



SSERC Professional Learning Courses



Accredited Centre Guidance

Guidance on how to become a SSERC Accredited Centre

Introduction

Welcome to your first step to becoming a SSERC Accredited Centre. We are a leading organisation working within the STEM sector. Our professional learning courses are held with high regard within the education community in Scotland, and we have been awarded the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) Professional Learning Award for Organisations.

Our professional learning courses are developed by a team of experienced practitioners drawn from industry and from STEM education. They are able to draw on the extensive expertise for which SSERC is noted.

SSERC professional learning courses have all been credit and levelled, by SQA, against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and so successful achievement will be certificated by SSERC at the SCQF level and credit associated with each associate course.

The courses appeal to those working within the education community, primarily as school technicians, but some are also appropriate for teachers of science and/or technology. SSERC professional learning courses are delivered not only by SSERC at its Dunfermline HQ, but also through SSERC Accredited Centres located in various locations in Scotland.

Our courses combine both practical and theory components and the Accredited Centre undertakes the assessment in accordance with SSERC professional learning requirements. Only SSERC Accredited Centres are permitted to host examinations or conduct any part of the assessment process.

What are the benefits of being a SSERC Accredited Centre?

From the moment you first contact SSERC, you will work with an experienced and helpful support team able to answer any queries or resolve any problems. Following application, Centres are assigned a SSERC Quality Assurance Manager who is able to offer advice and provide ongoing guidance. We are a small organization but take pride in providing a high level of service.

Once accredited the centre's details and SSERC professional learning courses they've been approved to deliver will be added onto our website and listed as a SSERC Accredited Centre. This directory is used by potential learners.



Accredited Centres are able to use a 'SSERC Accredited Centre' logo on their websites and literature.

Accredited centres will be sent an SSERC Accredited Centre wall plaque; these plaques can be used by the centre to help promote their Accredited Centre status.

This guidance document will give you information on:

- SSERC professional learning courses
- How to become a SSERC Accredited Centre
- Roles and Responsibilities of a SSERC Accredited Centre
- How to become approved to deliver specific SSERC professional learning courses.
- How to contact us

1.0 SSERC professional learning courses

1.1 Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF)

SSERC professional learning courses have been credit and levelled against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework and therefore all professional learning courses are:

- based on learning outcomes
- a minimum of 10 notional learning hours
- formally assessed
- quality assured

which ensures that learning will be recognised not just in Scotland but across the rest of UK and Europe.

1.2 Assessment

SSERC professional learning courses have been designed to offer a flexible way of learning with course of between 1 to 3-day duration which can be delivered in a complete block of training or split over a period of time. The theory-based components of courses are assessed using SSERC devised question papers which are delivered within the SSERC Accredited Centre, marked within the SSERC Accredited Centre by a SSERC Accredited Assessor and then externally quality assured by SSERC to ensure reliability of marking.

Practical based components of courses are internally assessed within the SSERC Accredited Centre by SSERC Accredited Assessors following SSERC assessment guidelines.

1.3 Candidate Certification

Once candidates have met the requirements for the course, a course certificate will be issued. All certificates are sent to the Accredited Centre in order that they can give them to their learners.

1.4 SSERC courses available for delivery in accredited centres

The following courses can, subject to obtaining course accreditation, be delivered in SSERC Accredited Centers.

Safe Use of Fixed Workshop Machinery Course code: SUFWM5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Safety precautions necessary for the safe operation of the bandsaw, circular saw and planer thicknesser.
- **Outcome 2**
Functions of guards and safety devices.
- **Outcome 3**
Tool setting and preparation of the bandsaw, circular saw and planer thicknesser for safe use.
- **Outcome 4**
Operation of the bandsaw, circular saw and planer thicknesser and carrying out their functions in a safe manner.

Use form [ACAF1](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Safety in Microbiology: Culture Preparation and Disposal

Course code: SMCPD6

SCQF Level 6 / 3 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Good laboratory practice, personal protective equipment (PPE) and risk assessment in Level 3 microbiological work
Aseptic technique: preparation of the workspace and maintenance of sterile conditions
Preparation and sterilisation of culture media (plates, slopes, broths) and use of the autoclave
Methods of sub-culturing, culture maintenance, record-keeping and quality control of cultures
Identification methods, differential and vital staining, microscopy and bioreactor safety considerations
- **Outcome 2**
Preparation of the workspace and equipment for aseptic work
Preparation of culture media from formulae and recipes; pouring plates, preparing slopes and preparing broths
Performing sub-culturing techniques: streak plates, lawn plates and broth inoculation
Quality assurance and contamination screening of prepared media and cultures
Maintaining cultures and appraising prepared media and cultures
Keeping accurate laboratory notebook records.
- **Outcome 3**
Preparing microbial smears and heat-fixing samples
Performing differential and vital staining
Using microscopy to observe and interpret prepared stained samples
Using autoclave equipment and chemical disinfectants to sterilise or decontaminate equipment and materials
Applying spill management and disposing of contaminated materials safely in accordance with current guidance and centre procedures

