ROYAL INSTITUTION OF CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Disciplinary Panel Hearing

Case of

Mr Amodith Wijewansha [0902313]
United Arab Emirates

On

Thursday 17 September 2026

At

Determined on the papers by Microsoft Teams

Panel

Amit Jinabhai – Lay Panel Chair
Jennifer Hobart – Surveyor Member
Nicola Hill – Lay Member

Legal Adviser

Evan Wright

RICS Representative

Not present

Tribunal Executive

Jae Berry

Attendance

Neither party attended. The matter was determined on the papers following the Chair's decision 12 August 2026.

ALLEGATIONS

Allegation 1

On or about 8 March 2025, Mr Amodith Wijewansha acted dishonestly when he submitted a formal Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) submission to RICS, with the intention of representing it as his own original work, knowing that he had copied parts of his submission from another source.

Contrary to Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct with effect from 2 February 2022, Mr Wijewansha is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2(c).

Allegation 2

On or about 8 March 2025, Mr Amodith Wijewansha acted without integrity when he submitted a formal Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) submission to RICS, with the intention of representing it as his own original work, when he knew or ought to have known that he had copied parts of his submission from another source.

Contrary to Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct with effect from 2 February 2022, Mr Wijewansha is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2(c).

SERVICE AND APPLICABLE RULES

1. The Panel considered the Notice of Hearing and the evidence relating to service. It was satisfied that notice had been served on Mr Wijewansha in accordance with the applicable RICS Regulatory Tribunal Rules.

2. The Panel was satisfied that the applicable procedural framework was the RICS Regulatory Tribunal Rules, Version 3, which came into force on 14 March 2024. The allegations came to the attention of RICS after that date. The Panel also considered the Rules of Conduct effective from 2 February 2022, the applicable Bye-Laws, and the Sanctions Policy and supplements in force when the allegations came to RICS.

HEARING ON THE PAPERS

3. By a decision dated 12 August 2026, the Chair directed that the matter be determined on the papers. Mr Wijewansha had asked for that course of action and had confirmed that he would not attend. RICS made the application and agreed with Mr Wijewansha's request.

4. The Panel considered the Chair's decision and was satisfied that there was no material before it requiring a different course. It proceeded in the absence of the parties and determined the allegations by reference to the documentary material.

5. The Panel reminded itself that proceeding on the papers did not relieve RICS of the burden of proving the disputed allegations. It approached the written evidence with care, particularly because the witnesses and Mr Wijewansha were not present for questions.

DOCUMENTS

6. The Panel considered the Final Bundle, including the allegations, RICS case summary, the statements and exhibits of Samantha Bream and Alan Smithers, the statement of Nadun Silva,

the candidate declarations and guidance, the APC submissions, the Turnitin report, the comparison schedule, and Mr Wijewansha's written responses. It also considered the schedule of costs and the regulated member's statement of means and further written submissions.

BACKGROUND

7. Mr Wijewansha is a candidate member, rather than a chartered member. Rule 125 applies to a Regulated Member and does not prescribe a separate, narrower sanction regime for candidates.

8. The Panel noted that the definition of "Member" in the Rules includes a Member of the Attached Classes. It also considered the candidate enrolment declaration by which Mr Wijewansha undertook to comply with the Charter, Bye-Laws, Regulations and Rules of RICS. The Panel was therefore satisfied that he was a Regulated Member subject to the disciplinary jurisdiction of RICS.

9. The allegation identifies the date of submission as 8 March 2025. Some correspondence refers to 6 March 2025. The Panel considered the audit-history evidence at AS/04 and found that the operative submission date was 8 March 2025. The precise difference in date was not material to the issues of copying, knowledge or intention. The Panel also considered the exact terms of the declaration accepted by Mr Wijewansha at AS/07: "*I hereby declare that the work contained within this report is the genuinely unaided work performed by myself and a true reflection of my involvement, knowledge, and experiences*".

10. The evidence described the overall Turnitin similarity as 51 or 52 per cent. The Panel regarded the numerical difference as immaterial and relied principally on its own review of the underlying submissions and comparison schedule. The Panel noted the date of Mr Silva's source submission by reference to the witness statement of Alan Smithers as 11 March 2024. RICS prepared and the Panel considered a side-by-side comparison schedule identifying similarities across the case study and competency material.

11. The Panel noted that comparison material included significant similarities in the structure and content of Mr Wijewansha's APC case study and the previous APC case study submitted by Mr Silva.

12. Mr Silva stated through his witness statement, that he knew Mr Wijewansha professionally and from university connections but had not shared his submission with him and had not assisted him. Mr Wijewansha denied seeing or having access to Mr Silva's submission.

MR WIJEWANSHA'S WRITTEN POSITION

13. From the outset, in his correspondence 19 August 2025, Mr Wijewansha acknowledged the extensive similarities and accepted responsibility for his shortcomings in attribution and drafting. He said that he had used sample case studies and other reference material, intending later to paraphrase certain wording, and had left the wording unchanged through oversight and insufficient quality assurance.

