The Science Council

1. The Science Council’s principal area of work is to advance the professional practice of science across the breadth of the science workforce, including technical roles in science. A key aspect of this is professional registration through the Chartered Scientist (CSci) designation which is the professional registration scheme relevant to all scientists working in the UK.

2. Since 2007, CSci has been accepted for the purposes of the European Union’s Professional Qualifications Directive (PQD) (Directive 2005/36/EC) as a regulated profession, with the Science Council designated as the Competent Authority. Approximately 13% of Chartered Scientists are overseas professionals.

3. The Science Council is a membership organisation representing 41 learned societies and professional bodies drawn from across science and its applications. Our mission is to support the professional development of scientists through setting common high standards and code of conduct across the disciplines and sectors of science and at all levels in the science workforce.

Recognising professional scientists across Europe

4. Making sure UK science has access to the widest possible pool of talent and making sure UK-based scientists have the opportunities they need to develop their skills and talents by working across Europe is vital for ensuring science in the UK remains a key driver of innovation and our economy. The EU-wide recognition of professional qualifications has made vast improvements to the mobility of professionals, and has provided a better climate for businesses to operate.

5. Facilitating easier movement between institutions within Europe has enabled UK scientists to work abroad more easily, and return to the UK with greater knowledge and expertise in their discipline, which can be greatly beneficial to wider society. The PQD has also enabled highly-skilled scientist from across the EU to be able to work in the UK and positively contribute to the economy, rather than seeking employment in other countries in Europe, the USA or China.

6. The Science Council believes the government must seek to ensure that the European-wide recognition of UK-based professional scientists continues. We are concerned that the UK’s ability to attract high-calibre scientists and researchers from across the EU and beyond will be negatively affected should UK professional qualifications stop being formally recognised across Europe. European-wide recognition of UK-based professional scientists is a key part of ensuring the UK remains an attractive place to invest.

7. The PQD and ready access to a highly-skilled scientific workforce will help the UK continue to be an attractive place for investment from both domestic and overseas businesses. Hindering UK-based businesses from appointing talented individuals from EU and non-EU states to fill vacancies will be detrimental to the UKs economic and social prosperity. This will be felt particularly strongly in sectors with an ageing workforce and those occupations with high skills shortages.

8. While it is essential that the UK attracts, educates and trains more home-grown citizens in scientific careers in order to fill long-term shortage gaps, it is unlikely that supply will meet

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2 http://www.scienc council.org/our-members
demand in the short term. It takes many years for an individual to gain the knowledge and experience that businesses require.

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Written evidence submitted by the Science Council (LEA0236)

Member Organisations of the Science Council

August 2016

Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine
Association of Neurophysiological Scientists
Association for Science Education
Biochemical Society
British Academy of Audiology
British Association of Sport and Exercise Science
British Computer Society
British Psychological Society
British Society of Soil Scientists
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management
College of Podiatry
Energy Institute
Geological Society of London
Institute of Animal Technology
Institute of Biomedical Science
Institute of Brewing and Distilling
Institute of Corrosion
Institute of Food Science and Technology
Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology
Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining
Institute of Mathematics and its Applications
Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine
Institute of Physics
Institute of Science and Technology
Institute of Water
Institution of Chemical Engineers
Institution of Environmental Sciences
London Mathematical Society
Mineralogical Society
Nuclear Institute
Oil and Colour Chemists’ Association
Operational Research Society
Physiological Society
Royal Astronomical Society
Royal Meteorological Society
Royal Society of Chemistry
Royal Statistical Society
Society for Cardiological Science and Technology
Society of Biology
Society of Dyers & Colourists
The Organisation for Professionals in Regulatory Affairs