Use form [ACAF2](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Electrical Safety and Portable Appliance Testing Course Code: ESPAT6

SCQF Level 6 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Electrical safety procedures and regulations.
- **Outcome 2**
Electrical theory and portable equipment testing

Use form [ACAF3](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Introductory Chemistry Course code: IC15

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to school chemical laboratory equipment and its safe use.
- **Outcome 2**
Demonstrate understanding of chemical measuring techniques and preparation of solutions.

Use form [ACAF4](#) to seek accreditation to delivery this course.

Chemical Handling for Schools Course code: CHS5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to chemical handling.
- **Outcome 2**
Carry out techniques related to chemical handling and glass working.

Use form [ACAF5](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Introductory Physics Course code INTP5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to school physics laboratory equipment and its safe use.
- **Outcome 2**
Demonstrate understanding of setting up equipment, measuring techniques and basic fault finding.

Use form [ACAF6](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Intermediate Physics

Course code: INTMP5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to intermediate level school physics laboratory equipment and its safe use.
- **Outcome 2**
Demonstrate understanding of setting up intermediate level equipment, measuring techniques and basic fault finding.

Use form [ACAF7](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Maintenance of Fixed Workshop Machinery

Course code: MFWM6

SCQF Level 6 / 3 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Understand the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) as they relate to both safe use and maintenance of work equipment
- **Outcome 2**
Demonstrate understanding in the Written Scheme of Examination (WSE) in maintenance of equipment and fixed machines.
- **Outcome 3**
Demonstrate an understanding of safe lock off procedures and safe procedures when lock off is not possible
- **Outcome 4**
Identify and use the correct personal protective equipment needed for individual machine maintenance.

Use form [ACAF8](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Introduction to Microscope Maintenance and Repair

Course code: IMMR5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to the routine maintenance of light microscopes.
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to the proper use of both light and digital school microscopes.
- **Outcome 2**
Identify and use the correct procedures to prepare stains and samples for simple biological investigations
Identify and use the correct procedures to prepare microscope slides in carrying out s biological investigations

Use form [ACAF9](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Safe Use of Fixed Workshop Machinery (Refresher) Course code: SUFWM5R

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Safety precautions necessary for the safe operation of the bandsaw, circular saw and planer thicknesser.
- **Outcome 2**
Functions of guards and safety devices.
- **Outcome 3**
Tool setting and preparation of the bandsaw, circular saw and planer thicknesser for safe use.
- **Outcome 4**
Operation of the bandsaw, circular saw and planer thicknesser and carrying out their functions in a safe manner.

Use form [ACAF10](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

3D Printing and Laser Cutting Course code: 3DPLC5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to the setup and configuration of software relating to 3D printing and Laser Cutting used within the technical department, and their safe use.
- **Outcome 2**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to the setup and configuration of hardware relating to 3D printing and Laser Cutting used within the technical department, and their safe use.
- **Outcome 3**
Demonstrate practical abilities with regards to the setup and use of 3D Printers and Laser Cutters hardware and software.

Use form [ACAF11](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Datalogging Course code: DL5

SCQF Level 5 / 1 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to the use of data logging equipment, sensors, and how they fit into the curriculum.
- **Outcome 2**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to set up various types of data logging equipment and sensors and use the associated software.
- **Outcome 3**
Demonstrate practical abilities with regards to the setup and use of various datalogging equipment, and associated software.

Use form [ACAF12](#) to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

Safe Use of Fixed Classroom Machinery Course code: SUFCM5

SCQF Level 5 / 2 Credit Points

- **Outcome 1**
Safety precautions necessary for the safe operation of the bandsaw, pillar drill, belt sander, and mortice machine.
- **Outcome 2**
Functions of guards and safety devices.
- **Outcome 3**
Blade/Tool/Belt/Bit setting and preparation of the bandsaw, pillar drill, belt sander, and mortice machine.
for safe use.
- **Outcome 4**
Operation of the bandsaw, pillar drill, belt sander, and mortice machine, and carrying out their functions in a safe manner.

