Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

Mandatory Document 3

Science Council Application requirements

This document has been produced to set out Licensed Bodies' responsibilities in carrying out application processes for Science Council registration.

Licensed Bodies are required to comply fully with the *mandatory* parts of the application requirements, which apply to registrants on each of the four Science Council registers: Chartered Scientist (CSci), Chartered Science Teacher (CSciTeach), Registered Scientist (RSci) and Registered Science Technician (RSciTech).

The *guidance* sections of this document are designed to help support Licensed Bodies but are not a mandatory requirement for the licence.

1) Application documents for professional registration

Mandatory

1.1 For applications processed via the Common Application Process (CAP), the Science Council will provide the application documents, otherwise Licensed Bodies are required to:

- Produce application documents, templates and guidance for applicants, supporters and assessors for applications following:

    o the standard full route to professional registration

    o if applicable, Science Council approved shortened and bespoke routes to registration accepted by the licensed body (see sections 11 and 12)

    o the equivalence process to demonstrate the expected academic requirements (see section 3)

- The application documents:

    o must include the **current** Science Council competencies for the relevant register, written out in full – **exceptions**: only the relevant competencies to be demonstrated for approved shortened routes to

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

registration, e.g. certain apprenticeships and bespoke routes (see Sections 11 and 12)

- o should provide sufficient information so that assessors can make a judgement in line with the requirements for professional registration

- o should be designed to guide applicants to demonstrate how they meet each of the competencies

- o must enable the supporter to:
    - confirm they are familiar with the applicant's work
    - verify each competency
    - confirm that they have seen copies of the applicant's qualifications
    - **exceptions:** certain shortened routes to registration via apprenticeships (see section 11)

- o must include a declaration from the applicant confirming:
    - accurate completion of the application
    - that if admitted to the Register, they will submit evidence of continuing professional development, as prescribed, when required to do so.
    - adherence to the relevant code of conduct used by the Licensed Body

Guidance

1.2 With the increase in use of generative AI technologies, Licensed Bodies are strongly advised to include wording in their application forms and guidance addressing appropriate use of the technologies in the submission of competency statements or equivalency reports. One example is:

Generative AI Statement we acknowledge that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools or large language models (such as ChatGPT) can be appropriately and ethically used to assist in composing a registration application. For instance, it can aid with translation, spelling, grammar, and restructuring. However, applicants remain responsible for the originality, validity, and integrity of the content in their application, even when utilising AI tools for specific elements. Any unethical use of AI, such as generating generic or inaccurate evidence statements that do not detail (or directly relate to) the applicant's personal experiences, will be deemed inadmissible, and may lead to utilisation of the disciplinary process. *

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

*in line with the relevant Licensed Body's disciplinary regulations.

2) The competencies

Mandatory

2.1 Licensed Bodies are required to:

- Use the correct up-to-date competencies for each Register.

3) Eligibility criteria for each register

3.1 Academic requirements

Mandatory

The Licensed Body will need to ensure that the applicant meets the academic requirements for registration. The following academic criteria are required:

- **RSciTech** applicants **must** have a Level 3 qualification (awarded in England, Wales or Northern Ireland) or a Level 6 qualification awarded in Scotland, or equivalent* learning and achievement.

- **RSci** applicants **must** have a Level 5 qualification (awarded in England, Wales or Northern Ireland) or a Level 8 qualification awarded in Scotland, or equivalent* learning and achievement.

- **CSci** and **CSciTeach** applicants **must** have a Masters level qualification or equivalent* learning and achievement. (Level 7 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Level 11 in Scotland)

*Although all Licensed Bodies must have an equivalency route, it is up to the Licensed Body what this equivalency route is.

Qualifications need to be within a scientific discipline or relevant practice. In the case where a relevant qualification in science is not held by an applicant, the Licensed Body may approve an equivalent programme of study that clearly demonstrates the correct level of knowledge and practice of science.

The Licensed Body will need to ensure that the applicant meets the academic requirements for registration indicated above.

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

International qualifications

International qualifications and institutions will need to be recognised by UK ENIC (the UK National Information Centre for global qualifications and skills). If a Licensed Body has any concerns over the academic qualification of international applicants they are advised to check the applicant's qualifications on the list of recognised HEIs on the UK ENIC website. If they cannot find the applicant's University/ HEI listed then they are advised to ask the applicant to provide a Statement of Comparability, which they can obtain from UK ENIC.

Guidance on Equivalency routes

The RA mandate that all Licensed Bodies need to have an equivalency route for each register that they hold, for use if the applicant does not have the academic requirements. However, it is up to the Licensed Body which equivalency route they choose to use. Examples of this could be:

- Via a technical report.

- Using the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency for Education) descriptors.

- Using Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) level descriptors

- An extended version of the competency report.

