Becoming a Registered Scientist

Competence report – advice to applicants

Applicants for RSci will need to demonstrate competence across five areas. Guidance on what the assessors will be looking for is provided below each competency but the examples are just indicative – there will be many other valid examples you could choose

Here are some tips you should bear in mind when compiling your application:

- For each competence statement, you will need to give clear examples of the role that **you** play or the contribution that **you** make to a particular task or activity.

- The examples must have sufficient depth that the assessor should be able to visualise what you did from your description. To achieve this, it might be useful to explain what you did, how you went about it and why you did it. Or consider using the STAR format to draft each competency, focusing on describing the **Situation, Task, Action and Result.**

- You may use the same task or activity more than once but you should ensure you are clear on how it applies to the specific competency you are addressing.

- Some of your competency answers may seem fuller or easier to complete than others – this is normal and is illustrative of the wide spectrum of scientists who wish to become professionally registered.

- Most of the examples you provide should be fairly recent (within the last three years) but you can also draw on relevant experience further back in your career.

- If you are undecided which examples to use to illustrate the competency, don't forget to read the statement in tandem with the competency group heading. For example, answers to the D competencies should be written through the lens of your professional practice.

- You should aim to write approximately 300 words per competency.*

*Word Limit

Please aim to write around **300 words per competence** - too few words may not give the assessors enough detail to fully understand your strengths, while too many could make your key points less focused and harder for the assessors to follow.

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Aim to be concise yet comprehensive, providing clear examples of how you meet the standard without unnecessary detail.

The guidance below is not specific to any Science Council Licensed Body. Each Licensed Body will have their own guidance to which applicants can refer. This document is intended to advise applicants using the Common Application Process or those exploring Science Council registration. It can be used by Licensed Bodies as a basis for their own guidance if required.

A: Application of knowledge and understanding

This competency grouping is looking at how you: Identify and use relevant scientific understanding, methods and skills to complete tasks and address well defined problems.

The A competencies are your opportunity to demonstrate your scientific knowledge and understanding and how you apply them in the workplace; what knowledge you have gained and how you translate it. There are 3 competencies within the A group which each have a different focus, try and think of ways you can evidence these competencies. They could include:

- Investigating new techniques
- Scientific reports
- Data analysis
- Devising, reviewing, selecting, adapting or improving a method
- Optimising a process or equipment using prior knowledge

> **In this document the text in purple is the competence statement itself. This will be documented in the application form and must be evidenced in your answer. The black text is guidance about what you might want to consider in your evidence but is not intended to be an exhaustive list.**

A1: Apply extended knowledge of underlying concepts and principles associated with area of work.

We are looking for an example of how you have used your extended knowledge within the area in which you work. This will include developments within your field and the ability to understand and apply new developments to your area of work.

This competency can be used to describe your routine scientific and technical duties and responsibilities.

For instance, you may describe how you:

- take part in a journal/publication review group within the workplace
- suggest updates to the way in which designs, prototypes, processes, programmes, experiments, or procedures are approached and carried out based upon new knowledge of technology or underlying theoretical principles
- undertake further academic / vocational / self-study or technical training in your current or advancing field of work

A2: Review, evaluate and apply underlying scientific concepts, principles and techniques in the context of new and different areas of work.

What we are looking for here is how you have taken techniques/principles and reviewed, evaluated and applied them in a new area of work.

Your example may for instance describe how you:

- work in a new subject, in a different discipline, area or with new material. You should be able to explain and describe in technical terms the main components/elements/tools/material etc. involved and why you are carrying out the new work.
- are involved in carrying out a new procedure, process, or design; you should be able to explain from a technical perspective why you are using this and why it is relevant to the new area of work.
- are involved in using different or new design or experimental model; you should be able to explain why you are using that model, how you are using it and what the results might mean

Your answer to this competency could be expanded on in the next competency – this competency is looking at the stated problem, A3 and how you solve it.

A3: Analyse, interpret and evaluate data, concepts and ideas to propose solutions to problems.

We are looking for an example of how you observe and interpret the results from your data to draw conclusions and inform your next steps.

Think about how you use the skills to critically evaluate the information scientifically that is delivered by the technologies that you utilise.

Your example could show how you:
- enable others to be able to analyse and interpret your work and advise on how you may overcome problems.
- review a number of relevant literature/manuals/designs and present your findings to others.
- develop new methods/approach based on information or outcomes from previous work by others or themselves.

