

Chartered Biologist

Guidelines for Applicants



Introduction

This document gives you all the necessary information on the Chartered Biologist (CBiol) registration offered by the Royal Society of Biology and details of how to apply and maintain it.

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

Why become chartered?

The Chartered Biologist registration is a gold-standard for professional competence, and provides a benchmark for bioscientists working in a vast and continually growing variety of settings. Gaining CBiol shows that you are making an impact in your role, contributing to your organisation and utilising highly developed biological skills. It also demonstrates a dedication to continuing professional development and may help your career progression.

For any employer or organisation, having employees with CBiol Status shows staff are working to high standards and that the organisation is supportive of the ongoing career development of staff.

Is it suitable for me?

Chartered Biologist (CBiol) is a registration offered solely by the RSB, 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. Applicants should also have a level 7 qualification, or be able to demonstrate equivalence, for example through significant experience in a senior or specialist position.

To determine whether this scheme is right for you depends on your particular job role, circumstances and personal self-identification as a biologist. Should you be uncertain about whether this award is right for you, please contact CBiol@rsb.org.uk.

It is crucial to bear in mind that being able to meet the professional competencies is of equal importance to the level of qualification you hold. We also offer CSci, RSci and RSciTech professional recognition awards, as well as more specialist registrations, with information regarding these available on our [website](#).



Professional registration with the Royal Society of Biology has provided me with external validation of the level at which I work. This is also recognised by my current employer who supports membership of relevant CPD schemes.

Dr Christopher Lindsay CBiol FRSB,
Research Scientist

Chartered Biologist Status is:

1. Gained through a successful application.
2. Maintained by successful annual recording of continuing professional development (CPD).
3. Renewed annually by payment of the registration fee.

Chartered Biologist 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 in addition to your Society postnominal letters where appropriate.



1. Your application

To assess your suitability for Chartered Biologist 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 or manager

To be eligible for CBiol you must meet our entry levels (MRSB or FRSB grade) and provide evidence in support of your application to illustrate how you meet the required competencies. As our application process is all completed online via the members' 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 15 competencies is required. These competencies are listed in Appendix 1. Usually, this is simply through statements providing specific examples to demonstrate how you have met each competency. Applicants should note that Chartered Biologist is not an academic qualification.

There is a £55 application fee for CBiol and a £25 annual retention fee.

2. Application tips

Here are some tips you should bear in mind when compiling your application:

- For each competency statement, you will need to give **clear** examples of the role that **you** play or the contribution that you made to a particular task or activity. In other words, make sure your answers make use of the pronoun "I" and are written in the first person.
- In all cases, make sure the examples incorporate sufficient depth but at the same time provide enough clarity for an assessor in STEM who does not share your specialist knowledge to understand exactly what you're saying. In particular, define acronyms, e.g... "HPLC" = "High performance Liquid Chromatography" and then add a sentence saying what the acronym refers to, e.g. "HPLC is a method for purifying proteins".
- To provide your examples with sufficient depth, it might be useful to explain what you did, how you went about it, and why you did it.
- Also, pick examples of reflective practice where **there was a successful outcome**, validating your approach. In other words, demonstrate an output, with metrics to measure success if that is possible.
- You may use the same task or activity more than once, but you should ensure you are clear on how it applies to the specific competence you are addressing.
- Most of the examples you provide should be fairly recent (in the last three years) but you can also draw on relevant experience further back in your career. These examples should be taken from a professional environment and not for example from a bachelor's or master's project. That "professional experience" can include voluntary internships or intercalated years in professional labs as part of a four-year Intercalated bachelor's degree.



3. Maintaining your Status through annual CPD submission

Continuing professional development, or CPD, is an expanding element of many careers. It 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 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 CBiol.

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 scientist 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 and courses. We set a high standard for our CPD 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 achieving 50 points may be difficult for some individuals. 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 – CPD Guide.

We 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 CPD requirements and professional attributes for Chartered Biologist Status during the year, through review of their CPD record.

Registrants will be contacted by email to advise of the audit and, following initial review, will be given up to eight 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 two months to submit any missing information and guidance on what is required. If this is not provided by the end of the two-month period, then the registrant's Chartered Biologist Status may be removed.



