



# Science Council

## Licence Reviews

Approved NOVEMBER RA 2023

# Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the process regarding licence reviews.

## Responsibilities of The Science Council

The Registration Authority (RA) of the Science Council has a responsibility to uphold and improve standards across the board, and the review process is designed to allow it to both monitor progress and ensure compliance, and to identify and share good practice among Licensed Bodies (LB).

## Responsibilities of Licensed Bodies

Licensed Bodies are responsible for meeting the eight key areas of The Evidence Framework. Additional guidance from the Science Council Registration Authority is circulated to the designated Licensed Body representatives as and when it is produced.

# The Licence Review Process

## 1. What are licence reviews?

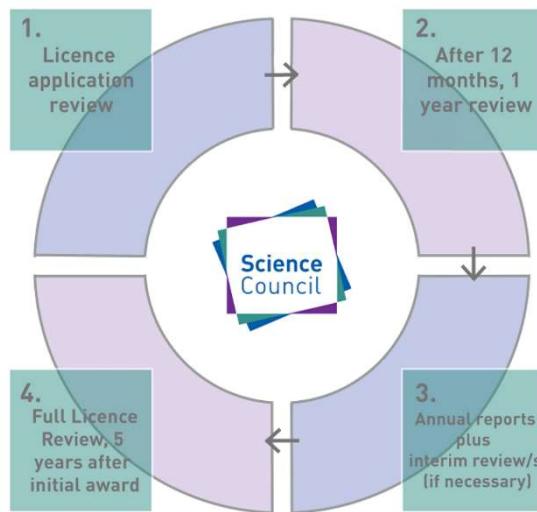
The Science Council conducts licence reviews with our volunteer licence review panel. Licence reviews are a peer review process and volunteers are from our Licensed Bodies. Licence reviews take place to decide whether an organisation can be licensed to award the Science Council's professional registers – CSci, CSciTeach, RSci and RSciTech. The Licence Review process is intended to provide support to Licensed Bodies to help embed new guidance and to facilitate the dissemination of good practice, and to provide assurance to the Registration Authority that Licensed Body responsibilities are being met.

## 2. How often do they occur?

Licensed Bodies are normally awarded a licence for a maximum period of 5 years. Licensed Bodies are then required to complete an annual report and interim reviews may be required. Where a Licensed Body is applying for a new licence, it will be normally be required to have a licence application review and will then be required to have a licence review after the first 12 months.



An example licence review cycle can be found below:



The diagram illustrates the below:

- Licence application review (for a brand new licence)
- (after 12 months) – 1 year review if it's a brand new licence (licence would normally be awarded for a 5 year period at this stage)
- Annual reports in between licence reviews (Interim review/s may be required)
- Full licence review – 5 years after the initial licence was awarded

In addition to the 5 year review, Licensed Bodies will take part in the annual quality assurance process carried out by The Science Council which includes completing the annual report.

\*For those Licensed Bodies that have a Development Licence, they are required to progress to a Full Licence after the first 2 years and therefore the RA may request a licence review at the 2-year mark as well as the 12 month mark.

### 3. Who is the review panel?

The review panel will normally consist of a member of staff from the Registration and Licensing team at the Science Council and two trained licence reviewers. The two licence reviewers will be either volunteers or staff from another Licensed Body that have been trained in undertaking licence reviews and the Science Council's licence requirements. One of the licence reviewers, chosen by the Science Council, will act as Chair of the review on the day. There may also be one or more observer as part of the review panel. The review



should be conducted in a collaborative style. The aim is for the Science Council and Licensed Body to work in partnership to ensure that the Licensed Body successfully fulfils all of the licensing requirements.

The Licensed Body that is being reviewed will provide the appropriate staff on the day to answer any questions from the licence reviewers. For example, this might be staff from their membership or assessment department, their CEO, volunteers from appropriate committees etc.

## 4. What happens before a licence review?

Licensed Bodies will be required to send pre-documentation at least 6 weeks before the licence review takes place and will be sent over securely. An example of the types of pre-documentation that may be requested can be found below, however this can vary:

1. 8-10 application files that are a mixture of each register (if more than 1 register is held) and include pass and fail applications along with assessor comments.
2. 8-10 CPD files that are a mixture of each register (if more than 1 register is held) and include pass and fail CPD submission along with assessor comments.
3. A sample of marketing materials that promote professional registration.
4. A completed CPD audit review form for each of the registers they hold
5. Minutes of the last two meetings of the Membership Committee (or equivalent)
6. A copy of the code of conduct
7. Any other significant changes to processes since the last review visit
8. A copy of the most recent annual report
9. An up to date organisation chart / organogram
10. A copy of the disciplinary process
11. A copy of the appeals process
12. Any procedural documents that outline CPD and application processes
13. An update on any outstanding actions from the previous review

The licence review panel will then have a pre-call with panel members ahead of the review to discuss the documentation and to check whether any further documentation is required.

## 5. What happens during a licence review?

The review panel will spend the first part of the meeting reviewing application and CPD assessment files and summaries on the day. After reviewing the files, the review panel will come back together with the Licensed Body who will firstly introduce their organisation. After this, the review panel and Licensed Body will discuss each of the agenda items, including questions based on the review of files.



# Example licence review agenda



## LB Name - Full review

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Time: 9:30 – 14.00

Online via Zoom

### Agenda

9:30                    Panel Meeting Before Review (Private)

10:05                Introductions

10:15                Overview (to be provided by the Licensed Body)  
                      - Recent Developments.  
                      - Future Plans.