Guidance on qualification checks

If the applicant is unable to provide originals of certificates, the Licensed Body will require an appropriate written statement from the awarding body.

3.2 Work experience requirements

Guidance on work experience

Applicants need to meet the level of competence for the level of professional registration they are applying for. To develop this level of competence, we find that it normally takes around:

- 5 years of work experience for CSci/CSciTeach

- 2 years of work experience for RSci

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

- 1 years of work experience for RSciTech

Please note – this is not a requirement. As a competency assessment the sole measure of competence is demonstrating the competencies. This is for GUIDANCE only

4) Supporter and Assessor requirements

Mandatory

4.1 Supporter:

- Applicants need **one supporter** to verify their application. This applies for all applications except for those applying via fully aligned apprenticeship routes.

- The supporter must be familiar with the applicant's work

- Ideally, the supporter should be professionally registered by the Science Council at either the same level of professional registration or above. Where this is not possible, it is up to the Licensed Body to make a judgement as to whether the supporter is appropriate.

4.2 An assessor who assesses applications:

- All applications need to be assessed by at least two assessors and where there is disagreement between the assessors, another assessor should be used.

- Application assessors must have been trained against the relevant Science Council competencies

- Ideally both assessors should hold the same level of professional registration (as the register the applicant wishes to join), or above, and be on the Science Council register. Where this is not possible, at least one of the two assessors should meet this criterion. The other assessor can be of an appropriate Chartership or an equivalent level of professional registration within an appropriate discipline on another Professional Register that is not regulated by the Science Council.

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

5) Guidance Documents

Mandatory

As well as application documents, Licensed Bodies are required to produce guidance documents for:

1. Applicants
2. Assessors
3. Supporters

- The Licensed Body will provide support and guidance to **applicants** to assist them with completing their application. This may consist of examples of each competency, guidance documents, exemplar applications and access to a mentor.

- The Licensed Body will provide support and guidance to **assessors** to assist them with completing their assessor forms. This will consist of guidance on how to complete the assessor forms as well as a robust training programme for assessors.

- Guidance will be clear and easily accessible to applicants, assessors and supporters

6) The assessment process

6.1 There are two ways that applications for registration can be processed:

1. Licensed Body processes their own applications
2. Licensed Body uses the Common Application Process where applications are processed via the Science Council

Mandatory – for Licensed Body processing their own applications:

6.2 Assessment - Peer Review Process

Once the application is ready to be assessed, the Licensed Body will need to have a robust peer review assessment process in place:

- All assessment processes will need to be documented and there will be oversight of these.

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

- See Section 4 for assessor requirements

- Assessors need to assess every applicable competency: normally all competencies but see Sections 11 and 12 for exceptions with shortened routes to registration via certain apprenticeships and bespoke routes.

- Assessors will first assess the application *independently* from each other.

- Assessors will assess professional experience and competence through inspection of completed applications and consideration of reports from supporter

- Where there is disagreement between assessors that has not been resolved through discussion, a further assessor should be used.

- The Licensed Body will have a process for resubmissions.

- There will be processes and procedures to deal with nonstandard applications.

- There will be processes and procedures for complaints and appeals. See also Section 10, regarding appeals.

6.3 Licensed Bodies need to be committed to the fair and equal treatment of all applicants [irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, ex-offending background or any other potentially unlawfully discriminating factor]. The application process will need to be accessible to candidates from all backgrounds. If an applicant requires adjustments during the application process, or has any particular access or other requirements, there will be a point of contact at the Licensed Body who can assist with this.

Mandatory – for Licensed Body using the Common Application Process

6.4 Where a Licensed Body uses the Common Application Process (CAP), the Licensed Body will need to:

- Provide the Science Council with at least two volunteer assessors for each register that they hold.

- Be clear on the CAP processes and procedures and the "CAP manual for Licensed Bodies" (Mandatory Document 4).

- Ensure that they have a process for ratifying any applications that are sent to them via the CAP.

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

- Issue the registrant with a certificate and welcome them to registration (and membership if not already a member).

- Find out from the registrant whether they would like to appear on the online register.

- Ensure that they use the correct unique registrant number (Science Council ID) for the registrant and that this is provided to the Science Council no later than the next quarterly data return. This is provided to Licensed Bodies once the successful CAP application has been passed over to them.

6.5 Where a Licensed Body uses the CAP, <u>The Science Council</u> will do the following on behalf of the Licensed Body:

- Complete the initial application checks and qualification checks for the application.

- Contact the applicant's supporter to verify the application. (This applies for all applications except for those applying via fully aligned apprenticeship routes – see Section 10.)

- Assign two assessors to each application.

- Provide training and refresher training for CAP assessors

- Contact the Licensed Body once the application has been recommended as being successful and pass the application over to the Licensed Body. This will also include the unique registrant number (Science Council ID).

