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* TOPS TRAINEES *
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The sample

1. Among members of the NCDS cohort who were interviewed at age 23 there were 273 (2.2%) who had done a TOPS course. Fifty-eight per cent of these were men and 42% were women. Four men and three women had been on two TOPS courses, and for these people the figures quoted in this paper refer throughout to the first course they attended. No-one had been on more than two TOPS courses.

Career before TOPS

2. Table 1 reports the age of the sample at the start of their TOPS course. A few people said they were under eighteen when they started, but the large majority were at least nineteen. The average age of entry for women was a little below that for men, presumably because women were increasingly likely to leave the labour market as they grew older.

3. Ninety-six per cent of both male and female TOPS trainees had held at least one full time job before their TOPS course, and 67% of men and 65% of women had been unemployed at least once before going on TOPS, though not necessarily immediately before entry. Table 2 shows that many TOPS trainees had very interrupted careers between leaving full time education and their interview at age 23. No less than three fifths of trainees held four or more different jobs between these two dates, and one fifth held seven or more. Three fifths were unemployed at least twice (1). Women trainees held on average slightly fewer jobs and were unemployed fewer times than men, probably because more of them spent some time out of the labour market, but as the sample was small (159 men and 114 women) these differences did not reach statistical significance.

4. NCDS IV does not contain any information specifically on the last job which trainees held before starting their TOPS course, but for those who were employed at some time before going on TOPS details can be given of their first job after leaving full time education. As Table 3 shows, for four fifths of men this was a manual job, the majority skilled but including 26% in unskilled or partly skilled occupations. In contrast 74% of the women held non-manual jobs, most of which were in social class III. The only other group of any size was the fifth of women trainees who held partly skilled jobs. Classified by OPCS occupation group (Table 4), half of women entrants were first employed in clerical and related jobs and a further fifth in selling. The largest occupation group for the first jobs of male trainees was 12, processing, making, repairing and related (metal and electrical), which accounted for more than one third; apart from this their occupations were spread across several groups.

5. Table 5 shows that five industrial divisions accounted for the first employment of 85% of male trainees. In order of importance these were metal goods, engineering and vehicles industries (21%), distribution, hotels and catering (20%), other manufacturing industries (16%), other services (15%), and construction (13%). More than a third of women trainees had their first employment in distribution, hotels and catering, and a further quarter in other services; the rest were distributed among several industrial divisions.

6. For 85% of TOPS trainees their TOPS course was the first

training course they had ever done. Fourteen per cent had previously attended one other training course in conjunction with their employment, and 2% had done two courses before going on TOPS.

7. Table 6 shows that the majority of TOPS trainees had first left full time education at 16. A quarter of men and over a third of women had stayed on beyond the minimum leaving age, but because of the size of the sample the difference between the sexes was not statistically significant. Fifty-nine per cent of trainees had O level GCE (2); this number comprised 54% of men, including 20% of men with five or more passes, and 67% of women, including 31% with five or more passes. In addition 7% of male and 16% of female trainees possessed A level GCE (2).

8. Only twenty-seven per cent of women trainees and 11% of men were married when they began their course, and very few (8% of women and 7% of men) had already got a child.

Characteristics of TOPS courses

9. The two main locations for TOPS course were in colleges, where nearly half took place, and at Government Skill Centres, which accounted for almost another two fifths (see Table 7). A handful were also held at employer's training centres and at Industry Training Centres. Men were much more likely than women to attend courses at Government Skill Centres and women were much more likely than men to be based at college.

10. This division between the sexes is apparent in Table 8, which records in some detail the content of their courses. Eighty-eight

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men and only one woman received training in engineering trades; 72 women trained in secretarial and clerical subjects, and only one man. Men also predominated in building and road transport and women in catering, though the numbers involved here were small. The sexes were more evenly balanced in the various computer related courses and in management and business studies, though within this field men more often opted for accountancy and book-keeping.

