

Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions

Consultation Response Form

The closing date is: 1 August 2012
Your comments must reach us by that date.



Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

Name	Nic Bilham
Organisation (if applicable)	Geological Society of London / British Geological Survey / Committee of Heads of University Geosciences Departments / Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain / British Geophysical Association
Address:	The Geological Society Burlington House Piccadilly London W1J 0BG

If you have a query relating to the policy content or consultation process you can contact the DfE National Helpline on: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact us'](#) page or by emailing: CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

e-mail: consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk

Please choose one of the following options to best describe you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/> 11-18 School	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-16 School	<input type="checkbox"/> Academy
<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth Form College	<input type="checkbox"/> Further Education Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> School Representative Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth Form College Representative Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Further Education Institution Representative Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Careers Representative Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Careers Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Student
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Governor	<input type="checkbox"/> Employer
<input type="checkbox"/> x Other		

Please Specify:

Joint response on behalf of five UK geoscience bodies:

Geological Society of London (GSL)
British Geological Survey (BGS)
Committee of Heads of University Geosciences Departments (CHUGD)
Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain (PESGB)
British Geophysical Association (BGA)

Details are at section 4.

1 Should we extend the new duty on schools to secure independent, impartial careers guidance for their pupils, downwards to Year 8 (age 12-13), from September 2013?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Discussion of careers options and opportunities should start at an early age, and should continue throughout students' school and sixth-form education. The focus of discussion, and the type of guidance and advice given, should be appropriate to each stage, and to the choices facing students.

There is evidence that while 10-year olds generally have a positive impression of science, and of the work of scientists, they may already have preconceptions about what kind of person becomes a scientist (and whether they fit this profile). These preconceptions appear to become much more pronounced between the ages of 10-14. (See the ASPIRES research project on Science Aspirations and Career Choice at <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/education/research/aspires/index.aspx>.)

If high quality information and advice is not available, such preconceptions are likely to be strongly influenced by stereotypes of what professional science is, and what kinds of people do it. This is potentially to the detriment of individuals, who may be put off a rewarding career in science. It is also vital that talented scientists are sourced from as wide a pool as possible, for the benefit of society and the economy. Work such as that done by the Science Council on the diversity of science careers available constitutes an invaluable resource for those responsible for careers advice and guidance at this stage – see <http://www.sciencecouncil.org/10-types-scientist>, for example. We commend the STEM Choices Resource Pack for Careers Education and Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners on the DfE website, to which the Science Council (among others) contributed.

Individual advice and guidance is not likely to be appropriate at age 10 or 11. But by the time pupils are choosing GCSE courses in Year 9, their attitudes to science may already be entrenched, affecting their study choices and the qualifications they achieve. In geoscience, as in many science disciplines, it is important for students to understand clearly how the subjects they choose to study at GCSE and A-level may later restrict the programmes of university study (and hence career options) available to them. For example, students selecting A-levels in Year 11 who are interested in pursuing study and a career in geoscience may be encouraged to study geography, although many geoscience departments prefer candidates with science and maths A-levels. This is particularly true in some specialisms. In geophysics, for instance, there is a strong preference for candidates with good maths and physics A-levels. (See BGA report on geophysics education in the UK (Khan, 2006) at www.geophysics.org.uk.)

2 Should we extend the new duty to secure independent, impartial careers guidance, upwards to young people aged 16-18 in schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions, from September 2013?

Please Note: If the consultation supports the extension of the new duty to 16-18 in schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions, the Government will consider extending to other provision including Work-Based Education and Training. However this is out of scope for this consultation.

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Many subjects in which undergraduate degree programmes are available are not widely taught in their own right in schools and sixth-form colleges. An example is geology/geoscience, which is taught in only a few schools. These subjects are likely to be less visible to students than those they come across explicitly in the school curriculum. Teachers are also less likely to be knowledgeable about university programmes and career choices in subjects with which they are unfamiliar, and less confident in providing advice and guidance about them. It is particularly important in the case of these subjects that high-quality advice from independent impartial professionals is available, and that these advisers have access to reliable and appropriate information, resources and support services. Such advice complements elements of geoscience which students encounter within other mainstream National Curriculum subjects (sciences and geography), but which they might not otherwise recognise as being an exciting field of study in its own right, which can lead to a wide range of rewarding careers.

