

'Working Towards RSci': helping your students improve their employability

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.

How much does it cost?

For just £15, students receive handbook and a covering letter in the post, as well as access to advice and support from the Science Council team as and when they need it.

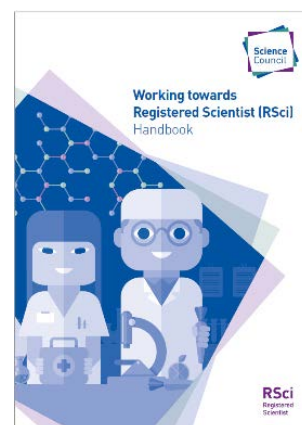
What do we mean by 'standards and competence'?

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 a placement officer (or other university staff member)?

If you have any students that have signed up to the programme, then you can help them by being a sounding board for their work experience and how it translates to professional competence and employability.

They may feel like their placement is not providing the right kind of opportunities for them to meet RSci standards. You could help them explore whether this is the case, or you could help them prepare for conversations with their manager asking for more responsibility.

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 please do encourage your students to sign up for the programme.

If you have any questions or feedback please get in touch at registration@sciencecouncil.org.