



## Bitesize Careers - Improving the uptake in physics

### Why we should we promote physics careers

This session begins with a brief description of '**What is Physics**' and then considers the '**Image of physics**' and some of the stereotypical views young people have about it.

Data is drawn from the IOP's Limitless programme with some extracts highlighting further views from young people. This includes data from parents and carers highlighting their perceptions of physics. A graph from research carried out by the Drayson Foundation is also included which shows a highly skewed uptake in A level physics study from a sample of schools. The report includes some useful findings which can be used to interventions that can help tackle gender bias and stereotyping. A brief summary can be found [here](#)<sup>1</sup> and the fuller report [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

The summary is particularly useful could be used as stimulus material for a discussion about your school's approach to gender balance and ways in which you might tackle this. More details about this can be found in the Bitesize session, **Empowering girls in STEM careers**.

The section concludes with a slide that provides an overview of '**Why we should promote physics careers**' drawing upon data from the IOP's [Limitless campaign](#)<sup>3</sup>. **Activity 1** asks you to consider the ways in which physics is conveyed to students in your school setting.

You might like to consider:

- How is the subject positioned, who champions the subject?
- Which students study it?
- Have you got specialist subject teachers in physics?
- What do other colleagues and departments know about the subject?

This is a quick activity which should take you no more than 10 minutes and could easily be carried out in a department or whole school meeting. By including other science specialists in your department and/or colleagues in other departments, you will be able gain a whole school perspective on how physics as a subject is viewed.

You may also like to think about ways in which you could promote physics further?  
What are the barriers or challenges to make this happen?

Links:

1. <https://www.iop.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/IGB-results-recommendations-2017-report.pdf>
2. <https://www.iop.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/IGB-reflections-intervention.pdf>
3. <https://www.iop.org/strategy/limit-less>