

Radiation Protection Adviser



Radioactivity features in both Chemistry and Physics Senior Phase courses. As a result, most, if not all councils have schools that own low activity radioactive sources.

This makes these councils “Radiation Employers”. Under the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999, it is a requirement that these employers appoint someone to be their Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA).

The RPA advises on compliance with legislation. In the unlikely event of a council having no schools with radioactive sources, it would still be worth appointing an RPA. It is not uncommon for radioactive artefacts or chemicals to turn up following a clear out in a school.

To become an RPA, a person must undergo certification by an HSE-approved body. Such a person would have spent a number of years working with radioactive sources, have attended training and assisted a qualified RPA. When the legislation first came out, Jim Jamieson of SSERC underwent certification. Jim has now retired. His replacement, Gregor Steele, has now also achieved

RPA status and will act as RPA for all councils, giving advice on the use of radioactive sources in schools. This is included as part of the core SSERC service at no extra charge and fulfils the employer’s legal requirement.

Note that the council has to formally appoint Gregor in writing. SSERC has written to each council, suggesting a form of words and many councils have already replied.

Risk assessment updates

We note the recent publication of BS 4163: 2014 (*Health and Safety for Design and Technology in Education and similar Establishments - Code of Practice*). Here at SSERC we have been updating our school risk assessments on our website, which are free to download and edit to suit your Technology department. To find them go to; www.sserc.org.uk/index.php/information-for-technicians55/risk-assessments55.

