



GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION FOR CHARTERED SCIENTIST STATUS THROUGH THE ASSOCIATION FOR CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTRY

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CHARTERED SCIENTIST - CSci

1-Summary of Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Chartered Scientist registration you must –

1. Meet the following time and qualifications criteria –
 - a) Be an active and fully paid up member of the ACB
 - b) Be in one of the following qualifying categories of membership - Ordinary, Affiliate or Overseas. Members in other categories – Federation, Student, Retired, and Corporate members - are not eligible to apply for CSci.
 - c) Hold a Masters or equivalent or higher Degree with a minimum of 4 years experience post achieving this.

FOR CLINICAL SCIENTISTS –

- I. You must hold an MSc or equivalent and have been registered with the Health Professions Council (HPC) as a Clinical Scientist for a minimum of 2 years;

OR

- II. You must have held a Masters degree or equivalent for a minimum of 4 years.

FOR BIOMEDICAL SCIENTISTS –

- III. You must have held a Masters degree or equivalent for a minimum of 4 years.

FOR MEDICALLY QUALIFIED MEMBERS -

- IV. You must be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and have acquired an MSc, PhD, MD or DipRCPath/MRCPath for at least 4 years.

FOR ALL OTHERS -

- V. For workers in professions not covered by the HPC or GMC, including Overseas applicants, you must provide copies of written evidence of meeting this criterion

- d) Be complying with the CPD requirements of the profession.
 - e) Be employed in a suitable post allowing compliance with the other requirements especially CPD
 - f) Comply with the ACB Code of Conduct
 - g) Apply appropriate work ethics in all you undertake
2. Complete and submit the application form to the ACB Offices as licensed body
 3. Include a cheque or other means of making full payment of the fees.

2-Guidance to Applicant

The award of Chartered Scientist is a prestigious status requiring application by members of licensed bodies and their affiliates who meet distinct criteria laid down by the Science Council. The regulations and assessment procedure involve establishing objective criteria so avoiding any subjective administrative decisions. These notes are intended to elaborate on, and help applicants fully understand, the application and assessment process.

The Association for Clinical Biochemistry has been licensed by the Science Council to confer registration as a Chartered Scientist, CSci. The Science Council sets standards for this registration and the Association has interpreted these and has developed the Professional Competences required for registration which are given in the regulations.

Joint applications to join the Association for Clinical Biochemistry and for Chartered Scientist status would be dealt with concurrently but independently. However, Chartered Scientist status through this licensed body is dependent upon acceptance as a member of the ACB.

Chartered Scientist is aimed at those practising science at the full professional level or at those for whom scientific knowledge or practice at that level form an essential element for the fulfilment of their role.

The award of Chartered Scientist (CSci) sets the individual practitioner at a high level of their profession. It demonstrates the achievement of a high-level education, the ability to practise the profession at a significant level and the maintenance and continued progression of scientific competencies and abilities. Becoming a Chartered Scientist sends a clear signal to future employers, colleagues and the public as a whole about the quality of the practitioner's scientific knowledge, application and professionalism.

Applicants for CSci must be able to demonstrate their professional scientific experience as well as managerial skills. They must have practical knowledge and understanding of Clinical Science and the underpinning scientific principles. They must also be able to exercise competent managerial skills and judgements.

Candidates will be assessed against these competence statements. Therefore it is suggested that, before you make your application, you carefully read the Regulations and the Application Form. This should help you identify any areas that may require further training or experience before you make your application. (If unsure it is also recommended that, where possible, you go through the form with your Proposers.)

To be eligible to apply for and achieve CSci through the Association for Clinical Biochemistry, applicants must meet EACH section of the following criteria –