11. The NCDS IV question "How long did the course last?" was ambiguous as it could be taken to refer either to the full length of the course or to the time which the respondent actually spent on it (3). Table 9 gives the answers which were recorded, but their interpretation is not wholly clear. Just over half of the courses were said to last between three and six months, and another quarter more than six months. Women's courses lasted slightly longer than men's, but the difference was not statistically significant.

12. Two fifths of men and three quarters of women gained a qualification on their TOPS course, and details of these are given in Table 10. More than half of the women's qualifications were RSA examinations. A handful of trainees gained other widely recognised qualifications such as City and Guilds, but the majority of men's qualifications and many of the women's were classified as "other". Presumably a lot of these were certificates of course completion and such like and not all trainees may have counted them as "proper" qualifications. Not surprisingly, as Table 11 demonstrates, trainees were much more likely to gain a qualification if they pursued secretarial, clerical or business studies. Qualifications were also more likely on college based

courses (74%) than on courses at Government Skill Centres (40%), and were least likely of all on courses held at other locations (25%). Trainees with 0 levels were a little more likely than trainees without 0 levels to gain a qualification on their course, but the difference was not large (60% versus 50%) and did not reach significance.

13. Courses based at colleges lasted slightly longer than courses at Government Skill Centres, but courses at other locations were the shortest of all: half of these lasted three months or less. As would be predicted, the longer the course, the more likely it was that it lead to a qualification.

Incomplete courses

14. Of the trainees who were not still on TOPS when interviewed, 13% had failed to complete their course. Men were more likely to drop out than women, the figures being 16% and 9% respectively. Table 12 reports the unprompted reasons which they gave. Six left because they either failed the course or found it too hard, and a further six left because they found a job. Illness or accident was the cause of departure for six more, and the remaining reasons were various. In all only nine of the 32 who left early left for reasons directly related to the course, either on account of its difficulty or because it did not meet their vocational needs.

15. Ninety-one per cent of trainees based in college completed their course compared to 84% at Government Skill Centres and 81% based elsewhere, though numbers were not large enough for these differences to reach statistical significance. This was reflected

in the completion rates for the different subjects (Table 13), for though sample numbers in several of the subject groups were very small, the completion rate on secretarial or clerical courses was significantly higher than the completion rate on engineering courses. The probability of dropping out from a course also fell as the number of O levels which the trainee had increased, though once more sample numbers were not large enough for statistical significance.

Career after TOPS

16. Two hundred and fifty-one trainees had left TOPS by the time they were interviewed. Table 14 shows that among these only two thirds of men and three fifths of women were in employment at age 23. Thirty per cent of the men and 19% of the women were unemployed at this time, and 14% of the women were housewives. In total, 14% of male and 22% of female trainees held no job at all between leaving the course and interview. Seventy per cent of the men and 56% of the women had at least one spell of unemployment during this time.

17. Clearly, the earlier the TOPS course started the greater the chances that the trainee would have at least one job during the period between TOPS and interview, as Table 15 confirms. In contrast, it seems from this table that the chances of having a spell of unemployment at some time during this period were largely independent of the date the course started, though numbers in the different subgroups were not large. This second measure may therefore provide a better criterion of progress after TOPS.

18. Table 16 shows the economic activity of TOPS trainees 12, 18 and 24 months after the start of their course (4). The number of respondents for whom there was information decreased as the interval from the start of the TOPS course grew, for the date in question became progressively more likely to be after the date of interview. Once again there was a problem of small numbers, but it appears that the chances of having a job or of avoiding unemployment did not improve as the interval from the start of the TOPS course increased. In other words, it *did not* seem to be the general picture for trainees to have an initial period of unemployment after they left their course which, once they found a job, was followed by stable employment. On the contrary, it seems that some trainees had continuing problems. Very few trainees were involved in other government special schemes after leaving TOPS.

