaire was further divided: Non-qualified S4 leavers were issued with the same questionnaires as qualified S4 leavers but their treatment differed in that they received one fewer reminder postcard and one additional readministration. Table 2 summarises this information.

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Table 3 shows the issued and target samples by questionnaire definition group and by version. Since the content of J3 is the same as that of J1, and similarly for J2 and J4, these have been grouped together.

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### Conduct of the Survey and Response

The survey was despatched on 21 March 1987. The reminder procedure for J3 and J4 and for the rest differed, and is depicted in Table 4 below.

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where PC indicates that a postcard requesting a response was sent, and 'Readmin' indicates that a new questionnaire and a covering letter were sent.

Several kinds of "anomalies" occurred during the conduct of the survey, which had to be dealt with. The first occurred when the information supplied by the school from which the questionnaire type was derived was in error. If this error meant that information about the respondent was missing (e.g. not asking about SCE examinations) a new questionnaire was despatched.

Table 5 shows the number of cases for which this remedial action had to be taken and also the cases which were detected to be wrong, but for which no action was taken, either because the survey team were unaware of the problem, or because there was no need to ask for any more information.

In the table, the left hand letter shows the type of questionnaire initially sent to the respondents, and the right hand letter shows the type they should have received.

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Another anomaly occurred when the questionnaire was returned unopened since the respondent was not (apparently) at the address given. In this case, help was sought via a contact-sheet exercise or from the Careers Offices connected with the relevant schools, who supplied updated addresses where they could. The following tables show the non-contacts who were identified, and how successful the tracing efforts were. Table 6 shows this by questionnaire group, and Table 7 shows it by survey.

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**Table 6 here**  
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**Table 7 here**  
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Other anomalies that were discovered during the survey process were: 'Duplicate names', where two schools sent in the name of the same person, and 'Ineligibles', people who were shown not to be in the target sample when their questionnaire was returned. The majority of these were pupils who had returned to school after S5.

Details of non replies, first by questionnaire type and then by survey group are shown in Table 8 and Table 9.

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**Table 8 here**  
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**Table 9 here**  
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The final response rate achieved, as at 9th October 1987, is shown in Table 10 by questionnaire type, and in Table 11 by survey group. (The survey did not close until then because one particular school had administrative problems in completing the Sample Detail Forms.)

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**Table 10 here**  
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**Table 11 here**  
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## **Weighting**

Two sets of weighting were supplied: preliminary weighting for Pass 1 data, and final weighting for Pass 2 data. The algorithm for both sets was the same, with the data supplied to the algorithm being changed:

1. for preliminary weighting, Pass 1 assessments of achievement were used;  
for final weighting Pass 2 values were used
2. for preliminary weighting, the population figures from the 1983-84 were used; for final weighting, the correct population figures, relating to 1985/6 leavers or fourth-year pupils, were used. (The population figures for 1985/6 were made available in March 1988.)

Within the database a special record was created to hold the population figures for leavers within each cell of a table defined by sex and VTOTSCEP (a fourteen-category variable summarising the level of SCE attainment), and the population figures for the post-fourth-year cohort within each cell of a table defined by sex and VTOT4SCP (a ten-category variable summarising fourth-year O-grade attainment).

With the introduction of Standard Grade examinations in 1986, which are not entirely equivalent to O Grades, it became necessary to define a working equivalence for the purpose of weighting. For leavers, the population figures are obtained directly from the Scottish Education Department, and Table 12 shows the figures supplied:

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Since the population figure for grades for 6 and 7 of Standard grade were so small, these were collapsed together with no awards in the weighting procedure.

For the Cohort, figures are derived partly from the Scottish Examination Board annual report, supplemented with figures supplied directly from the SEB and the SED. Table 13 shows these figures.

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**Table 13 here**  
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The achieved sample of leavers was divided into 28 categories based on sex and VTOTSCEP. The achieved sample of post-fourth-year cohort was divided into 20 categories based on sex and VTOT4SCP. The cases in the database were processed to count the number of people in each of the categories defined above. Two new variables LVRRATE and CHRRATE were calculated using the following algorithms:

$$\text{LVRRATE} = \frac{\text{total number of leavers in sample}}{\text{total number of leavers in population}}$$

$$\text{CHRRATE} = \frac{\text{total number of cohort in sample}}{\text{total number of cohort in population}}$$

Weighting values for each of the categories were then calculated using the formula:

$$\text{Wght}(s,g,t) = \text{S-rate} * \text{Pop}(s,g,t) / \text{Ach}(s,g,t)$$

where:

**s** is survey population – leaver or post-fourth-year cohort

**g** is gender – male or female

**t** is achievement – i.e. category of VTOTSCEP or VTOT4SCP

**S-rate** is LVRRATE or CHRRATE

**Pop** is number in population

**Ach** is number in achieved sample

These weights were calculated for all cells.



