

RSC Saturday School Scholarship
Mid-term impact report
April 2022

Maximising attainment through diversity and inclusion

1. Introduction

In November 2021, Saturday School Ltd (SSL) was awarded £5000 with a further £2880 from the Royal Society of Chemistry as part of their Diversity and Inclusion Fund. This has led to the formation of the RSC Saturday School Scholarship. The additional funding (£2880) was requested due to the large volumes of applications and difficulty in reaching an awards decision. The generous additional funding meant that all twenty-six applicants were awarded a scholarship with nobody being left disappointed, and it was the strong feeling of the selection team that all twenty-six merited a place. This has since been validated by the effort, attitude and performance of all young people involved.

Recommendation 1:

SSL will reapply for RSC funding later in 2022 with the aim of continuing the programme and supporting more young people; taking on new scholars and ideally offering the current scholars studying N5 the opportunity of support with Higher Chemistry should they choose to continue with the subject at school. SSL would like to explore the possibility of greater funding to increase the number of scholars it can support and also increase the number of classes and subjects scholars can attend; branching into Maths, English and potentially Physics for example. SSL would also like to explore how the other learned societies may contribute to new scholarships to mirror the hugely positive impact being made by The RSC.

2. Scholarships at Saturday School

The RSC Scholarship is now the second scholarship being delivered by SSL – being run alongside [The Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholarship](#).

[The RSC Scholarship](#) offers learners fully funded attendance at 4 Weekly Lessons and 2 Grade Booster Days in N5/H Chemistry, delivered by fully qualified Chemistry Teachers of SSL. It also gives them unlimited 24/7 access to online support via Google Classroom.

[Weekly Lessons](#) cover areas such as:

- Bonding and properties of materials, Chemical formulae
- Periodicity and trends in the periodic table
- The Mole and concentration calculations
- Chemical bonding and Intermolecular forces
- Alkanes, alkenes, cycloalkanes, alcohols, Isomers, energy from fuels
- Oxidising and Reducing Agents
- Energy from fuels, calculations based on equations, Chemical analysis
- Getting the most from reactants

[Grade Booster Days](#) 1 and 2 offer a two-part cumulative full course review of Chemistry in preparation for the scholar taking their N5 or Higher exam in the SQA exam diet, typically April/May each year.

Recommendation 2:

Should ongoing funding be given to SSL, an increased number of classes in Chemistry will be created to cover even more areas of the N5 and Higher Courses; the increase likely to be to 6 Weekly Lessons. In addition, any future increased funding would be used to support scholars in relevant, associated subjects such as Maths, English and Physics (as per recommendation 1).

3. Publicising the opportunity and the application process

Saturday school used a range of media to communicate this opportunity to learners:

- Direct emails to all schools within relevant geographical reach of SSL
- Social media output on Twitter and Facebook
- Upgraded and new pages on SSL website
- Sharing on teacher channels such as Strontium
- Email campaigns to existing parents and students of Saturday School.

Scholars applied using a Google Form designed by SSL staff, linked to the RSC Inclusion and Diversity Strategy. A personal statement, parent/carer statement and teacher supporting statement was required.

Recommendation 3:

If the scholarship is to continue, SSL will seek greater support of The RSC to promote and publicise the opportunity among schools, learners and their families. It is also to be expected that with a successful inaugural year in terms of general establishment and the attainment results the programme yields, that there will be a natural organic growth and publicity. This is likely to bring a larger volume of applications than year one and it is realistic that not all applicants will be awarded, unlike year one. In six applications there were no supporting statements from teachers. Concessions were made here as it may have been an impact of covid, teacher workload etc. Uncertainty remains among SSL team whether an application could or should be rejected if this is lacking in future years as a potential scholar will be penalised through no fault of their own and as a result of their teacher not engaging with the process. RSC guidance would be welcome here.

4. Scholars

There are twenty-six young people taking part in the RSC Scholarship, seven studying at N5 and nineteen at Higher level in Chemistry. The cohort for year one represents twelve schools across six local authorities in the West of Scotland.

Table 1 - A breakdown of demographics and characteristics

Scholar (name removed)	Decile	Student gender identity	Student ethnic identity	Learning barrier/disability/ESOL
1	1	Male	Black - Scottish	No
2	1	Male	Ghanaian	No
3	1	Male	Pakistani	No
4	3	Female	White Scottish	No
5	8	Female	White	No
6	7	Male	White Scottish	No
7	9	Female	Scottish Pakistani	No
8	1	Female	Black African	No
9	8	Female	Asian	Yes
10	9	Female	White Scottish	No
11	10	Female	Persian	Yes
12	8	Female	Black Scottish	No
13	9	Female	White	Yes
14	1	Female	White	No
15	3	MALE	White Scottish	Yes
16	1	Female	Asian	ESOL
17	9	Female	White	No
18	6	Female	White	No
19	9	Female	White Scottish	Yes
20	9	Female	White	No
21	6	Female	White Scottish	No
22	9	Female	Black British	No
23	4	Female	White Scottish	Yes
24	10	Male	Scottish	ESOL
25	8	Female	Nigerian	ESOL
26	2	Female	White	No

Recommendation 4:

SSL welcome the thoughts of RSC in terms of how well the cohort meets the aims of their Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

5. Mid-term data capture

At the end of March 2022, RSC Scholars were asked to take part in a brief survey to capture feedback on how the programme is impacting on them. The feedback from scholars at this point is very encouraging with some notable points below:

