



APPLYING FOR REGISTERED SCIENTIST AS A REGULATORY PROFESSIONAL: GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

What is Registered Scientist?

Registered 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 at least one to two years to achieve this and must either have a Foundation Degree 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 16 broad scientific competencies and to apply you need to demonstrate and evidence how you meet all of these competencies in your daily work.

How do I apply?

To apply for Registered Scientist, you need to:

- Be a member of TOPRA
- Complete the application form
- Ask a supporter or referee to complete the supports form
- Go to the TOPRA website www.topra.org/RSci and pay the application fee
- Email your completed documents, evidence that you have paid the application fee, a photocopied photographic ID and proof of your *qualifications to charteredscientist@topra.org

**All applicants who with qualifications awarded outside of the UK are required to submit a UK NARIC report.*

To maintain your Registered 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 <http://www.topra.org/rsci>

What are the requirements?

There are 16 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 Registered 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 supporter should be a Member or Fellow of TOPRA and be a Registered or Chartered Scientist, 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 a Level QCF 5 or equivalent qualification?

Registered Scientist is considered to be at QCF Level 5, however, this does not mean that you must have a Level 5 qualification 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 Level 5 competence. What training, whether formal or on the job, mentoring or coaching have you received to help you develop masters level competence? 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 a Level 5 qualification.

What if I have a Level QCF 5 qualification in a very different subject?

If your qualification 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 a Level 5 qualification.

How much does it cost?

The application fee for Registered 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, Registered/ Chartered Scientists and trained RSci/CSci assessors.

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

If an application for RSci 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 Registered 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 Registered Scientist members must renew their TOPRA membership, pay the annual RSci 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 Registered Scientist requirements, Registered Scientist 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 (e.g. On the job training and activities beyond your current role)
- Professional activity (e.g. involvement in a professional body, mentoring)
- Formal/educational (e.g. training, qualifications, writing articles/papers)
- Self-directed learning (e.g. reading journals and reflective practice)
- Other (e.g. 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 Registered Scientist members monitored?

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

Until TOPRA has over 100 Registered Scientist 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 Registered Scientist 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 Registered status. At least 2.5% of Registered Scientist 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 Registered Scientist 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 Registered Scientist members and specific feedback to those whose CPD is selected for review.

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

Registered Scientist 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 Registered Scientist 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 Registered 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 Registered Scientist

It is the duty of all TOPRA Members to abide by TOPRA's [Statement of Values](#) and [Rules of Membership](#). All members agree to these when they join TOPRA and are reminded about these when renewing annual membership.

The [TOPRA Articles of Association](#) prescribe the reasons and processes for disqualification of any member or of the Board of Directors. Changes

to these provisions can only be achieved with the agreement of the membership at an Extraordinary General Meeting. Changes to the TOPRA constitution will be announced in the TOPRA member newsletter and other member communications.

[The Disciplinary Procedure for all TOPRA members holding professional registration](#), on the RSci webpage, outlines the additional requirements

and procedures which have been introduced for those members who apply for and are awarded professional registration (RSci or CSci).