

## Topic 2: Career Development and Accreditation of Chemists

### Comments from the Royal Society of Chemistry

1. In the UK universities are autonomous, deciding what subjects they teach and the curriculum in each subject. Regulation of professional activity is not, in general, carried out by government, but by the professions themselves through their professional societies. For example part of the Object of the RSC is

“to establish, uphold and advance the standards of qualification, competence and conduct of those who practise chemistry as a profession”.

The RSC achieves this in part through a membership structure that recognises the newly qualified, (Associate Member), a full professional (Member) and a senior practitioner (Fellow).
2. RSC influences the nature of university courses and the standards attained. At Bachelor's level, the RSC specifies the minimum amount of chemical science that a program must contain if it is to be given Recognition [*i.e.* such that person can satisfy the requirements to become a member of the RSC]. At the Masters level, RSC specifies detailed criteria for the level of problem solving in chemistry, practical and project work and professional skills in a program for Accreditation [*i.e.* satisfying the academic requirements for the award of the Chartered Chemist designation]. Recognition, and especially Accreditation, are important if universities wish to attract students.
3. When RSC members enter employment they receive detailed guidance from the RSC in the development of essential professional attributes for a successful career. There is a mentoring scheme and assessments that leads to promotion to the category of Member and, for those with at least a Masters level of academic achievement, the award of Chartered Chemist status.
4. The RSC provides guidance on continuing professional development (CPD) to all of its members and issues them with record books. The RSC website gives information about courses, conferences and other means of CPD.
5. Within Europe, at the bachelors level a Eurobachelor programme is being developed to help mobility between countries. There is likely to be an international approval system. At the Masters level, there is a EurChem designation of the Federation of European Chemical Societies which recognises chemists with a minimum of Masters level of education and four years of professional experience.