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**Chancellor's report on science progress is welcome:
Now we need to make the UK competitive for research investment**

The Campaign for Science & Engineering today welcomed the Chancellor's fulsome appreciation of the importance of science to the economy, and called on him to strengthen his policies to make Britain a competitive location for companies to wanting to invest in science.

"It was great to hear the Chancellor say right at the start of his pre-budget statement that he believes we need to be a leading nation in science if the economy is to do well," said Dr Peter Cotgreave, Director of CaSE, "and to hear him say that he understands how 'neglect of investment in science held our economy back' in the past."

CaSE particularly welcomed the announcement about new investment by pharmaceutical companies, because figures published a few weeks ago showed that many firms still do not see the UK as an attractive location to invest in science. CaSE was also pleased that the Chancellor will make it easier for companies to access the tax credits available for companies carrying out research and development in the UK.

"He must now step up the reform if he wants to set the economic context in which the UK becomes the best place in the world for science.

"If companies are to invest in science in the UK they need access to a workforce with the right skills and knowledge, the fiscal and other costs need to be low, and the firms look for a light-touch regulatory environment. To ensure that each of these is in place, the Chancellor needs to push forward even more vigorously on investing in further and higher education, so that colleges and universities are no longer short of the money needed to deliver what is expected of them.

"And the Government needs to take much, much more seriously the shortage of maths and physics teachers. Without them, children will not be properly prepared to study science, and they will not have the skills needed for the economy's success.

"Gordon Brown also needs to look at the rules governing private sector funding for collaborative research with the universities and the public sector. At the moment, companies are saying it's just too expensive to invest in British university research.

"The UK really could become one of the best places in the world for scientific and engineering investment, and Gordon Brown today showed once again that he understands how important this is.

"But with private sector investment falling, he's running out of time to make his vision a reality," said Peter Cotgreave.