



Foundation for Science and Technology Meeting

25 May 2005

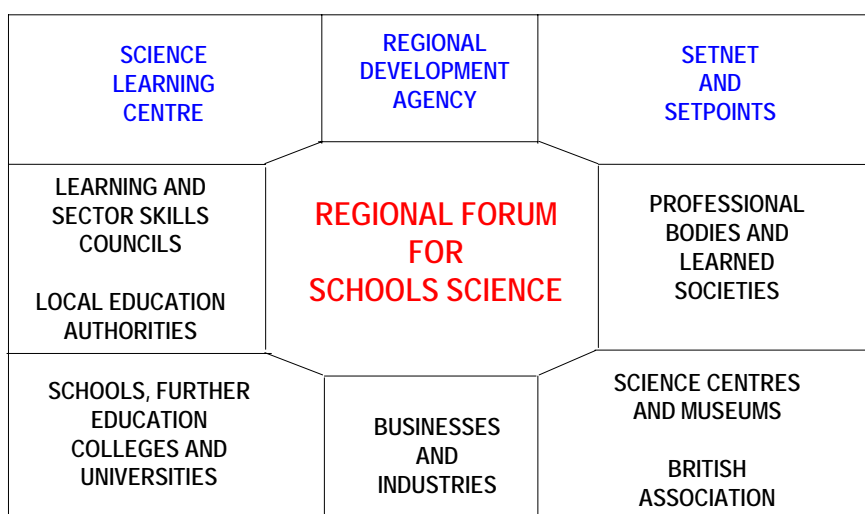
# 'The education of 14–19 year olds'

Lord May of Oxford OM AC Kt PRS

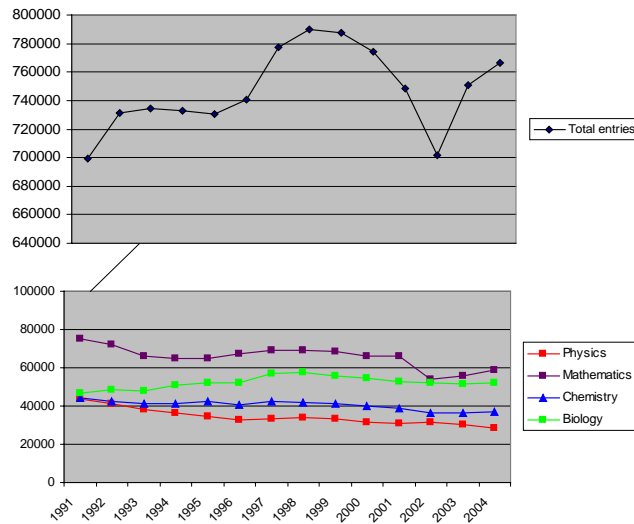
Excellence in science



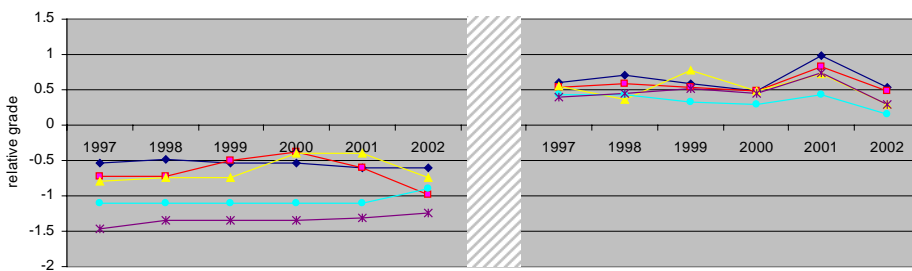
## CONTRIBUTORS TO A REGIONAL FORUM FOR SCHOOLS' SCIENCE



**Total number of A-level entries in science and maths compared with total entries in all A-level subjects**  
(Source: AQA)



