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Science and Engineering in the Manifestos

With all the main parties having published their manifestos for the General Election, the Campaign for Science and Engineering has scoured the texts for mentions of science and engineering.

“When we ask them, politicians always say they believe science is important, so we thought we’d see which party leader has put his commitments where his mouth is,” said Peter Cotgreave, Director of CaSE. “*Technology* doesn’t do so badly – all the three main parties mention it at least once. But *Engineering* is obviously unpopular with the parties – it gets one mention in Labour’s lengthy document, but neither the Conservatives nor the Liberal Democrats appear to mention it at all.”

The full counts for words relevant to science are given below:

	Number of times the Party Manifestos use the words:			
	Science/scientific/ scientist(s)	Technology/ Technological	Engineer(s)/ Engineering	Research
Conservative	0	1	0	0
Labour	11	8	1	8
Lib Dems	5	7	0	3

“Science policies are hugely important. Labour has said repeatedly that Britain should be the best place in the world for science, and the Opposition has said it will match Labour’s spending plans for science research.

“We were hoping that we would see importance of science and research reflected in the use of the words *science* and *engineering* throughout the party manifestos, but in at least some cases, we’ve been disappointed.

“We know all the Parties have important science policies, but we wish some of them would talk about them more. We not going to deliver all the things we want for society and the economy unless we get science policies right, and we won’t get the policies right unless we debate them fully.

“That’s why we’re organising science hustings meetings during the election campaign, with local politicians getting involved in debate with local scientists, engineers and businesspeople about science and engineering issues. We have a good meeting in Cardiff earlier this week, and are looking forward to doing the same in Norwich on 21 April and Aberdeen on 28 April.”

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