In summer 2016, a representative sample of over 4,000 14- to 18-year-olds at English, state-funded schools and colleges shared their views and experience of science and science careers. Here we present some of the key results. The full findings are freely available from: https://wellcome.ac.uk/what-we-do/our-work/young-peoples-views-science-education

**Learning science**

Most young people said they found science lessons at school interesting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very interesting</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly interesting</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very interesting</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top factors encouraging young people to learn science**

- I find science interesting: 41%
- I like doing practical work/experiments: 35%
- Having a good teacher: 35%
- It’s relevant to real life: 41%

**Top factors putting young people off learning science**

- Having a bad teacher: 33%
- More difficult than other subjects: 35%
- Doesn’t fit with future study/career plans: 26%

*Most deprived areas = young people living in lowest quintile of Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). Least deprived areas = young people living in highest IDACI quintile
Young people's views on science education | Science at GCSE

**Triple science***

37% of students said that they studied triple science. But this is higher than official statistics.

23% of pupils were entered for triple science (four year average, DfE).

Reasons for not studying triple science:

- Too difficult/lacked confidence: 30%
- Didn’t achieve grade needed/not in the right set: 30%
- Not interested: 27%
- Not offered by school: 29%

### Practical work

45% of students did hands-on practical work at least once a fortnight.

- Single science: 37%
- Double science: 42%
- Triple science: 52%

Percent of young people who would prefer to do more practical work:

- Single science: 76%
- Double science: 57%
- Triple science: 49%

*GCSE science course worth three GCSEs. This may involve studying biology, chemistry, and physics as separate GCSE subjects or studying Core, Additional and Further Additional Science GCSEs.

**Most deprived areas = young people living in lowest quintile of Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). Least deprived areas = young people living in highest IDACI quintile.
Young people's views on science education | Science as a career

**STEM careers**

43%

Interested in a career involving science, computer science, engineering or maths (STEM)

19% Very interested
24% Fairly interested

66% Enjoy the subject/career
47% Careers are well paid
45% Good at the subject

43% Relates to real world
41% Wide range of career options

**Work experience**

30%

Among those with a firm interest in a science-related career did STEM-related work experience

46% Myself
39% Through family/friends
35% Through school/college

28%

Wanted to but were unable to do STEM related work experience

38% Didn’t know how to find opportunities
37% Couldn’t find relevant opportunities
36% School didn’t offer
35% Didn’t have right contacts
**Informal science learning**

- Young people’s varied engagement with science outside school in the last 12 months
  - Engaged with science content outside school (e.g. TV, radio, newspapers, online): 68%
  - Visited a zoo or aquarium: 26%
  - Visited a science museum, science centre or planetarium: 20%
  - Visited a historical or cultural museum: 30%

**Extra-curricular science activities**

- Extra-curricular activities by young people in the last 3 years
  - Any activity:
    - Talk at school by someone in a science-related job (e.g. STEM ambassador): 20%
    - Science, computer science, engineering or maths club: 8%
    - Science event, fair (e.g. Big Bang Fair): 9%
    - Science Extended Project Qualification* or CREST award: 4%

- But male students were more likely to say that these activities had encouraged them to study science
  - Male: 46%
  - Female: 36%

- Male: 30%
- Female: 31%

* An Extended Project Qualification can be taken as a post-16 Level 3 course, comparable to half an A level.

**Interest in hearing from scientists**

- Are interested in hearing more from scientists about their research: 53%