19. Trainees, especially women, were a little more likely to avoid unemployment after TOPS if they gained a qualification on their course, but the difference between the two groups was not great and was not statistically significant. Having O levels also helped. Table 17 shows the post-TOPS progress of people who had studied different subjects. Many of the sample numbers were very small, but it is clear that women who had studied secretarial, clerical or business subjects were more successful in avoiding unemployment than men who had been trained in engineering or building trades. This was partly because some women trainees later left the labour market altogether, but another cause must have been the greater demand for workers with their skills, for at the end of the seventies and in the early eighties the engineering and building industries were in recession.

20. For some trainees their TOPS course provided further training in a field they had already entered; for others it may have involved a change of direction. Tables 18, 19 and 20 are based only on trainees who held at least one job both before and after their TOPS course, and they compare their first job on entering the labour market with the job they held at age 23, or with their last job if they were not in work when interviewed (5). It would be very misleading to attribute all the differences between the first job and the current or last job to the intervention of TOPS. School leavers typically occupy a much narrower range of jobs than adult workers, and the transition to the adult labour market is influenced by many factors, some of which were discussed in NCDS IV Working Paper 31. More pedantically, because NCDS IV contains details only of the first and latest job and not of the jobs inbetween, it is not possible to tell whether any rise or fall in status or change of direction took place before or after going on TOPS, and thus we cannot know for sure whether any such change was mediated by TOPS. All this said, it is nonetheless of interest to compare the first and latest job of TOPS trainees.

21. Table 18 shows that for males trainees there was relatively little change in social class between their first and latest job. Any differences that were observed could have been accounted for by the larger number for whom there was no information about the first job. It has already been shown that these men had experienced a lot of unemployment (Table 2), and this unemployment might normally be expected to lead to occupational downgrading for a number of them (see NCDS IV Working Papers 21 and 31). TOPS therefore may have helped some of these men to maintain the skill level at which

they were employed.

22. Women trainees showed an overall rise in social class, with an increase in the number in white collar jobs and a fall in the number in partly skilled manual jobs. Numbers are too small to permit an assessment of whether this rise was in excess of what would normally be expected of women whose careers were not interrupted by spells out of the labour market. However, the link with the content of their courses and the RSA qualifications which many of them obtained is clear, and again we must bear in mind that this rise in status took place despite substantial unemployment. It is probable therefore that TOPS helped the careers of a number of women.

23. Comparing the occupation group of the first and latest job (Table 19) it seems that for men there was a shift away from manufacturing jobs and into a wider range of occupations. Two groups in particular fell in size: these were group 12, processing, making, repairing and related (metal and electrical) which accounted for 34% of male trainees' first jobs and 22% of their latest jobs, and group 11, materials processing, making and repairing (excluding metal and electrical), where the figures were 14% and 5% respectively. There was also a drop in the numbers employed in professional and related occupations in science, engineering, technology and similar fields. Two groups increased in size more than others: group 14, construction, mining and related not identified elsewhere, which grew from 5% to 12%, and group 15, transport operating, materials moving and storing and related, which grew from 6% to 23%.

24. These changes are reflected in the industrial distribution of the first and latest job (Table 20). The number of men employed in SIC divisions 3 and 4, the metals goods, engineering and vehicles industries and other manufacturing industries, fell, as did the number employed in division 9, other services. At the same time there was an increase in SIC divisions 2 and 5, which include the mining and construction industries, and in transport and communication, division 7.

25. These changes are compatible with the decline in manufacturing industry which was taking place in the second half of the seventies, and also with the age limits on entry to some occupations which would have precluded 16 year olds from taking them as their first job. The link between the changes and the content of some TOPS courses is evident; for example there were courses in both building and road transport. However more than half of male trainees attended courses in various branches of engineering, and in this context the fall in the number employed in occupation group 12 and in industrial division 3 needs explanation. There were 70 men who took TOPS courses in engineering and had a job afterwards. Less than half of them had a skilled manual job as their latest job when they were interviewed; eight were in non-manual occupations and 28 were in partly skilled or unskilled jobs. Only 19 of the 70 were employed in SIC division 3, the metal goods, engineering and vehicles industries. Of the 36 who were employed before TOPS and whose first job was skilled manual, 20 were still employed at this level at age 23, and 14 had taken partly skilled or unskilled jobs.

