

## RSB degree accreditation during COVID-19

March 2020

The Royal Society of Biology has shared the following statements with Higher Education Institutions awarding degrees accredited by RSB, to provide reassurance to life science departments that changes to teaching and assessment that prove necessary should not impact on the accreditation of their degrees.

*“The outbreak of coronavirus is an evolving situation that may require universities to take action in order to protect the health, welfare and safety of students and staff or to follow the advice of local or national authorities.*

*The Royal Society of Biology (RSB) appreciates that universities and individual departments may need to make adjustments at short notice as a result of coronavirus. The RSB would like to be clear that these measures will fall under the principle of force majeure with regard to meeting the requirements of degree accreditation. Universities and life science departments are responsible for ensuring that their approach to this situation upholds overall standards and mitigates impact on their students and the overall learning outcomes of their programmes.*

*Accreditation requirements should be preserved where possible but should circumstances beyond the department’s control not permit this, temporary deviation from accreditation requirements is likely to be acceptable.”*

RSB accreditation site visits due to take place after 15 March 2020 have been cancelled, these have been rearranged to take place online where possible. It may be necessary to extend this approach to all applications from September, if travel restrictions and social distancing requirements are still in place.