Appendix 1: CBiol competencies

1. Explain how your skills and knowledge in biological science inform and impact on your work and career development.
2. Show how you continue to develop your interest in biological science and what effect this has on your work.
3. Demonstrate how you use critical thinking and problem solving to draw conclusions from scientific and other data as you develop courses of action.
4. Show how you operate in your role as a biologist with autonomy, accountability and integrity.
5. Describe how you reflect on possible improvements in areas of responsibility and offer suggestions to make these improvements.
6. Give examples of working as part of a successful team, highlighting your contribution to that success.
7. Show how you plan work and demonstrate foresight in carrying out your responsibilities, using resources effectively.
8. Explain how you exert influence in your role and demonstrate good leadership, either directly or through networks.
9. Describe how you communicate effectively with specialist and non-specialist audiences.
10. Show how you discuss work constructively and objectively with colleagues, customers and others and how you respond respectfully to, and acknowledge the value of, alternative views and hypotheses.
11. Explain how you promote, implement and take responsibility for health, safety and environmental issues and adhere to requirements relevant to your role.
12. Describe your contribution to key tasks, understanding fully the biological science objectives of the work done and its relevance to your employer and others.
13. Describe how you show professional integrity and respect for confidentiality, and where you comply with personal and professional issues such as ethical practice and the RSB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.
14. Give an example of your contribution to the profession of biology outside your direct work environment.
15. Give examples of how you support and develop the careers of colleagues.



Appendix 2: Competency guidance

Throughout your application it is important to give clear examples of your own activities and contributions. You should avoid writing 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 and experience. Remember the assessors reading your application are not necessarily experts in your field of work, so lay your answers out clearly. Aim for 300-500 words per competency.

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. A submission that contains a wide diversity of evidence for the assessors gives you the best chance of success.

| A) Knowledge and Skills | |
|--|---|
| Competency | Additional Information |
| <p>A1 Explain how your skills and knowledge in biological science inform and impact on your work and career development</p> | <p>In this section you should demonstrate how you've used your training for your own personal and career development: if your current job is not directly related to biological science, what skills are you using that you learned through the subject; or what appropriate volunteering opportunities have benefited from your learning?</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing and presenting internal papers, reports or standards ● Conducting appropriate research to facilitate design and development of scientific processes ● Writing primary journal articles and patents ● Preparing relevant teaching materials ● Taking on volunteering roles with relevant charities |
| <p>A2 Show how you continue to develop your interest in biological science and what effect this has on your work</p> | <p>In this section you should demonstrate how your interest in and knowledge of the biological sciences is kept up to date, and whether that has had an impact on your career or your interest and involvement in the subject – 'work' can include relevant volunteering as well as salaried work.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading bioscience journals ● Attending conferences and events ● Writing for bioscience publications ● Reviewing and updating relevant teaching materials |
| <p>A3 Demonstrate how you use critical thinking and problem solving to draw conclusions from scientific and other data as you develop courses of action</p> | <p>Solving problems is an everyday need – assessors are looking in particular for examples where you have had to decide on a way forward using your research skills, based on the available information.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging in experimental design and testing ● Reviewing relevant literature, databases, manuals or designs ● Statistical analysis and numerical modelling ● Developing new approaches to teaching or research ● Organising relevant training events, either professionally or as a volunteer |

| B) Professional approach | |
|--|--|
| Competency | Additional Information |
| <p>B1 Show how you operate in your role as a biologist with autonomy, accountability and integrity</p> | <p>In this section you should show examples of where you have been given responsibility for a relevant task, and were able to show success in delivering the task to high ethical and professional standards; this is about demonstrating that others have trust in your actions, and that you can successfully deliver on a project, whether that is part of your salaried role or as a volunteer.</p> <p>Your answer should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate through examples how you are able to undertake projects without day-to-day supervision ● Give evidence that you are held accountable for your work through being given responsibility for it ● Show how you exhibit both professional and ethical integrity through your work ● Include a reflective view on your personal contribution, responsibility and impact on a certain task or project |
| <p>B2 Describe how you reflect on possible improvements in areas of responsibility and offer suggestions to make these improvements</p> | <p>In this section you should demonstrate that you actively review your areas of responsibility in all aspects of your professional and personal life.</p> <p>Some examples you could give include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encouraging the continuous development of junior staff or through improvements to processes within the organisation ● Evaluation of the performance of specialist methods and tools used ● Development of recommendations for future enhancements or modifications to procedures or working practices in order to achieve performance improvements ● Description of examples where your actions have led to performance improvement by yourself or others ● Identification of 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 |
| <p>B3 Give examples of working as part of a successful team, highlighting your contribution to that success</p> | <p>'Teamwork' is different from working as a group – in a team, there are a range of roles which all need to work together for success. While teamwork examples are easy to give for those working in a research and development context, it is just as important for voluntary organisations; for education in schools and colleges, and in any place where several skills are needed to deliver a project. The assessors are looking for specific examples of how you worked in a team, in whatever role was needed.</p> <p>Your answer should demonstrate through examples such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How you directly contributed to the work of a successful team and the outcome of your work ● How you managed the merger or integration of different teams ● How you managed working relationships across different departments or organisations ● Any interactions with committees, working groups or other professional or voluntary body activities |
| <p>B4 Show how you plan work and demonstrate foresight in carrying out your responsibilities, using resources effectively</p> | <p>Using projects with which you have been involved as examples, you should describe your roles and responsibilities in planning, managing resources and overseeing the activities to achieve the desired outcomes.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identifying the resources (people and/or money) needed to undertake the activities ● Monitoring and surveillance of the progress of the activities ● Identification, evaluation and implementation of changes that may be needed to ensure the activities are successfully completed ● Identification and management of risks that could impact on the successful completion of the activities |
| <p>B5 Explain how you exert influence in your role and demonstrate good leadership, either directly or through networks</p> | <p>The assessors are looking for examples of you successfully leading initiatives or triggering new activity by convincing others of the need for change.</p> <p>You should demonstrate through examples your leadership skills and how you exert influence in your role.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experiences of mentoring or coaching you have had; you should consider how effective this was and the overall impact ● Considering when you have managed change within your organisation or overseen the implementation of any new processes; you should consider how effective this was and the overall impact |

