

## Guidance Notes to Assist You in Applying for Registered Scientist with IFST

### Before you start your application:

- Make sure you have set aside some quality time for this – it will take you around an hour.
- The online application must be submitted in one go, and cannot be saved as you type, so we would strongly recommend typing your answers into a word document before adding them into the online application to ensure no loss of content if your connection times out.
- The questions are available in Appendix 1 of this document to assist you with preparing your application.
- Make sure you have all the documents required before submitting your application (see paragraph 2 below). Sending incomplete documents will lead to delays in your application being assessed.
- If you are unsure of anything, please email IFST on [JoinUs@ifst.org](mailto:JoinUs@ifst.org)

### 1. What you are applying for: Registered Scientist (RSci)

Registered Scientists (RSci) apply their skills and knowledge whilst working autonomously and have the ability to resolve problems and identify, review and select appropriate techniques, procedures and methods.

We accept applicants from the food and related industries with a wide range of qualifications and experience and who meet our requirements by a combination of work-based learning and/or qualifications. You will typically be qualified to at least degree level in relevant subjects and will normally have applied this knowledge in your role for at least a year. This may include the completion of a year's work placement, whilst at university. If you do not yet qualify for RSci registration, you can still use the competences as a framework to assist you in developing your skills and experience to apply in the future.

To apply for RSci, you must meet one of the following criteria:

- Non-scientific and qualifications below level 3 (in Scotland level 5) plus 3 years' experience in a relevant role.
- QCF Level 3 qualifications (for example A' levels in science subjects) plus 2 years post qualification experience in a relevant role.
- RSciTech or Foundation degree or HND in other science subjects<sup>2</sup>, plus 2 years' experience in a relevant role
- Degree or higher degree in other science subjects<sup>2</sup> or Foundation degree or Higher National Diploma in food science/technology or closely related subjects<sup>1</sup>, plus 2 years' experience in a relevant role. Up to 1-year relevant work experience gained as part of the qualification can count towards this experience.
- Degree in food science/technology<sup>1</sup>, plus 1 years' experience in a relevant role (work experience gained as part of the qualification can count towards this)

### Examples of suitable subjects include:

1. Food science and technology degrees of which a major element is food plus another subject, e.g. nutrition, product development, chemistry, microbiology, marketing, management, consumer studies, biotechnology.
2. Science, technology and engineering subjects: e.g. nutrition, chemistry, biochemistry, physics, mathematics, biology, engineering, statistics, agriculture, environmental sciences, plus modular degrees which combine these subjects.

Please note that the Science Council has a shortened application route for apprenticeships that have been deemed as aligned. More information is available here: <https://sciencecouncil.org/careers-from-science/apprenticeships-apply-for-professional-registration/>

### Relevant experience

You can demonstrate the continuing development of your knowledge and skills through a wide range of employment within the food chain and associated organisations, education, training or personal study related to the field of food science and technology.

Examples of suitable employment include: food processing, food manufacturing, distribution, technical sales, food law enforcement, food retailing, food service, trade bodies, legal work, consultancy, central and local government departments and agencies, research, academia, teaching, media, etc.

## 2. Application Process

- All applications are made online (see guidance box above). The application process consists of submitting a competency report in which you draw upon your career and experience in food science and technology, and your answers will be assessed against the standards in place for this registration.
- Appendix 1 contains the questions that you will be asked to answer in your report and the full details of the standards.

To submit your application, the following is required:

- Completed Competency Report
- Up-to-date CV including details of roles and responsibilities held
- RSci Registration Fee
- Details of 1 x referee to support your application. A suitable referee would be a senior professional in your field of work; someone who is able to base their view on direct knowledge of your work experience. They should also be able to confirm the validity of your stated achievements. **Your referees should not be related to you or subordinate to you.**
- Certificate of highest relevant qualification.

## 3. Ongoing registration

In order to maintain your RSci status, you will need to pay a renewal fee, and are required to annually confirm that you remain professionally active, competent to perform your role, and have engaged in Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The CPD year runs from 1 April to 31 March, and 25 hours of CPD are required each year. Registrants are audited every few years to ensure that their CPD meets the standards set by the Science Council. You will be given access to an online tool where you can add your CPD activities. More information on the CPD standards is available here:

<https://www.ifst.org/career-development/what-cpd/cpd-standards-and-learning-activities>

## 4. Code of Professional Conduct

All registrants, as IFST members, are bound by a Code of Professional Conduct. As food science and technology professionals, every member gives an undertaking to:

1. Uphold the integrity of the food science and technology profession, and refrain from conduct which detracts from its reputation
2. Comply with current regulatory and legal requirements with care, and follow best practice to ensure the safety of food
3. Develop and maintain my professional knowledge and skills, and work within the limits of my knowledge, competence and skill
4. Act in a fair, honest, trustworthy and diligent manner
5. Take reasonable steps to ensure my professional judgement is not compromised nor perceived as being compromised because of bias, conflict of interest, or the undue influence of others
6. Consider the risks and implications of my action (or inaction) and advice, and hold myself accountable for them and for the impact these may have

7. Treat information with appropriate confidentiality and sensitivity
8. Raise any concern I have about the conduct of an individual or organisation likely to put the safety or health of the public at risk

Any allegation of a breach of the Code will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary action being taken against a member.

The Disciplinary Procedure governs how the investigation and disciplinary hearing will be conducted and a range of possible outcomes, including expulsion from membership in the most serious cases.