14. He apologised, described his conduct as "*a lapse in judgment*", accepted that his work fell below expected professional and ethical standards, and referred to future remedial measures that he would implement, including plagiarism checking, improved citation practices and further learning.

15. However, he repeatedly denied intentionally copying Mr Silva's work or intending to present another person's work as his own. In his response to the proposed allegations dated 23 March

2026, he neither expressly admitted nor denied the pleaded allegations and maintained that it had never been his intention to present another source's work as his own.

AMISSIONS

16. RICS submitted in the paper-hearing application 31 July 2026 that Mr Wijewansha had "*admitted the charges*". The Panel considered the case summary produced on 23 July 2026 and the underlying correspondence for itself, noting that unequivocal admissions had not been made. It distinguished admissions of primary fact or professional shortcoming from an unequivocal admission of dishonesty, lack of integrity or liability to disciplinary action.

17. The Panel found that Mr Wijewansha admitted that his submission contained wording and material derived from reference sources, that he had failed to provide proper attribution or complete the intended paraphrasing, and that the resulting submission fell below RICS standards. Those were substantial concessions.

18. In considering the final bundle of evidence, the Panel did not treat those concessions as an admission of dishonesty. His repeated denial of intentional copying and of an intention to pass off another person's work was inconsistent with an unequivocal admission of dishonest intent. The Panel also did not treat the correspondence in the evidence bundle as an express admission of lack of integrity, although it regarded the underlying factual concessions as relevant to that allegation.

19. However, the Panel noted that in response to receiving the bundle of evidence from RICS on 23 July 2026, Mr Wijewansha replied by email 30 July 2026 at 05.38hrs, stating "*I fully admit all the allegations made against me, as set out on Page 4 of the Final Case Bundle. I accept full responsibility for my actions and recognise the seriousness of the matters raised. Furthermore, I respectfully request that this matter be determined by way of a paper hearing. Please find attached my final response for the Panel's consideration prior to the hearing. I respectfully ask that this submission be considered as a sincere acceptance of responsibility and* ***not as an attempt to deny or challenge any of the allegations*** *made against me".* The email was accompanied by a PDF letter dated 30 July 2026 containing Mr Wijewansha's more detailed response. The email and the PDF letter were served with RICS application for a hearing on the papers, hence the reference therein to "*admitted the charges*".

20. Having regard to the different positions described in the main evidence bundle and in the correspondence dated 23 and 30 July, the Panel therefore determined each allegation on all of the evidence available to it on 17 September 2026, applying the burden and standard of proof, rather than accepting RICS' characterisation of the charges as *'admitted'.*

LEGAL ADVICE

21. The Panel received and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser. The Panel was reminded that RICS bore the burden of proof throughout and that the standard was the balance of probabilities. The seriousness of dishonesty did not alter that standard.

22. The Panel considered the admissibility of the written statements and documentary material under Rule 121. It was satisfied that the material was relevant and that it was fair to receive it. The Panel separately considered the weight to attach to each item, bearing in mind that no witness was present for questioning and that the matter had, at the parties' request, been scheduled to be determined on the papers. It considered provenance, contemporaneity,

consistency, corroboration, the importance of evidence and the opportunity afforded to Mr Wijewansha to respond.

23. For dishonesty, the Panel applied the test set out in Ivey v Genting Casinos [2017] UKSC 67. It first determined Mr Wijewansha's actual knowledge or belief as to the facts and then considered whether, given that state of mind, the conduct was dishonest by the standards of ordinary decent people.

24. For a lack of integrity, the Panel applied the guidance in Wingate and another v SRA [2018] EWCA Civ 366. It considered whether the proved conduct objectively failed to meet the ethical standards expected of the profession. It treated dishonesty and lack of integrity as distinct allegations and did not regard integrity as an automatic fallback if dishonesty were not proved.

FINDINGS OF FACT

25. The Panel gave significant weight to the submissions themselves, the Turnitin report and the detailed comparison schedule. The similarities were extensive, repeated and often close or word-for-word. They were not confined to standard technical language. They extended to analytical reasoning, critical appraisal, conclusions and reflective analysis.

26. The Panel rejected the proposition that the scale and character of the similarities could be explained solely by common industry terminology. It found, on the balance of probabilities, that substantial parts of Mr Wijewansha's APC submission had been copied from source material corresponding to Mr Silva's earlier submission and had been submitted, without attribution, as Mr Wijewansha's original work.

27. The Panel considered Mr Wijewansha's account that he used unidentified sample materials which he intended to paraphrase later; he writes *"but due to an oversight during editing, certain phrases remained unchanged in my final version"*. It noted that no source material was identified or produced and that the explanation did not readily account for the replication of personal learning and reflective passages.