26. The changes between the first and latest jobs of women trainees could be predicted from the courses which they took. The number employed in selling and in manufacturing jobs fell, while more got clerical and related jobs and jobs in catering and other personal services (Table 19). In terms of industries, the biggest change was a move away from division 6, distribution, hotels and catering and into division 9, other services (Table 20). Of the 54 women who studied secretarial or clerical subjects and were employed after TOPS, all but five had, or had last had, white collar jobs when they were interviewed. For 39 of them this job was classified in the occupation group "clerical and related".

Trainees' views of TOPS

27. Trainees were asked how they thought their course had affected their long term job prospects and were given pre-coded replies to choose from. These are analysed only for trainees who had left TOPS by the time of interview.

28. According to Table 21, 42% said that TOPS had improved their prospects a lot, 24% said that it had improved their prospects a little, 28% said it had made no difference, and 4% said they would have been better off if they had not done the course. Women were a little more enthusiastic than men, and this was reflected in the fact that 47% of those who had done college based courses said their prospects had been improved a lot, compared to 36% of people who had attended Government Skill Centres. Trainees who obtained a qualification on their course were significantly more satisfied than others: 52% said that TOPS had improved their prospects a

lot, compared to 30% of trainees who did not gain a qualification. Not surprisingly, drop-outs from courses were unlikely to think that TOPS had improved their prospects (Table 23).

29. Table 22 analyses these opinions by the subject of the course. Numbers in most subject groups are very small, but there was a statistically significant difference between trainees on secretarial or clerical courses and trainees in engineering: 51% of the former said their prospects had been improved a lot compared to 31% of the latter.

30. Men who felt TOPS had improved their prospects a lot were no more likely than others to have held a job afterwards (Table 23) - it was shown in Table 15 that having a job after TOPS in fact depended heavily on the date at which the course was begun. However there was a significant difference in the likelihood of unemployment between men who said that TOPS had improved their prospects a lot and men who said that TOPS had made no difference or that they would have been better off not doing it: 64% of the former had at least one spell of unemployment between leaving TOPS and interview, but the figure for the latter was 84%.

31. Significantly more of the women who said that TOPS had improved their prospects a lot were employed at some time between leaving TOPS and interview than of the women who said that TOPS had made no difference or that they would have been better off without it. The difference between the sexes in this respect is probably explained by women leaving the labour market for domestic reasons. Similarly, fewer women who said that TOPS had improved their

prospects a lot had some unemployment after leaving TOPS, as compared to women with less favourable views.

Summary and conclusions

32. This study is based on a small sample, and analysis is hampered by this fact. Nevertheless the availability of information on careers before and after the TOPS course makes it a useful exercise.

33. TOPS trainees have not been compared with other members of the NCDS cohort, for two reasons. First, this would require considerably more computing effort, an effort which would be disproportionate to the importance of the topic within the current project. Second, it is not immediately obvious what the appropriate comparison group would be: this would indeed depend on the purpose for which the comparison was made.

34. Nonetheless from the knowledge we have of the NCDS cohort it is possible to make some statements about the particular characteristics of TOPS trainees. They were more likely than young people of the same age to have been unemployed, though unemployment was not a universal precondition of entry to the scheme. Their employment histories tended to be very interrupted, often with several spells of unemployment alternating with periods in work. Women trainees were less likely than other women to leave the labour market at an early age. They tended to have left full time education a little before other cohort members, and the men, but not the women, were slightly less likely to have O levels. These findings are of course influenced by the fact that we have details

of TOPS courses only up to the age of 23: people who prolonged their full time education beyond the minimum age would have had less opportunity to go on a TOPS course by this date.

35. The courses which they took were very heavily segmented by sex. Men trained in engineering and building trades; the women learned how to be secretaries. It was only in the field of management and business studies, including computing, that there was anything approaching a balance between the sexes, and even here men and women tended to take different options. This division had other implications: women's courses were much more likely to be college based, they lasted a little longer, and they were more likely to lead to qualifications, particularly RSA examinations.