**Relative difficulty of the five most difficult and five least difficult subjects at A-level**  
(Source: CEM, Durham)



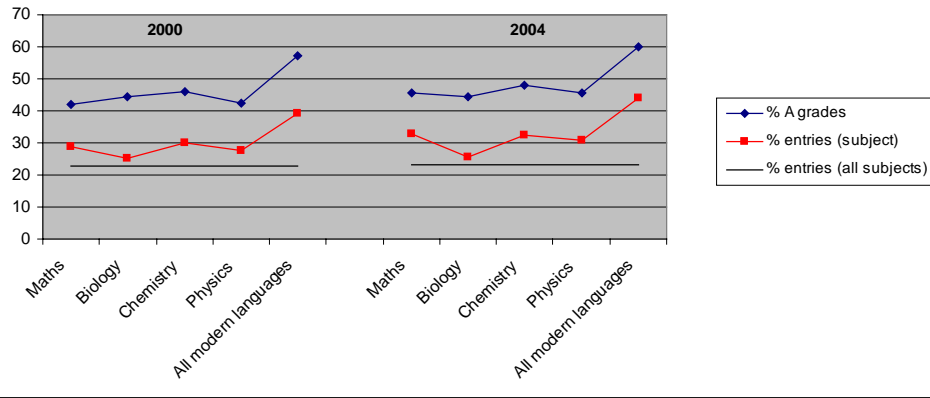
**Least difficult subjects**

- Design and Technology (dark blue)
- Graphical Communication (red)
- Communication Studies (yellow)
- Art (turquoise)
- Photography (purple)

**Most difficult subjects**

- Chemistry (dark blue)
- Physics (red)
- Latin (yellow)
- French (turquoise)
- Mathematics (purple)

### Independent schools A-level entries and A grades as a proportion of all school entries (Source: ISC, March 2005)



THE ROYAL SOCIETY

The Royal Society is the independent scientific academy of the UK dedicated to promoting excellence in science

Institute of Physics

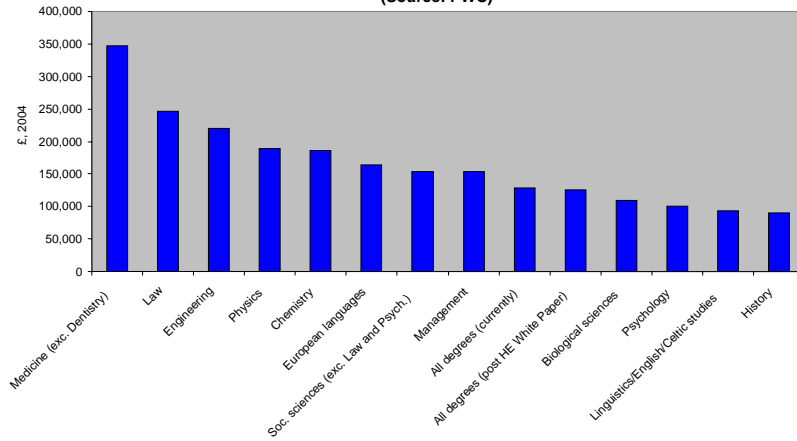
The economic benefits of higher education qualifications

A report produced for  
The Royal Society of Chemistry and  
the Institute of Physics

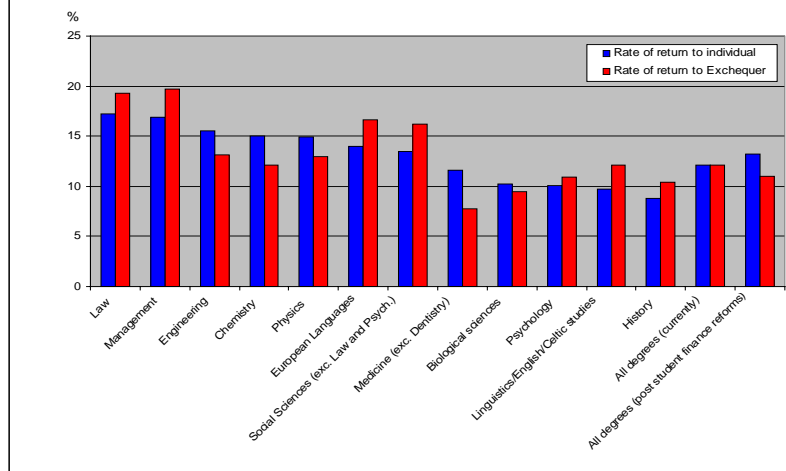
by  
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP  
January 2005

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**Working life additional net earnings by degree subject compared to two or more A-levels: pooled Quarterly Labour Force Surveys 2000-2004**  
(Source: PWC)



**Per cent individual and Exchequer rates of return associated with different degree level subjects**  
(Source: PWC)





## Strategic subjects

- Not just Physics, Chemistry etc; languages, land planning...
- Recent HEFCE changes haven't helped:
  - -4% for "> 17 A-level points" in 2003/4
  - T ratios reduced to 1: 1.3: 1.7 in 2004/5
  - R funding: +17%, +14%, +8% in 2005/6  
(and Chemistry is *down* -1%...)
- All add to challenges on science base:
  - Wrong pointers for VCs and U. Councils
  - HEFCE developing a strategy
- (How) are research and teaching linked?

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