Use form **ACAF13** to seek accreditation to deliver this course.

2.0 How to become a SSERC Accredited Centre

2.1 Becoming a SSERC Accredited Centre

Many different types of organisations can become a SSERC Accredited Centre, including further education colleges, universities and Local Authorities. The centre may include a number of training and assessment sites, organisations or partnerships.

In order to become an SSERC Accredited Centre you will need to complete a *SSERC Accredited Centre Application Form (SACAF)*. This can be obtained from our website or by emailing accreditation@sserc.scot

When we receive the completed SACAF, we will review the information and allocate a SSERC Quality Assurance Manager to undertake a centre accreditation visit.

SSERC will arrange a mutually convenient date for the accreditation visit to take place. The visit is to confirm the suitability of the intended programme delivery, the facilities and resources available, and confirmation of the policies detailed in the application. This visit will cover both centre and course(s) accreditation. The SSERC Quality Assurance Manager can also offer advice and guidance on offering the various SSERC professional learning courses.

In accrediting a centre to deliver SSERC professional learning courses, we must ensure that the centre meets the following criteria:

- The centre has the staff, resources and systems necessary to support the delivery of the course, and that it undertakes to use staff and/or associates who have the necessary competence in the subject matter and assessment procedures.
- That there is a single-named point of accountability for the quality assurance and management for the assessment of the course.
- The centre can securely store and manage assessment materials.

- The centre has administrative systems in place to track the progress of learners.
- The centre undertakes to enter into a written Center Accreditation agreement with SSERC
- The centre undertakes to use facilities for assessment purposes that provide access for all learners, in accordance with relevant legislation.

Following the visit, the SSERC Quality Assurance Manager will make a recommendation to SSERC on the centre's suitability to offer the course(s), and if appropriate will provide advice and an action plan to remedy any shortcomings. Until formal centre accreditation status has been confirmed by SSERC, the centre must not promote, deliver or assess SSERC professional learning courses.

Accredited Centres will be given access to all teaching and assessment materials required to deliver a SSERC Professional Learning Course.

2.2 Fees

Centres applying to offer SSERC courses will be required to pay a one-off centre accreditation fee of £900 to cover the costs of the accreditation process. This fee will be payable before the accreditation visit has been conducted. Thereafter an annual fee of £150 will be charged on the anniversary of the accreditation date.

After the accreditation visit, centres who have been accredited to offer SSERC courses for the first time will receive a free advisory visit to assist with delivery and completion of course accreditation documentation.

Centres will be charged a one-off fee for each course that they wish to deliver. This fee will provide access to the delivery and assessment materials for each course.

Centres will be charged an assessment fee for each learner entered for a course. SSERC permits centres to pass on this cost onto their learners either by including this in the tuition fee or as a separate assessment fee.

There will be a re-assessment fee should a learner be required to undertake a second written assessment.

The above fees are the only fees charged by SSERC and there is no minimum annual expenditure by centres required.

SSERC will provide course materials to support the delivery and assessment of each course. Centres are responsible for:

- duplication of course material for each learner
- tuition to their learners
- providing all equipment and consumables required to deliver each course.
- setting their own tuition fees.

A full list of fees is attached as Appendix 1

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities of an Approved Centre

3.1 Registration and certification processes

The course notification, registration and certification processes are progressed via the use of a single Registration and Certification Form (RCF) which incorporates the forms identified below.

Course notification.

Before delivering a course for which the centre has been accredited, the centre will need to complete and submit to SSERC a *Course Notification Form (CNF)* which provides details relating to the proposed delivery of a specific course to a specific group of learners. This needs to be sent to SSERC at least 6 weeks prior to delivery commencing.

Assessment notification.

At least 3 weeks prior to the written assessment the centre will need to complete and submit to SSERC an *Assessment Notification Form (ANF)* which provides specific details about any written assessment to be undertaken with a specific group of learners. The submission of the ANF will trigger the issue of a set of written assessment papers associated with the course being delivered.

Learner Code

The ANF will also trigger the allocation of a *Learner Code* for each learner, unless the allocation of a Learner Code has been undertaken by SSERC. The Learner Code is unique to each learner and is only used for administrative purposes. This Learner Code should be used by centres when entering learners for subsequent SSERC Professional Courses.

Result Notification

On completion of practical and written assessment activity, the centre will need to complete a *Result Notification Form (RNF)* which will indicate the result status for each learner in both the practical and written assessment components along with an indication of an overall Pass or Fail for the course.

