COUNCIL FOR
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

Council for Science and Technology

How Government and academia can work together

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How Government and academia can work together

- John Denham commissioned this project from CST as a component of the DIUS HE debate
- CST project led by Sir John Beringer
- Involved wide consultation – over 50 individuals and organisations
- Recommendations accepted by John Denham. Government Office for Science leading on the implementation

How Government and academia can work together

Four main inhibitors identified:

- Less than professional working relationships: largely because of different cultures
- Ignorance on both sides of what good engagement can deliver
- Degree of mistrust between academics and policymakers
- Failure to value and reward the relationship

How Government and academia can work together

Main message:

- academics and policy makers have a healthy level of engagement and goodwill but the relationship needs to be strengthened

CST's recommendations designed to

  - Build relationships and communication
  - Build capacity to ensure a more productive engagement
  - Rate, value and reward the engagement

How Government and academia can work together

Build relationships and communication

- Have world - class internship and secondment schemes between academics and policy-makers, and promulgate them widely.
- Need to be seen as career-enhancing on both sides
- All should build our own networks

Desired outcome

- A culture change on both sides leading to greater clarity in the relationship, better interaction, mutual understanding and a more coherent relationship between academia, Government and professional bodies

How Government and academia can work together

Build capacity to ensure a more productive engagement

- strengthen the roles of Departmental Chief Scientists and Science Advisory Councils in Government
- Universities act more like consultancy organisations

Desired outcome

- A more professional, creative and efficient relationship between academia and Government, with agreement on both sides on where and how to build the necessary capacity

How Government and academia can work together

Rating, valuing and rewarding the engagement

- identify criteria to assess quality and incentives within the three major categories of academic engagement with Government
  - for example peer review mechanisms within Government or a gold standard acknowledgement
  - universities should reward engagement with Government through academic career development

Desired outcomes

- A wider range of academics will be eager to work with Government and more civil servants working with academics

Council for Science and Technology

- Council for Science and Technology (CST) is the Prime Minister's top-level independent advisory body on strategic science and technology policy issues
- It focuses on issues that cut across Governments within the medium to long-term
- it is co-chaired by the Government Chief Scientific Advisor, Professor John Beddington, and by Professor Dame Janet Finch, together with 14 members drawn from a range of academic, business and charity backgrounds
- One of the strengths of a body such as CST is that it can range across a wide spectrum of science and technology issues, and their social implications