CRITERIA	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be an active and fully paid up member of the Association 	Members will receive two written reminders at monthly intervals to the addresses/email addresses on the current database regarding renewal of subscriptions. Failure to respond or provide full fees in the set period of grace will result in suspension from membership and loss of Chartered status.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be in one of the following qualifying categories of membership - Ordinary, Affiliate, Overseas or Retired. Members in other categories – Federation, Student, and Corporate members – are not eligible to apply for CSci. 	See extract from Bye Laws below for definition of each category. Once granted Chartered Status, this can be retained on becoming retired members as long as they meet the other criteria especially CPD requirements. Retired Members may only retain Chartered status if maintaining their CPD requirement..
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a Masters or equivalent or higher Degree with a minimum of 4 years experience post achieving this. 	This is a key criterion for the award. Applicants without a Masters degree will have to provide documentary evidence, substantiated at interview, of alternative combination of awards and experience to be assessed of equivalent merit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Clinical Scientists you must EITHER have held an MSc and have been registered with the Health Professions Council (HPC) each for a minimum of 2 years. OR without an MSc or equivalent you must be registered with the HPC for a minimum of 4 years. For Biomedical Scientists, you must have held a Masters degree for at least 4 years irrespective of when you registered with HPC For medically qualified members, you must have achieved an MSc, MD, PhD, DipRCPath or MRCPPath for a minimum of 4 years. 	<p>HPC registration for Clinical Scientists will confirm the applicant meets all the required competences for Chartered Scientist status. HPC registration can only occur after a minimum of 4 years post graduation during which an MSc may be obtained. You must have gained this registration for at least 2 years before being eligible to apply for CSci.</p> <p>Biomedical Scientists may register with HPC without an MSc and so they must substantiate that they have held an MSc for at least 4 years</p> <p>For medically qualified members you must possess an MSc, or equivalent - MD, PhD, part 1 or final MRCPPath (DipRCPath or MRCPPath). You must have gained this for at least 4 years before being eligible to apply for CSci.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For workers in professions not covered by the HPC or GMC, you must provide other evidence to meet the criterion of 4 years post Masters. 	<p>Applicants in professions without such registration must provide evidence that they have worked in appropriate roles for a minimum of 4 years following acquisition of their Masters or equivalent degree.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be complying with the CPD requirements of the profession. 	<p>Registered Clinical Scientists are encouraged to join the RCPATH CPD programme which is reviewed on an annual basis. The nature, content and hours spent on CPD each year is scrutinised via the RCPATH review process prior to signing off as appropriate CPD.</p> <p>The ideal evidence for Chartered Scientist status application would be a copy of a suitable certificate of CPD compliance e.g. from the Royal College of Pathologists or from the HPC. If no formal certificate is available, documented evidence of CPD participation must be submitted e.g. annual appraisal records showing CPD undertaken, records of attendance at meetings etc. This will be required at application and each renewal.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be employed in a suitable post allowing compliance with the other requirements especially CPD 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with the ACB Code of Conduct 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply appropriate work ethics in all they undertake 	

APPLICATION FORM

You must complete the CSci application form answering all questions and submit to the ACB Administrative Office together with copies of your certificates supporting your eligibility –

- Initial degree certificate
- AND a CPD Certificate or evidence
- AND EITHER
 - Masters Certificate or Equivalent (PhD, MD, DipRCPATH, MRCPATH)
- OR
 - HPC certificate for Clinical Scientists

You must include a marriage certificate or other documentation to verify identity if there has been a change of name from that shown on the certificates presented.

The application form must be signed to record your acceptance and agreement with the ACB Code of Conduct and membership procedures. PLEASE DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL CERTIFICATES.

ACB MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

The ACB has the following categories of membership –

- Ordinary
 - UK & Eire
 - Level 1
 - Level 2
 - Level 3
 - Overseas
 - Retired
- Federation
- Affiliate
- Student
- Corporate

All members have to be elected to membership by Council following submission of application form and fees.

Ordinary category stipulates a minimum 1st or 2nd class honours degree and working in the roles of clinical biochemistry or allied clinical sciences in the health service, industry or academia.

Level 1 Ordinary membership is intended for trainees entering the profession and for HPC registration is a pre-registration level so such members would not be eligible for Chartered Scientist status. Similarly for medical members Level 1 represents the early Specialist Registrar training stages.

Level 2 and 3 Ordinary members would have completed basic training and acquired HPC registration allowing unsupervised work and become Registrant Practitioners and later Advanced Practitioners, or for Medically qualified members would have achieved an MSc, PhD, MD, DipRCPATH or MRCPATH. Members in these fee levels would be eligible for Chartered Scientist status once complying with the time criteria. Academic members in these categories would need to provide evidence establishing that they meet the 4 years post Masters and CPD criteria to be eligible for CSci status.

Overseas members would also be eligible for Chartered Scientist status providing they substantiate that they meet the Masters and CPD criteria. It is likely that applicants from this group would need to be individually assessed for CSci via the non-standard route.

Retired members would also be eligible for Chartered Scientist status providing they substantiate that they meet the Masters and CPD criteria. CSci is a measure of current professional competence and while many retired members may have retired fully from professional life (in which case it would be unlikely that CSci would be suitable for them), a significant proportion of 'retired' scientists operate consultancy roles and other activities which maintain competency and professional practice to the levels required for CSci. It is likely that any ACB member in a retired membership category would have to be individually assessed for CSci via the non-standard route.

Federation category stipulates an equivalent graduate requirement to Ordinary membership categories but in fields of clinical science other than clinical biochemistry. However, this category is intended for those who desire to join solely for trade union support and benefits, rather than for scientific reasons. As such the Science Council does not consider them eligible for Chartered Scientist status through the ACB, but they are free to apply for full Ordinary membership of the ACB if they choose – and thus open the road to CSci.

