

What is an RPS? (and can a technician be one?)

RPS stands for **Radiation Protection Supervisor**. This is a formal role defined by the Ionising Radiation Regulations and isn't legally required in schools. Having said that, someone within each school has to be responsible for ensuring that SSERC's guidance on safe working with radioactive materials is in place, and there's no issue with this person being described as RPS.



Usually, the senior physics teacher is responsible for taking on the role of RPS. This is because anyone qualified to teach physics or chemistry will have the background to understand and implement our documentation without additional training. Having said that, we strongly recommend that at least one person in the school undergo formal training every 3-5 years (HSE's recommendation regarding the frequency). (It is worth noting that even self-study training can be recorded as formal training).

This bulletin also has an article about radiation protection training. SSERC training includes:

- A day course that involves both "talkie" parts on working safely and staying legal, and practical sessions.
- A two-part online course on working safely and staying legal (free).
- A self-study course is under development (free).

The ideal scenario is to do the day course and then refresh with the online one every 3 - 5 years.

This formally trained person can then provide in-house training to others in the school using sources, though there's nothing to stop more than one person from coming on a course.

The employer decides who is a competent person to be RPS, though we supply the above guidance. The employer's duty under H&S law is to ensure everyone has adequate training. Some local authorities are happy to have a suitably trained technician as RPS. We at SSERC have no problem with this if the person taking on the role is comfortable with it.