3 What issues, if any, would arise for your institution from the requirement to provide access to independent careers guidance?

Comments:

There would be no direct impact on our organisations resulting from the requirement on schools, sixth-form colleges and FE colleges to provide access to such advice. In common with other learned societies and professional associations, we are already committed to playing our part in providing high-quality information and support to students, teachers and others responsible for careers advice and guidance. We would be pleased to offer information and guidance on geoscience as new advice structures are developed and implemented, and as resources are developed, and we are continuing to develop our own resources in this area.

The Geological Society's careers advice includes comprehensive information on study options, and careers profiles of a wide range of professional geoscientists working across academia and industry. The Society engages directly with students and teachers through its Schools

Affiliate Scheme, and through initiatives such as the annual Schools Geology Challenge. Through the Geoscience Education Academy, it helps non-geologists who are expected to teach geoscience within science and geography to develop their skills and confidence, and to act as champions for geoscience within their schools. Since 2011, it has worked with a wide range of geoscience organisations to promote UK Earth Science Week, a major focus of which is to promote geoscience careers. The Society also works through its Specialist Groups and with partner organisations to provide information and support regarding particular specialisms and industries – for example, with the Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain with regard to petroleum geoscience and career opportunities in the energy industry.

The British Geological Survey has an active programme of careers activities, including academies, open days and other events for aspiring geologists. It hosts one of the Geological Society's principal annual careers events.

Departments teaching geoscience degrees have strong links and outreach programmes with many schools, colleges and FE institutions. The Committee of Heads of University Geosciences Departments, which brings these departments together, is actively engaged with industry and with the Geological Society, building on these links to develop impartial and independent materials in relation to careers guidance. The aim of this work is to ensure that such guidance is reliable and appropriate.

The Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain and the British Geophysical Association both work actively to promote career opportunities in their specialisms, alone and with others.

4 Any other comments?

Comments:

We would be pleased to discuss further any of the points raised in this response, and to offer advice on any aspect of careers advice in relation to geoscience.

- i. The Geological Society of London (GSL) is the national learned and professional body for geoscience, with over 10,000 Fellows (members) worldwide. The Fellowship encompasses those working in industry, academia and government, with a wide range of perspectives and views on policy-relevant geoscience, and the Society is a leading communicator of this science to government bodies and other non-technical audiences.
- ii. The Committee of Heads of University Geosciences Departments (CHUGD) is the subject association of Geoscience (geology, applied geology, Earth science, geophysics, geochemistry and some environmental science) departments/schools based within universities

in the British Isles. It promotes discussion and exchange of information between departments and provides a point of contact between these and professional, government and quality control agencies.

- iii. The British Geological Survey (BGS) is a world leading geological survey and the United Kingdom's premier centre for earth science information and expertise. The BGS provides expert services and impartial advice in all areas of geoscience. Its client base is drawn from the public and private sectors both in the UK and internationally.
- iv. The Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain (PESGB) represents the national community of Earth scientists working in the oil and gas industry, with over 5,000 members worldwide. The objective of the Society is to promote, for the public benefit, education in the scientific and technical aspects of petroleum exploration. To achieve this objective the PESGB makes regular charitable disbursements, holds monthly lecture meetings in London and Aberdeen and both organises and sponsors other conferences, seminars, workshops, field trips and publications.
- v. The British Geophysical Association (BGA) represents geophysicists in academia and industry who are members of the Royal Astronomical Society and/or the Geological Society of London. Its role is to promote geophysics and knowledge about geophysics at national and international levels.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

X Yes No

All DfE public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Carole Edge, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 0370 000 2288 / email: carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 1 August 2012

Send by post to: Public Communications Unit, Area 1C, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ

Send by e-mail to: CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk