



Assessor guide

August 2026



Associate assessor guide

Introduction..... 1

Your role 1

Pathways and competencies 1

1 Candidate submission 2

Summary of experience..... 2

Case study 3

Continuing professional development (CPD) 3

2 Assessment process..... 5

Before the assessment 5

Completing the assessment 5

After the assessment..... 7

Introduction

Thank you for your commitment to RICS and the future of the profession by being an assessor.

You have a crucial role in ensuring that only those candidates who demonstrate the professional and technical competency requirements, and highest ethical standards, can become RICS-qualified.

Assessment outcomes must be fair, valid and globally consistent. Candidates come forward from a variety of backgrounds, showing the diversity of the profession, and must all be assessed to the same standard.

All assessors must undertake training to perform the role and sign the *Assessor commitment statement*.

This assessor guide sets out:

- the format and structure of the assessment
- the preparation you will need to carry out
- the basis for your decision to pass or refer a candidate.

The assessor role is both professionally and personally rewarding. It fulfils the requirements for the 'Service to RICS' characteristic when applying for Fellowship. (Note: This is defined as having completed the required training, signed the *Assessor commitment statement* and having met the requirements for a minimum of two years at the time of applying for Fellowship.)

Assessor training counts as structured CPD. Assessment preparation may, where appropriate, count as unstructured CPD, for example, if research is needed into specific legislation relating to a candidate's submission.

Associate membership of RICS (AssocRICS) is a high-value RICS qualification. It is recognised in its own right and also as an entry point to progress to become a chartered surveyor (MRICS).

The Associate assessment is based on a written submission. Candidates must demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and work-based experience against the competency requirements for their pathway (surveying discipline).

To be eligible to apply, applicants must have:

- one year of relevant experience and a relevant bachelor's degree or
- two years of relevant experience and a relevant higher/advanced/foundation qualification or
- four years of relevant experience (no qualifications required).

Your role

You must be AssocRICS, MRICS or FRICS and have met the full role profile, including completing RICS assessor training.

The panel consists of two assessors:

- **Assessor #1** – along with Assessor #2, is responsible for deciding if the candidate has demonstrated the minimum competency requirements. Assessor #1 is also responsible for managing contact with Assessor #2 to agree the assessment outcome – pass or refer. If the candidate is referred, Assessor #1 will write the referral report.
- **Assessor #2** – along with Assessor #1, is responsible for deciding if the candidate has demonstrated the minimum competency requirements.

These roles are randomly allocated by RICS staff.

Pathways and competencies

You will only assess candidates from your own area of expertise. It is essential that you read the relevant pathway guide and familiarise yourself with the competency requirements.

1 Candidate submission

Candidates will come from a variety of backgrounds in terms of education. They will all have relevant work experience. Assessment is open to those with four years' relevant experience. The required length of experience is reduced if a candidate has certain specified qualifications calibrated by RICS.

RICS Assessment Platform

An online tool where candidates manage their assessment details, CPD and selected competency records, and prepare their submission for assessment.

As an assessor, you will access the platform to provide your availability to assess and to download candidate submissions and details of each assessment panel you are assigned to.

A short video guide about using the platform is available on the [Assessments information](#) web page.

Confidentiality

The candidate submits for assessment in the Assessment Platform. Each submission is confidential and must not be disclosed to any third party without the candidate's permission. Candidates may choose to replace names with pseudonyms.

The following advice looks at the individual components of the submission in more detail.

Summary of experience

This is a record of the candidate's experience, demonstrating how that experience meets the requirements of the technical and mandatory competencies of the chosen pathway.

You are looking for confirmation that the candidate has understood the technical competencies and analysed their work in the context of those competencies. The candidate will also write briefly about each of the mandatory competencies.

Technical competencies

The candidate must demonstrate **six** technical competencies, providing an individual summary for each one. Collectively, all six must come to no more than 2,000 words. Summaries must clearly show how work experience is relevant to each competency.

Mandatory competencies

Non-technical general business skills. The candidate must demonstrate **eight** mandatory competencies. They will write a brief example for seven of these, with a total word limit of 1,000 words in total. Candidates are not required to write about the mandatory competency 'Conduct rules, ethics and professional practice', as they will demonstrate this by completing the RICS professionalism (ethics) module.

