



Approval of training courses Criteria and guidelines

1.0 Introduction

The Royal Society of Chemistry encourages all members to undertake suitable continuing professional development (CPD) and maintain appropriate records of this. An online tool to assist with recording CPD activity is available at www.rsc.org/cpd

Although an individual's professional development may encompass a number of different activities, a key component 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. Outcomes of assessment are governed by our Membership and Qualifications Board.

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 and associated fees 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 a searchable online database, available to members and non-members;
- discount on advertising of the course in Chemistry World;
- use of the RSC logo¹ on any course documentation or publicity material relating to the course;
- use of the following text alongside the RSC logo on any documentation or publicity material relating to the course: **"Approved by the Royal Society of Chemistry for purposes of continuing professional development."**

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

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, level and duration. 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 will be www.rsc.org/cpd/training

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 advertising options are available in Chemistry World at substantially discounted rates for 12 months. Please contact recruitment@rsc.org to discuss these opportunities.

4.0 Fees

Application for approval of training is subject to a fee which is payable upon application. Where a training provider applies for approval of multiple courses at the same time fee reductions apply. If a course is found not to be eligible for approval the fee may be partly refunded.

- Standard fee of £900 (plus VAT) per course for a 3 year period, with a reduction of 20% for renewal of approval.
- Annual review may be required (at the discretion of the assessors) but no fee will apply.
- Application for approval of 2-5 courses will qualify for 10% reduction.
- Application for approval of 6-10 courses will qualify for 20% reduction.
- Application for approval >10 courses will qualify for additional reduction, negotiable upon application.
- Multiple courses (any number) that are very closely related may qualify for further reduction

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.

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

5.0 How to apply for approval of training

To apply for approval of a course, please complete the **Training provider course approval application form**. You will also need to provide supporting evidence to meet the following criteria. Examples of suitable supporting evidence are given. Note that these examples are not exhaustive and not all examples will be relevant to all course types.

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

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.

5. 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).

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. Participant health and safety must be ensured, and steps taken to minimise environmental impact where relevant.³

Suitable evidence:

- Risk assessment documentation.
- Environment, health and safety guidance provided to participants.

10. Course providers should ensure that there are no exclusions to participation based on accessibility or specific learning difficulties.

Suitable evidence:

- Document or webpage describing venue accessibility.
- Description of accessibility of any websites used.
- Evidence of consultation with appropriate organisations.
- Information about any extra support available.

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 RSC and/or the RSC's 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, with annual review required.
- iii. The course should be approved subject to specific recommendations being implemented. Further assessment of the course following implementation of recommendations will be necessary before approval can be finalised.
- iv. The course should not be approved. Reapplication at a later date is permitted.

We reserve the right to remove approval at the discretion of our Membership and Qualifications Board. 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, 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 20% reduction on the initial approval fee (eg where the initial approval fee was £900 for a single course, the renewal fee will be £720 for the same course).

6.0 Contact

If you have any questions, please contact us:

Email: cpd@rsc.org

Tel: 01223 432670