

CREST assessor handbook



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British Science Association

The British Science Association (BSA) is a charity, founded in 1831. Our vision is of a world where science is at the heart of society and culture. Our mission is to support, grow and diversify the community of people interested and involved in science; and to strengthen their influence over science's direction and place in society.

We organise major initiatives across the UK, including British Science Week; the annual British Science Festival; regional and local events through our network of branches; the CREST Awards, and other programmes for young people in schools and colleges.

We want all young people to value science as a part of their culture. To do this, we seek to support and diversify the community of young people and educators who are interested and involved in science. An integral part of this mission is growing the CREST Award Scheme.

CREST Awards

The CREST Awards scheme is the British Science Association's flagship programme for young people, providing science enrichment activities to inspire and engage 5-to-19-year olds. It is the only nationally recognised accreditation scheme for project work in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

CREST gives students the chance to participate in hands-on science through investigations and enquiry-based learning, supporting them to solve real-life STEM challenges through practical investigation and discussion.

There are six CREST Award Levels, allowing students to progress through the scheme throughout their education. CREST offers educators an easy-to-run framework for curriculum enhancement and is student-led, encouraging young people to take ownership of their own projects. The Awards are well regarded, high quality and a tangible recognition of success. CREST can be run in schools, clubs, youth groups, other organisations or at home.

CREST Silver and Gold Awards are assessed by you, our trained CREST assessors.

Types of CREST Awards projects:

There are typically four types of CREST projects that you will assess:

- Practical investigations – where students try to answer a question or prove a hypothesis.
- Design and make – where a product is designed and created with the aim of meeting a specific purpose.
- Research projects – where students use existing data to provide a novel viewpoint or weigh in on a currently disputed topic.
- Communication projects – where students communicate a topic to a specific audience to raise their awareness or interest in STEM.

Regardless of the project type, the CREST guiding principles will apply:

Real-world context	CREST projects have a clear real-world context, appropriate for the level.
Problem solving	CREST projects demonstrate creative approaches in developing solutions to scientific problems.
Independent working	CREST projects show independent working skills, students should carry out their projects either on their own, in pairs or small groups, ideally completing their challenge independently of adults (appropriate to the level).
Decision making	CREST projects should, as far as possible, support students to lead their own projects, to set their own aims and objectives and create their own plans for how to conduct the project.
Practical science	Star and Superstar activities should allow children to take part in 45minutes – 1 hour of practical, hands-on science activities.
	CREST projects should allow students to reflect on what they have learnt.

Reflective practice	
Reporting and Communicating	CREST projects should enable young people to share their results (not necessarily in a written format) and explain the impact of what they did.
Research	Discovery, Bronze, Silver and Gold projects require students to do some background research to help them complete and understand their project.
Creativity	Discovery, Bronze, Silver and Gold projects allow students to utilise creativity and approach their project in an innovative way.

To get an understanding of the difference between silver and gold levels have a look here:
<https://help.crestawards.org/portal/kb/articles/criteria-for-bronze-silver-and-gold-crest-awards>

CREST assessor role

Your role as a CREST assessor is to engage, encourage and support students, by assessing their projects and providing feedback.

You will do this by:

- Using the online platform to assess students' work
- Providing constructive feedback to students on how their project can be improved
- Acknowledging students' efforts and work – regardless of whether a project has achieved a CREST award.

Projects are assessed against the 15 CREST assessment criteria. Feedback is provided where a project has not met the criteria or if there is a particularly impressive aspect of a project.

Planning the project

- The students set a clear aim for the project and broke it down into smaller objectives
- The students explained a wider purpose for the project
- The students identified a range of approaches to completing the project
- The students described their plan for how to complete the project and why they chose that approach
- The students planned and organised their time well

Throughout the project

- The students made good use of the materials and people available
- The students researched the background to the project and referenced their sources appropriately

Finalising the project

- The students made logical conclusions and explained the implications for the wider world
- The students explained how what they did affected the outcome of the project
- The students explained what they have learned and reflected on what they could improve

Project-wide criteria

- The students showed understanding of the science behind their project, appropriate to their level
- The students made decisions to direct the project, taking account of ethical and safety issues
- The students showed creative thinking in carrying out the project
- The students identified and overcame problems successfully
- The students explained their project clearly, in both writing and conversation

You will typically spend three to five hours per month assessing projects.

