British values and the curriculum – A Level Sciences

The Prevent duty requires providers and practitioners to exemplify British values in their practice and to use opportunities to explore British values and to challenge extremism.

British values are defined as including:

“democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.”

This includes complying with the Equality Act 2010 and preventing discrimination against those with protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

The Prevent duty also includes an expectation that staff will encourage students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Behaviour in classrooms, laboratories and workplaces
Effective learning and work takes place in classrooms where there is tolerance and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs as well as respect for people with protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act. Staff should also be aware of the need to ensure that no one in protected groups is discriminated against. Those employers who allow discrimination to take place have been prosecuted using the Equality duty.

By maintaining high standards of behaviour, including mutual respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs and encouraging learners to respect the protected characteristics, class teachers, lecturers and trainers will be promoting British values.

The law

In any area of employment, regulations are very important:

- As part of the Science A Level courses, as in other vocational courses, the importance of health and safety legislation will always be taught.

Democracy and its link to rule of law
A core part of all A Level Science subjects will be the importance of safe practice of science in accordance with health and safety legislation. Opportunities will arise to discuss British law in this

context. Students are likely to have opportunities to undertake group and individual investigations that will allow a range of legal and democratic issues to be explored.

Legislation that directly impacts on learners' work can provide an opportunity to discuss how these laws have come about through the democratic system and as a result of the use of the democratic system to achieve change.

There is a diverse range of topical scientific issues that allow students to explore the nature of scientific evidence and the interplay between scientific communities, the media, politicians and policymakers. Legislation has an impact on all areas of science in both college and university laboratory work and also in commercial applications of science.

Critical thinking to build student resilience

Students of GCSE Science(s) will find it necessary to distinguish between opinions based on valid, repeatable and reproducible evidence and opinions based on non-scientific ideas (for example, prejudice or hearsay).

Individual liberty

Students of A Level or GCSE Science subjects will have opportunities to use their individual liberty to make decisions about their future education and careers. They will also be aware that there are limitations on those freedoms. They will also have the opportunity in various topics to explore individual freedom of choice and constraints on freedom of choice. This could include constraints in the use of methods, materials and also freedom to engage in a potentially dangerous activity that could lead to a requirement for medical treatment, e.g., rock climbing or to follow an unhealthy lifestyle.

Challenging extremism

The Prevent duty is not intended to stop students or apprentices debating controversial ideas.
If students make comments that could be regarded as extremist, staff should encourage the student to consider:

- what they have said
- where the views they are expressing came from
- whether the evidence they have is accurate and full
- whether they have received a partial or incorrect interpretation of evidence
- alternative interpretations and views
- whether they need to make a referral to the designated safeguarding lead.

Staff should use opportunities to challenge extremist narratives through discussions with students or apprentices. If staff do not feel confident in challenging extremist ideas with their students or apprentices, they should ask for support.
If students or apprentices behave in a way that contravenes the equality and diversity aspects of the code of conduct that they have signed, then this is a disciplinary issue, e.g., refusing to work with a gay student or apprentice or a student or apprentice of a different ethnicity.

Applying British values to your subject area: Example	
British values	**Examples A Level Sciences**
Rule of law	Maintain your responsibilities for health and safety Know how health and safety policies and procedures affect health and safety: Your responsibilities for health and safety as defined by any specific legislation covering your job role, e.g.: • Health and Safety at Work Act • The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) • The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations • The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order • The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) Equality Act 2010
Democracy	How laws have come about: • Pressure from the public, politicians and media for safe products • Trade union pressure for health and safety legislation. • Political influences on science, e.g., genetic experimentation, restrictions on use of chemicals, government policy on energy production
Individual liberty	• Limitations on freedom through health and safety legislation and the rules of the laboratory to ensure safe practice • Career and education choices that students make and limitations on these freedoms, e.g., exam results • Individual freedom to accept or use life support in maintaining circulatory and respiratory systems • Individual freedoms to decide whether to donate organs for transplantation • Individual freedom to use or not use birth control • Individual freedom to have genetic screening • Individual lifestyle choices that influence health outcomes
Tolerance and mutual respect of different faiths and beliefs and the Equality Act	The approaches to solving scientific problems that are part of A level Science qualifications require students to show tolerance and mutual respect in relation to: • Behaviour in the laboratory and classroom • Creation of an effective working environment whether in a college, ILP or the workplace • Health and safety: implications of clothing and other items of religious significance • Understanding of the influence of different faiths and beliefs in some decisions that impact on science and healthcare