

Science Council welcomes DCSF announcement that Science Diploma needs more time to get it right

The Science Council welcomes the [DCSF's announcement](#) of a twelve month delay to give more time to develop the right framework and curriculum for the Science Diploma. Now that a delay has been agreed it is essential that all stakeholders have an opportunity to work to ensure that the Level 3 diploma is fully integrated within the overall framework of diplomas.

The Science Council supports the introduction of a flexible and broadly based Science Diploma which responds to the need to teach the sciences in a more integrated way and will attract more young people into STEM post 16. However, the Science Council has a number of issues of concern about the current proposals which it has raised with the diploma development team – these are not insurmountable problems but they do need to be addressed fully and in depth. We very much hope that in this coming twelve months DCSF will do this. In particular the Science Council wants to address the following issues:

- DCSF must give greater clarity to the way in which the Level 3 Science Diploma will address the needs of the student cohort it has identified and this needs to influence and guide the development process – there is a tendency to present the Diploma as all things to everyone.
- If the Diploma is to support post 16 and 19 entry into science based industries for those without higher education qualifications, there must be clear evidence of employer demand and clarity about continued training and employment opportunities.
- The Level 3 Diplomas must offer clear and attractive progression routes through to the full range of STEM opportunities in higher education and accurate careers information, advice and guidance must be available to schools, students and parents.
- The Diploma must respond to the desire of young people to have breadth in their post-16 education and enable options in subjects beyond STEM (i.e. including languages and humanities) at Level 3 without restricting their progression routes to STEM in higher education.
- The Diploma must respond to students' desire for choice and flexibility by enabling students to move between the different lines of learning (subject strands) at each level.
- The Diploma should be designed to fit within a framework of lifelong learning to allow access for those who wish to retrain or update their skills.

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