Applying for Chartered Status

(CBiol or CSci)

Introduction

This document should give you all the necessary information on the two types of Chartered Status, namely Chartered Biologist (CBiol) and Chartered Scientist (CSci), offered by the Royal Society of Biology and details of how to apply and maintain them.

Should you have any questions regarding the information provided in this document, or find that the document does not address your concerns, please contact us.

Is it suitable for me?

Chartered Status (CSci) is open to members of the Royal Society of Biology with a Masters level qualification or equivalent, who can also demonstrate the required professional competences and a commitment to CPD.

Chartered Biologist (CBiol), is a registration offered solely by the Royal Society of Biology, and is available for members who have the appropriate professional experience or have successfully completed Royal Society of Biology CPD for the past two years at the MRSB or FRSB grade.

To determine which scheme is best for you depends on your particular job role, circumstances and personal self-identification as a biologist or scientist. The Society welcomes applications from members wishing to gain both Chartered registrations. Should you be uncertain of which award is right for you, please contact csci@rsb.org.uk.

It is crucial to bear in mind that being able to meet the professional competences is of equal importance to the level of qualification you hold. We also offer RSci and RSciTech professional recognition awards, with information regarding both awards available on our website.

Whilst most members will apply for CSci with a Masters level Qualification, combinations and equivalents may be accepted. If you do not hold the appropriate qualification, you will be required to complete an equivalency report, further details of which can be found in *Appendix 1.*

Chartered Status is:

1. gained through a successful application.
2. maintained by successful annual maintenance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
3. renewed annually by payment of the registration fee.

Chartered Status will be yours for as long as you maintain your CPD submissions and pay your annual renewal fee. This means you will be able to use CBiol or CSci in addition to your Society post nominal letters where appropriate. If you are on the CSci register, your name will also be maintained on the UK Professional Registers by the Science Council which is publically available on request.

1. Your application

To assess your suitability for Chartered Status we will require the following from you:

- evidence of educational qualifications or an equivalent
- evidence of achieving the required professional competencies
- evidence and a commitment to continuing professional development (CPD)
- adherence to the relevant codes of conduct
- support of application by your supervisor

Both CBiol and CSci have identical entry levels (MRSB or FRSB grade) and require evidence in support of your application to illustrate how you meet the required competencies. As our application process is all completed online via the member's area, we can reduce the amount of information we require from you.

Chartered Biologist (CBiol)

If you decide to apply for Chartered Biologist status we require *either* two years of CPD completed at the Royal Society of Biology at MRSB or FRSB level, or equivalent professional experience. Completion of the twelve competencies is required, these competencies are listed in *Appendix 2*. Usually this is simply through statements providing specific examples to demonstrate how you have met each competency. Applicants should note that the Chartered Biologist is not an academic qualification.

There is a £50 application fee for CBiol and a £25 annual retention fee.

Chartered Scientist (CSci)

If you decide to apply for Chartered Scientist status we require evidence illustrating how you meet each competency, a letter of endorsement from a supporter and agreement to adhere to the Science Council rules of conduct.

A competency can be defined as the combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour necessary to carry out your role and also to improve performance. The competencies fall into areas A-E, these are:

A. Application of knowledge and understanding
B. Personal responsibility
C. Interpersonal skills
D. Professional practice
E. Professional standards

Each area (A-E) may have more than one competency which you must meet. Your application will allow you the opportunity to show how you illustrate each of the competencies through reflective statements. The 15 competencies you must meet for CSci and guidance on what each requires can be found in *Appendix 3*.

Your application must also be supported by someone familiar with your work. This is included as a stage in your online application. Preferably they should hold Chartered status, although we are aware some people may work in an area where this is difficult and therefore we will accept alternative equivalents. Your referee will be sent an email asking them to endorse your application by an email to the relevant Society staff member. A draft version of this email can be seen in *Appendix 4.* Once this email has been successfully received and payment made, your application will be formally accepted.

Applying for CSci status will incur an annual fee of £46, payable to the Royal Society of Biology. You will be asked for payment details during your online application and will be sent automatic reminders annually.

Your application will be assessed by the Royal Society of Biology and a panel of external experts. The panel will meet 4 times a year to review applications in line with the Royal Society of Biology annual election processes.

