



## Radiation Protection Career Guidance

Reference Number: IAC/RPCG/RPA/0002

**Title:** Radiation Protection Career Guidance – Part 2

**Status:** Open (Issue 1)

**Scope:** This RPCG article provides useful careers guidance for those that have an interest in radiation protection. This article has been written as Ionactive Consulting Ltd believes there is a need for clear guidance and information regarding the world of radiation protection and the opportunities available. The RPCG comes in a number of parts, this being **Part 2**.

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**Use:** This article is provided for general use by all those interested in radiation protection. It may also be of use to those currently working with sources of ionising radiation. Ionactive Consulting Ltd accepts no liability for any outcome (including errors or omissions) arising from using the information presented in this article. If you are in any doubt about how this article might apply in your particular circumstances, contact a suitable Radiation Protection Adviser.

**Legislation:** Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999 (SI1999/3232)  
Radioactive Substances Act 1993

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If you have not read **Part 1** of this RPCG article series, please visit our articles pages at [www.ionactive.co.uk](http://www.ionactive.co.uk) and download as required.

Whilst this article may be printed **it is designed to be read online** as we provide useful embedded links to other external resources. We will also be directing you to other useful areas of our site, all of which will open in a new window.



### 3) Radiation Protection in the UK

In the UK, radiation protection can be broadly split into two groups:

Radiation Protection in the Nuclear Industry  
Radiation Protection in the Non-Nuclear Industry

The nuclear industry includes nuclear fuel fabrication, nuclear power generation, fuel reprocessing, radioactive waste (decommissioning, treatment, storage and disposal) and research. This is commonly known as the '*nuclear fuel cycle*'. There are many Radiation Protection Advisers (RPA) employed in the industry.

Those entities which make up the non-nuclear sector are commonly known as '*small users*'. The term small user is somewhat inaccurately defined since it can imply that the uses of ionising radiation are trivial. Overall, the gross use of ionising radiation will be less, but the impact of those uses in terms of radiation exposure to individuals or the public can be comparable to the nuclear industry.

The small user non-nuclear sector can be further subdivided, some examples of which are:

Industry (e.g. radiography)  
Medicine (e.g. diagnostics & treatment)  
Research (e.g. Biological research)  
Teaching (e.g. schools & undergraduate)  
Sterilisation (e.g. food & medical products)  
Measurement (e.g. thickness and levels)

For a detailed description of users in this sector please visit our site at [www.ionactive.co.uk/users.html](http://www.ionactive.co.uk/users.html), we have clients covering the entire sector.

Many RPA's work in the small user sector, indeed this is where Ionactive Consulting provides most of its advisory RPA and Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) training services. This area of radiation protection is therefore diverse.

Clearly it is quite possible to have a career as a RPA in the nuclear industry, the non nuclear industry or both. Many RPA's have started their career in one sector before moving to the other. Which ever you choose, you can be assured of a rewarding environment, rich with diversity and new challenges.



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We have not yet defined what the RPA actually is or what they do. Just before we reveal this we need to briefly consider the UK legislation which underpins radiation protection matters. Not only is this for general interest, it is important since the UK legislation (and UK regulators) define what the RPA role is.

## 4) UK Radiation Protection Legislation

The key UK radiation protection (and related) legislation is as follows:

Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999 (IRR99)  
Radioactive Substances Act 1993 (RSA93)  
Ionising Radiations (Medical Exposures) Regulations 2000 (IRMER)  
Nuclear Installations Act 1965 (NIA65)

For a short description of the above legislation and much more besides, please visit our legislation links page on the website at [www.ionactive.co.uk/links\\_listings.html?c=19](http://www.ionactive.co.uk/links_listings.html?c=19). This page also contains links to the full online versions of the legislation.

## 5) UK Radiation Protection Regulators

The key UK radiation protection regulators are as follows:

Health & Safety Executive (HSE)  
Environment Agency (EA) - for England & Wales  
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)  
Environment & Heritage Service (EHS) - Northern Island  
Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (part of HSE)  
Department of Health  
Department of Transport  
Food Standards Agency

For an extensive range of links to these regulators and their associated resource, please visit our website pages at [www.ionactive.co.uk/regulations.html](http://www.ionactive.co.uk/regulations.html). From this link you will be able to download application forms, approvals, guidance notes and similar.



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Some of the above entities are not strictly 'regulators' but the definition is suitable for the purposes of this article.

We have now outlined both the legislation and regulators who are involved in UK radiation protection. In considering the lists above, it is the *Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999* (IRR99) and the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) which collectively define the role of the RPA. We will examine this in **Part 3** of this article series.

When you are ready please feel free to access **Part 3** of this RPCG article – available from our website.

You may be interested in the following services and resources which are available from our website at [www.ionactive.co.uk](http://www.ionactive.co.uk).

If you need a formal Radiation Protection Adviser service then please visit this page: [www.ionactive.co.uk/adviser\\_services.html](http://www.ionactive.co.uk/adviser_services.html).

If you would like to attend a formal radiation protection training course, e.g. a Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) course, then please visit the following page: [www.ionactive.co.uk/training\\_services.html](http://www.ionactive.co.uk/training_services.html).

An extensive range of radiation protection related links are available from the following page: [www.ionactive.co.uk/links.html](http://www.ionactive.co.uk/links.html).

## Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) Training Courses (2006)

If you're already working with ionising radiation, or planning to do so in the near future, then perhaps consider one of our radiation protection training courses. Whether you need a basic introduction to the subject, or require more in-depth Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) training, we will meet your needs and expectations.



*'Ionactive have demonstrated all the attributes we require of a key supplier and partner. By evaluating our business needs they have provided a service that matches all our expectations. Feedback from training has been very positive! Alan Harwood, FMC Ltd*

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