



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

The Rt Hon Charles Kennedy
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Dr Peter Cotgreave,

Charles Kennedy, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, has asked me to thank you for your letter regarding science policy and to reply on his behalf.

I have set out Liberal Democrat policy relating to the questions that you posed below.

- 1. What will your party do to make it easier for the science and engineering community to attract young people into science, to bring more of the brightest science graduates into the teaching profession, and to ensure that the UK's universities can remain world-leading scientific institutions?**

The Liberal Democrats will reform the education system to ensure that more young people take core subjects. For key A-Level subjects such as maths, science and ICT, we believe there should be a higher reward on the points system to incentivise pupils to take them.

We will use the Child Trust Fund to train and employ 21,000 new teachers and match Labour's pledge of £9.4 billion of capital investment in primary schools over the next parliament to ensure adequate classroom space. We will guarantee that all children are taught the core subjects of Maths, English, Science, Modern Languages and ICT by suitably qualified teachers and provide secondary schools with the necessary funding for high-quality teacher-training courses in these subjects.

The Liberal Democrats support the role of UK academic institutions in producing world-class research. We believe that government has a role to play in funding basic research in universities or through the Research Councils, especially what is often called 'blue-sky' or 'curiosity-driven' research, where the immediate commercial payoff is far from clear.

We also recognise that there are areas of public policy where the provision of high quality independent research is critical to a balanced debate and maintenance of public confidence in outcomes.

- 2. What will your party do to ensure that the UK's world-class research base retains the freedom it needs to generate new and exciting ideas, which can feed tomorrow's economy and meet the challenges of the coming years?**

The UK has an enviable record in scientific research, and we will ensure this continues.

The Liberal Democrats will scrap the Department of Trade and Industry and transfer its useful roles to more appropriate departments. The part of the science budget administered by the DTI will be

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