If your application is not successful we will provide feedback and advise how you could improve your application. A flow chart depicting the application procedure can be seen in *Appendix 5*.

2. Maintaining your status through annual CPD submission

Continuing Professional Development, or CPD, is a vast expanding area of many careers. If offers a mechanism by which you can document your work above and beyond your job role, aiding upwards progression. Our CPD scheme is wide ranging as we appreciate our members come from all areas of the life sciences.

To keep your CBiol or CSci status you must pass the annual requirements for CPD every year. There is a single system used for all members of the Royal Society of Biology, making it simple for people progressing through our other professional recognition awards or maintaining both CBiol and CSci.

Our CPD scheme is points based with 50 points required to complete the year. These are achieved in sums of one to three points per hour depending on the activity. Almost any activity that develops your valuable skills as a life science employee qualifies for CPD. A small selection includes; the training of staff, the learning of a new practical technique, presenting at a conference and self-study in any area of biological interest. The Royal Society of Biology helps our registrants meet the targets for annual progression by approving suitable events. We set a high standard for our Approved Events so they're worth more points and by attending, you'll be able to meet your CPD requirements more quickly.

As a member of the Society, you gain access to our online members' portal, where you can enrol and manage your CPD. Here you will upload details of your activity, record the time spent on it and reflect on how it has impacted on your professional development. You can add activities as frequently as you wish and upon completion of your CPD, if the full 50 points have been achieved, you will receive certification for having successfully completed your CPD year.

The Society understands that for some individuals achieving 50 points may be difficult. Therefore, should you feel your annual CPD submission meets the learning outcomes of CPD we will still assess your application. For further guidance on CPD, please read our Learning for Life document.

We are obliged to carry out an annual audit on 2.5% of the total number of registrants. Those who have been randomly selected will be asked to illustrate how they have met the competencies or professional attributes for Chartered Status during the year which is under examination.

Registrants will be contacted by email to advise of the audit and given up to 8 weeks to submit any additional information if necessary. If the audit concludes that a registrant has not sufficiently illustrated maintenance of the CPD standard required, the registrant will be given 2 months to submit any missing information and guidance on what is required. If this is not provided after the 2 month period ends then the registrant's Chartered Status may be removed.

Appendix 1

Equivalency Report for CSci

For those that do not have the relevant qualifications at Level 7 you will need to complete this report form.

For guidance, the report should be no more than 1,000 words and take you approximately two hours to complete. The report should then be uploaded with your online application as a PDF document.

The panel will be looking to see that you have developed your scientific knowledge and skills base since completing your formal education. This development should be apparent through your job roles that you have held, either in project teams or developing new procedures within your work area. They will also be looking for evidence of problem solving within your job role. In addition the level must be equated to Level 7 Qualifications

Your report should outline one or more projects where you have had to apply your scientific knowledge skills and scientific information to a problem in your workplace. If possible please present your report in the format of:

- Project Aim
- Outcome
- Development
- Evaluation

If you have already written a suitable report or document in the course of your work that fulfils criteria this can be submitted in place of an equivalency report.

So the panel can assess your application you will need to exhibit characteristics that correspond to the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education qualifications framework.

Find out more about the QAA framework

Based on the framework, we would expect an equivalency report to show how you;

1. deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
2. demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
3. continue to advance your knowledge and understanding, and develop new skills to a high level
4. possess the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
    - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
    - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
    - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

Appendix 2

CBiol Competencies

1. A high level of professional skills in the field of biology, including thoroughness and reliability
2. An understanding and appreciation of health, safety and environmental issues and adherence to the requirements relevant to their role
3. Integrity and respect for confidentiality in work, personal and professional issues, such as ethical practice
4. An interest in broader developments in biological science; and a contribution to the profession of biology outside their direct work environment
5. An ability to work as part of a team
6. Skills in biological science plus other professional skills as required for work undertaken and career development
7. Skills in critical evaluation and in drawing conclusions from scientific and other data
8. Time management skills, demonstrating foresight in carry out responsibilities and offering suggestions for improvements to areas of responsibility
9. That they make a contribution to key tasks in their employment, understanding fully the biological science objectives of the work done and its relevance to their employer and others
10. That they communicate through clear, concise and orderly documents and comprehensible oral information
11. That they discuss work constructively and objectively with colleagues, customers and others; that they respond respectfully to, and acknowledge the value of alternative views and hypotheses
12. That they exert effective influence as appropriate