Affiliate category stipulates HPC registered Biomedical Scientists working in the UK. Unlike Clinical Scientists in the other categories such registration could be acquired without a Masters degree. Thus, to be eligible to apply for Chartered status, members in this group would need to provide evidence to establish the 4 years post Masters qualification as well as compliance with CPD requirements.

Student members are undergraduates or wholly grant supported post-graduate research students resident in the United Kingdom and as such would not be eligible for Chartered status.

Corporate membership is intended for those industry corporations involved in the profession to retain close links with membership and the science. It is a Company membership rather than an individual membership and as such would not be eligible for Chartered status.

COSTS

The appropriate current fee set by the ACB as licensed body must accompany the CSci application form. An appropriate cheque or direct debit must also be included if simultaneous application is being made for ACB Membership. Credit card payments are possible only for members from non-sterling countries.

PROCESSING TIME

Applications will be processed in turn on receipt at the ACB Office. You will receive an initial acknowledgement of safe receipt of the application form, the supportive documents and payments. Assessment and decision will then be communicated to the applicant within 4-6 weeks together with issue of certificates as appropriate. Explanation of any queries or rejection of application will be made in writing to the mailing address noted on the application form together with details of the appeals mechanism if appropriate.

THE AWARD

The Award of chartered status allows the successful applicant to append the term CSci after their name.

A list of registered members will be indicated by their designation in the ACB Members' Handbook and successful new applications also noted in the ACB News.

Statistical reports on numbers of chartered members will appear in the ACB Annual Report.

APPEAL

Grounds for an appeal related to the validation of a Member as a Chartered Scientist.

Appeals should be made to the President of the Association for Clinical Biochemistry through the ACB Office address. The President will consider appeals against a failure to validate an applicant as a Chartered Scientist in the following circumstances:

1. That the Registration Officer was not in receipt of sufficient information to allow a reasoned decision.
2. That the Registration Officer misinterpreted or misapplied the regulations for validation as a Chartered Scientist when considering the application.
3. That the Chair of Education committee and the interview panel discriminated arbitrarily against the applicant;
4. That there was maladministration on the part of the Association.
5. Any other circumstances that seem equitable to the Association at the absolute discretion of the President of the Association. An unsuccessful applicant can request that their application be re-considered by the Council of the Association, but must provide further information to that originally considered by the Chair of Education Committee to substantiate their claim. If the President considers that the evidence submitted is sufficient to warrant reconsideration, the evidence is to be re-submitted to the Chair of Education Committee for re-assessment.

Procedures for an appeal related to validation of a Member as a Chartered Scientist.

A member who has applied to the Association to be validated as Chartered Scientist and is aggrieved that it has not been approved, may appeal against that decision by writing to the President at the address of the Administrative Office stating the grounds for their appeal. Appeals in electronic form will not be accepted by the Association. Appeals from outside the UK are to be sent by recorded delivery system where possible.

The President is to acknowledge receipt of an appeal within 4 weeks of receipt of the appeal.

The President will establish an Appeal Panel following the procedure set down for appeals under the disciplinary procedure.

The Appeal Panel is to consider the appeal within two months of acknowledgement of the appeal.

The Appeal Panel may seek further information from the proposers and the appellant.

The Appeal Panel may call for an interview with the member if necessary.

A decision will be conveyed to the applicant within two weeks of the hearing.

RENEWALS

The Chartered Scientist status is awarded to successful applicants upon full payment of the initial registration fee of £35 and will be valid for 5 years AS LONG AS membership of the ACB is retained and CSci renewal fees are paid each year. The award is then renewed annually with membership renewals upon payment each year of an additional renewal fee of £25 over and above the normal appropriate ACB membership fees. Members will be reminded of this payment required with the normal invitation to renew ACB membership.

As with ACB Membership, those CSci applications received between October 1 and December 31 in any year will not have to renew until the following January a year later – i.e. up to 15 months membership for the initial fees.

The CSci award must be fully reviewed at each 5th anniversary of acceptance to the register when a signed declaration of continuing compliance to the above criteria will be required together with the £25 renewal fee. Members will be reminded of this anniversary 3 months prior to the date with an invitation to renew and two further reminders sent at monthly intervals thereafter. Failure to provide the information and fees after the second reminder will result in immediate de-registration.

On renewal at this 5th anniversary, members must complete and sign the renewal application, return it together with the current renewal payment due and CPD certificate.

DE-REGISTRATION

Members who do not maintain the standards of the ACB, fail to pay the annual fees or for any other reason leave membership will immediately lose CSci status. Such reasons are –

- Failure to pay ACB membership subscriptions or those who otherwise terminate ACB membership.
- Failure to maintain appropriate level of CPD required by the profession.
- Failure to promptly pay the CSci fees each year by the deadline.
- Failure to comply with the ACB Code of Conduct and, being found so, sanctioned through the ACB Disciplinary Procedure.

