



CREST Award Judging – a quick guide

Thank you for volunteering as a CREST Assessor! This guide is intended as a quick introduction to the CREST awards scheme and some tips to help you to assess projects effectively.

Along with this guide you will need copies of the “CREST Assessment Grid” for each of the projects you will be assessing. You should familiarise yourself with the criteria before you begin assessing, just so you know what key things to look out for.

An overview of the CREST Awards

CREST is Britain's largest national award scheme for project work in the STEM subjects. It gives young people aged 11-19 opportunities to explore real world projects in an exciting way. There are 4 different CREST award levels; each is suited to a different group of students and a different method of delivery

Discovery	Bronze	Silver	Gold
5 hrs minimum	10+ hours	30+ hours	70+ hours
Suitable for 11- 14 yrs	Suitable for 11-14 yrs	Suitable for 14-16 yrs	Suitable for 16-19 yrs
Mentor Optional	Mentor Optional	Mentor Optional	Mentor Required
Takes the form of a STEM Challenge day	Work can take a variety of forms	Must take the form of a written project or portfolio	Must take the form of a written project
Assessed Internally	Assessed internally	Assessed externally	Assessed externally

The projects you will be assessing will be either **Silver** or **Gold**. So that you are aware, the work produced for a Silver award, should be of GCSE level and students should have spent a minimum of 30 hours on their project. Gold projects should be at A-level standard and should have taken at least 70 hours.

Some projects will involve a practical element, others will be research based.

If this is your first time as an assessor, please don't hesitate to ask any questions you may have, I can be contacted on 01865 810014 or karen.bell@scienceoxford.com



Assessment usually takes the form of the student (or students if it is a group project) giving a short presentation about their project and then time for you to ask questions. It usually lasts for around **15 minutes**.

Students should be well briefed, but some might feel nervous and not know where to start. In this case it is helpful to put them at ease and reassure them that it is a very informal process. You can then ask leading questions to get them to begin;

e.g. **So tell me about your project?**

or

Can you tell me what your project is about and how you went about doing it?

followed by

And what did you find out?

Whilst the student is talking to you, you can begin to check off where they have met the CREST assessment criteria on the "CREST Assessment Grid". Some people find it useful to do this as the student is talking; others prefer to wait to the end to fill in the grid.

After they have presented, you have time to ask them questions about their project. This is a chance to get them to think about areas of the assessment criteria they haven't yet covered. It is also an opportunity for you to find out more about any aspect of the project that interested you.

Questions you might want to ask include;

- What resources did you use when researching your project?
- What was the biggest problem you had to overcome and how did you do it?
- How do you think what you've learnt is relevant to the real world?
- I was interested to hear you talk about _____ did you learn anything more about it?
- If you could do your project again with unlimited time and resources, what would you do differently/more of?
- Why did you choose this topic?

Assessing Gold CREST projects

The process is largely the same as with Silver projects, however, may take a little more time as the concepts explored by students will be more complex.

Students should be well aware of the process, and may well have presented their work as part of their project. CREST Assessment is mostly informal, however if they have a presentation prepared that they want to use, that is completely fine.



As above, while they present you have time to tick off any assessment criteria they hit, followed by time for questions. As the projects are more advanced, you can ask slightly more demanding questions; however keep the criteria in mind.

Questions you might want to ask include;

- How did you find working with your mentor?
- Did you talk about your project with anyone else? What did they think?
- What made you select the approach you have taken?
- What is the biggest thing you have learnt while doing the project?
- Is there anything you'd like to find out more about?

Some things to remember;

- Assessment should be very informal and last only **15-20** minutes
- You are there to encourage the students, perhaps ask if they are interested in pursuing their work further or going on to do STEM A-levels/degrees
- Students knowledge of the topic is not the **most** important thing
It is more important that they have gone through the proper processes and undertaken a project that excites them
- You are not expected to be an expert in the projects you are assessing – as long as you can talk about the project process with the students, you will be able to assess them
- It can be nice to summarise what you think of their project at the end, be positive and let them know if they've done a good job
- Projects can be purely research-based so if they haven't done an experiment, they are still eligible for an award
- CREST rewards creativity, so some students choose to display their projects in a more creative way – you may see posters, videos etc.
- Students don't need to meet every single assessment criteria, to achieve an award, they must have 11 out of the 15 criteria assessed as either acceptable or excellent
- Students who have worked in groups can present together, try to make sure that each of them speaks for a similar amount of time – you may want to direct questions at individual members of the team