Certification

On receipt of the RNF and after any associated quality assurance activity linked to the reliability of marking, a certificate will be created by SSERC for each learner identified as achieving a PASS for the course. These certificates will be generated by SSERC and issued to the accredited centre for issue to learners.

3.2 Access Arrangement

Access arrangements allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, adjustments could include larger fonts, extra time, readers and/or scribes. In this way SSERC and Accredited Centres will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the SSERC to make any adjustment to the assessment criteria being tested in an assessment.

Approved Centres must seek prior approval from SSERC for any access arrangements required by their learners.

3.3 Assessors and SSERC Quality Assurance Manager.

Assessors

Assessors employed by the centre will be responsible for instructing, supporting and coaching learners for courses for which the tutors have the relevant expertise and/or qualifications. They will also administer all assessments associated with each accredited course.

All assessors must meet the specific requirements as specific in the *SSERC Accredited Assessor Guidance Document*.

All assessments leading to SSERC Certification are held at the centre or conducted by the centre in an approved location. The centre is responsible for putting together and timetabling the assessment tasks outlined by SSERC.

Assessments should only take place at a time when the learner is considered ready to undertake the assessment task(s).

Centres must have adequate systems and resources (including sufficient staff) are in place to support the delivery of all the assessment(s) tasks. This includes ensuring teaching staff and assessors have the appropriate qualifications or equivalent experience necessary to deliver these courses. The Quality Assurance Manager will ensure that all the equipment and resources required to deliver and assess a course are available, or that plans are in place to make such equipment and resources available in time for delivery. The SSERC Quality Assurance Manager will also review the CVs of each member of the centre's staff who has been identified as a course tutor/assessor.

Suitable risk assessments must be carried out for all practical assessments, activities and tasks leading to the course. There must not be any circumstances when the health and safety of a learner is compromised. Risk assessment documentation must be available to the SSERC Quality Assurance Manager.

SSERC Quality Assurance Manager

The purpose of an external (SSERC) quality assurance visit is for the SSERC Quality Assurance Manager to observe assessments taking place and discuss with the centre the policies and procedures the centre has in place to run SSERC courses. It is likely that that an external quality assurance visit would take place to coincide with the presentation of the first cohort of learners and then occasionally thereafter.

To ensure the reliability of assessment activity, the quality assurance process will involve the submission to SSERC, of a sample of marked assessment responses for each course.

The Quality Assurance Manager may wish to speak with the teaching staff and will need to speak with the assessor and a selection of learners involved in the practical assessment. SSERC will also require the electronic submission of learner course evaluations.

3.4 Complaints, Equal Opportunities Policy and Malpractice and Maladministration

Centres should have in place their own Complaints and Equality and Diversity Policies. The centre must ensure that all learners are aware of these policies. These policies will be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Manager during the approval visit.

SSERC takes all allegations of malpractice or maladministration by centres and learners seriously. Centres are required to have arrangements in place to prevent, investigate and deal with malpractice.

The SSERC Quality Assurance Manager will have responsibility for dealing with appeals or disputes on the outcome of learner assessment.

4.0 How to become accredited to deliver specific SSERC professional learning courses.

In many cases centre accreditation and course accreditation will happen at the same time. Once a centre has gained accreditation, it can seek accreditation to deliver additional courses at any time.

Seeking accreditation to deliver additional courses will have an associated fee.

To seek accreditation to deliver additional courses in addition to those accredited at the time of centre accreditation, simply complete 'Additional Course Delivery Form' (ACDF) along with the relevant Appendix (ACAF1- ACAF9) and submit to accreditation@sserc.scot.

5.0 How to contact us.

Postal Address: 2 Pitreavie Court, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU

Phone: 01383 626070

E mail: accreditation@sserc.scot

Website: www.sserc.scot

Appendix 1

Current Associated Fees

Cost become a SSERC Accredited centre	£1500
Annual cost to retain accredited centre status	£180
Cost for each SSERC Accredited course	£230
Annual cost to retain course accreditation* (per course)	£75
Assessment fee per candidate (includes certification)	£52
Re assessment fee	£70

*Includes annual update of course materials

Associated Fees from 1st October 2026

Cost become a SSERC Accredited centre	£1550
Annual cost to retain accredited centre status	£185
Cost for each SSERC Accredited course	£235
Annual cost to retain course accreditation* (per course)	£77
Assessment fee per candidate (includes certification)	£54
Re assessment fee	£72