You may find that your answer to A3 is an extension of A2 - demonstrating how you solved the problem described in A2, especially if you don't work in a laboratory setting.

B: Personal Responsibility

This competency grouping is looking at how you: Exercise personal responsibility in planning and implementing tasks according to prescribed protocols.

The B competencies are focussing on your personal responsibility, specifically in the workplace. There are 3 competencies which look at different aspects of professional behaviours. Different aspects of your work that you include could be:

- Crisis management
- Laboratory or team organisation
- Maintaining quality outputs
- Health and Safety responsibilities
- Sustainable practices

B1: Work autonomously while knowing when to escalate appropriately and recognising limits of scope of practice.

We are looking for an example of how you work with no supervision for certain key tasks, experiments or procedures associated with your role within required timeframes. You will also be able to demonstrate your understanding of when you need to seek input from either your supervisor or others and when to escalate.

This references your personal responsibility, rather than through a lens of your interpersonal skills, which is a focus in the next group.

B2: Take responsibility for safe and sustainable working practices and contribute to their evaluation and improvement.

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We are looking for an example of how you have taken responsibility for working safely and sustainably.

Your example could include:
- Identification of potential safety issues and recommending solutions
- risk assessments associated with your work
- relevant Health and Safety regulations, e.g. COSHH, Noise, Manual Handling, DSE
- relevant Home Office Licences
- safety training courses you have successfully completed for your laboratory role
- any monitoring of safety within your work, e.g. for radioactivity, chemical exposure
- safety equipment and control measures necessary to work safely and protect others.
- carrying out safety inspections of premises and equipment, producing reports and making recommendations.

You may also be responsible for an aspect of 'safety monitoring or training' and (if relevant) a description of this could be included.

Sustainability does not only focus on environmental impacts, although this is an important area to address if you do so in your practice. Other aspects that you could use include:

- sustainability of the workforce and succession planning
- financial sustainability
- sustainability in education and training

B3: Take responsibility for the quality of your work and also enable others to work to high standards.

This means that you can show how you are aware of the quality standards necessary for the work being carried out by yourself and others. You should be able to describe an example of how you enable these standards and ensure that they are applied.

You may, for example:
- produce and communicate protocol standards (such as good laboratory/workshop/design practice)
- train others to recognise when something has not been carried out correctly and explain the impact this could have.
- contribute to the analysis of your own and others' work and explain the impact of good and bad data and outcomes

- recognise when your own and others' work needs to be repeated or the methodology updated and can communicate the reasons for this in terms of reproducibility or quality standards for example.
- if you have to follow different levels of regulatory frameworks e.g. company/government you should include how the differences impact on your practice.

C: Interpersonal Skills

This competency grouping is looking at how you: Demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills

The C competencies are looking for evidence of your interpersonal and communication skills. While most of your examples will be from your workplace, you may wish to use more wider evidence if it fits better. There may be slight overlap between each area so please ensure you have read each of the competencies in this group before starting. There are 3 competencies to address here. Some examples to think about could include:

- Leading meetings
- Giving presentations
- Work with regulators
- Line management

C1: Demonstrate effective and appropriate communication skills.

What we are looking for here is an example that you are an effective communicator. The example can be through appropriate oral, written or electronic means.

Think about the different cohorts you communicate with and how you do this – the language you use in formal reports is different to that used with other stakeholders (e.g. suppliers/trainees).

This may include examples of:
- discussing and agreeing objectives with your supervisor
- discussing and agreeing objectives in team meetings
- giving presentations of your work or other aspects of lab work (e.g. safety updates, method updates) to your supervisor and team.
- preparing written reports on your work
- train, demonstrate or teach others in procedures or protocols
- play a part in staff development (e.g. carry out appraisals or staff reviews)
- carry out induction training

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C2: Demonstrate effective interpersonal and behavioural skills.

This means that you can give an example that demonstrates the skills that you use to interact with colleagues in a constructive way within the work setting. In these situations, it may be appropriate to discuss these with your supervisor, as an external perspective is often very useful in this regard.

You could consider inclusion and how you demonstrate this in this competency.

C3: Demonstrate productive working relationships and an ability to resolve problems.

This means that you should be able to describe how, when working with others, you are able to demonstrate that you developed positive working relationships and resolved the problem. Your example should demonstrate how those working relationships were effective in resolving problems.

