

School visit guidelines

This is by no means a definitive guide, rather a collection of useful tips and information.

IChemE strongly advise that all whynotchemeng volunteers also register with SETNET as Science & Engineering Ambassadors (SEAs), to make use of their more comprehensive induction session.

More information can be found in the [SETNET](#) area.

UK education systems

England & Wales

Typically the school year sequence is as follows

| School year | Age | Keystage | Public exams |
|-------------|-----|-------------------|---|
| 7 | 11 | Keystage 3 | SATS (Science, Maths, English) in May of Yr 9 |
| 8 | 12 | | |
| 9 | 13 | | |
| 10 | 14 | Keystage 4 | GCSEs (9,10 or 11 subjects) in May/June Year 11 (Some modular exams run throughout Yr 10 & 11) |
| 11 | 15 | | |
| 12 | 16 | Keystage 5 | AS levels (usually 4 subjects) |
| 13 | 17 | | A2 levels (usually 3 subjects) |

Scotland

Typically the school year sequence is as follows

| School year | Age | Study level |
|-------------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| S1 | 13 | Lower Secondary School |
| S2 | 14 | |
| S3 | 15 | Standard Grade |
| S4 | 16 | |
| S5 | 17 | Highers & Intermediate |
| S6 | 18 | Highers & Advanced Highers |

Contacting schools

- Phone or letter are usually more successful than e-mail
- Expect to have to make a number of attempts to make contact
- Ask when break times/free periods are – staff are more likely to be available
- The Head of Science or Head of Careers is often the most appropriate first point of contact

Visiting schools

- Don't assume the school will have adequate car parking – allow extra time for this
- Always aim to arrive 30 mins early – the school timetable can be very inflexible and adjustments are not always possible if you are late
- Always report to the school reception first – it will be clearly signposted
- It can be useful to take photo ID (eg company ID/photo drivers license) just in case
- Don't assume the school will have projector or display equipment – always check first
- Don't assume practical demonstrations will be allowed as schools must adhere to strict health & safety procedures – always check first
- You should **NEVER** be left unattended with a class – if the class teacher leaves the room, you should too.