



# Ofsted subject conference report: science

The 2006 changes to the Key Stage 4 science curriculum

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## Synopsis

These conferences were a collaboration between Ofsted, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Secondary National Strategy (SNS) and the National Advisers and Inspectors Group for Science (NAIGS). The Programme of Study (PoS) for Key Stage 4 science has changed and been reduced to a core. QCA is approving specifications for new GCSEs based on the new PoS to be taught from September 2006. The Specialist Subject Adviser (SSA) for science in Ofsted identified support for the implementation of the new specifications to raise achievement of pupils as a priority. The collaboration of Ofsted, QCA, SNS and NAIGS was designed to maximise the impact of the conferences.

A total of 360 delegates attended the conferences, which were oversubscribed. To ensure common messages are conveyed to people at different levels in the education system, local authorities were asked to send an adviser, a member of a senior management team in a school and a head of a science department.

## Summaries of conference sessions

Each delegate attended two workshops out of six with their peers:

### Local authority advisers

- Workshop 1 LA advice and guidance to schools
- Workshop 2 Strategies within LA for addressing changes

### Headteachers or deputy headteachers

- Workshop 3 Curriculum design
- Workshop 4 Progression 14–19.

### Science subject leaders or lead science teachers

- Workshop 5 How science works
- Workshop 6 Contemporary issues

## Outcomes

A single PowerPoint slide with around 5 bullets was produced from each discussion group on each topic. The bullets included:

- significant issues
- essential actions
- required future developments
- ideas for CPD
- other support needs.

Delegates also indicated what action needs to be taken by QCA, SNS, awarding bodies, schools, science departments and individual teachers.

Dissemination of conference materials was carried out by issuing delegates with a CD. It is planned to make CDs available to other agencies and groups to promote effective choices of GCSE courses for September 2006. The items on the CD are listed in the appendix.

## Further information

- CDs are being used and distributed via SNS consultants in their local authorities.
- CDs are being given to around 100 teacher training institutions.
- The contents of the CD are being placed on the NAIGS website and used by advisers in local authorities.
- The QCA is intending to make the materials available through their website.

## Annex

<b>CONTENTS OF CD</b>
QCA Futures document
QCA PowerPoint: Changes to Science
QCA Publication: Changes to the Curriculum from 2006
QCA Futures Summit report
QCA Science KS4 poster
Ofsted PowerPoint: Key Stage 4 Changes and Inspection
Ofsted Guidance on Subject Inspections and Surveys
Ofsted Guidance on School Inspections
Evaluation Report
PowerPoint Summary of outcomes from group discussions
Blank PowerPoint for use in local settings
PowerPoint of questions for group discussion
Notes and questions for chairs
Local Authority planning form
SNS: Supporting teachers with the new science GCSEs
SNS: Checklist for science departments
NAIGS: Self Evaluation for Secondary Schools 1
NAIGS: Self Evaluation for Secondary Schools 2
NAIGS: Running GCSE Science Courses in Parallel and Series
Science Learning Centres: Support for introduction of GCSEs 2006
AQA Science Specification Summary
Edexcel Science Specification Summary
OCR Science Specification Summary
Evaluation of 21st Century Science
KS4 Programme of study from 2006