

IMPRESS



The Association
for Science Education

Promoting Excellence in Science Teaching and Learning

www.ase.org.uk



Schoolsystem - UK

- Primary (5 to 11):
 - Science is a core subject taught to all students
 - Each school has a teacher who is the Science Coordinator, though their own scientific background can vary.
 - Formal National tests in science (to monitor and assess student progression) are taken by students aged 11.
- Secondary (11 to 18):
 - Science is taught to all students.
 - National tests (to monitor and assess student progression) are taken by students aged 14.
 - Upper Secondary science may be Dual Award, Single Award, Applied or taught as the separate sciences. Final GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) exams are taken at 16.
 - There are variations in the systems in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
 - Scientific Enquiry is included as part of the structure and students must submit coursework relating to this.
 - England is currently reviewing its GCSEs with new specifications being introduced in 2006.
 - Scotland is also undergoing educational reform.

National Role and Functions of ASE

- Represents science teachers on a regional, national and international level with various kinds of educational contacts.
- Has almost 18,000 members.
- Advises and is consulted on matters concerning science education for students aged 3 to 18, and their national final exams.
- Organises conferences, regional events and continuing professional development events for those involved in science education.
- Is a publisher, producing numerous titles and resources in addition to its main journals, which are Education in Science, Primary Science Review, School Science Review and Science Teacher Education.
- International members are represented through the International Committee.
- Science Across the World www.scienceacross.org is one of the most successful ongoing international ASE projects (in partnership with GlaxoSmithKline).

Who are the stakeholders in educational renovation and why

- In England, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) are the overarching governmental department, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) stipulate the National Curriculum.
- Several examining bodies set the exams (accredited by QCA).
- Scotland, Wales and NI have their own slightly different systems with their own curriculum and assessment organisations.
- The Institute of Physics (IOP), The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), Institute of Biology (IOB), The Royal Society (RS) and the BA (the British Association for the Advancement of Science) are learned bodies with a strong involvement with science.
- Institutes for Higher Education, Universities & Institutes for Higher Vocational Education.
- Industry.

Current UK developments

- ASE are on the way to achieving Royal Chartered Status for Science Teachers, which will give additional recognition to those in the profession.
- The National Science Learning Centre and a regional network of Science Learning Centres (in England) has been established to provide high quality professional development for those involved in science education. ASE are in support of this development.
- Other training and strategies for science exists, such as the Key Stage 3 National Strategy in England (for those with students 11-14).
- The challenge to increase the staying on rates of students studying science related subjects at post-16 is recognised and is being addressed.
- There are currently major governmental 14-19 proposals for England which relate to all subjects.

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