



APPLYING FOR CHARTERED SCIENTIST AS A REGULATORY PROFESSIONAL: GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

What is Chartered Scientist?

Chartered Scientist is a professional registration that recognises a high level of skill and experience independent of discipline. It provides recognition for professional practice and experience and thus complements the academic qualifications you might also have. Typically professionals need to have been working for 4–6 years to achieve this and must either have a Masters level qualification or be able to demonstrate that they are working at this level.

As it is independent of scientific discipline it provides parity across the different scientific careers.

It is based on 15 broad scientific competencies and to apply you need to demonstrate and evidence how you meet all of these competencies in your daily work.

Chartered Scientist is accepted for the purposes of Directive 2005/36/EC as a regulated profession with the Science Council appointed as the Competent Authority. The Directive works on the basic principle that an individual fully qualified to practise a regulated profession in one member state should be treated, in principle, as qualified to practise that same profession in another member state.

How do I apply?

To apply for Chartered Scientist you need to:

- Be a member of TOPRA
- Complete the application form
- Identify a supporter or referee for TOPRA to contact. The supporter/ referee will need to complete the supporters form.
- Go to the TOPRA website www.topra.org/charteredscientist and pay the application fee
- Email your completed documents and evidence that you have paid the application fee to charteredscientist@topra.org
- Send TOPRA a photocopy ID (passport or driving license) and proof of qualification (certificate).

To maintain your Chartered Scientist registration you need to:

- Maintain your TOPRA membership
- Submit your CPD record each year via the TOPRA online CPD recording tool
- Pay your annual renewal fee.

You can find the application form and the supporters form at www.topra.org/charteredscientist

What are the requirements?

There are 15 professional competencies and for each you need to provide evidence of how you demonstrate this competence through the work you do, the training you have received and your other professional activities such as speaking at conferences and taking part in TOPRA working parties or committees. The competencies and an indication of some of the evidence you might use can be found in a separate document titled *Matrix of Competency Descriptions*.

Once you have achieved your registration as a Chartered Scientist you will be required to submit an annual CPD return using the online TOPRA CPD recording tool to evidence your continuing professional development.

Who can act as a supporter for my application?

Ideally supporters should be a Member or Fellow of TOPRA and already hold Chartered Scientist themselves, however we recognise that this is not always possible. The most important criteria is that your supporter must have detailed knowledge of the work you do. Typically this would be your line manager or someone similar who is senior to you. It must not be someone who reports to you. The supporter needs to be able to comment on all five areas of competence and will receive a copy of your application and the Matrix of Competency Descriptions.

What if I don't have an MSc or equivalent qualification?

Chartered Scientist is considered to be at Masters level, however, this does not mean that you must have an MSc to apply. If you have sufficient professional experience to demonstrate that you meet the competencies you just need to provide a little bit more detail about how you have continued to learn since leaving education and how this has allowed you to develop the competencies. What training, whether formal or on the job, mentoring or coaching have you received to help you develop these competencies? As an indication you would typically be expected to write an additional 100–200 words to set out how you developed the competencies on top of the 200–300 words you would already be writing to set out the evidence that you meet each competency if you do not have an MSc.

What if I have an MSc/MA in a very different subject?

If your MSc/MA is not in regulatory affairs or a related scientific, engineering or legal subject you will need to follow the same process that people who do not have an MSc follow.



How much does it cost?

The application fee for Chartered Scientist is £70, this is a one-off fee for the application and is not refundable if your application is unsuccessful. The annual renewal fee will be £55 in addition to the TOPRA membership fee.

How will my application be assessed?

Your application will be assessed by a panel of five experienced professionals who are all TOPRA members, Chartered Scientists and trained CSci assessors.

Can I appeal if I don't agree with the outcome?

If an application for CSci is rejected the reasons for this will be provided to the applicant by the panel. The applicant will be able to apply again once they have addressed the issues identified. The applicant may appeal if they have reason to believe that their application has not been considered fairly or the correct procedure has not been followed. If the applicant appeals TOPRA will appoint an additional independent assessor to review the case and the decision of this assessor will be final.

Renewals – what is required and how often?

At the end of the first year, and all subsequent years, members achieving the Chartered Scientist registration must submit a record of their continuing professional development meeting the criteria set out below.

At the start of each membership year the Chartered Scientist members must renew their TOPRA membership, pay the annual CSci renewal fee and confirm that they are still professionally active within regulatory affairs.