Appendix 3

CSci Competencies

Throughout your application it is important that you give examples of your own activities in detail. Please avoid lengthy descriptions of an aspect of the work of your group, department or institution/employer, but provide a full description of your own activities, knowledge, experience etc. The assessors will always be looking for much more "I" and less "we".

You can demonstrate knowledge and understanding, for example, by including a description of the underlying principle of a test, a particular reagent or calibration of an assay.

Though you might refer to the same project or task in successive sections of your application, choose (if possible) a different facet of your work. This gives you the best chance of success, from a submission that contains a wide diversity of evidence for the assessors.

A) Application of knowledge and understanding

	Additional Information
Use specialist experiential knowledge and broader scientific understanding to optimise the application of existing and emerging science and technology.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how you have shown your specialist practical knowledge and how you have applied it, as well as examples of where your broader scientific understanding is applied to your area of practice.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you write and present internal papers, reports or standings; • How you carry out appropriate research to facilitate design and development of scientific processes.
Exercise sound judgement in the absence of complete information and in complex or unpredictable situations.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of your experimental work / managing work of others and the solutions arising from your collection, analysis and evaluation of data.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you have approached a piece of work or project flexibly and in a novel or different way, or reacted to an unexpected outcome; • How you collect, analyse and evaluate relevant data and offer possible solutions;
Demonstrate critical evaluation of relevant scientific information and concepts to propose solutions to problems.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how you select the best methodology, subsequent data analysis and conclusions you draw and how you overcome any barriers or issues.*

	Answers could illustrate by examples: • How you engage in experimental design and testing; • How you review relevant literature, manuals or designs; • How you share your findings with others.

B) Personal Responsibility	
	Additional Information
Work autonomously and take responsibility for the work of self and others.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of your contribution, responsibility and impact on a certain task and make clear what you personally have achieved, i.e. "I" not "we."* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you carry out much of your work effectively without day-to-day supervision. • How you seek and obtain guidance when you need it. • How you delegate responsibilities within a team, if you are responsible for managing others.
Promote and implement robust policies and protocols relating to health, safety and security.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of your understanding of health and safety protocols and policies in your workplace, and what responsibilities that you have in relation to this. Security can include issues related to data, Intellectual Property, confidentiality, prevention of contamination, traceability of documents and information.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you know where the policies and protocols are documented and that you are able to apply them in your practice. • How you identify risks related to the security aspects of the work you carry out, and how you seek to mitigate these risks. • How you "promote" the awareness and application of these policies and protocols with others, especially peers and more junior colleagues.

Promote and ensure compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements and quality standards.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how the regulatory requirements and quality standards relate to your area of work.* **Answers could illustrate by example***:* • How you ensure that these requirements and standards are being followed for the activities you are responsible for; • How you "promote" the awareness of regulatory requirements and quality standards amongst peers and more junior colleagues.
Oversee the implementation of solutions with due regard to the wider environment and broader context.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how you understand the potential and actual impacts of your work on your organisation, on the profession, on the general public and on the physical environment.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • Awareness of the sensitivity of your work and how this understanding translates into the way you carry out your work; • Awareness of how your profession is portrayed and viewed by the public, and how you take responsibility for recognising this in the work you do; • How you seek to avoid reputational damage related to the work you carry out; • How you set a good example to others in the way you delegate responsibilities related to the work you undertake.

C) Interpersonal Skills	
	Additional Information
Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with specialist and non-specialist audiences.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how you communicate effectively with people working both within and outside your particular area of expertise.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you alter the mode or style of deliver to communicate to adapt to different audiences; • How you gauge audience understanding and improve future communications.