36. Drop-outs were relatively few in number, but less from college based secretarial courses than others. The reasons for leaving TOPS early had in most cases nothing to do with the course itself.

37. The large majority of both men and women re-entered the labour market on leaving TOPS, but they were still very likely to experience unemployment. The level of unemployment appeared not to fall as time went by. Women who had trained for secretarial jobs did rather better than others in terms of avoiding unemployment, and men who had trained in engineering trades did worse. There was evidence that going on TOPS had enabled some people to avoid the occupational downgrading sometimes associated with unemployment, but people who took courses in engineering trades seemed to be less able than people trained in other areas to find employment which was related to their training.

38. Under half of TOPS trainees felt that the course had improved their long term job prospects a lot. Their views were related to their success in avoiding later unemployment, but by no means wholly determined by this factor. Once more it was women doing college based secretarial or clerical courses who felt they had gained the most, while men who had trained in engineering were less happy.

NOTES

- (1) Note that these figures include jobs and spells of unemployment both before and after the TOPS course: distinguishing the two would require additional computing.
- (2) SCE O grades and CSE grade I are treated as equivalent to GCE O level, and SCE H grades are treated as equivalent to A level.
- (3) This ambiguity is evident when this question is compared with the question, "Did you complete the course?" In reply to the first 13 respondents said they were "still doing it"; in reply to the second 22 respondents said they were "still on it".
- (4) The NCDS IV questionnaire does not record the exact date at which the TOPS courses finished, and as paragraph 9 showed, there was ambiguity about the duration of the course. For these reasons economic activity has been computed at various intervals from the start rather than the finish of the course. For technical reasons some rounding up was necessary; thus what is described as economic activity 12 months after the start of the course would in fact be activity 10 or 11 months later for some respondents. Similarly, figures for activity 18 months from the start of the course also cover activity 16 and 17 months later, and figures for activity 24 months from the start cover activity 22 and 23 months later. For most respondents however the interval is the exact 12, 18 or 24 months specified.
- (5) Because of the structure of the NCDS IV questionnaire, this is the nearest approximation that can be made to a pre and post TOPS comparison.

Table 1 Age started TOPS course by sex

All TOPS trainees

<u>Age at start of course</u>	men %	women %	all %
16	0	1	-
17	4	2	3
18	8	2	5
19	14	13	14
20	18	29	22
21	21	27	24
22	22	14	19
23	12	11	11
no information	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100
(Base N)	(159)	(114)	(273)

Table 2 Total number of jobs held (part and full time) and spells of unemployment between leaving full time education and interview at age 23, by sex

All TOPS trainees

	men %	women %	all %
<u>Number of jobs held</u>			
one	6	7	7
two	10	7	9
three	19	26	22
four	14	18	15
five	16	17	16
six	13	10	11
seven or more	23	16	20
Total	100	100	100
<u>Number of spells of unemployment</u>			
none	13	19	15
one	26	25	26
two	21	24	22
three	16	11	14
four	12	12	12
five or more	12	8	11
Total	100	100	100
(Base N)	(159)	(114)	(273)

Table 3 Social class (OPCS 1980 classification) of first job by sex

TOPS trainees who had a job before TOPS course

		men	women
		%	%
Social class			
I	professional	3	0
II	intermediate	6	0
IIINM	skilled non-manual	13	66
IIIM	skilled manual	46	5
IV	partly skilled	18	18
V	unskilled	8	1
	no information	7	2
Total		100	100
(Base N)		(153)	(109)

