

Disciplinary Panel Hearing

Case of

Name **Tsun Sing Yeung [6621329]**
Location **Macao**

On

Thursday 13 August 2026

At

Virtual hearing held on Teams

Chairperson

Mr Jason Tucker (Chair)

Members

Dr Stephen Moore FRICS (Surveyor Member)
Ms Nirupar Uddin (Lay Member)

Legal Adviser

Ms Rosemary Rollason

Regulatory Tribunal Executive

Mrs Maria Choudhury-Rahman

Representatives

The Member was not present or represented

RICS was represented by Ms Sanna Chaudry, RICS.

Introduction

A Panel of RICS' Disciplinary Tribunal considered the following allegations against RICS APC Candidate, Tsun Sing Yeung ("Mr Yeung"):

1. On or about 31 July 2023, Mr Tsun Sing Yeung acted dishonestly by submitting a formal Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) submission to RICS, intending to present it as his own original work when he knew that he had copied parts of his submission from the submission of another candidate (Mr YCS).

Contrary to Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct with effect from 2 February 2022

Mr Yeung is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2 (c)

2. On or about 31 July 2023, Mr Tsun Sing Yeung acted without integrity by submitting a formal Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) submission to RICS, intending to present it as his own original work when he knew or ought to have known that he had copied parts of his submission from the submission of another candidate (Mr YCS).

Contrary to Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct with effect from 2 February 2022

Mr Yeung is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2 (c)

Service

1. The Panel had sight of a Notice of Hearing dated 4 June 2026 which was sent to Mr Yeung by email at his preferred RICS email address, in compliance with Rule 53 of the RICS Regulatory Tribunal Rules (Version 2 with effect from 2 February 2022) ("the Rules").
2. The Notice of Hearing was also sent to a second email address known to RICS.
3. The Panel noted that the details relating to service were confirmed in the witness statement of the Mrs Choudhury Rahman, RICS Regulatory Tribunal Executive, dated 31 July 2026.

4. The Panel was satisfied that the requirements of Rule 53 of the Rules had been complied with and that good service had been made of the Notice of Hearing.

Application to proceed in absence

5. Ms Chaudry, on behalf of RICS, informed the Panel that no response had been received from Mr Yeung to the Notice of Hearing. No request for a postponement had been received.
6. Ms Chaudry submitted that Mr Yeung had voluntarily waived his right to attend or be represented at this hearing. There was no indication of any reason why the Panel should adjourn the hearing. Ms Chaudry submitted that, given the gravity and the important public interest in the resolution of the matter, the Panel should proceed with the hearing today in the Candidate Member's absence.

Panel decision

7. The Panel considered the submissions on behalf of RICS and accepted the advice of the Legal Adviser.
8. The Panel was referred to Rule 81 of the Rules which provides that where a member or applicant is neither present nor represented at a hearing, the Panel may proceed with the hearing if it is satisfied that relevant notification as required by the Rules has been given and if the Panel is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so, having considered the public interest and the rights of the parties.
9. Having found that good service of notice of the hearing had been made, the Panel considered whether to exercise its discretion to proceed in absence. The Panel was referred to relevant guidance from the cases of *R v Jones (Anthony)* [2004] 1 AC 1HL and *GMC v Adeogba* and *GMC v Visvardis* [2016] EWCA Civ 162. The Panel was careful to remember that its discretion under Rule 81 is not unfettered and must be exercised with the utmost caution and with the fairness of the hearing at the forefront of its mind.

10. The Panel noted an email from Mr Yeung dated 20 March 2025 in which he provided comments on the matters which RICS had notified him it was investigating. The Panel was informed this was the last communication RICS had received from Mr Yeung.

11. In his email of 20 March 2025, Mr Yeung stated the following:

'I am willing to accept any punishment and expulsion from the membership. I apologise for causing you so much trouble. Please do not contact other relevant colleagues for confirmation. I do not want to disturb them of (sic) affect my current work.

Thanks a lot.

Best regards

Johnson Yeung.'

12. The Panel had sight of various emails sent by RICS to Mr Yeung in the period March to July 2026 concerning its investigation and latterly, in connection with this hearing date. In respect of a number of these emails, RICS produced confirmations of email delivery. Mr Yeung did not respond to any of these further communications after his email of 20 March 2025. The Panel was also advised that attempts to contact Mr Yeung by telephone had also been made by the case presenter, but there was no answer.

13. The Panel Noted that RICS' emails after 20 March 2025 were sent to the email address from which Mr Yeung had sent his email of 20 March 2025. The Panel therefore considered it was likely that Mr Yeung had received these emails and that he is aware of this hearing date. It was clear from his previous communications that he was aware of the ongoing RICS proceedings.

14. Mr Yeung has not communicated with RICS in response to the Notice of Hearing. He has not provided any reason why he may be unable to participate today, nor has he sought an adjournment for any reason. The Panel concluded that Mr Yeung has voluntarily waived his right to participate or to be represented at this hearing. The Panel was satisfied that no useful purpose would be served by an adjournment. The Panel did not consider that an adjournment was likely to ensure Mr Yeung's attendance on a future date.