Demonstrate effective leadership through the ability to guide, influence, inspire and empathise with others.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of your understanding of your leadership skill, not limited to those in management roles.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you have mentored or coached individuals, and how effective this was and the overall impact; • How you have managed change within your organisation or overseen the implementation of any new processes.
Demonstrate the ability to mediate, develop and maintain positive working relationships.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how you describe or define the "working relationship" and provide at least one example which focuses on your handling of a challenging interpersonal situation and demonstrates your ability to mediate and achieve a positive outcome. You should consider how through your approach you have changed or modified the behaviour or attitudes of others to positive effect.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you have managed the merger or integration of different teams; • How you manage working relationships across different departments or organisations; • How you interact with committees, working groups or other professional body activities; • How you have managed and resolved a difficult relationship situation between members of a team for which you are responsible.

D) Professional Practice	
	Additional Information
Scope, plan and manage multifaceted projects.	*Assessors need to see an explanation about a project that you have managed; making clear the level of autonomy you had while working on the project, especially if you were in a team. You should show how you contributed to determining the resulting course of action.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you utilised resources, aligned processes or established guidance effectively on certain projects.

Demonstrate the achievement of desired outcomes with the effective management of resources and risks.	*Assessors need to see an explanation about a project that you have been involved. You should describe your roles and responsibilities in managing the activities to achieve the desired outcomes.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you identify resources (people and/or money) need to undertake activities; • How you monitor and survey the progress of activities; • How you identify, evaluate and implement changes that may be needed to ensure the activities are successfully completed; • How you identify and manage risks that could impact on the successful completion of activities.
Take responsibility for continuous performance improvement at both a personal level and in a wider organisational context.	*Assessors need to see an explanation that indicates what actions you take to make improvements to your personal performance and to your organisation as a whole. This could be through encouraging the continuous development of junior staff or through improvements to processes within the organisation.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you identify lessons learned from activities undertaken by yourself or by others for whom you are responsible, such as what went well, went badly or was lacking; • How you evaluate the performance of specialists methods and tools used; • How you develop recommendations for future enhancements or modifications to procedures or working practices in order to achieve performance improvements; • How your actions have led to performance improvement by yourself or others.

E) Professionalism	
	Additional Information
Demonstrate understanding and compliance with relevant codes of conduct.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of how the codes of conduct under which you practice relate to the work that you should carry out and give examples of how they govern your professional practice. Within this, you should include any ethical considerations, both in terms of scientific and business practices.* **Answers could illustrate by example:** • How you use professional practice in respect of your profession, employer, clients or patients. • How you use behaviour in respect of attitudes, respect and confidentiality. • How you use professional competence in respect of personal development and the development of others.
Demonstrate a commitment to professional development through continuing advancement of won knowledge, understanding and competence.	*Assessors need to see an explanation of what you have already done in terms of continuing professional development (CPD) and your plans for the coming year. In your examples you should describe how your engagement in CPD has benefitted your practice and the users of your work.* **Answers should aim to illustrate:** • Any of the five categories of activity (work based learning, professional activity, formal/educational, self-directed learning and other) defined and exemplified here.

Appendix 4

Dear [Supporter Name],

[Applicant Name] has listed you as a supporter for their recent application to the Royal Society of Biology for the Professional Award of CSci.

If, after reviewing their application, you are happy to offer your support, the draft response below has been created for you to edit as appropriate. Once complete please submit this document to the Professional Registers Officer at the Royal Society of Biology.

Should any further advice be required, please do not hesitate to ask,

Kind Regards,

Professional Registers Officer

[ADDRESS]
[DATE]

Dear Royal Society of Biology,

Letter of Support

I am writing this letter in support of my colleague, [APPLICANT NAME] and their application for Chartered Scientist Status.

