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CaSE PR 07/04

### **Youngsters being short-changed in careers advice**

CaSE today called for dramatic improvements of the quality of advice and guidance given to students about the opportunities opened up by studying science or engineering.

Publishing the report of an *Opinion Forum*, sponsored by the The Science Council and the Engineering & Technology Board, CaSE's Director, Dr Peter Cotgreave, said:

*"We heard some shocking stories of the appalling advice young people were given about the options open to them if they studied science or engineering - one young woman was even told that she could engage her interest in chemistry by going to acting school and ten getting a part in a TV show about forensic science.*

"But also heard that there is a lot of good stuff going on.

"There are many problems with getting enough young people to study science, and many of them seem intractable, but the problems with advice and guidance about careers constitute a soluble problem.

"The information that already exists needs more coordination and quality control, we need to get parents much more closely involved in the process.

"Government, schools and the science community all need to work harder, and we need to stop banging on about specific careers and help children and young people realise that studying sciences keeps open a huge range of opportunities for the future, some of which will be based in science and many others will not.

"We need to be much more sophisticated in the ways in which we deliver this kind of advice and guidance.

"Big challenges like climate change need actually excite young people, but to make a difference, many of them will need good training as scientists or engineers, and it's not clear that this message is getting through."

The report is available at:

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk/documents/2007/CaSE0704.pdf>

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