

# **‘Working Towards RSci’:** helping your placement student make the most of their experience

## **What is ‘Working Towards RSci’?**

Working Towards Registered Scientist (RSci) is an employability programme that students pay to sign up for, setting them on the path to becoming a full Registered Scientist.

They are provided with a handbook and additional guidance that helps them apply their workplace experience to the standards and competences expected of a professional scientist. It is a status that students and graduates can include on their CV and use in job applications.

## **What is ‘Registered Scientist’?**

**RSci** Registered Scientist, RSci for short, is a professional status that recognises someone working at a particular standard within science, independent of discipline.

**Registered Scientist** It is a status in its own right but can also be considered a stepping stone towards Chartership.

All Registered Scientists are committed to codes of professional and ethical conduct and are expected to keep their skills up to date through continuing professional development (CPD) on an annual basis.

## **Who is ‘Working Towards RSci’ for?**

To be eligible for the programme, students need evidence of employment in a science role. This could be for a placement year, which they may be starting, currently be on or have completed. Or it could be their first graduate science job.

## **What do we mean by ‘standards and competence’?**

The Science Council sets the standards for professional scientists, through professional registration.

There are 5 areas covered by these standards:

1. Knowledge and Understanding
2. Personal Responsibility
3. Interpersonal Skills
4. Professional Practice
5. Professionalism

Each standard has up to four specific areas of competence, demonstrated by evidence of how this competence has been applied in a professional setting.

For example:

*“Identify, review and select scientific techniques, procedures and methods to undertake tasks”  
(Professional Practice; D1)*



Anyone signed up for the 'Working Towards RSci' programme is expected to be gaining experiences that would eventually lead to their being competent at the level of a Registered Scientist.

For this reason, only students that are on or have done a placement year are eligible to sign up for the programme, since a degree course on its own does not provide professional experience.

### **How does this affect me as someone managing a student on placement?**

If you are managing one or more students on the 'Working Towards RSci' programme, then you may find that they want to discuss with you how their work relates to the standards expected of a Registered Scientist. They may also ask for more responsibility or other opportunities within the workplace.

As their manager, you may find that the 'Working Towards RSci' programme provides additional structure to conversations about their development and performance. Ask to see the handbook or get in touch with the Science Council to find out more.

You could also help them identify if and when they have built up enough experience and competence to start the application for full Registered Scientist status. Their year in industry may not prepare them fully, so it's worth being a critical friend and really probing whether they are ready to apply.

Over time, the Science Council hopes to build up a body of evidence over which placements put students in the strongest position to apply for professional registration. So it's worth thinking about whether the students you have on placement are getting the most out of their time with you.

If you have any questions or feedback please get in touch at [registration@sciencecouncil.org](mailto:registration@sciencecouncil.org).