



Campaign for Science & Engineering Monthly update – September 2008

What we are working on

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/members/projects.htm>

- **Impact of Basic Research Opinion Forum:** Our next Opinion Forum will look at the social and economic impact of basic research and how it can best be measured and facilitated. The meeting is being scheduled for early 2009.
- **International Issues Opinion Forum:** We have been meeting with DIUS ministers and officials to discuss the results of the Opinion Forum. The final report will be published later this year. Please visit the CaSE website to view web casts of the presentations.
- **Science and Society Consultation:** Our response will focus on putting forward our proposals to increase the diversity and uptake of science and mathematics. We will also discuss the Government's use of science and engineering.
- **Engineering in Government:** We will be responding to the IUSS Committee's inquiry into the use of engineering by government.
- **CaSE initiatives to boost STEM skills:** We have developed two proposals to boost the diversity and uptake of science and mathematics in schools. The first looks at awarding higher UCAS points for STEM subjects and the other is a STEM diversity bursary. DIUS ministers have expressed interest in both proposals.
<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/activities/education.htm>

CaSE News

- **CaSE Annual Review:** The 2007-08 Annual Review has been published highlighting key activities over the past year.
<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/documents/2008/1208.pdf>
- **New member:** Unilever has joined CaSE as our latest corporate member.
- **Join CaSE's executive committee:** CaSE is looking for individuals who are interested in joining our Executive Committee. If you are interested please send us no more than 250 words about yourself and what you would bring to the Committee. There will be election at this year's Annual Meeting.

CaSE Diary – August

26/08/08 Demos

CaSE met with Demos to discuss their projects looking at the internationalisation of science and engineering and the implications and policy responses for the UK.

21/08/08 CaSE celebrates increase in triple science results and argues for more students to be offered it

CaSE today celebrates the increase of about a third in entries into separate science GCSEs. Numbers entering biology GCSE increased 35% to 85,521, with chemistry up 29% to 76,656 and physics up 29% to 75,383, while overall entries decreased 2.7%. Dr Hilary Leever commented: "We are absolutely delighted to at last see substantial rises in GCSE results for triple science. CaSE has campaigned for triple science to be available to all students and, as more students are now being offered triple science, we are pleased and relieved to see that students are choosing to study science to the highest level at GCSE."

Information obtained from the Department for Children, Schools and Families by CaSE through a Freedom of Information request revealed that over half of schools that did not enter students into triple science in 2007 now already offer it. Worryingly, a fifth of schools that did not enter students into triple science in 2007 have no plans to offer it now and another fifth have not decided whether to or not.

14/08/08 CaSE on the BBC

CaSE's Assistant Director Dr Hilary Leever spoke on BBC News 24 about today's A level numbers for science and mathematics. During the interview she raised the CaSE proposal for awarding greater UCAS points for students studying science and mathematics.

14/08/08 Congratulations to the increasing numbers of A level students in science and mathematics

CaSE was delighted that the small rises seen in last year's A level entries into physics and chemistry were sustained this year and extended to biology. Entries in biology increased by 1447, chemistry by 1395 and physics by 630. CaSE particularly celebrated the combined increase of 5700 students in mathematics and further mathematics. However, CaSE's Assistant Director, Dr Hilary Leever, urged caution: "While we are obviously delighted to see these rises...the proportion of actual entries has unfortunately not increased in any of the sciences. The increases reflect an overall rise in the number of entries. There was an increase in the proportion of entries that were mathematics and further mathematics."

13/08/08 Science Education

Dr Hilary Leever met with Derek Bell, Chief Executive of the Association for Science Education to discuss key areas of concern in secondary science education.

08/08/08 Latest Teaching Figures

CaSE continues to express alarm over the latest teacher training figures. At the start of the year, applications for secondary physics PGCEs were 30% down compared with the same time last year, they were also 17% down in chemistry, 25% down in biology and 15% down in mathematics, but were comparable for general science. An increase in last minute applicants have reduced these differences to 18% in physics and just 3% in mathematics. Dr Hilary Leever, CaSE's Assistant Director, commented "It is possible that the economic downturn has attracted applicants into teaching for its job security.

However, we must not depend upon this effect and must remember that the number of recruits that we had last year in the shortage subjects, namely physics, chemistry and mathematics, were no way near the levels required to alleviate the teaching shortages experienced by schools. It is vital that the Government continues with its drive towards recruitment in these critical subjects."

04/08/08 **CaSE responds to the DIUS Single Equality Scheme Consultation**

04/08/08 **CaSE proposals to improve the uptake of secondary science and maths**

CaSE today released a press release outlining their proposals for improving the uptake of secondary science and maths, particularly among disadvantaged schools. The proposals include higher UCAS points for STEM subjects and a STEM diversity bursary. Dr Hilary Leever, Assistant Director of CaSE commented: "We need to take a more radical approach to increase uptake of science and mathematics in schools and beyond. There are many great new initiatives, but even taken all together they are simply not having enough impact. Policies that widen participation are not only morally right, and help to diversify the workforce, but often have the greatest and most efficient potential for impact."

CaSE in the Media

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/press/inthemedial/index.htm>

The Guardian (29/08): The experiment of a lifetime

The Financial Times (22/08): GCSEs show new wave of young scientists

The National Union of Teachers (22/08): More separate science GCSEs welcomed by pressure group

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (22/08): Pressure group welcomes separate science uptake increase

The Times Educational Supplement (22/08): Pupils learn to love science and maths again

BBC News 24 (14/08): Dr Hilary Leever interviewed about A level science and maths results

The Times Educational Supplement (08/08): Credit Crunch's Silver Lining

The Times Educational Supplement (08/08): UCAS carrot could halt decline

For more information on our activities go to our website

www.sciencecampaign.org.uk

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