

Guidance for revalidating your professional award

This guidance document gives information on what you need to do if you're called to revalidate your award. The guidance should be referred to when completing your revalidation form to ensure the requirements are met and all information is included. This guidance applies to revalidation of the professional awards RSciTech, RSci, CSci, CSciTeach, CEnv, CChem and can also support CPD returns for QP status.

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1. What is revalidation?

The requirements for holding a professional award include a commitment to keeping your skills and knowledge up to date through **continuing professional development** (CPD). When you renew your membership and opt to retain your professional award, you sign a declaration stating that you will honour this commitment. The RSC carries out an annual **revalidation** process, where we ask a sample of members to give evidence of the CPD activities that they have carried out over the previous year.

CPD is any activity which helps you to learn new skills and knowledge or enhance existing skills and knowledge that enable you to develop as a professional. These include activities you undertake in your **day to day role** and additional duties or projects like sustainability initiatives, as well as **training or courses**.

Recording CPD:

- reminds you of all your achievements and how much you have grown as a professional
- helps to focus your efforts towards your career aspirations
- helps you to identify skills gaps
- provides excellent case studies to use in your CV and interviews
- helps you to widen your range of transferable skills, and
- can help you set objectives.

The evidence and examples submitted by award holders in their revalidation form should demonstrate that their CPD activities meet the **Science Council's CPD standards**, which state that registrants must:

1. Maintain a continuous, up-to-date, accurate and reflective record of their CPD activities and be able to provide supporting evidence if requested;
2. Demonstrate that their CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice;
3. Seek to ensure that their CPD has benefited the quality of their practice and reflect upon this;
4. Seek to ensure that their CPD has benefitted the users of their work (employee, customer, student etc.) and reflect upon this.

(where **registrant** refers to anyone with a professional award)

Each year, a small sample of award holders are selected for revalidation. If you are selected, you'll be asked to complete a revalidation form describing your relevant learning activities, and provide an up-to-date CV. This should be **no more than 3 pages long** – aim for a traditional CV rather than an academic CV.

The revalidation form is provided to help you reflect on the CPD activities you have undertaken in the past 12 months and how these have helped to maintain or develop your professional skills and knowledge. These can be both formal and informal activities. Your original application for your professional award contained elements of CPD activities, and now we need to know how you have built on that.

Maintaining your professional award is important because it:

- captures what you already know and do;
- demonstrates that you also maintain the knowledge and competence you've developed over several years;
- provides recognition for the role you're in now, as well as a framework to support your future career development;
- demonstrates your professionalism to employers, colleagues and clients;
- is transferable across sectors, which is also good for your mobility; and
- makes you part of a broader community of scientists working across a huge range of sectors and disciplines

The RSC member's area has a dedicated [CPD recording tool](#) which can be used throughout the year to document any CPD activities undertaken. This can then be used for reference when completing the revalidation form.

2. What is required on the revalidation form

Section one

In this section you list your professional development activities in at least three **categories** (see page 5), or two if you are retired.

You may record **up to four** activities for each category.

For each activity, you should record:

- **How the CPD activity has benefitted your work.**
Explain how each CPD activity has impacted on the quality of your professional practice and / or service delivery. You should aim to write between 100-250 words.
Consider the following questions as prompts:
 - how has the activity improved your work or benefitted the profession as a whole?
 - has there been any impact/ influence on how you choose learning activities in the future?
 - have you learned anything from the activity, and have you acted upon what you learned? If not, why not?

- **How the CPD activity has benefitted the users of your work.**
Describe how each activity has had a positive impact on the work you carry out, and the people you work with, e.g. colleagues, customers, or students. You should aim to write between 100-250 words.
Consider the following questions as prompts:
 - Have any improvements to your work environment been brought about by the activity?
 - What positive impact has it had on customers? Customers of your work include those outside your workplace, and those in the workplace who are dependent upon the results of your work
 - How will you apply what you have gained from your CPD to help others?