Table 4 Occupation group (OPCS 1980 classification) of first job by sex

TOPS trainees who had a job before TOPS course

<u>Occupation group</u>	<u>men</u> %	<u>women</u> %
1 Professional & related supporting management; senior national & local government managers	1	1
2 Professional & related in education, welfare & health	0	6
3 Literary, artistic & sports	1	1
4 Professional & related in science, engineering, technology, & similar fields	6	0
5 Managerial	2	2
6 Clerical & related	9	50
7 Selling	4	19
8 Security & protective service	8	2
9 Catering, cleaning, hairdressing & other personal service	2	7
10 Farming, fishing & related	2	2
11 Materials processing; making & repairing (excl. metal & electrical)	13	3
12 Processing, making, repairing & related (metal & electrical)	35	4
13 Painting, repetitive assembling, product inspecting, packaging & related	3	5
14 Construction, mining & related not identified elsewhere	5	0
15 Transport operating, materials moving & storing & related	6	0
16 Miscellaneous	3	0
Total	100	100
(Base N)	(153)	(109)

Table 5 Industry (1980 SIC) of first job, by sex

TOPS trainees who had a job before TOPS course

<u>Industry</u>	<u>men</u> <u>%</u>	<u>women</u> <u>%</u>
0 Agriculture, forestry & fishing		1
1 Energy & water supply industries	0	3
2 Extraction of minerals & ores other than fuels, manufacture of metals, mineral products & chemicals	5	2
3 Metal goods, engineering & vehicles industries	21	6
4 Other manufacturing industries	15	6
5 Construction	13	5
6 Distribution, hotels & catering	20	35
7 Transport & communication	2	6
8 Banking, finance, insurance business services & leasing	5	8
9 Other services	15	26
no information	2	3
Total	100	100
(Base N)	(153)	(109)

Table 6 Date of first leaving continuous full time education by sex

All TOPS trainees

	men %	women %	all %
<u>Date left full time education:</u>			
before Sept.1974 (age 16)	74	65	70
Sept.1974-Aug.1975 (age 17)	15	18	16
Sept.1975-Aug.1976 (age 18)	7	10	8
Sept.1976 or later (age 19+)	4	6	5
Total (Base N)	100 (159)	100 (114)	100 (273)

Table 7 Location of TOPS course by sex

All TOPS trainees

	men %	women %	all %
<u>Location of course</u>			
college	24	82	49
employer's training centre	4	4	4
Industry Training Centre	6	2	4
Government Skill Centre	60	7	38
somewhere else	4	4	4
some combination of the above	1	0	-
no information	1	0	-
Total (Base N)	100 (159)	100 (114)	100 (273)

Table 8 Subject of TOPS course, by sex

All TOPS trainees	men N	women N
automobile engineering	22	1
electrical engineering	8	0
mechanical engineering	8	0
production engineering	3	0
offshore engineering & technology	1	0
agricultural engineering	1	0
general & other engineering	45	0
total engineering	88	1
building	25	1
road transport	5	0
clothing & footwear	0	3
management & management science	0	2
retail management & storekeeping	1	1
accountancy, book-keeping	6	1
hotel book-keeping & reception	0	2
other business studies	3	7
total management & business studies	10	13
computer operation	3	4
computer programming	5	2
data processing	2	0
total computer studies	10	6
secretarial & clerical	1	72
catering & cooking	2	9
misc. maths & science subjects	1	5
misc. social science, general & liberal studies	2	0
misc. professional & vocational	5	2
no information & not classified	10	2
Total N	159	114

Table 9 Length of TOPS course by sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Length of course</u>	men %	women %	all %
less than 2 weeks	1	0	-
2-4 weeks	5	3	4
over 1 month-3 months	18	14	17
over 3 months-6 months	52	53	53
over 6 months-1 year	22	30	25
over 1 year-2 years	1	0	1
Total (Base N)	100 (147)	100 (104)	100 (251)

Table 10 Qualifications obtained on TOPS course, by sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

	men %	women %	all %
Qualifications obtained on course			
none/no answer	59	27	46
RSA stage 1	1	8	4
RSA stage 2	1	24	11
RSA stage 3	0	8	3
City & Guilds Operative	1	0	1
City & Guilds Craft	5	7	6
City & Guilds Advanced	1	0	1
ONC/OND	0	1	-
TEC/BEC Cert. or Dip.	2	2	2
A level GCE/SCE H grades	1	1	1
Professional Level 1 qualification	2	2	2
other technical or business qualification	2	1	2
other qualification	24	20	22
Total (Base N)	100 (147)	100 (104)	100 (251)

