1.0 Introduction

The Royal Society of Chemistry encourages all members to undertake suitable continuing professional development (CPD) and maintain appropriate records of this.

Alongside other activities, a key component of professional development for many chemical scientists is formal, structured training courses for developing both scientific and behavioural skills.

Training providers may apply for approval of training courses. This approval highlights where good quality training exists and supports our members in their CPD. Our approval process is one of peer review, involving assessment against set criteria by members that are expert in their field.

2.0 Eligibility

The types of courses we can assess include classroom based, laboratory based and online (e-learning) activities. To be eligible for approval, a course does not have to be specifically "chemical" in content or encompass scientific training. However, the content should be contextualised for a professional chemical science audience rather than the general public or any other profession.

The approval criteria are outlined in this document. Approval will normally be granted for a period of 3 years, although annual review may be required at the discretion of the assessors.

3.0 Benefits

Once a course is successfully approved, the provider benefits from:

- listing of course on our online database, available to members and non-members - http://www.rsc.org/cpd/training;
- substantial discount on advertising of the course in Chemistry World, including on the website;
- at least one free of charge classified style advert in *Chemistry World;*
- use of our *Approved training* logo[1] on any course documentation or publicity material relating to the course.

3.1 Database of approved courses and events

Our database of approved courses allows users to easily search for courses relevant to them based on subject area, type of course or event, location and level. Users can also read a brief description of the course and click through to the training provider's website to make enquiries and book. Training providers are responsible for ensuring that course or event details are up to date by supplying the appropriate information.

The database website is www.rsc.org/cpd/training

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[1] On approval of a course you will be sent the logo artwork and guidelines for use.

3.2 Advertising in Chemistry World

We are keen to advertise approved training in the courses section of Chemistry World. A single text-only listing is included with the approval process. Further Chemistry World advertising options are available at substantially discounted rates for 12 months. Please contact recruitment@rsc.org to discuss these opportunities.

3.3 Using our *Approved training* logo

Once your course is successfully approved we will provide you with our exclusive *Approved training* logo*.*

This logo may be used in advertising and on promotional materials associated with the approved course(s) but should not be used to imply approval of the training provider overall.

3.4 Additional opportunities

We may contact providers of approved training from time to time to offer opportunities to be involved in other relevant activities. These may include conferences, exhibitions and other events.

4.0 Fees

Application for approval of training is subject to a fee which is payable upon application. The fee is quoted on a case by case basis and will depend on the nature of the course(s), the number of courses submitted for approval at one time and how long each course will take to assess. If a course is found not to be eligible for approval the fee will be refunded, less a 10% administration charge.

In addition, we expect that a training provider will provide members of the Royal Society of Chemistry with a discount of at least 10% off the advertised price when booking an approved course. This applies only when a member is self-funding participation in the course and is not applicable to company bookings.

We will contact you to discuss payment once your application is received.

5.0 How to apply for approval of training

In order to apply for approval of a course, an online form will need to be completed. This provides the information that is needed for the listing on our database which will be published if successful approval of a course is granted. The online form to complete can be found at http://www.rsc.org/cpd/training/apply

In addition to this, an application form, which will be provided, will need to be completed. The application form will be used to describe how the course meets each of the criteria for approval. You will also need to provide supporting evidence to meet the criteria. Examples of suitable supporting evidence are given below. These examples are not exhaustive and not all examples will be relevant to all course types. The submission must be clear and easy to navigate. The RSC will work with the training provider to get the submission fit for assessment.

Although a site visit by our assessors is not a requirement for approval, we reserve the right to request a visit if deemed appropriate.

5.1 Criteria

1. **The target audience, aims of the course and benefits to participants should be clear.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Webpage outlining course objectives, intended learning outcomes etc.
   - Any material provided to participants in advance of the course.

2. **The course should clearly address a professional or vocational need.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Documentary record of consultation with employers, institutions of teaching and learning or potential participants.
   - Documentary record of relevant, positive feedback provided by participants.

