

## Professional Recognition and Development at the Royal Society of Biology

### 1. Introduction

Today it is increasingly being recognised that demonstrating how you have increased your skills, knowledge and expertise is an important aspect of professional development. This is called Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and is usually a structured approach to learning. CPD helps to maintain and increase competence to practice by increasing knowledge, skills and practical experience. CPD can involve any relevant learning activity, whether formal and structured or informal and self-directed.

Often CPD is rolled up into an appraisal system where goals are agreed, formalised and monitored throughout the appraisal year. Whilst appraisals and in house CPD programmes are highly valued they don't have an 'external face' i.e. they are for you and the organisation you are working in and thus there is no external recognition for this.

It is now possible to obtain external recognition for your skills, competencies and experience. Under license from the Science Council, the Royal Society of Biology (<https://www.rsb.org.uk/>) is able to offer professional recognition of your skills, knowledge and expertise (including CPD activities) that you undertake.

The Royal Society of Biology offers to their members three Professional Recognition and Development awards under license from the Science Council *Registered Science Technician (RSciTech)*, *Registered Scientist (RSci)* and *Chartered Scientist (CSci)*. In addition it is also possible for members of the Society to obtain the award of Chartered Biologist (CBiol).

All those who are committed to the biological sciences in academia, industry, education and research are eligible to join their appropriate register. All these registers can be applied for by visiting the members' area [mySociety](#).

### 2. Which Professional Recognition Award is for me?

The above recognise and reward scientists at various stages of their career and development.

In general:

**Registered Science Technician (RSciTech)** is aimed at those working in a technical role in the lab and have experience equivalent to at least a level 3 qualification such as A levels, BTEC, Scottish Highers.

**Registered Scientist (RSci)** is aimed at those working in a lab where experimental planning, design and interpretation are important aspects of the job. Experience is equivalent to at least a level 5 qualification such as HND, Foundation degree.

**Chartered Scientist (CSci)** is aimed at those:

- working at a more strategic level in the lab/group where they have more role in defining direction and strategy for implementation such as a group or project leader/manager or,

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- are scientific experts in their field of work or,
- have senior roles which encompass a more broad role within the organisation. This can include department heads but also those who have significant administration roles such as health and safety officers etc.

Please note facts:

- I. The above is a guide only and *it is the job role* which is important. As a 'rule of thumb' new graduates should consider RSci and postgraduates (MSc, PhD etc) should consider CSci.
- II. It is likely that candidates need to have a minimum of 1-2 years of experience in their job role before they are likely to have all the skills and competencies needed for a particular award.

### **3. The awards are a UK pan science recognition and development award**

The Science Council is promoting professional recognition in several scientific areas in the UK. Specifically the Science Council has awarded licenses to Professional Bodies in Science in the UK.

All judge applications to the same standards which are laid down by The Science Council and can award RSciTech, RSci and CSci.

Applicants need to join their appropriate professional body in order to apply for professional recognition.

### **4. Obtaining a Professional Recognition award**

To obtain a professional recognition award, applicants first have to join the Royal Society of Biology at the appropriate grade. For RSciTech (affiliate or associate grade), RSci (associate or member grade) and for CSci (member or fellow grade).

Subsequently obtaining the appropriate recognition award depends on submission of:

- I. Educational qualifications (*Level 7 qualification or equivalency report necessary for CSci. RSciTech and RSci competencies are reviewed as equivalency in absence of the necessary qualification*)
- II. Evidence of achieving the required professional competencies in 5 areas:
  - Application of knowledge and understanding
  - Personal responsibility
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Professional practice
  - Professional standards
- III. Demonstrating commitment to CPD
- IV. Adherence to the codes of conduct for the Royal Society of Biology and Science Council
- V. Support of application by your supervisor

## 5. Maintaining your Professional Recognition award

This requires the *annual submission* of CPD. The Royal Society of Biology CPD scheme is wide ranging and flexible as members come from all areas of the life sciences and the development of one member may differ widely from the development of another.

The CPD system is maintained online, via the Society members' area, and you upload each activity, either as it is completed or at the end of your CPD year. Activities can fall under one of the 5 areas.

- I. Work based learning (max 20 CPD points)
- II. Professional activity (max 30 CPD points)
- III. Formal/Educational (max 20 CPD points)
- IV. Self-directed learning (max 10 CPD points)
- V. Other (max 10 CPD points)

When you select the area your activity falls under, you will also be given various sub-categories for your activity to allocate the number of points that can be claimed for each hour you have spent on your activity. This is automatically calculated for you by the on line system.

To pass the CPD year, 50 points must be gained which equates to around 30 hours per annum

Note - CPD does not require attendance at external conferences. Many of CPD activities can come from on the job training courses, and professional development activity, day release courses, manufacturers training courses carried out as part of your job etc.

## 6. How are applications assessed?

Assessors for the Royal Society of Biology vet all applications and submit a report to the Society.

## 7. The Application Process

There are two routes to obtain your award:

**Online system** – candidates upload/submit evidence via the Royal Society of Biology online application system

**Assessment by Interview System** – assessors from the Royal Society of Biology visit candidates at their place of work or host an interview day at Charles Darwin House

The assessor will discuss with each candidate how they meet each of the competencies required for the level of professional recognition required.

For more information on the registers please contact:

[rscitech@rsb.org.uk](mailto:rscitech@rsb.org.uk)

[rsci@rsb.org.uk](mailto:rsci@rsb.org.uk)

[csci@rsb.org.uk](mailto:csci@rsb.org.uk)

## 8. What does Professional Recognition signify for the recipient?

### Professional Recognition

- Externally validated nationally recognised award
- Raised standard or expertise
- Pan science professional award
- Improved status and recognition
- Potential for enhanced career development
- RSciTech, RSci or CSci after your name, in addition to your post nominals of your membership grade
- Demonstrates your transferable skills
- Demonstrates your commitment to CPD

### Commitment to Professional Development

- Potential to develop to Chartered Status
- Access to lifelong learning, CPD, professional networks and dedicated meetings

### Influencing Development of Professional Recognition

- Potential to be on advisory or assessor panel overseeing implementation and development
- STEM programmes – raise standard of vocational training and professional recognition and development

## 9. What does Professional Recognition signify for the employer?

### Their Employees

- ❑ Have externally assessed and validated skills, knowledge and competencies
- ❑ Are committed to CPD
- ❑ Have increased skill level
- ❑ Raise value of employees within the organisation

### By Committing to Professional Development

- ❑ That Vocational training and professional registration - valued and viable.
- ❑ Vocational training and professional recognition are a real alternative to undertaking a degree course. Potential to Increase recruitment from schools, colleges and universities.

### Influence development at the Royal Society of Biology

- ❑ Potential to be on advisory panel overseeing implementation and development. Potential to be on assessment panel. Ability to influence skills and competencies required for professional registration in response to changes in markets, new discoveries and technology impacts.

## 10. Annual Fees (all include membership fee)

Registered Science Technician (RSciTech) £81

Registered Scientist (RSci) £81 or £89 (depends on grade of membership)

Chartered Scientist (CSci) £150 or £198 (depends on grade of membership)

Chartered Biologist (CBiol) £120 or £168 (depends on grade of membership)

## 11. More information

- ❑ We are more than happy to visit your company and provide a presentation on the registers or a workshop on applying.
- ❑ We can also provide a fast track clinic, whereby we visit your company to interview applicants in person and review competency answers and eligibility for professional recognition.

<http://www.rsb.org.uk/careers-and-cpd/registers>

[http://www.sciencecouncil.org/professional\\_registers](http://www.sciencecouncil.org/professional_registers)