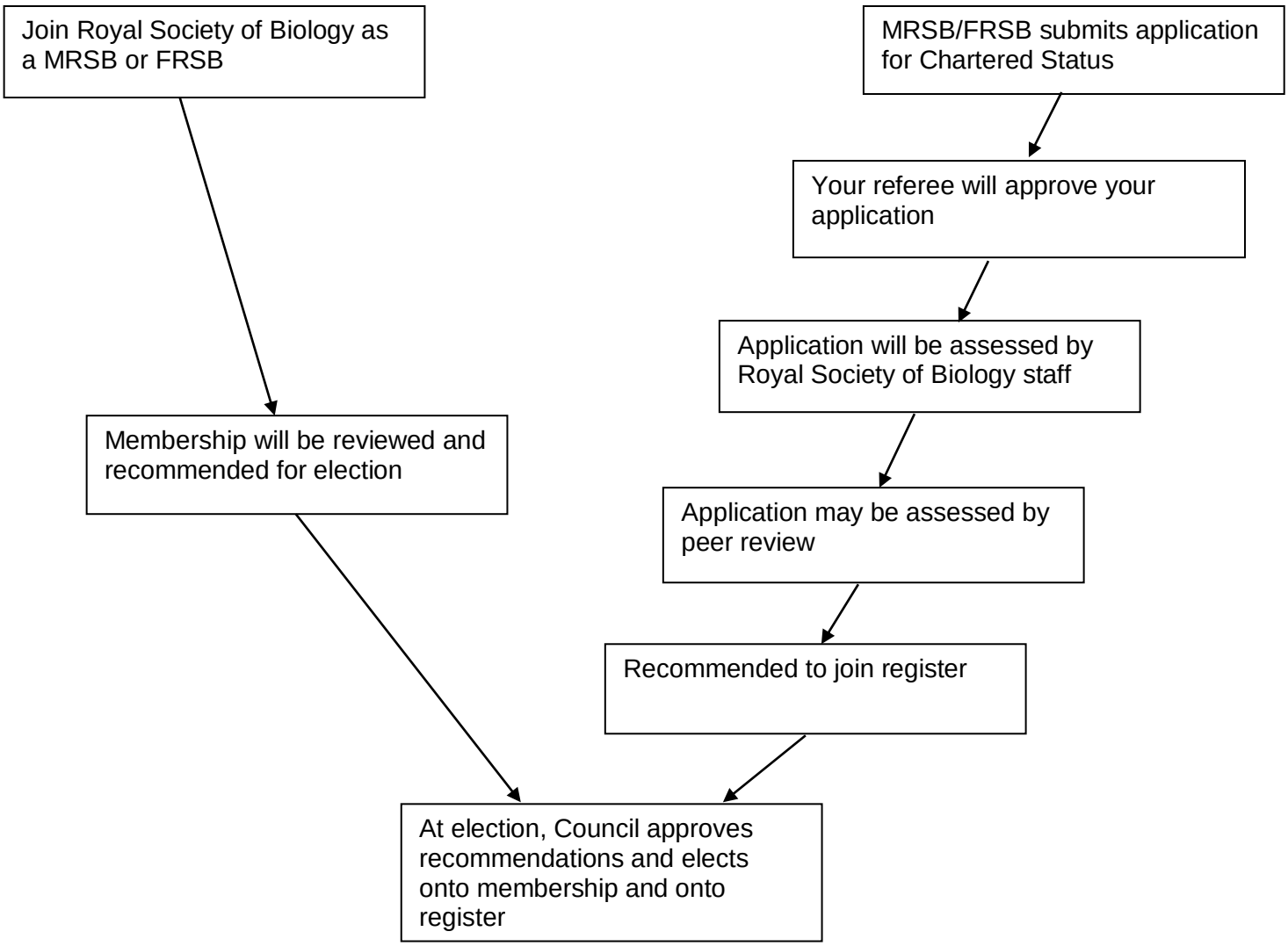
I acknowledge that [APPLICANT NAME] is at a suitable level to apply for CSci status and has provided true and accurate evidence to illustrate how they meet the required professional competencies.

I can support this CSci application through my [SUPPORTER'S PROFESSIONAL RECONGITONS] status, job role as [SUPPORTER JOB ROLE] and professional experience and am willing to respond to the Professional Recognition Panel should they require further assistance in assessing [APPLICANT NAME].

Yours sincerely

[SUPPORTER SIGNATURE]

Appendix 5


Join Royal Society of Biology as a MRSB or FRSB
MRSB/FRSB submits application for Chartered Status
Your referee will approve your application
Application will be assessed by Royal Society of Biology staff
Membership will be reviewed and recommended for election
Application may be assessed by peer review
Recommended to join register
At election, Council approves recommendations and elects onto membership and onto register