The term professionally active is used to indicate that an individual is performing a role that requires them to keep their knowledge and competence up to date. It does not need to be full-time or paid work and so members who are notionally retired but engaged in volunteering, outreach or consultancy, for example, should consider themselves as professionally active and undertake relevant CPD. In contrast, someone who is reading journals and attending lectures out of personal interest but is no longer actively contributing to the profession either through paid employment or volunteering of some kind would not be considered professionally active.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – What am I required to do?

To satisfy the Chartered Scientist requirements Chartered members are required to demonstrate how their CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice. This should include activities in at least three of the following categories:

- Work-based learning (eg, On the job training and activities beyond your current role)
- Professional activity (eg, involvement in a professional body, mentoring)
- Formal/educational (eg, training, qualifications, writing articles/papers)
- Self-directed learning (eg, reading journals and reflective practice)
- Other (eg, voluntary work, developing business or leadership skills).

The CPD record must include:

- Examples of how CPD activity has contributed to the quality of your professional practice and service delivery
- Examples of how CPD activity has benefited the users of your work
- At least 50 hours of CPD to satisfy the TOPRA CPD requirements.

How are the CPD records of Chartered Scientist members monitored?

All Chartered member records will be reviewed to ensure that a CPD submission has been provided.

Until TOPRA has over 100 Chartered members the CPD submissions will be reviewed through the Science Council's Joint Monitoring Process.

The Joint Monitoring Process (JMP) is coordinated by the Science Council and provides a standardised process for carrying out auditing of CPD returns as part of the annual renewal process. It is particularly targeted at Licensed Bodies with a small number of Registrants to provide an efficient process for auditing. The Licensed Bodies retain direct contact with their Registrants in requesting information for audit, making the final decision and providing feedback. The Science Council administers the process; provides the template for making audit submissions; and coordinates the activities of the assessors.

Once TOPRA has sufficient Chartered members a random sample of the CPD submissions will be reviewed in detail by a panel of at least two experienced and trained TOPRA members, at least one of whom will hold Chartered status. At least 2.5% of Chartered members or 20 individuals, whichever is greater, will be selected. If particular groups are identified as being at greater risk of not completing the CPD record the chance of them being selected for review may be increased. This will be done within six months of the CPD submission deadline which is the 31 December each year.

Members will not be selected for review until they have held Chartered Status for at least 12 months. Members who were selected and found to fully meet all of the criteria will not be selected again the following year.

TOPRA will provide general feedback on CPD submissions to all Chartered members and specific feedback to those whose CPD is selected for review.



What happens if I do not meet the annual CPD requirements?

Chartered members found not to comply fully with the standards (either because they fail to make a submission or because their submission is inadequate) will be given a period of no longer than three months to make a re-submission and/or address the assessors' comments, at which point their registered status will be removed if they are unable to comply. If the Chartered member is able to address the panel's comments the panel may insist that the member has their CPD submission reviewed again the following year.

Members who have had their Chartered Scientist status removed will normally be required to wait at least 18 months before being able to apply again.

The applicant may appeal if they have reason to believe that their CPD submission has not been considered fairly or the correct procedure has not been followed. If the applicant appeals TOPRA will appoint an additional independent assessor to review the case and the decision of this assessor will be final.

What happens if I am taking a career break?

Registrants who are on a designated career break and continue to pay the required registrant fee are not required to participate in the CPD monitoring process for up to three years while on the career break.

Registrants facing extenuating circumstances may, at the discretion of the Licensed Body, defer participation in the CPD monitoring for a period of up to three years. After this period they must participate in the CPD monitoring process or relinquish their registered status.

Disciplinary procedures for alleged misconduct by a member registered as a Chartered Scientist

The current Articles of Association for TOPRA contain provision for sanctions for all categories of membership: if a member, through activities in a professional capacity, or through criminal activities in a personal capacity is considered to have brought the profession of regulatory affairs into disrepute, the Board, in its absolute discretion, may cancel the membership of that individual until such time that the member can supply information to show that membership may be re-instated.

Any disciplinary issues arising will be considered by a panel made up of a Board member and a regular member, the member in question will also have the right to their own representation. If the panel members do not agree the Executive Director and two Board members will review the case and a majority decision will be the final decision. The member may appeal on the grounds that the correct process has not been followed. In the event of an appeal a board member will be appointed to review the case and their decision will be final.

The panel will consider any disciplinary issues and report the outcome to the member concerned within 28 days. If any disciplinary action is recommended for CSci registered members the panel will inform the Science Council.

Members who fail to meet the criteria for CSci but who continue to use this designation would be considered to have brought the profession into disrepute and would have membership withdrawn in line with the procedure described previously.