

Education Policy Lunchbox

Speaker: Dr Rosalind Mist

Current role: SCORE Manager, [Science Community Representing Education](#) (SCORE)

Talk title: 'The work of SCORE and how to get involved'

Date and time: Tuesday 16 February 12:30 - 14:00

Location: Charles Darwin House, London

Summary

Science education policy professionals met in London on 16th February 2010 for the first 'Education Policy Lunchbox' seminar, organised by the Biochemical Society, the British Ecological Society and the Society for Experimental Biology.

Dr Rosalind Mist, Manager of SCORE (Science Community Representing Education), led a discussion on 'The work of SCORE and how to get involved', which included background information on who SCORE are, details about the work that SCORE do and ideas on how interested parties can get involved.

Background

SCORE is a partnership of six membership organisations which aims to provide a coherent voice for the science community on issues in science education. SCORE has a small secretariat (Dr Mist and Ms Fiona Miller, Assistant SCORE Manager) responsible for administering the partnerships activities.

The members of SCORE are the Association for Science Education, the Institute of Physics, the Royal Society, the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Science Council and the Society of Biology. SCORE is chaired by Sir Alan Wilson. Each partner is represented by two employees of each member organisation.

SCORE committee members convene through three different types of meetings:

- Business meetings (where general matters are covered)
- Policy meetings ("private seminars" on policy matters delivered by an external speaker)
- Away days (where long-term strategy ideas are discussed).

In addition SCORE organise steering and working group meetings on particular topics, in order to seek guidance and canvass ideas from a range of stakeholders with expertise in the relevant areas.

SCORE work closely with the equivalent partnerships for Mathematics (ACME – Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education) and Engineering (E4E - Education for Engineering).

Work of SCORE

SCORE activities encompass policy research, responsive work, seminars, workshops and conferences and cover many of the pressing issues in science education today. All of their policy making activities are evidence-based. Current priorities include:

- Curriculum
- Schools and colleges workforce
- Wider learning experience
- Qualifications and assessment.

SCORE activities are managed through a mixture of steering groups and working groups. The steering groups are made up of specialists in a given area (e.g. the wider learning experience). These steering groups identify particular issues within that area for further consideration and working groups are established to look at these in more detail (e.g. under 'wider learning experience' there are working groups looking at practical work policy and progression routes in science). This process ensures that SCORE engage relevant members of the science education community in their work.

Case study

Dr Mist gave an example of SCORE's work in practical science to highlight how this process allows the group to translate their policy work into practice:

Practical work policy: evidence

Driven by a lack of evidence on practical work in science SCORE commissioned a report, led by the ASE, to research this area in more detail (including 'what are the purposes of practical work?'). This took the form of a literature review and surveys and involved SCORE, Government and its agencies and the science community. The result was a report which outlined the current state of practical work in science and a proposed for a strategic framework. SCORE have subsequently begun to carry out recommendations from the report with their activities outlined below. www.score-education.org/downloads/practical_work/ExecSum.pdf

Practical work policy: audience

High level messages from the research report were collated into a short booklet aimed at senior school leaders, initial teacher training (ITT) trainers and other key influencers over practical work in schools. The booklet included details of why practical work was important and how it should be used, and was circulated to UK secondary schools and colleges in addition to other key audiences such as policy makers. www.score-education.org/downloads/practical_work/framework.pdf

Practical work policy: resources

The DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) funded the production of online and hard copy resources covering science practical work in primary schools and practicals in biology, chemistry and physics in secondary schools and colleges. The resources contained detailed information about how to carry out different experiments, alongside details about the purpose for each experiment (e.g. what key concepts would be learnt). www.score-education.org/downloads/practical_work/secondary.pdf and http://www.score-education.org/downloads/practical_work/primary.pdf

Practical work policy: CPD

The report recommendations included more effective communication and funding for teacher CPD related to practical work. This led to the “Getting Practical” project, funded through the DCSF and organised by an ASE-led consortium.

www.gettingpractical.org.uk

Practical work policy: policy into practice

SCORE worked with Government and its agencies and the science community to review the primary and GCSE science curricula in order to ensure the place of practical work in the curriculum and qualifications. Activities included reviewing every question from the 2008 core and additional GCSE papers and producing a report on the findings (www.score-education.org/downloads/gcse_project/SCORE_report_final.pdf) and a production of a set of maths skills requirements for science. Going forward SCORE will look at both applied and separate science GCSEs and at sample and exemplar assessments.

Practical work policy: next steps

SCORE are planning to look at benchmarking, A Levels and KS2/3 assessment.

What else?

Curriculum:

- International perspectives
- Curriculum mapping framework

Schools and colleges workforce:

- Expert teachers
- School technicians
- Motivations of PGCE students

Wider learning experience:

- Enrichment and enhancement
- Progression routes
- Practical work

Qualifications and assessment:

- Science Diploma
- Grading severity
- Applied science
- A-level

How to get involved

Interested parties can be involved with SCORE through their working groups on:

- International perspectives
- Curriculum framework
- Practical work policy
- Progression routes
- How Science Works
- GCSE Science 2009
- Maths in science
- Primary science

You can also keep up-to-date with the work of SCORE through their electronic newsletter (sign up through the website – www.score-education.org) and by visiting the SCORE website and attending their conferences and workshops.

Dr Mist can be contacted at rosalind.mist@score-education.org.