- **If you find it helpful, you may indicate which competencies or attributes from your original application for your professional award these activities support.** This may help you to identify themes or trends in your CPD activities, which could inform your future CPD plans.
The relevant award competencies can be found on the [RSC website](#).

The **categories** for professional development activities are:

a) Work-based learning (e.g. supervising staff/students, training initiatives, report writing)

This section could include listing [training](#) or development courses you attended, such as workshops, briefings, master-classes or in-house training.

Be specific, what was the course/training about?

Have you contributed to any energy-saving or environmental initiatives within your workplace?

Have you participated in any risk assessment processes, or written any reports?

b) Professional activity (e.g. involvement in a professional body, mentoring)

This can include being [mentored](#), attending personal development sessions and any e-learning.

Have you [mentored](#) anyone?

Have you helped to guide any new starters at your workplace?

Have you supported your organisation to become [accredited](#) by the RSC?

Have you been involved with the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), with [events](#), [local sections](#) or [interest groups](#)?

Have you done any [outreach](#) activities?

Are you involved with any other professional bodies?

c) Formal/Educational (e.g. writing articles/papers, further education, internal procedures/reports)

Are you studying any qualifications that are relevant to your job role?

Have you contributed to any documents such as operating procedures and investigation reports?

d) Self-directed learning (e.g. reading journals, reviewing books or articles)

This includes reading [books](#), [Chemistry World](#), [journals](#), and reports from your workplace which can include historical accounts.

Self-directed learning can be about the science involved in your work, or about things that have a positive influence in your workplace such as learning about standards/regulations, professional practice, report writing or presentation skills.

e) Other work (e.g. voluntary work, public service)

This category includes all work which has given you skills which you can use in your work.

For example, do you volunteer for any charities?

Have you volunteered for any science-based activities such as the Big Bang fair?

Are you a STEM ambassador? Have you given a talk about your experiences and career so far to students at local schools and colleges?

Do you participate and organise any activities outside of your workplace, such as those to do with hobbies and interests?

Be specific, for all these activities, tell us how they relate to any of your core professional competences such as communication, organisation, networking, problem solving, risk assessment, independent and teamwork skills.

The assessors will be looking for

- specific CPD activities across the professional development categories, with dates and, if relevant, event or publication titles, references etc.
- a mixture of different types of activities
- activities that are spread across the previous 12 months
- your reflection on these activities and the impact they had on your work, for example, what did you learn from these activities; did you make any improvements to your practice as a result of these activities?

- your reflection on how the CPD activities have benefitted the users of your work.

Section two

In section two please outline your **future CPD plans**. These may be activities that are scheduled, or areas where you have identified a gap in your knowledge or development. This could include a reflection on your completed revalidation form, for example, if there are particular attributes you have not demonstrated in your recent development activities.

3. Frequently asked questions

Career breaks

Those with a professional award must maintain their CPD if they wish to retain their status. The CPD standards have been designed such that award holders who are unemployed will still be able to engage with them; however, it is acknowledged that there are times in a professional's career that they will not be actively participating in CPD. Examples of this include those on long-term sick leave, parental leave and those taking a career break to travel or work outside of science. In such cases, award holders may request to take a **career break** for a period of no more than 3 years, during which they will not be required to revalidate.

What if I've changed jobs?

If you have changed job in the last 12 months and would like to revalidate your award, you can include CPD activities undertaken in your previous role alongside those from your current (new) role.

The key thing is to demonstrate that the CPD activity undertaken was relevant to your job at the time.

If you were on a career break prior to starting your new role, within the last 12 months, you may wish to defer revalidation. If you would like to discuss your career path, please contact the relevant award team.

Do I need to send in evidence of my CPD activities?

When you send in your revalidation form and CV, you do not need to send in any evidence you may have of the activities you have discussed in your revalidation. You can indicate whether evidence is available on the revalidation form. If the assessors decide they would like to see the available evidence, you will be asked at a later date to provide it.

What if my planned CPD was cancelled?