10:40                Breaks taken throughout, their timings agreed by the Chair and attendees on the day.  
                      a. Review of actions from previous licence review.  
                      b. Assessment of applications.  
                      c. CPD.  
                      d. Conduct, competence and discipline.  
                      e. Data assurance.  
                      f. Reporting and quality assurance.  
                      g. Marketing and promotion.  
                      h. Governance and professional registration.  
                      i. Evidence Framework and standards implementation – outstanding actions and questions.  
                      j. Nominated Licence Reviewer  
                      k. AOB.

13:00                Panel Meeting to Agree Licence Review Outcome (private)

13:30                Closing Comments

13:45                Conclusions, Feedback and Close

### Licence Review Panel

Panel Chair XXX

Panel Member XXX

Science Council XXX



At the end of the licence review, the review panel meet privately to come to a decision. They will provide feedback to the Licensed Body on the day. The review panel will present their findings to the Registration Authority as a recommendation.

The Licensed Body may be given mandatory actions after the review that will need to be completed within a timescale agreed by the RA which will be communicated with the Licensed Body. The Licensed Body will be required to inform the Registration and Licensing team in writing of the changes that have been made to comply with the criteria and this may be shared with the Registration Authority. The Registration Authority may require a reassessment of the Licensed Body if the actions have not been met. The Licensed Body may also be given a list of recommendations at the licence review – although these are not mandatory, The Science Council would ask the Licensed Body to respond to them in a timely manner and include reference to this in their annual reporting.

The review panel's decision is a recommendation that will be sent to the next Registration Authority (RA) committee meeting who will ratify the decision. Subsequently the review panel meet with the LB representatives to indicate their decision and to outline any key actions and recommendations and to conclude the licence review meeting.

## 6. What happens after a licence review?

After the licence review, a member of the Registration and Licensing team will write up a report from the review. This will be circulated to the review panel for comment and then to the Licensed Body to check for any factual inaccuracies. The final version of the report will then be sent to the RA for ratification.

## 7. Regular Contact with the Science Council

The review process is intended to minimise the administrative burden on both individual Licensed Bodies and the Science Council itself. As part of the ongoing process of review and self-assessment, Licensed Bodies are required to complete an Annual Report and to complete their CPD audits. These will be requested annually by The Science Council and the Licensed Body will need to return these documents **fully and within the timescales** given by The Science Council.



## **Licence Reviews - How often?**

**1**

The Licensed Body will normally have a review 1 year after a new licence and then every 5 years after the award date. Licensed Bodies are required to complete annual reports in between licence reviews and the Science Council may conduct a review before the 5-year cycle if they believe there to be a concern/perceived risk.

**2**

## **Scheduling the licence review**

A member of the registration and licensing team will contact The Licensed Body in advance of the review to arrange a review date. The Licensed Body shall return the requested documents to the member of the registration and licensing team 6 weeks before the review.

The member of the registration and licensing team will review the documents for completeness and may ask for further documents/evidence if needed.

The Licensed Body will be sent the agenda in advance of the review.

**3**

## **Appointing the panel**

The review panel is appointed and will consist of a staff member from the registration and licensing team at the Science Council and two volunteer licence reviewers.

**4**

The panel will have a pre-meeting ahead of the review to review the documents and identify any gaps and areas they want to focus on during the review visit.

The agenda will be confirmed with the Licensed Body in advance.

**5**

## **Review visit by review panel**

The panel may have a pre-meeting on the day of the review to look over core documents.



The licence review thoroughly covers all items on the agenda and The Licensed Body ensures that knowledgeable staff/volunteers are present to cover all the items on the agenda.

The review panel will see how the Licensed Body is meeting all the 8 key areas in The Evidence Framework and use the framework to review the Licensed Body.

## **Licence review report**

**6**

A member of the registration and licensing team produces a report within 2 weeks of the visit on how well the Licensed Body meets the criteria outlined in the 8 key areas of The Evidence Framework based on the visit.

The report will list agreed actions and recommendations for the Licensed Body being addressed within a specified timeframe and the timescale for the next review. It is then circulated to the review panel ahead of the RA.

## **Review decision - RA or the Board**

**7**

A member of the registration and licensing team or Panel Chair presents the report to the RA who ratifies the decision. Depending on the outcome, it is either the RA or the Board that makes the final decision.

The RA is able to renew an existing licence.

If a new licence is to be granted or a licence is to be withdrawn or suspended, the RA would need to recommend this to the Board who would have the final decision.

## **Award of the licence and informing the Licensed Body**

**8**

If the licence is renewed or a new licence is granted, a member of the registration and licensing team renews the licence for the specified period and logs the actions and recommendations to be followed up.

A member of the registration and licensing team will contact the Licensed Body via email of the decision.

A member of the registration and licensing team provides the Licensed Body with the final report following the RA review and Board consideration which states the outcome, the actions the body is expected to complete, the recommendations and the next review date.



## Monitoring actions

A member of the registration and licensing team monitors progress of the actions and recommendations completed by the Licensed Body. Actions listed in the report are mandatory, whereas recommendations are not but the Licensed Body is expected to respond to them.

**9**

If the actions are not complete within the specified timeframe, a member of the registration and licensing team discusses the circumstances with the RA and then the RA can recommend suspension or withdrawal to the Board if appropriate.

Purpose: To ensure the actions are complete in the timescale and recommendations are addressed to the satisfaction of the Science Council.