Table 11 Whether gained a qualification on TOPS course by subject of course

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Subject of course</u>	gained a qualification %	(Base N)
engineering	39	(80)
building	32	(25)
business studies	73	(22)
secretarial or clerical	82	(65)
computer studies	36	(14)
catering	64	(11)
other	54	(22)
no information or not classified	33	(12)

Table 12 Reason why did not complete TOPS course

Respondents who failed to complete TOPS course

	<u>men & women</u>
	N
couldn't afford it	1
pregnant	1
illness or accident	6
family or personal reasons	3
got a new job	6
failed/asked to leave/course too hard	6
changed plans	1
course not vocational	3
no information	5
Total	32

Table 13 Whether completed TOPS course, by subject of course

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Subject of course</u>	completed course %	(Base N)
engineering	81	(80)
building	76	(25)
business studies	95	(22)
secretarial or clerical	92	(65)
computer studies	100	(14)
catering	73	(11)
other	95	(22)
no information or not classified	83	(12)

Table 14 Economic status at interview (age 23), by sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

	men %	women %
employed full time	65	55
employed part time	1	4
unemployed	30	19
full time education	1	2
out of the labour force (housework)	0	14
out of the labour force (other reasons)	2	4
no information	0	2
Total (Base N)	100 (147)	100 (104)

Table 15 Employment history after TOPS by age of starting TOPS course and sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Age of starting TOPS course</u>	<u>history after TOPS</u>					
	<u>at least one job</u>		<u>at least one spell of unemployment</u>		<u>Base N</u>	
	men %	women %	men %	women %	men	women
19 or younger	100	85	71	60	(41)	(20)
20	100	88	68	64	(28)	(33)
21	97	77	68	42	(34)	(31)
22 or older	57	61	76	67	(42)	(18)

Table 16 Economic activity at various intervals after the start of TOPS course by sex

All TOPS trainees

	Interval after start of TOPS course		
	12 months %	18 months %	24 months %
(a) Men			
employed full time	75	81	80
employed part time	0	0	0
TOPS	5	1	1
other government special scheme ¹	1	0	0
full time education	1	0	1
out of the labour force	1	1	1
unemployed	18	17	17
Total	100	100	100
(Base N)	(130)	(107)	(90)
(N no inf. date is after interview)	(29)	(52)	(69)
(b) Women			
employed full time	68	57	68
employed part time	1	1	3
TOPS	0	0	3
other government special scheme ¹	1	0	0
full time education	1	1	3
out of the labour force	13	15	12
unemployed	16	16	12
Total	100	100	100
(Base N)	(95)	(81)	(74)
(N no inf. date is after interview)	(19)	(33)	(40)

¹ This included schemes under the Job Creation Programme, Special Temporary Employment Programme, Community Enterprise Programme, Work Experience Programme and Community Industry

Table 17 Employment history after TOPS, by subject of TOPS course and sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Subject of course</u>	<u>history after TOPS</u>					
	<u>at least one job</u>		<u>at least one spell of unemployment</u>		<u>Base N</u>	
	men %	women %	men %	women %	men	women
engineering	89	+	71	+	(79)	+
building	83	+	75	+	(24)	+
business studies	89	77	56	46	(9)	(13)
secretarial or clerical	+	83	+	52	+	(64)
computer studies	78	100	78	80	(9)	(5)
catering	+	56	+	89	+	(9)
other	77	56	62	44	(13)	(9)
no information or not classified	80	+	70	+	(10)	+

+ *Less than five observations*

Table 18 Social class (OPCS 1980 classification) of first job and of current or last job, by sex

TOPS trainees who had a job both before and after TOPS course

		men		women	
<u>Social class</u>		first job %	current/last job %	first job %	current/last job %
I	professional	2	1	1	0
II	intermediate	6	7	9	12
IIINM	skilled non-manual	14	12	65	71
IIIM	skilled manual	46	49	2	5
IV	partly skilled	16	22	21	10
V	unskilled	10	10	1	1
	no information	7	0	2	0
Total (Base N)		100 (122)	100 (122)	100 (80)	100 (80)