There is potential for overlap in your answers on the C competencies. C3 should be where you focus on team working.

For instance, you may:
- be a member of a committee/group that is tasked with a safety aspect of the job and can demonstrate that together you made a difference that was useful and effective in the workplace.
- liaise with other groups within your organisation to effectively deal with problems (e.g. lack of or demand for training in a particular area)
- be a part of working group tasked with addressing specific problems or the need for change.

D: Professional Practice

This competency grouping is looking at how you: Apply appropriate theoretical and practical methods.

The D competencies focus on your professional practice. They are distinct from the other competencies although there may seem to be overlap on first viewing (especially with the A group). Some examples to consider including could be:

- Trouble shooting a method
- Scoping and then managing projects
- Reducing hazards and waste

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Please note that the review of Standards in 2025 resulted in a competency being removed from the D group for Registered Scientist (RSci). This document reflects the competencies from September 2025.

D1: Identify, review and select scientific techniques, procedures and methods to undertake tasks.

This means you can give an example of work that you have undertaken showing where and why the method/procedure used was chosen as the best (or most relevant) to use.

This might include:
- review of method – why is this one the best compared to others that are available
- cost effectiveness
- time taken
- IT considerations

It may help to break this competency down into 3 distinct stages to work through - identify, review and then select. Can you discuss the pros and cons of the various techniques or procedures available to you in a particular task, either something routine or something ad hoc.

D2: Contribute to the organisation of tasks and resources.

This means that you can give examples of how you have contributed to the running of the laboratory/workshop/section or other types of working environment.

For instance, this might mean:
- organisation of safety checks and inspections
- ordering equipment, software, and materials
- organisation of a rota for cleaning, maintenance, or machine time
- organisation of human and physical resources when an issue arises
- organisation of statutory inspections, external/internal servicing, and maintenance of equipment or infrastructure.

D3 (previously D4): Contribute to continuous process improvement.

This means that you can give an example which shows how you are aware of progress in your area and seek ways of improving the efficiency of your work. It should describe how you seek to discuss with your supervisor the strategy for achieving this. For instance, this could

include new and improved methods, new ways to increase throughput, or ways to increase cost-effectiveness.

This competency is not about your personal improvement but about what you've done to improve your working environment or the outputs of your employer. This could focus on lessons that you have learned from practice, and where colleagues have, at the completion of projects, undertaken review and then taken forward any improvements.

Think about how you personally take responsibility for, contribute to or participate in process improvement.

Examples might be your role in:
- taking part in staff reviews
- working within time frames and using SMART objectives
- contributing to operational plans
- looking for cheaper resources
- working within a budget
- playing a role in procurement management

E: Professional Standards

This competency grouping is looking at how you: Demonstrate a personal commitment to professional standards.

This section has a different focus from the other areas and should be looked at through the lens of 'professional standards' – not just within the workplace but in your wider interactions.

Examples could include:

- Your Professional Body's Code of Conduct
- Codes of Conduct for your employers (e.g. Civil Service Code)
- Your commitment to EDI initiatives
- Your ethical principles

E1: Comply with and promote relevant codes of conduct and practice.

This means that you can give an example of how you comply with a code of conduct (e.g. of your professional Body) or how you work within and promote all relevant legislative, regulatory and local requirements.

This means that you can give examples of how you, for instance:

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- comply with your professional body's code of conduct
- manage your work within all relevant legislative, regulatory and local requirements, frameworks such as Health and Safety Legislation, Home Office Regulations, Good Laboratory Practice (GLP), local Codes of Practice, etc.

Assessors will be looking for your understanding of ethical practice and compliance with codes of conduct is only one part of ethical practice. This could include how you see the need for personal accountability in your practice.

E2: Maintain and enhance competence in own area of practice through professional development activity.

This means that you undertake activities to enhance your competence in your own area of practice i.e. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and reflect on its impact on themselves and others. We are not looking for a list of courses here but evidence of how your CPD benefits your practice and benefits others. Your CPD may include work-based learning, professional activity, formal/educational, self-directed learning.

You should ensure that the CPD you include is planned, executed and then reviewed after completion to gauge the impact of your CPD, rather than focusing on lists of activities. Consider how the outputs of your CPD may feed forward into your future personal and professional development.

Once you have gained registration you will need to commit to maintaining your Continuing Professional Development as a scientist and comply with Science Council CPD standards.