



Research Councils UK Physics Review

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Research Base

- Physics research in the UK is in a generally good state of health, with departments performing research of the highest international quality and having benefited from a significant increase in research expenditure in recent years
- This is reinforced by the UK's strong performance in research outputs and citations
- UK government should continue to fund research in basic and applied physics at the current level to retain the UK's international competitiveness



People

- Despite levelling off recently, physics A-level numbers have declined over the past fifteen years.
- Physicists are ubiquitous in their presence across academic disciplines and within other sectors.
 - Evidence from employers shows that physics is a very desirable training to possess and that physics makes a significant contribution to the economy
- There are significantly lower numbers of female physicists throughout the academic system
- A further concern is the lack of practical experimentation skills possessed by Physics graduates



University departments

- Departments should broaden research focus to claim back research money that is funding Physics in other departments
- Lost the ownership of a number of sub-disciplines to other university departments
- Departments need to seek to differentiate and diversify their income streams
- Departmental structure largely RAE driven
- Due to the low relative cost of funding physics infrastructure in the current departmental structure we are promoting inertia



Future of the Discipline

- Physics can find additional funding in new areas that have been lost to other university departments
- Universities have to protect the discipline by maintaining and developing existing departments assisting them to broaden their focus
- Should Research Councils consider structural changes to encourage great engagement between physics and other disciplines
- How do we do more to encourage students into physics, particularly women, given such healthy employment prospects both in academia and other sectors



RCUK Review of Physics

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/review/physics.htm>