3. **Teaching and learning methods should be appropriate and meet the needs of the target audience.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Course materials, eg PowerPoint slides, hand-outs, workbooks.
   - For online courses, web link and associated details to access course.

4. **The course content should be of a breadth and depth appropriate to the intended learning outcomes.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Course materials, eg PowerPoint slides, hand-outs, workbooks.
   - For online courses, web link and associated details to access course.

5. **The intended learning outcomes should be appropriate and be met on completion of the course.[2]**

   Suitable evidence:
   - List of learning outcomes
   - Examples of formal assessment tools eg test paper, online self-assessment, practical assessment where relevant.
   - Template action plan for putting the learning into practice in the job role.
   - Documentary record of any external monitoring.

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[2] Where the course leads to an award or certification, methods of assessment, standards set and arrangements for external monitoring should be sufficient to instil confidence in the value of the award by participants and their employers.
Where the course does not lead to an award or certification there should be sufficient participation opportunities and/or exercises involved to evidence a positive learning experience.

- Documentary record of immediate and follow-up feedback from participants.

6. **Relevant codes of practice, standards and/or regulations should be adhered to and participants made aware of these.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Copy of relevant code(s) of practice.
   - Documentary evidence of meeting relevant ISO standards (where applicable).

7. **Feedback should be requested from participants, analysed and acted upon by the training provider.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Feedback forms distributed to participants (during and/or after the course).
   - Documentary record of updates/alterations to course as a result of participant feedback.
   - Documentary record of quality assurance processes, or in the case of new courses, an outline of the intended process for gathering, analysing and acting on feedback.

8. **Course tutors should have qualifications and/or experience appropriate to their role and degree of involvement in the course.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Course tutor(s) CV(s) and certificates of qualification.
   - Documentary record of "Train the trainer" initiatives.
   - Documentary record of quality assurance processes.
   - Recordings of tutors delivering part of the course.

9. **Course providers should demonstrate their commitment to supporting the chemical science community.**

   Suitable evidence:
   - Summary of previous activities with RSC member networks.
   - History of training activities within the chemical sciences sector.

10. **Participant health and safety must be ensured, and steps taken to minimise environmental impact where relevant.[3]**

    Suitable evidence:
    - Completed risk assessment documentation.
    - Criteria for venue selection.
    - Environment, health and safety guidance provided to participants including, where relevant, guidance on the safe use of display screen equipment.

11. **Course providers should ensure that there is equal access to the training, regardless of the protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.**

    Suitable evidence:
    - Document or webpage describing venue accessibility.
    - Description of accessibility of any websites used.
    - Evidence of consultation with appropriate organisations.
    - Evidence that participants have the opportunity to declare or discuss any special requirements prior to, or at the time of, booking.
    - Information about any extra support available.

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[3] In approving a training course the Royal Society of Chemistry accepts no responsibility for participant health and safety and will not be held liable should any accident or injury occur, except where any such accident or injury is due to the negligence of the Royal Society of Chemistry and/or its employees.

5.2 Application outcome

Following evaluation of a course against the criteria, one of the following decisions will be reached:

   i.   The course should be approved for a period of three years.
   ii. The course should be approved for a period of three years, subject to specific recommendation being implemented.
   iii. The course should not be approved. Reapplication at a later date is permitted.

We reserve the right to remove approval at our discretion. It is a condition of approval that a member of RSC staff may attend an approved course for the purposes of inspection free of charge.

5.3 Period of approval and renewal process

Once granted, approval will normally last for 3 years; however, review at the end of the first year of approval, or annual review may be required at the discretion of the assessors and additional evidence may be requested at these points. Once a course is approved, the Royal Society of Chemistry should be provided with updates of any significant changes to structure and/or materials.

When the 3 year approval period comes to an end, application for renewal of approval is required. This takes the form of the initial application and different assessors may be involved. The fee for renewal incorporates a reduction on the initial approval fee.

6.0 Contact

If you have any questions, please contact us:

Email: cpd@rsc.org
Tel: 01223 432408