- Compile and keep the necessary audit trail of the processing of the application up to the point of handover to the Licensed Body (see Section 9)

- Provide feedback on the recommendation following assessment and, in the case of a recommendation to revise and resubmit the application, feedback from assessors will be provided to support the revision and resubmission.

- The Registration Routes Committee (RRC) will periodically review the assessment of standard and non-standard applications for quality assurance purposes.

6.6 The Science Council is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all applicants [irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, ex-offending background or any other potentially unlawfully discriminating factor]. The

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

application process will need to be accessible to candidates from all backgrounds. If an applicant requires adjustments during the application process, or has any particular access or other requirements, there will be a point of contact at the Science Council who can assist with this.

Guidance

6.7 The option of an interview

Interviews are not mandated for Science Council registration, however the Licensed Body may choose to interview if their procedures require. Interviews can also be used to assist applicants that may have special requirements. Interviews will be conducted in English and interviewees should bring an appropriate form of identification.

7: Process for ratifying decisions

Mandatory

7.1 The Licensed Body will need processes in place for quality assurance of the registration processes.

7.2 The Licensed Body is responsible for issuing certificates to successful registrants.

Guidance

Any application decision that is sent to a Licensed Body via the CAP is sent as a recommendation and the final decision lies with the Licensed Body.

It is not expected that ratification will revisit the assessment of competencies and, if applicable, equivalence. These assessments are fully completed before handover from the CAP to the licensed body.

When applications for professional registration are received by the Licensed Body on completion of the CAP, the Licensed Body can check that the member is in good standing, and that their membership is appropriate for the registration.

8) Training of assessors

Mandatory

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

8.1 Licensed Bodies are required to:

- Train their assessors to assess Science Council applications for professional registration.

- Provide refresher training to assessors (normally every 3 years).

- Undertake proportionate quality assurance checks on their assessors(to a level that gives the Licensed Body confidence).

- Ensure that there are enough active trained assessors to cover the target number of registrants.

Licensed Bodies will need to provide sufficient information, guidance and training so that assessors are fully informed of their role. In particular, guidance should be given to assessors on:

- level of commitment required by the assessor;

- clarity on how to assess the Science Council competencies and how to record their assessments and feedback;

- the criteria the applicant must satisfy for Science Council registration, primarily, the level and extent of professional competence required.

- training on equivalency routes

- training to raise awareness of and limit any potential unconscious bias and/or discrimination and conflict of interest.

The assessor will need to be given sufficient information on the applicant to prepare fully for the review process. Examples of what the assessor should have available are:

- application form;

- supporting evidence from the applicant on appropriate professional experience, which may include copies of educational awards; and

- any other information (e.g. reports) that the applicant has submitted as part of the application process.

The Science Council holds regular centralised assessor training that is available to:

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

- CAP assessors
- New and existing Licensed Bodies who may attend the assessor training and then use this learning to deliver their own training within their Licensed Body (i.e. via a train the trainer model).

9) Producing an audit trail

Mandatory

9.1 Licensed Bodies need to ensure a suitable audit trail exists for application decisions, demonstrating rigorous and consistent assessments. This will include completed applications from the applicant along with the corresponding completed assessor forms. These should demonstrate how application decisions are made and should include assessor forms with full comments

9.2 If an interview is used, there will be a clear written audit trail to document the outcome of the interview and the reason the decision was taken.

9.3 Licensed Bodies will be able to provide evidence of feedback that is given to the applicant (e.g. emails or written correspondence) if applicants have not been successful in order to support them to enable them to apply again.

9.4 Where a Licensed Body uses the Common Application Process, they will still need to keep a record of the audit trail for applications after the applications are handed over to the Licensed Body. In these cases, the Science Council will provide the audit trail for the professional registration application.

10) Process to handle appeals against decisions not to award registration

Mandatory

10.1 Licensed Bodies will have an effective independent appeals procedure. They will advise individuals on access to an appeals process upon refusal of admission and will have in place processes to handle appeals against decisions not to award registration. The process should include a stage at which the appeal is heard by a different panel to that which declined the application. The appeals procedure will also be regularly reviewed. Where the Common Application Process is used, the appeals procedure highlighted within the "CAP Manual for Licensed Bodies" will be used.

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

11) Apprenticeship Shortened Applications – (RSci and RSciTech only)

Mandatory

11.1 Section 11 is applicable to Licensed Bodies that process applications directly via the shortened application routes for RSci and RSciTech.

Mapping apprenticeships identifies those applicants who are eligible to apply to the professional registers of RSci and RSciTech through shortened application routes. Mapping is undertaken by a trained pool of assessors at the Science Council and ratified by the Registration Routes Committee.