C) Communication and Collaboration

| Competency | Additional Information |
|---|---|
| C1 Describe how you communicate effectively with specialist and non-specialist audiences | <p>In this section you should show examples of when you have had to explain yourself and your subject to others, how you judged your audience and what you did to make sure that audience could follow you. Teachers and lecturers will of course find this easy, but volunteers should remember that they often have to explain complex systems to a wide range of audiences as well.</p> <p>In formulating your answers, you should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● How you adapted the content of the message as well as the mode or style of delivery according to the audience● How you considered the feedback loop, enabling you to gauge the audience's understanding and improve future communications |
| C2 Show how you discuss work constructively and objectively with colleagues, customers and others and how you respond respectfully to, and acknowledge the value of, alternative views and hypotheses | <p>In this section you should demonstrate how you successfully work with other people, especially in challenging situations, outside of your normal team – customers, other colleagues or volunteers – where different points of view have to be acknowledged and managed. Volunteering situations are often very challenging because of the way teams come together, and can offer very good examples for this competency.</p> <p>Your answer should include examples of activities which involved collaboration, whether with colleagues, customers or others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 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● Give examples of how you have collaborated with colleagues and ensured that alternate views are considered● Give examples of how you managed working relationships across different departments or organisations● Give examples of how you managed and resolved a difficult relationship situation and the outcome of this |