Evaluation

Consider whether the candidate has the necessary technical knowledge, and has put that knowledge into practice in day-to-day work. You would not expect the candidate to be providing professional advice to clients. A candidate working at Associate level would normally be contributing to the advice, carrying out research, preparing significant parts of the report or advice, but not signing off the advice under their own name (except in reasonably simple or routine matters, with proper quality assurance from a supervisor).

Is the summary well written and well presented? Is the evidence convincing – in particular, does it appear to be truthful and to be based on the applicant's own experience?

For each of the technical competencies you should refer to the pathway guide and look particularly at the examples given. Does the summary show that the applicant has understood the competency?

For the mandatory competencies, you will be looking for confirmation, again, that the candidate has understood the competencies and recognised their importance.

Case study

An account of a project or piece of work, described in terms of the competencies. It should focus mainly on the two technical competencies most relevant to the candidate's day-to-day work, but will refer to other technical and mandatory competencies as well.

The candidate must select a project or projects that they have been personally involved in the two years prior to their assessment submission date. A project may have started over two years ago but the case study should reference their involvement in the past two years.

The case study must not exceed 2,500 words.

There may be illustrations, calculations or plans, but only if they are directly relevant to the two main competencies covered in the case study.

The template provides a text box for the candidate to describe briefly the context (details such as date and location of project, name of the employer and details of the candidate's role). This section should be no more than 500 words in total.

The case study should show:

- objective of project
- knowledge, skills and experience
- role played and contribution made
- technical skills used
- overall outcome.

It should:

- demonstrate understanding of the competencies
- focus on two technical competencies
- display some of the general business skills (mandatory competencies).

Evaluation

Does the case study clearly identify the objective of the project? Does the knowledge, skills and experience match the descriptions in the pathway guide? Does it demonstrate the ability to reflect on the learning involved in the project? In addition to the two main competencies identified, does it touch on other technical competencies and reflect at least some of the mandatory competencies?

The content is more important than the style, but it should meet the standard expected in a report prepared for a client – well written, unambiguous, technically correct, well organised, and free from errors of spelling, grammar or presentation.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

All candidates are required to complete 48 hours of CPD.

The hours must be split between structured development and unstructured development. At least 50% must be dedicated to structured.

Structured CPD

Can be any form of learning activities where there is a structured approach, where learning outcomes can be easily identified and where the candidate will enhance their knowledge of a particular subject or their professional skills in a way that is relevant to their work.

Typically, this includes attending webinars, seminars, conferences, lectures, workshops.

Unstructured CPD

Unstructured learning is any self-managed learning that is relevant or related to their role and has a clear learning purpose, but where

there is a less structured approach to the learning content and/or learning method.

This could include activities such as private study, on-the-job training, attendance at unstructured seminars or events.

Activities that do not count as CPD

Any CPD activity, whether structured or unstructured, should be planned wherever possible and be relevant to the candidate's role or specialism. Any activity that does not have a clear learning objective that relates to their role and specialism cannot be considered as appropriate CPD. Activities such as reading, listening to podcasts, networking, social events, unstructured team building or planning events and involvement on boards, committees or clubs that have little or no relevance to the candidate's professional role will not count towards the CPD requirement.

Evaluation

Does the candidate's CPD record complement both their mandatory and technical competencies?

Candidates are asked for recent examples. You might question a record where activities are concentrated into a short period of time rather than being completed over the course of 12 months.

Areas to consider are as follows:

- Was this gained in a structured manner?
- Was this based on an explicit process of selecting, planning and evaluating the activities?
- Does the record include learning from informal training sources, e.g. structured reading, secondments?

Plagiarism and the use of AI

All assessment submissions must be the candidate's own original work. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) software to generate content for submissions is not permitted.

Candidates may use tools to aid with spelling, grammar and word count.

Candidates who need specific support or who have identified needs should submit a reasonable adjustment application for any other form of technological aid approval.

Candidates **must not** use generative AI software (e.g. ChatGPT) in the production of their assessment submission. Assessors **must not** put any part of a candidate's submission into generative AI software.

RICS will carry out plagiarism and AI detection checks for all submissions. If there are suspicions that a candidate has submitted work that is not their own, they will be subject to investigation and possible RICS Regulatory action.