The whole database was processed again, applying the weights calculated above to two variables, VREWGHTL and VREWGHTC, corresponding to the sex and level of VTOTSCEP or VTOT4SCP of each sample member.

A similar method was employed for the calculation of weights for the TVEI sample members. Population figures for each of the five TVEI "regions" were supplied by SED and used in an algorithm modified from that shown above for the Leaver and Cohort sample members. Weighting categories for TVEI sample members were collapsed to five only (except for one region collapsed to three) because of the small numbers involved. A weighting variable VREWGHTT was produced. Table 14 shows the population figures for the TVEI sample.

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Table 14 here  
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Table 1

Sample: Cohort, Leavers and TVEI

Leaver Total	7711
S4 Cohort Total	7882
TVEI Total	3662
Leaver only	4789
S4 Cohort only	4748
TVEI only	3308
Leaver & S4 Cohort	2780
S4 Cohort & TVEI	212
Leaver, S4 Cohort & TVEI	142
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Total in survey	15979
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Table 2

**Allocation of versions and treatments**

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J1 + J2 = qualified S4 leavers

J3 + J4 = non-qualified S4 leavers

J3 + J4 received one postcard and two readministrations

Everyone else received two postcards and one readministration

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Table 3

## Sample by Questionnaire Definition Group

Quest Group	Issued Sample Version			Target Sample Version		
	1/3	2/4	Total	1/3	2/4	Total
S4 leaver	1493	1492	2985	1482	1482	2964
S5 leaver	1505	1504	3009	1445	1424	2869
S6 leaver	975	974	1949	946	946	1892
S4 stayer	2482	2481	4963	2478	2468	4946
Extra TVEI	1661	1660	3321	1656	1652	3308
	8116	8111	16227	8007	7972	15979

Table 4

**Dates of Postal Despatch**

	J	K	L	O	T
19 March	Despatch	Despatch	Despatch	Despatch	Despatch
31 March	PC1 J3+4	-	-	-	-
02 April	-	PC1	PC1	PC1	PC1
03 April	PC1 J1+2	-	-	-	-
23 April	PC2 J1+2	PC2	PC2	PC2	PC2
23 April	R1 J3+4	-	-	-	-
30 April	Readmin2 J3+J4	Readmin1	Readmin1	Readmin1	Readmin1

Table 5

**Wrong Questionnaires**

	<b>New questionnaire sent and returned</b>	<b>New questionnaire sent, not returned</b>	<b>New questionnaire not sent</b>
J/Q	9	19	26
K/J	0	2	0
L/K	0	3	4
Q/L	0	0	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>

Table 6

## Tracing non-contacts by Questionnaire Group

	S4L	S5	S6	S4S	TVEI	Total
Target	2964	2869	1892	4946	3308	15979
<b>Presumed to be at original address:</b>						
Ordinary returns	2079	2088	1499	4202	2487	12355
No response	657	562	279	535	619	2652
Refusals	37	39	12	21	15	124
Total	2773	2689	1790	4758	3121	15131
<b>Second address assumed good:</b>						
Questionnaire returned	36	33	16	58	45	188
No response	50	54	21	38	43	206
Refusal	1	3	0	1	0	5
Total	87	90	37	97	88	399
<b>Failure to obtain contact:</b>						
At second address	20	22	2	16	20	80
At original address	84	68	63	75	79	369
Total	104	90	65	91	99	449
<b>Percentages:</b>						
Addresses chased up as a percentage of target	6.4	6.3	5.4	3.8	5.7	5.3
Addresses obtained as % of those tried	45.6	50.0	36.3	51.6	47.1	47.1
Questionnaires returned as % of addresses tried	18.9	18.3	15.7	30.9	24.1	22.2
Questionnaires returned as % of addresses obtained	41.4	36.7	43.2	59.8	51.1	47.1