Allegation 1: Dishonesty

28. The Panel found that Mr Wijewansha knew the APC submission was required to be his own work and knew that substantial parts of it were not his original work. The declaration and candidate guidance made the requirement clear. The scale, distribution and selective adaptation of the copied material, including personal reflections and analytical passages, satisfied the Panel that the presentation of the work as original was deliberate rather than an editing oversight or "*lapse in judgement*". Applying the standards of ordinary decent people, that conduct was dishonest. **Allegation 1 is proved.**

Allegation 2: Lack of integrity

29. The Panel separately considered integrity. It found that a candidate seeking admission to a trusted profession was required to ensure that an APC submission genuinely demonstrated the candidate's own learning, analysis, judgment and experience. Submitting extensive unattributed material, including another candidate's analytical and reflective wording, while accepting the originality declaration, fell seriously below those ethical standards. The Panel reached this conclusion by a separate objective assessment of the professional ethical standard engaged. Its finding did not depend upon, or follow automatically from, its conclusion on dishonesty. **Allegation 2 is proved.**

LIABILITY TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION

30. The Panel next considered whether the facts found proved rendered Mr Wijewansha liable to disciplinary action under Bye-Law 5.2.2(c). It treated this as a matter for its own judgment and did not regard a breach of Rule 1 as automatically determinative. The integrity of the APC process is fundamental because it is the route by which candidates demonstrate that they meet the competence and ethical standards required for membership. The proved breach represented a serious departure from the standards expected and was sufficiently serious to render Mr Wijewansha liable to disciplinary action.

SANCTION

31. The Panel accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser and considered the RICS Sanctions Policy and Supplements with effect from 2 February 2022, including Supplement 1 (Sanction Guidelines), Supplement 2 (Fines, Costs and Administration Fees), Supplement 3 (Publication of Regulatory/Disciplinary Matters) and Supplement 4 (Disciplinary History). It reminded itself that sanction is regulatory, not punitive, although it may have a punitive effect. The purposes include protecting the public, maintaining confidence in RICS and the profession, declaring and upholding proper standards, and deterrence. It considered the available measures in ascending order and sought the least restrictive outcome sufficient to meet those purposes.

32. Mr Wijewansha is a candidate member, a member of an Attached Class, rather than a Chartered Member. The Panel nevertheless had disciplinary jurisdiction. The ultimate membership sanction is properly expressed as expulsion from candidate membership. The Panel considered whether it was appropriate to impose a sanction and decided that it was. The potentially available sanctions considered were caution, reprimand, conditions, a fine, and expulsion from candidate membership, subject to the precise powers in the applicable Rules and Sanctions Policy.

33. The Panel identified the following potential aggravating features, to the extent established by its findings: the extensive and repeated nature of the copying; inclusion of analytical and personal reflective material; acceptance of a declaration of originality; the importance of the APC as a gateway to professional membership; risk to the public and deliberate misrepresentation for professional advantage.

34. The Panel considered the mitigation presented, including the asserted absence of previous disciplinary findings, engagement with the investigation, factual concessions, apology, remorse, reflection, improved citation practice, further professional and ethical learning, and the absence of evidence of direct client harm. It distinguished mitigation presented from mitigation accepted, and proposed remediation from steps completed and evidenced. The Panel noted Mr Wijewansha's written representations in this respect but also noted the absence of any supporting evidence as an important factor in considering mitigation.

35. The Panel determined that Mr Wijewansha's continued candidate membership was incompatible with its findings. It fully considered and rejected no Regulatory Sanction, Caution, Reprimand, a Fine or Conditions as insufficient to maintain confidence in RICS and the APC process, and to declare and uphold proper professional standards. The Panel found that there were no extenuating circumstances. The deliberate attempt to obtain professional status by presenting extensive copied work as original goes to the heart of trust in the admissions process. The Panel considered the judgment in Bolton v The Law Society [1993] EWCA Civ 3, explaining why striking off is often justified, not as punishment, but to protect public confidence in the profession.

"The reputation of the profession is more important than the fortunes of any individual member."

36. The Panel therefore directed that Mr Wijewansha be expelled from candidate membership of RICS.
37. In accordance with Rule 126, any Regulatory Sanction imposed will take effect on expiry of the relevant appeal period.

COSTS

38. RICS sought costs of £5,700.00 and served a schedule of costs. The Panel considered whether the costs were reasonably incurred and proportionate, the findings on each allegation, the conduct of the proceedings, and Mr Wijewansha's statement of means, which incorporated representations on ability to pay. The Panel noted that although Mr Wijewansha included references to expenditure, there was no evidence of income. It ordered Mr Wijewansha to pay RICS costs of £5,700.00.

PUBLICATION

39. The Panel considered Rules 94, 127 and 128 and the applicable Regulatory Sanctions Publication Policy. It found no sufficient basis to depart from ordinary publication. Publication was necessary to maintain confidence in the APC process, declare standards and deter similar conduct. Pending expiry of 28 days following service of the record of decision, the name, charges, findings and Regulatory Sanction will be published in accordance with Rule 127 and the policy. The Panel's Record of Decision will be published following expiry of the appeal period under Rule 128.

RIGHT OF APPEAL AND REVIEW

40. The parties are to be notified of this decision in accordance with Rule 93. Mr Wijewansha may appeal against the Panel's findings and/or any Regulatory Sanction under Rules 152 to 155. Any application to appeal must be served on the Head of Regulatory Tribunals within 28 days of service of notification of this decision and must comply with the prescribed requirements.