2 Assessment process

Before the assessment

We will match each candidate with two assessors. We will take account of the candidate's sector, practice area, specialism and employment history. We will email you to tell you an assessment is waiting for you in the Assessment Platform. Check the candidate's name and employment details, and consider whether you have a conflict of interest. You must not accept the assessment if:

- you have personal knowledge of the candidate
- you have significant connections with the candidate's employer (for instance, you have worked for the organisation in the last five years, have close personal relations with any of its employees, regularly do business with the organisation or could be considered a business competitor).

You are bound by the RICS Rules of Conduct in these matters and must act ethically at all times. We will provide advice if you are in doubt.

You must also decline the assessment if you cannot guarantee you will be able to meet the deadline for completing it: see below.

We will let you know whether you are Assessor #1 or co-assessor, and we will tell you if the candidate has previously been assessed.

By accepting, you take full responsibility for delivering an assessment with the terms of the service level agreement. At this stage you will also be given the name and contact details of your co-assessor. It is up to you how you prefer to work with your co-assessor, whether by email, telephone, or meeting to discuss.

There are no strict rules on this, provided you reach a fair assessment with each assessor's views being given full weight. RICS does not pay travel or other expenses if you choose to meet.

Completing the assessment

Your benchmarks

As a practitioner and a trained assessor your essential benchmark is your own knowledge and experience of the sector, and the shared view you reach after discussion with your co-assessor. Another important source is the candidate guide: you should familiarise yourself thoroughly with this before you assess a candidate.

Do not assess candidates against the standard of the RICS chartered qualification (MRICS); Associate candidates are not required to have the academic background, the breadth of skills, or the level of experience and professional responsibility of an RICS chartered professional (MRICS), although they may well choose to seek MRICS in the future.

You should be confident of passing a candidate who:

- has demonstrated attainment of six technical competencies defined in the relevant pathway guide
- has submitted reasonable evidence that they have achieved the mandatory competencies (judgement is needed here, because there is less evidence for these competencies)
- has submitted reasonable evidence that they are a fit person to practise as an RICS Associate professional.

Overall, you are looking for confirmation that:

- the candidate's experience is relevant to the pathway competencies
- the candidate demonstrates both knowledge/understanding, and the practical application of that knowledge/understanding
- the candidate is performing quality work at a responsible level?

Your assessment is holistic, and you must use your judgement and discretion to reach a balanced view on the basis of all the elements of the submission. Candidates may have gained experience from other geographical locations. However the candidate must demonstrate they have a working knowledge of the legislation and are competent to practise in the country they are being assessed in.

Access arrangements

RICS makes every effort to protect applicants from discrimination in accordance with the UK *Equality Act 2010* (the Act) and is committed to equality of opportunity.

Reasonable adjustments: When applying for an assessment, RICS must consider requests for a reasonable adjustment where a candidate, who is disabled as defined by the Act, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

A reasonable adjustment must be based on the individual needs of the applicant and their ability to access an assessment.

You will be informed if an adjustment has been agreed and given appropriate guidance.

For further information, refer to: [Access Arrangements](#).

Overall assessment

During the assessment you must ask yourself:

- Is the candidate describing their own work?
- Is the record of professional development appropriate to someone working at that level?
- Is the presentation of a reasonable standard, such as you would expect in communications to clients?

Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism

All Associate candidates must demonstrate the competency 'Conduct rules, ethics and professional practice'.

This is assessed via the RICS professionalism (ethics) module prior to final assessment.

The assessment version of the module includes four units:

Module 1: Introduction to ethics and professionalism.

Module 2: The RICS Rules of Conduct, integrity and professional codes of ethics.

Module 3: Ethical topics and considerations.

Module 4: Choose your own adventure case study.

The module is assessed via a further 'complex' case study and a multiple-choice question test.

This means that you are not required to assess this competency. Provided the candidate passes the module, RICS will accept that they have met the competency requirements.

As an RICS assessor, you must also successfully complete the module every three years. This can count towards your requirement as an RICS member to undertake three hours' CPD related to ethics every three years.

Discussions with the other assessor

When both assessors have had time to read all the material and make their notes, Assessor #1 will contact the co-assessor. The first contact must be made as soon as possible after accepting the assessment – this will generally be only to set a time and date for the detailed discussion.