Judgement levels

The assessment identifies whether an apprenticeship maps to 3 judgement levels:

- Full alignment
- Majority alignment
- Low level alignment

11.2 Once an apprenticeship has been mapped (independently judged by two assessors against the requirements for the registers), with one of the three judgement levels (as listed above), it influences the type of application available to the applicant:

- Full alignment - shortened application method 1
- Majority alignment - shortened application method 2
- Low level alignment – full application method

A list of apprenticeships eligible for shortened applications can be found on the Science Council's website.

11.3 Licensed Bodies are required to check whether the apprenticeship is fully aligned or majority aligned before deciding which application method to choose as explained below.

Full alignment and majority alignment

11.4 If the apprenticeship is judged as fully or majority aligned with requirements for professional registration then Licensed Bodies are required to include the following elements within their shortened application forms for applicants using the approved shortened routes to registration:

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

Requirements of Application	Fully Aligned	Majority Aligned
Copy of **apprenticeship certificate***?	✓	✓
Competency **A1** required?	No	✓
Competency **A2** required?	No	✓
Competency **A3** required?	No	✓
Competency Statements of Section **B**, **C** and **D** required?	No	No
Competency **E2** required?	No	No
Employer supporting statement required?	No	✓
Additional Qualification (L3 + RSciTech and L5+ RSci) or Equivalent	No	✓
Copy of **CV**	✓	✓

***Apprenticeship Certificate** – must be a version of an apprenticeship confirmed as fully or majority mapped by the Science Council and with a certification date of within 2 years of the date of submission of the shortened application for registration.

Qualification or Equivalent

Mandatory

11.5 Majority aligned

Qualification or equivalence is required for those apprenticeships that are assessed as **majority** aligned and there is the need to provide evidence of either a Level 3* minimum qualification (RSciTech), or Level 5* minimum qualification (RSci), or equivalent (such as a training plan).

*England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Scotland Level 6 RSciTech, Level 8 RSci

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

This is because the apprenticeship itself cannot give 100% certainty that the application of knowledge has been sufficiently met. This may be due to qualifications not being mandated as part of the apprenticeship, or KSB's (knowledge skills and behaviours) that have been written too broadly by the trailblazer group to be able to deliver total reliance in the knowledge coverage being received by all apprentices on that apprenticeship.

Mandatory

11.6. Fully aligned

- Qualification and equivalence are not required for a **fully** aligned apprenticeship that either has mandated qualifications and/or very descriptive KSB's that provide reassurance that all apprentices who complete this apprenticeship have covered sufficient knowledge.

11.7 Timeframe

- To be eligible to use a shortened route the apprenticeship needs to have been completed and certificated within 2 years at the point of application submission to RSci and RSciTech.

Guidance

11.8 It is advised to record the start date of the apprenticeship, as this will ensure that the version of the apprenticeship achieved by the applicant is consistent with that of the apprenticeship version assessed and mapped to RSci and RSciTech as eligible for shortened applications.

Note – historically Skills England (previously IfATE) apprenticeship certificates do not list the version and therefore the start date is the best way to identify the version held by the applicant. Version start dates can be found at the bottom of the respective Skills England web page for published apprenticeships.

Mandatory

11.9 Licensed Body Accredited Apprenticeships

For majority aligned apprenticeships where the Licensed Body's accreditation requirements provide assurance that the knowledge taught is Level 3*+ (RSciTech) and Level 5*+ (Rsci) or equivalent, and all competency areas are covered, then the

Science Council Application Requirements for professional registration.

Document Control
Approval date: November 2024
Version No: 5
Change: Minor
Review date: November 2026

Science Council can approve the upgrade of the apprenticeship to fully aligned for the purpose of a shortened route to professional registration as RSciTech or RSci.

*England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Scotland Level 6 RSciTech, Level 8 RSci

Mandatory

11.10 Science Council approved Apprentice Register Assessment by an End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)

The Science Council may approve End Point Assessment Organisations to perform RSci/RSciTech register assessments for majority aligned apprenticeships. The EPAO shall offer apprentices the option to opt in for the appropriate Science Council register assessment prior to their apprenticeship assessment.

The register assessors trained to the Science Council standards based within the EPAO shall each independently perform the registers assessment based on the packs generated as a result of the apprenticeship assessment. The assessors need to meet the criteria for application assessors in section 4. If both assessors recommend registration then the Licensed Body proceeds with the approval of the registration. In all other cases the Licensed Body informs the applicant that there is insufficient information available from the end point assessment and advises the applicant to apply via the shortened route.

Note: this is in a pilot phase which is expected to continue in 2025

12) Bespoke routes to registration

Mandatory

- **12.1** Licensed Bodies that submit a request to process a bespoke route to registration will need to complete a bespoke routes to registration application form.

  12.2 As part of the approvals process the Registration Authority will need to agree any deviations to the mandatory framework