

Key Commitment from Conservatives – Election 2010

Research Base

Commitments in the Conservative response to the CaSE election letter:

- Initiate a multi-year Science and Research Budget to provide a stable investment climate for Research Councils
- Postpone the Research Excellence Framework by up to two years while reviewing the evidence behind this new system
- If we can find an impact measurement that is robust and accepted by the academic community, then we would adopt that. If not, we would remove it from the framework.
- Work with the science community to arrive at a clearer definition of the Haldane Principle.

Commitments in the Conservative Election Manifesto:

- Encouraging the establishment of joint university-business research and development institutes

Commitments Elsewhere:

- Emergency budget within 50 days of forming a government
- Grant applications should be based on the quality of the proposal, rather than the economic impact. Although it is also a good exercise for Research Councils to assess over long periods what their impacts have been, this should not determine investment into basic research (Source: CaSE Policy Debate)

Education & Skills

Commitments in the Conservative response to the CaSE election letter:

- Will pay off the student loan obligations of top STEM graduates for every year they spend in the classroom
- Launch an immediate programme to overhaul the National Curriculum in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, developing a new curriculum on the assumption that studying three separate sciences should be a basic curriculum entitlement, not an elite activity.
- Develop proper vocational and technical education that engages young people and meets the needs of modern business. Will establish Technical Academies across England, starting in at least twelve cities.

Commitments in the Conservative Election Manifesto:

- Creating a better focus on Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects in schools; and establishing a new prize for engineering

Commitments Elsewhere:

- All would-be primary teachers will have to have at least grade B passes in maths and English, instead of C grade passes as at present
(Source: Michael Gove speech – Nov 2009)
- Only students achieving a 2:2 class degree or above will be funded for teacher training
(Source: Conservative Education Manifesto 2010)
- £600 million package to boost science skills, training and apprenticeships: (£350 million to provide funding for 25,000 new Masters Degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), £100 million to fund an extra 50,000 learners aged over 25 in STEM and other subject, £150 million to support the thousands of apprentices who risk losing their training place during a recession)
(Source: George Osborne – April 2009)

Innovation and Industry

Commitments in the Conservative response to the CaSE election letter:

- Re-establish clear national policy leadership for key technology sectors such as aerospace, pharmaceuticals, IT, the creative industries, high-value manufacturing and high-tech engineering
- See a strong role for the Technology Strategy Board, working alongside the Research Councils and at arm's length from Ministers
- Will retain R&D tax credits but will simplify and refocus them on high-tech companies, small businesses and new start-ups

Commitments in the Conservative Election Manifesto:

- Create the conditions for higher exports, business investment and saving as a share of GDP
- Aim to deliver 25 per cent of government research and procurement contracts through SMEs by cutting the administrative costs of bidding
- Will work to reduce the use of animals in scientific research.

Commitments Elsewhere:

- To provide nationwide superfast broadband (50-100 mbps) by 2017
(Source: Conservative Technology Manifesto)

Science & Engineering in Government & Society

Commitments in the Conservative response to the CaSE election letter:

- Operate a programme of science literacy inductions available to all new Conservative Members of Parliament after the election

Commitments in the Conservative Election Manifesto:

- We will review and reform libel laws to protect freedom of speech, reduce costs and discourage libel tourism.

Commitments elsewhere:

- Would look at tying in scientific advice from national academies and others into policy-making process
(Source: CaSE Policy Debate)
- Introduce 'Right to Government Data' legislation
(Source: Conservative Technology Manifesto)