Contact can be by any method – assessors should agree between themselves at the outset what means of communication they prefer. We recommend that assessors discuss each submission by telephone because this enables the fullest exchange of views. The assessors must then undertake a detailed discussion and evaluation of the submission, which should take place at the latest by day 8 after accepting the assessment.

During the discussion you will:

- compare your assessment of the documents
- discuss the candidate's submission in the round
- work towards agreement.

Assessors will develop different ways of working and, provided you can show that you have given proper and thorough consideration to the submission, we do not prescribe a specific approach.

A suggested way of structuring the discussion is to take it competency by competency, then go through each element of the submission in turn to determine whether that competency is demonstrated to your satisfaction.

Decide, taking a balanced view, whether the candidate has satisfied you that the requirements have been met. If so, the candidate has passed. If not, clearly identify the individual competencies in which you think the candidate has fallen short, and the items from the submission which are below standard. This will form the basis of your referral report.

Verification interview

Candidates may be selected by RICS to participate in a verification interview.

The purpose of this interview is to verify the extent of the candidate's involvement in the work described in their submission. For example, if plagiarism or improper use of AI is suspected.

As an assessor, you may nominate a candidate for a verification interview if you have any concerns about their submission.

Notifying RICS of your decision

The candidate is scheduled to receive their result within one month of the submission deadline. Assessor #1 must enter the result in Assessment Platform by **day 21**. If the decision is to refer, you must upload the referral report within 21 days of entering the result.

As the decision is measured against clear criteria, there should be very few cases where assessors cannot agree. If that does happen, you must notify us as soon as possible but, at the latest, by **day 12** of accepting the assessment. This gives us time to appoint a third assessor. The third assessor will review all the evidence and reach a decision after a discussion with both assessors. The third assessor will have a 'casting vote' and the decision will be reached by a two to one majority.

Note: if, as a result of a casting vote of the third assessor, the candidate is referred, the third assessor will be responsible for preparing feedback for the candidate.

If you refer a candidate you must also agree what they should do to remedy any deficiencies. Those deficiencies, and the remedy for them, must be set out in the feedback.

After the assessment

If the candidate has passed, they will become an RICS Associate (AssocRICS). RICS staff will take over the process from here.

If you refer the candidate, they must do whatever is required in the referral report before submitting for reassessment.

Referral

The referral report is prepared by Assessor #1. It must:

- identify specific competencies that were deficient
- give detailed reasons why the submission was referred
- give general guidance and suggestions for improvement including seeking other/additional experience
- specify what new or revised written material is required.

Again, there are no strict rules, and you can prescribe whatever you consider reasonable, provided:

- it is achievable without creating potential problems for the candidate at work
- it does not require more than 12 months of further experience
- it is proportionate.

We provide a template for the referral report

Previously referred candidates

The submission from previously referred candidates will include the referral report from the previous assessment panel.

You should conduct the assessment in the same manner as for new candidates before reading the referral report.

1. Read the submission, excluding the referral report.
2. Complete the marksheet.
3. Read the referral report and consider the previous panel's feedback against your own comments.
4. Make any adjustments to your comments and decisions where appropriate.
5. Following discussion with your co-assessor, agree the result.
6. If the result is a pass, continue as normal.
7. If the result is a refer, ensure the feedback on your referral report states the deficiencies in the new submission.

Remember: A candidate can only be referred based on a deficiency in their submission. Your referral report must not make reference to the previous referral report or the previous panel's feedback. The reason for referral cannot be stated as 'you failed to address feedback in the previous referral report'.

Do not use the following phrases, or any similar wording: 'As mentioned by the previous panel ...'; 'Your submission does not address the comments in your previous referral report ...'; 'This competency remains unsatisfactory'.

From 1 January 2026, applicants have up to four attempts to pass the Associate assessment and can apply for a fifth and final attempt after completing a period of 12 months' further experience. Any attempts prior to 1 January 2026 do not count towards the total allowed.

Delivering confidence

We are RICS. As a member-led chartered professional body working in the public interest, we uphold the highest technical and ethical standards.

We inspire professionalism, advance knowledge and support our members across global markets to make an effective contribution for the benefit of society. We independently regulate our members in the management of land, real estate, construction and infrastructure. Our work with others supports their professional practice and pioneers a natural and built environment that is sustainable, resilient and inclusive for all.

Enquiries
contactrics@rics.org



[rics.org](https://www.rics.org)