3-Guidance to Proposers

Candidates for Chartered Scientist should nominate two supporters for their application (see the relevant sections on the application form). Such people may be termed Proposers, Supporters, Referees or Advisors but are conventionally referred to by the ACB as Proposers. Proposers will be asked by the Association for Clinical Biochemistry to comment on the degree to which the candidate has mastered the various competences specified above and to indicate whether or not they support the application for CSci, taking due account of the criteria. To be able to comment fully, proposers will receive a copy of the candidate's application.

Two Proposers are required.

Any Ordinary, Affiliate or Overseas member of the Association for Clinical Biochemistry, who has known the Applicant personally for a minimum of three years, may act as Proposer.

Proposers must NOT be the candidate's line manager/supervisor and at least one must be from outside the candidate's organisation.

Proposers must be Members of a professional body and at least one must be a full (not Student or Corporate) member of the ACB.

The documents must be completed by the Proposers personally after verifying the content of the application.

Proposers should initial in the margins of this application form and the copied certificates to indicate those statements for which they can testify.

They must confirm that they have read the Criteria for Chartered Scientist (i.e. the introduction of this application form) and recommend that the applicant, to the best of their knowledge and belief, is a fit person to be registered as a Chartered Scientist through the Association for Clinical Biochemistry. They must agree, on request of the Association, to provide a confidential written reference.

Applicants or Proposers who are unsure of any details related to this application should consult the ACB Administrative Office for guidance.

4-Criteria for Masters Degree

Chartered Scientist status has Masters level qualifications as a pre-requisite. Members of the ACB will normally fall into one of three categories whereby this can be established.

Clinical Scientists will progress post graduation either into a formal pre-registration training course which will include an approved MSc or will undertake a separate MSc or PhD prior to further training and registration.

Approved MSc courses used by Clinical Biochemistry are –

- MSc in Clinical Biochemistry – University of Birmingham
- MSc in Clinical Biochemistry – University of London
- MSc in Clinical Biochemistry with Molecular Biology – University of Surrey
- MSc in Clinical Biochemistry – University of Manchester

These courses are accredited by the ACB Education Committee.

In addition Clinical Scientist members may have pursued MSc or PhD studies in other Universities. Many of these are approved by other Clinical Science professional bodies.

Examinations of the Royal College of Pathologists (DipRCPath and MRCPPath) are other qualifications undertaken by many ACB members. It would usually occur after 2 to 4 years following registration with HPC/GMC and so would again be an indicator beyond the Masters Level. The HPC accepts that the ACS Certificate of Attainment as recognition of equivalence to Masters level if this has not been attained earlier.

Medically trained members will similarly work post graduation towards either an MSc, PhD, MD, DipRCPath or MRCPPath.

Other members working in academia or industry may or may not have appropriate MSc qualifications but those without can be accommodated through equivalence rules.

In all the above cases, MSc or PhD qualifications used to meet CSci criteria but not approved by clinical scientist professional bodies would be assessed on an individual basis by the Chair of Education Committee in evaluating the application.

Whilst a Masters Level degree is the exemplifying educational standard for the award of CSci, there are a number of different routes that can demonstrate the educational equivalence of a Masters degree. In these instances, it is the responsibility of the applicant in their application to establish that their training and experience meets the set criteria. In these circumstances there is likelihood that an interview will be required before granting Chartered status. Acceptable equivalence criteria include -

- An accredited Bachelors degree followed by at least one year on an accredited training scheme (the scheme must be accredited by the ACB).
- A post-graduate qualification provided it includes project work related to the field of healthcare clinical science. This may have been obtained while undergoing work carried out in health service, academia or industry.
- A minimum of 12 months' professional experience (usually more) including in-depth study of a technical area and project work suitable for publication or written up as a formal assessed dissertation, as would be achieved in many jobs in industry. This may occur at the same time as the acquisition of responsible experience and the specified competences

In each of these cases, the applicant must establish 4 years experience following this listed equivalence criterion.

5-Appeals Mechanism

Grounds for an appeal related to the validation of a Member as a Chartered Scientist.

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1. That the Registration Officer was not in receipt of sufficient information to allow coming to a reasoned decision.
2. That the Registration Officer misinterpreted or misapplied the regulations for validation as a Chartered Scientist when considering the application.
3. That the Chair of Education committee and the interview panel discriminated arbitrarily against the applicant;
4. That there was maladministration on the part of the Association.
5. Any other circumstances that seem equitable to the Association at the absolute discretion of the President of the Association. An unsuccessful applicant can request that their application be re-considered by the Council, but must provide further information to that originally considered by the Chair of Education Committee to substantiate their claim. If the President considers that the evidence submitted is sufficient to warrant reconsideration, the evidence is re-submitted to the Chair of Education Committee for re-assessment.