Table 7

## Tracing non-contacts by Survey Group

	Cohort	Leaver	TVEI
Target	7882	7725	3662
<b>Presumed to be at original address:</b>			
Ordinary returns	6266	5666	2755
No response	1183	1498	681
Refusals	57	88	18
Total	7506	7252	3454
<b>Second address assumed good:</b>			
Questionnaire returned	94	85	51
No response	87	125	46
Refusal	2	4	0
Total	183	214	97
<b>Failure to obtain contact:</b>			
At second address	35	44	20
At original address	158	215	91
Total	193	259	111
<b>Percentages:</b>			
Addresses chased up as a percentage of target	4.8	6.1	5.7
Addresses obtained as % of those tried	48.7	45.2	46.6
Questionnaires returned as % of addresses tried	25.0	18.0	24.5
Questionnaires returned as % of addresses obtained	51.4	39.7	52.6



Table 8

## Non-replies by Questionnaire Group

	S4L	S5L	S6L	S4S	TVEI	Total
<b>Not in sample:</b>						
Duplicate	3	3	1	5	3	15
Ineligible	25	135	56	7	10	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>Non contact:</b>						
Deceased	1	1	0	1	1	4
Abroad	5	2	19	15	1	42
Undelivered	99	88	46	76	98	407
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<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>453</b>
<b>% of target</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Others</b>						
Refusal	37	41	12	21	14	125
No response	707	616	300	573	662	2858
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<b>Total</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>2983</b>
<b>% of target</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>18.7</b>
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<b>Total non achieved</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>3436</b>
<b>% of target</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>

Table 9

## Non-replies by Survey Group

	Cohort	Leaver	TVEI
<b>Non contact:</b>			
Deceased	2	2	1
Abroad	20	26	1
Undelivered	173	233	110
	---	---	---
Total	195	261	112
% of target	2.5	3.4	3.1
<b>Others</b>			
Refusal	57	90	17
No response	1270	1623	727
	----	----	----
Total	1327	1713	744
% of target	16.8	22.2	20.3
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Total non achieved	1522	1974	856
% of target	19.3	25.6	23.4

Table 10

## Response by Questionnaire Group

	Number	Percentage of Target Sample	Percentage of Contact
S4L	2115	71.4	74.0
S5L	2121	74.0	76.3
S6L	1515	80.1	82.9
S4S	4260	86.1	87.7
TVEI	2532	76.5	78.9
Total	12543	78.5	80.8

Table 11

Response by Survey Group

	Number		Percentage of Target Sample		Percentage of Contact
Cohort	6360	(7822)	82.3	80.6	82.7
Leaver	5751	(7215)	73.0	74.5	77.0
TVEI	2806		76.6		79.0

Table 12

## Population figures used in weighting leavers

Highest SCE Qualification	Male	Female	Total
No SCE award	10492	8211	18703
SG 6/7	208	182	390
SG 4/5, OG 4/5 or D/E	4179	3856	8035
SG 1-3, OG 1-3 or A-C:			
1 pass	4329	3483	7812
2 passes	2906	2584	5490
3 passes	2109	2290	4399
4 passes	1696	1752	3448
5 passes	1368	1348	2716
6+passes	2147	1741	3888
Higher grade A-C:			
1 pass	2434	3054	5488
2 passes	1832	2568	4400
3 passes	1763	2316	4079
4 passes	1960	2292	4252
5 passes	2654	2548	5202
6+passes	1758	1815	3573
<b>Total</b>	<b>41835</b>	<b>40040</b>	<b>81875</b>

**Note:**

SG = Standard Grade

OG = O Grade

Table 13

## Population figures used in weighting the cohort

Highest SCE Qualification	Male	Female	Total
No SCE award	9307	6635	15942
SG 6/7	370	329	699
SG 4/5, OG 4/5 or D/E	5234	4823	10057
SG 1-3, OG 1-3 or A-C:			
1 pass	5279	4556	9835
2 passes	3828	3469	7297
3 passes	3006	3290	6296
4 passes	2617	2985	5602
5 passes	2421	2767	5188
6 passes	2673	2917	5590
7 passes	3625	3901	7526
8+passes	3673	4561	8234

Table 14

## Population figures used in weighting the TVEI sample

Highest SCE Qualification	Region 1		Region 2		Region 3		Region 4		Region 5	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
No SCE award SG 4/7, OG 4/5	109	106	87	68	180	126	150	134	242	145
SG 1-3, OG 1-3:										
1 pass	56	55	48	32	68	44	23	25	66	71
2 passes	27	40	27	35	46	42	17	7	40	49
3 passes	27	32	33	26	25	47	10	12	30	35
4 passes	22	32	20	20	32	25	9	13	25	34
5 passes	22	38	13	15	30	26	1	1	25	28
6 passes	23	25	12	30	40	43	3	7	23	38
7 passes	32	28	15	18	57	49	1	3	52	46
8+passes	58	70	18	14	14	28	0	0	19	19