Projects are assigned randomly to assessors in a group. If you feel you are receiving too many or too few projects, please contact [Angus Woodhams](#).

You will be paid on a per assessment basis, £4 for Silver and £6 for Gold.

Support from the British Science Association

The BSA will support you with your assessing of CREST Award projects.

We will do this in a variety of ways.

Answering questions and providing support

If you ever have any questions about CREST, a project and its assessment, or have any issues with the platform email crest@britishscienceassociation.org.

The CREST team will get back to you as soon as possible.

Please visit this site for updated CREST Assessor Advice
<https://help.crestawards.org/portal/kb/articles/crest-assessor-guidance-page>

Providing updates

From time-to-time, the CREST team will need to communicate changes to you about CREST, the assessment process or the platform.

In these instances, we will email you about these changes, providing you with relevant information.

Moderating assessments and providing feedback

To ensure all students receive equal, high-quality assessment and feedback, the CREST team will moderate and provide feedback on your assessments. Moderation of assessors is done at random.

You will receive feedback from the CREST team if any of your assessments have been moderated. We expect you to act on any feedback when assessing future projects, where relevant.

Hosting webinars for assessors

If there is suitable demand for a topic relating to the assessment of CREST Awards, the CREST team will host webinars for CREST assessors.

If there is a topic that has been requested or we think is worth addressing, we will survey the assessor pool to determine the level of interest and the best time to host the webinar.

If there is a topic you would like to be addressed, please email
crest@britishscienceassociation.org.

How to assess projects

You have already completed the online CREST assessor training course. However, if you ever want to check anything, or brush up on your CREST assessor training, the online course is always available at <https://crest-award-assessor-training.thinkific.com/courses/crest-assessor-training-course/>

It may be worth checking the course every so often as the CREST assessor training material is continually being updated and improved.

How to use Fluid Review

The guide to using Fluid Review to assess projects is available via the CREST assessor online course, found [here](#).

Number of assessments and availability

If you are receiving more than 5 hours or less than 3 hours, of projects per month (with Silver projects taking roughly 30 minutes and Gold projects 45 minutes), please email crest@britishscienceassociation.org.

Depending on the number of projects available to be assessed, we will attempt to redistribute project assignments.

If your availability to assess projects changes, i.e. you are not able to assess projects for a period of time, please inform crest@britishscienceassociation.org of when you will be unavailable **from** and **to**. We will temporarily remove you from the assessor group, to ensure you don't receive projects when you are unable to assess them. You will be added back to the group when you have availability again.

If you know you are unable to assess a project you have been assigned within the allotted two weeks, but wish to remain part of the assessor group, please inform the CREST team. We will reassign the project to a different assessor.

Payment process

When you were sent this handbook, you were asked to confirm whether you wish to assess projects on a voluntary basis.

If you chose to be paid for assessing, at the end of each month complete the CREST assessor payment form.

You will have been sent the form when you were sent this handbook. If you need another copy email crest@britishscienceassociation.org.

When completing the form make sure to include:

- Your name
- Phone
- Email
- Date of claim
- Bank account number
- Sort code

In the form, write the ID numbers, date of assessment and select the award level of the projects you've assessed.

Select "Yes" if you pay VAT on your assessor fees, if not choose "No"..

Email your completed forms to crest@britishscienceassociation.org.

We will make payment via BACs within 28 days of receipt of a valid payment form.

All payment forms must be submitted by the 28th day of each month.

Resigning role

If you no longer wish to assess projects please inform crest@britishscienceassociation.org.

If possible please include an explanation as to why you no longer wish to continue assessing projects.