If you have put considerable effort into planning and organising an activity which has been unable to go ahead, for example because of the COVID-19 pandemic, you may include it as one of your CPD activities under the relevant key area as long as there is sufficient reflection on any work that has been done towards setting something up and the intended impact of that activity. Make sure you include all the information and reflection you would for a completed activity.

Confidentiality Problems

We understand that the work of many of our members may be highly confidential or sensitive in its nature, which may mean that completing a revalidation form could be challenging. In such cases, please consider the following pointers:

- The activities that you submit are your choice - they can be anything that you gain something from that is of use to you in your professional life. This may well not be research based - it might be to do with 'firefighting' a problem or finding a particular way of approaching a customer need. It could even be from outside your day to day work - examples include acting as a school governor, being a mentor, reading a journal article and so on. In terms of your development you could think about things you would like to be better at rather than specifically about the market.
- You can also think about the process involved in an activity rather than the detail of the activity itself. So you might think about the way you approached solving a problem (e.g. thinking about occasions where you have been successful in the past, situations where you might have acted differently, brainstorming, trial and error etc.) rather than the technical nature of the problem itself. Additionally, some award holders use euphemisms, or simply do not name the product or process in their revalidation (it is acceptable to use 'commercially sensitive' instead of naming the activity, for example).
- You may wish to have your line manager or supervisor check over your revalidation form before you submit it, to seek reassurance that you have not disclosed any confidential information.

Appendix - model example for a revalidation form

Section 1: Professional Development Activities

Include information of up to four activities in any three or more of the five categories (a – e) below. Complete two categories out of five (a-e) if you are retired

List your CPD activities from the last 12 months	Reflect upon how these activities have benefitted the quality of your practice. You should aim to write between 100-150 words.	Explain how your CPD activities have benefitted the users of your work. You should aim to write between 100-150 words.	If helpful, you may indicate which award standards/ attributes (RSciTech, RSci, CSci, CChem, CEnv, or CSciTeach) these activities support. See the guidance document for each of the award standards.	Approximate date(s)	Is evidence for this activity available, if requested? If yes, please x the check box
b) Professional activity (e.g. involvement in a professional body, mentoring)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e.g. Became an RSC assessor for professional awards 	<p>As part of the process to become an assessor, I had to attend training. This entailed... I am now able to...</p>	<p>As a result of becoming an award assessor, I am able to support colleagues in....</p>	<p>C1: Demonstrate effective and appropriate communication skills</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking part in a mentoring scheme with BIG STEM Communicators Network 	<p>Through being paired with an experienced mentor with specialism in communication, I have learnt more about event management, project management, and understanding audiences. These subjects are directly applicable in my current job, and as this scheme is ongoing with monthly meetings, I have the opportunity to ask questions and secure my knowledge in an area rather than only having one brief interaction. The mentoring scheme includes group meetings with the mentor, and also peer-to-peer mentoring where I meet with another early-career individual interested in science communication. This has also been valuable to be able to discuss and debrief about the group meetings, cement my understanding, and learn more about other people's experiences within science. Being part of this scheme has benefitted my practical skills, but also my confidence in these areas.</p>	<p>As my role includes organising and running events, I have found the mentoring support around engaging audiences and stakeholders particularly useful, which is beneficial for the users of this work who are the same audiences and stakeholders. This included differentiated between beneficiaries, stakeholders and funders, so I would be able to understand each audience to tailor my communication. We have also touched on the different stages of events, and I am organising a conference in September which has been directly influenced by this learning, benefitting the conference speakers, stakeholders, and attendees. Additionally, the peer-to-peer element of the mentoring has coincidentally been with someone who may benefit from my day-to-day role, so I have been able to signpost to RSC support and resources, and also reflect on my career development and offer advice; I have not had this kind of career advisory experience before, so I have found that a useful experience and feel more confident to support others in this area in future, who may be RSC members undertaking retraining, or apprentices or other young audiences.</p>		<p>March-Oct 2021</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