Table 19 Occupation group (OPCS 1980 classification) of first job and of current or last job

TOPS trainees who had a job both before and after TOPS course

<u>Occupation group</u>	<u>men</u>		<u>women</u>	
	first job %	current/last job %	first job %	current/last job %
1 Professional & related supporting management; senior national & local government managers	0	3	1	4
2 Professional & related in education, welfare & health	0	1	5	5
3 Literary, artistic & sports	1	2	0	0
4 Professional & related in science, engineering, technology, & similar fields	7	2	0	0
5 Managerial	2	1	2	2
6 Clerical & related	10	7	50	60
7 Selling	5	3	18	11
8 Security & protective service	7	1	2	1
9 Catering, cleaning, hairdressing & other personal service	2	5	6	11
10 Farming, fishing & related	1	4	2	0
11 Materials processing; making & repairing (excl. metal & electrical)	14	5	4	1
12 Processing, making, repairing & related (metal & electrical)	34	22	4	0
13 Painting, repetitive assembling, product inspecting, packaging & related	2	5	5	1
14 Construction, mining & related not identified elsewhere	5	12	0	1
15 Transport operating, materials moving & storing & related	6	23	0	1
16 Miscellaneous	4	4	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100
(Base N)	(122)	(122)	(80)	(80)

Table 20 Industry (1980 SIC) of first job and of current or last job, by sex

TOPS trainees who had a job both before and after TOPS course

Industry	men		women	
	first job %	current/last job %	first job %	current/last job %
0 Agriculture, forestry & fishing	0	2	1	0
1 Energy & water supply industries	0	0	2	0
2 Extraction of minerals & ores other than fuels, manufacture of metals, mineral products & chemicals	3	6	0	6
3 Metal goods, engineering & vehicles industries	22	18	5	8
4 Other manufacturing industries	16	9	9	9
5 Construction	13	16	4	4
6 Distribution, hotels & catering	22	20	35	25
7 Transport & communication	2	11	6	1
8 Banking, finance, insurance business services & leasing	5	5	11	8
9 Other services	15	8	24	39
no information	2	6	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100
(Base N)	(122)	(122)	(80)	(80)

Table 21 Whether thinks TOPS improved long term job prospects. by sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

	men %	women %	all %
<u>Respondent's opinion of course</u>			
improved prospects a lot	37	49	42
improved prospects a little	26	20	24
made no difference	29	27	28
would have been better off not doing it	4	3	4
don't know/no answer	3	1	2
Total (Base N)	100 (147)	100 (104)	100 (251)

Table 22 Whether thinks TOPS improved long term job prospects. by subject of course

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Subject of course</u>	improved prospects "a lot" %	(Base N)
engineering	31	(80)
building	44	(25)
business studies	54	(22)
secretarial or clerical	51	(65)
computer studies	50	(14)
catering	18	(11)
other	59	(22)
no information or not classified	25	(12)

Table 23 Whether thinks TOPS improved long term job prospects, by whether completed course

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Respondent's opinion of course</u>	completed course	did not complete course
	%	%
improved prospects a lot	47	9
improved prospects a little	25	19
made no difference	24	59
would have been better off not doing it	3	9
don't know/no answer	1	3
Total (Base N)	100 (218)	100 (32)

Table 24 Whether thinks TOPS improved long term job prospects, by employment history after TOPS and sex

Respondents who had left TOPS by the time of interview

<u>Respondent's opinion of course</u>	<u>history after TOPS</u>				<u>Base N</u>	
	<u>at least one job</u>		<u>at least one spell of unemployment</u>		men	women
	men %	women %	men %	women %		
improved prospects a lot	87	92	64	45	(55)	(51)
improved prospects a little	85	57	64	52	(39)	(21)
made no difference/ better off without course	86	68	84	74	(49)	(31)