### Appendix 1: Completing the competency report

The application process consists of submitting a competence report in which you draw upon your career and experience in the food industry. To be awarded this registration, you need to meet the following 5 standards:

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

The competency report will ask you the following:

- Please provide a summary of your experience during the past 2 years. For each position, state the company name, start and finish dates, list of achievements, responsibilities, level of authority and autonomy (please limit this to 300 words).
- Please tell us how you meet the 5 RSci competence areas, using examples drawn from your recent personal experiences. Please answer ALL questions.

Some tips on completing the report include:

- **We would strongly recommend typing your answers into a document before adding them into the online application to ensure no loss of content if your connection times out.** The questions are provided below for your information.
- When you are thinking about how to structure your answers, you will need to think of examples of your experiences in terms of what you did, how you went about it and why you did it. You may find the STAR method helpful for structuring your answers – this stands for Situation, Task, Action, Result.
- Provide clear examples of the role that you played or the contribution that you made to a particular task or activity, rather than that of the team as a whole.
- You should think about using examples that are fairly recent i.e. from the last three years, although you can also draw on relevant experience from further back in your career.
- You can use and refer to a particular example more than once, but do ensure you make it clear how and why it applies to a competence.
- You can use examples from broad professional experiences, but you must be able to show how you have applied the skills developed in your job role.
- As a guide, approximately 100-150 words are suggested per response.

**The questions and competences in the report are provided here so that you can prepare your answers. This is just for your information, and the application form will need to be completed online.**

<b>Section A: Application of knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Further information</b>
<b>A1:</b> Apply extended knowledge of underlying concepts and principles associated with area of work.	We are looking for an example of how you have used your extended knowledge within the area in which you work. This will include developments within your field and the ability to understand and apply new developments to your area of work
<b>A2:</b> Review, evaluate and apply underlying scientific concepts, principles and techniques in the context of new and different areas of work.	What we are looking for here is how you have taken techniques/principles and reviewed, evaluated and applied them in a new area of work.
<b>A3:</b> Analyse, interpret and evaluate data, concepts and ideas to propose solutions to problems.	We are looking for an example of how you observe and interpret the results from your data to draw conclusions and inform your next steps.

<b>Section B: Personal responsibility</b>	
<b>B1:</b> Work autonomously while knowing when to escalate appropriately and recognising limits of scope of practice.	We are looking for an example of how you work with no supervision for certain key tasks, experiments or procedures associated with your role within required timeframes. You will also be able to demonstrate your understanding of when you need to seek input from either your supervisor or others and when to escalate.
<b>B2:</b> Take responsibility for safe and sustainable working practices and contribute to their evaluation and improvement.	We are looking for an example of how you have taken responsibility for working safely and sustainably.
<b>B3:</b> Take responsibility for the quality of your work and also enable others to work to high standards.	This means that you can show how you are aware of the quality standards necessary for the work being carried out by you and others. You should be able to describe an example of how you enable these standards and ensure that they are applied.

<b>Section C: Interpersonal skills</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Further information</b>
<b>C1:</b> Demonstrate effective and appropriate communication skills.	What we are looking for here is an example that you are an effective communicator. The example can be through appropriate oral, written or electronic means.
<b>C2:</b> Demonstrate effective interpersonal and behavioural skills.	This means that you can give an example that demonstrates the skills that you use to interact with colleagues in a constructive way within the work setting. In these situations it may be appropriate to discuss these with your supervisor, as an external perspective is often very useful in this regard
<b>C3:</b> Demonstrate productive working relationships and an ability to resolve problems.	This means that you should be able to describe how, when working with others, you are able to demonstrate that you developed positive working relationships and resolved the problem. Your example should demonstrate how those working relationships were effective in resolving problems.

<b>Section D: Professional practice</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Further information</b>
<b>D1:</b> Identify, review and select scientific techniques, procedures and methods to undertake tasks.	This means you can give an example of work that you have undertaken showing where and why the method/procedure used was chosen as the best (or most relevant) to use.
<b>D2:</b> Contribute to the organisation of tasks and resources	This means that you can give examples of how you have contributed to the running of the laboratory/workshop/section or other types of working environment.
<b>D3:</b> Participate in the design, development and implementation of solutions.	This means that you can give an example of 'problem solving' that describes your specific role in helping to overcome a specific problem. For instance it might mean that a process, programme, design, assay, or method suddenly stops working and you are involved in finding out the reason why. Your example should show what your role was in understanding the problem and what your contribution achieved.
<b>D4:</b> Contribute to continuous process improvement.	This means that you can give an example which shows how you are aware of progress in your area and seek ways of improving the efficiency of your work. It should describe how you seek to discuss with your supervisor the strategy for achieving this. For instance this could include new and improved methods, new ways to increase throughput, or ways to increase cost-effectiveness.

<b>Section E: Professional standards</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Further information</b>
<b>E1:</b> Comply with and promote relevant codes of conduct and practice.	This means that you can give an example of how you comply with a code of conduct (e.g. IFST's Code of Professional Conduct) or how you work within and promote all relevant legislative, regulatory and local requirements.
<b>E2:</b> Maintain and enhance competence in own area of practice through professional development activity.	This means that you undertake activities to enhance your competence in your own area of practice i.e. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and reflect on its impact on you and others. We are not looking for a list of courses here but evidence of how your CPD benefits your practice and benefits others. Your CPD may include work-based learning, professional activity, formal/educational, self-directed learning. (Note registrants will need to comply with the Science Council CPD Standards)