- Forty-six percent strongly agree and 46% agree that the RSC Scholarship is sending a message that chemistry is for everyone
- A combined 96% of scholars strongly agree or agree that the RSC scholarship is positively changing perceptions on who can study chemistry, with the same combined figure strongly agreeing or agreeing that inclusion and diversity in science is being promoted
- The scholarship is also showing high impact in subject performance for our young people with 97% of scholars showing an increase or remarkable increase in subject confidence, and 100% reporting an increase in the Knowledge and Understanding aspect of chemistry, seventy-four reporting the same impact in their Problem Solving.
- Fifty-eight percent of our scholars are now more interested in a future in chemistry as a result of taking part in the programme and all bar on of these young people strongly agree that the scholarship should continue for future years. Survey export is below (please note questions 1 to 4 were on personal data and are therefore not shown for GDPR and safeguarding reasons).

5. The scholarship sends a message that "chemistry is for everyone".

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[Insights](#)

● strongly agree	12
● agree	12
● neither agree or disagree	2
● disagree	0
● strongly disagree	0



6. The scholarship is positively changing perceptions on who can study chemistry.

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[Insights](#)

● strongly agree	14
● agree	11
● neither agree or disagree	1
● disagree	0
● strongly disagree	0



7. The scholarship is promoting inclusion and diversity in chemistry/science.

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[Insights](#)

● strongly agree	18
● agree	7
● neither agree or disagree	1
● disagree	0
● strongly disagree	0



8. I would like to see the RSC Scholarship continue so that more people can benefit in future years

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● strongly agree	23
● agree	2
● neither agree or disagree	1
● disagree	0
● strongly disagree	0



9. The scholarship has increased my general confidence in chemistry.

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[Insights](#)

● strongly agree	16
● agree	9
● neither agree or disagree	1
● disagree	0
● strongly disagree	0



10. As an RSC Scholar, my knowledge and understanding in chemistry is

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[Insights](#)

● remarkably increasing	4
● increasing	22
● staying the same	0
● decreasing	0
● remarkably decreasing	0



13. In terms of your future career/study, how big a part will chemistry play?

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 Insights

- Significant - I aim to work/stu... 5
- Some - I aim to work/study in ... 19
- None - I don't see myself stud... 2



14. Based on your answer to question 12, how has the scholarship affected your future career/study plans?

[More Details](#)

 Insights

- Made me more interested in a... 16
- No real change 10
- Made me less interested in a f... 0



The final question in the mid-term learner survey was:

Finally, please use the space below to tell us how to improve the RSC Scholarship so that we can greater enhance the support you and others receive. All learner responses are in the table below:

Give out work about a certain topic so when there are lessons we can ask help with a specific question as allows us to independently work without the assistance of the teacher plus it builds the study mindset for the exams.
I understand that the time is limited so going over multiple topics in the same lesson is out of the question. However, if you can gather input from all students participating in lessons in the form of a questionnaire like this one and from said data choose the most challenging topics to base the lessons around, it would make an immense difference.
I wouldn't change anything.
Maybe start with younger year groups to get them more interested in chemistry from an earlier stage?
It's great, no improvements required.
Everything was really good. The teacher was very nice and he gave us good teachings lesson and how he filled the missing knowledge/gap in my learning.
Advertise it more so more people can know about it.
This has been an amazing opportunity, allowing me to get into the subject more deeply. Gaining a better understanding of the course. The support is already very good. I would recommend this to anyone interested in Chemistry.
Honestly, I can't think of anything. I think what the scholarship offers right now it's enough and it's very effective.
Be more active on google classroom, post notes/worksheets, answers.
No improvements are required.
I am enjoying the scholarship and do not think any changes have to be made.

The only minor improvement I could think on, is maybe just hosting more classes.
Provide more resources to take away like printed off questions etc.
I like the way the lessons are structured. I wish school were more like Saturday School as I would engage more. Saturday School gives you the info in a quick and understandable way whereas school lessons are really long and drawn out.
I've been incredibly lucky to have found out about this scholarship through my Chemistry teacher's involvement with the Saturday School. I'm not sure I would have known about this otherwise so feel a lot of potential candidates may be missing out. Greater involvement with local high schools would mean even greater diversity in applications.
Everything is okay now.
Maybe a bit more regular.
The classes are already great, I just wish they were longer so we could go over more stuff.
-
Nothing. Perfect.
By providing more sessions for chemistry.
Nothing.
I don't have any feedback on how improve it.
I think that for the little time I have been here it does not need any changes at the moment.
I think you could focus more on the KU parts of Chemistry rather than how to answer the questions in the class. e.g., going over parts of the course during the class, then at the end giving out question worksheets with answers to do at home instead of going over them for the whole class the next time we're in. Though I am saying this with a competent ability to do the problem-solving questions already, so that's something to bear in mind.

6. Next steps

Our RSC Scholars will now progress to the Grade Booster Days in N5 or Higher Chemistry to provide enhanced and intensive exam revision. SQA exam results will be published to learners on Tuesday 9th august 2022 and at this point we will collect grades from our scholars. We will then produce our final impact report and will also ask our independent impact report and evaluation to be completed by PK Partners.

For more information on any aspect of this report, or the wider work of Saturday School Ltd, contact info@saturdayschoolscotland.com or visit www.saturdayschoolscotland.com.