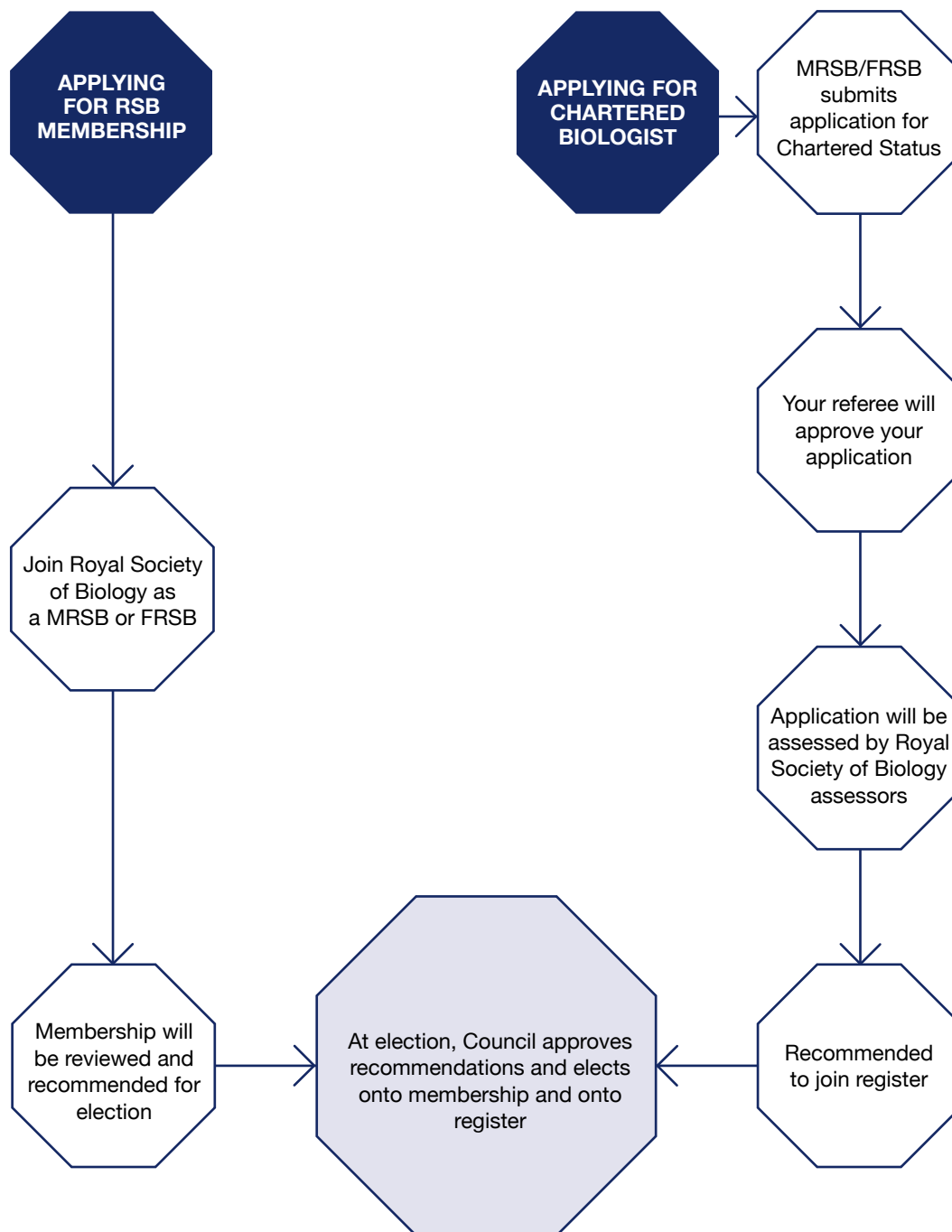


| D) Responsibility | |
|---|--|
| Competency | Additional Information |
| <p>D1 Explain how you promote, implement and take responsibility for health, safety and environmental issues and adhere to requirements relevant to your role</p> | <p>In this section you should show your attitude to health and safety and the impact your work has – a professional approach will always consider the effect of your actions on others as well as on the environment.</p> <p>Your answer should demonstrate your thorough understanding of and appreciation for the policies and protocols related to health, safety and environmental issues that apply to the work, paid or voluntary, that you are undertaking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include examples where you have implemented and promoted these protocols and describe any responsibilities that you have related to this ● Demonstrate that you know where these policies and protocols are documented, and that you are able to apply them in your practice ● How does your work contribute to the update and development of your workplace policies and procedures? ● How do you “promote” the awareness and application of these policies and protocols with others, especially peers and more junior colleagues? |
| <p>D2 Describe your contribution to key tasks, understanding fully the biological science objectives of the work done and its relevance to your employer and others</p> | <p>In this section you should demonstrate your knowledge and skills in biology, and the assessors are looking for how that impacts on your leadership of initiatives at work, salaried or unsalaried</p> <p>Your answer should demonstrate your understanding of the desired outcome of these tasks and prove your understanding of the potential and actual impacts of your work on your organisation, on the profession, on the general public and on the physical environment.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indicating that you are aware of the sensitivity of your work and show how this understanding translates into the ways in which you carry out your work ● Showing an awareness of how your work is relevant to the public at large, and how you take responsibility for recognising this in the work you do ● Describing how you seek to avoid reputational damage related to the work you carry out |
| <p>D3 Describe how you show professional integrity and respect for confidentiality, and where you comply with personal and professional issues such as ethical practice and the RSB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct</p> | <p>The assessors are looking for evidence that you comply with the RSB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct, especially around the issues of trust associated with responsibility and the need to keep confidences.</p> <p>Your answer should include comprehensive examples of occurrences where you have demonstrated integrity and a respect for confidentiality, applied and promoted the codes of conduct under which you practise and the outcome of these.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consideration for equality, diversity and inclusion ● Examples of reliability and integrity and ethical practices ● Examples of where you have dealt with a confidential matter |

E) Supporting the Profession

| Competency | Additional Information |
|---|--|
| <p>E1 Give an example of your contribution to the profession of biology outside your direct work environment</p> | <p>In this section you should show proactive involvement in initiatives that support the professionalisation of your subject, outside of your salaried responsibilities.</p> <p>Your examples should not cover activities which are part of your employment, but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Presenting at conferences and events● Contribution of articles to scientific journals● Volunteer work in the field of biology● Working in schools and colleges to promote the subject |
| <p>E2 Give examples of how you support and develop the careers of colleagues</p> | <p>In this section you should demonstrate how you encourage others to move forward, to develop their own skills and knowledge and hence progress in their careers.</p> <p>As well as past examples, please include any plans for the year ahead and describe in your answer how your involvement has benefited your colleagues' professional practice.</p> <p>Examples could include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● How you have taken an active role in the support and development of colleagues● Your work to promote careers in STEM areas, including the design of materials and reflection of success● Identifying professional development needs among colleagues and your active involvement in their completion of professional development plans |

Appendix 3: Application stages





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