15. Whilst there is inevitably likely to be some disadvantage to a respondent where their case proceeds in their absence, the Panel in this case has the benefit of some comments and explanations Mr Yeung has provided at earlier stages of RICS' investigation.
16. The Panel was also required to consider fairness to RICS and the general need for expedition in regulatory proceedings in the public interest. The Panel concluded that there was no good reason to adjourn and that the public interest required that these serious allegations should proceed and be considered today.
17. In deciding to proceed in the Candidate Member's absence the Panel was mindful that it should ensure that the hearing was as fair as possible in the circumstances and that it should ask any questions which were reasonably apparent from the evidence which the Panel considered might have assisted Mr Yeung.

Documents

18. The Panel received and read in advance the following electronic document bundles:

- Hearing bundle (145 pages)
- Correspondence bundle (38 pages)

Response to the charges

19. Mr Yeung has not provided a formal response to the allegations and has not responded to the Notice of Hearing. Mr Yeung's email dated 20 March 2025 commented on the concerns raised by RICS and indicated admissions to the underlying facts which are the basis of the allegations. However, the Panel concluded there was no formal admission to the charges and it should therefore treat the allegations as denied. The Panel was advised by the legal adviser that it could take account of Mr Yeung's responses as part of the overall evidence.

Summary

20. Mr Yeung is a candidate member of RICS (no 6621329) and is based in Macao. It is alleged by RICS that he plagiarised the work of a colleague, Mr YCS, when submitting an

assessment document to RICS and by doing so acted both dishonestly and without the level of integrity required of an aspiring member of RICS.

21. Mr Yeung was enrolled with RICS as a candidate to become a chartered member of RICS on 5 July 2016. In order to become a chartered member, Mr Yeung had to complete an assessment of professional competence (“APC”) which consisted of a written submission along with a case study.
22. Mr Yeung submitted his final APC submission on 31 July 2023. That submission was checked by RICS against their plagiarism detection software which is called ‘Turnitin’.
23. The Turnitin report identified a 76% similarity between Mr Yeung’s submission and that of a previous APC submission made to RICS by Mr YCS. Mr YCS’s submission was submitted to RICS in 2022.
24. Mr Yeung was contacted by RICS’s investigator in August 2024 and informed that the matter was being investigated by RICS. He was invited to explain why his submission contained word for word similarities with the submission made by Mr YCS.
25. Mr Yeung was provided with a comparison table showing the areas where the Turnitin report confirmed that his submitted case study matched that of Mr YCS.
26. Mr Yeung responded on 2 September 2024 fully accepting that he had copied Mr YCS’s submission with minor amendments. He confirmed that Mr YCS was a colleague working with him in the commercial department of the firm where they were both employed.
27. Mr Yeung explained in an email to RICS dated 20 March 2025 that during the period between July 2020 and March 2024 he was under significant pressure due personal circumstances of which he provided details. In due course he provided supporting evidence, which RICS accepted.
28. RICS received confirmation from Mr YCS in November 2024 that he had worked with Mr Yeung on the same project and had shared his submission with Mr Yeung for reference.

Submissions

29. Ms Chaudry adopted her written submissions as set out in RICS' case summary dated 12 March 2026. This set out the background and RICS' case in respect of the facts of the allegations. Ms Chaudry submitted that any instance of dishonesty or lack of integrity engages the reputation of RICS and that in this instance, there is a strong public interest in maintaining the integrity of the APC process.

Legal Advice

30. The Panel received and applied the advice of the legal adviser. The Panel was reminded that the burden of proof is upon RICS, which brings the charges, throughout. The standard of proof to be applied in relation to the facts is the civil standard, that is the balance of probabilities. This means that before finding a fact proved the Panel must be satisfied that it is more likely than not that it occurred.

31. The Panel should consider and make findings only on the charges brought by RICS and consider each of the particulars of the charge separately. The Panel was able to take account of any admissions made by Mr Yeung.

32. RICS did not call any live witnesses and relied on the written witness statements which RICS submitted in the hearing bundle. The Panel was advised of its broad discretion in Rule 121 to receive evidence subject to its being relevant and fair. The evidence had been properly served on Mr Yeung by RICS. He had not raised any objection to it and had indicated admissions to the facts. As he had not chosen to attend the hearing, Mr Yeung had not sought to cross-examine RICS' witnesses. The Panel was mindful that the evidence in this case is based on formal documents and the witness evidence is factual, referring to the documents. The Panel was satisfied the witness statement evidence was relevant and that it was fair in the circumstances to admit it in evidence.

33. In respect of the allegation of dishonesty in Allegation 1, the Panel was referred to the test set out in *Ivey v Genting Casinos t/a Crockfords* [2017] UKSC 67.

34. In respect of the allegation of lack of integrity in Allegation 2, the Panel was referred to the guidance set out in the case of ***Wingate and Others v SRA [2018] EWCA Civ 366***. In that case, the Court of Appeal said that integrity connotes adherence to the ethical standards of one's own profession and that professional integrity is linked to the manner in which that particular profession professes to serve the public. The Court explained that the concept of integrity is "*a useful shorthand to express the higher standards which society expects from professional persons*".

35. In relation to liability to disciplinary action, the question of whether or not any facts admitted or found proved give rise to liability is a matter for the Panel's own judgment. However, in order to establish liability, the conduct in question must be serious and fall far short of the expected standards.

Findings of fact

Allegation 1.

On or about 31 July 2023, Mr Tsun Sing Yeung acted dishonestly by submitting a formal Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) submission to RICS, intending to present it as his own original work when he knew that he had copied parts of his submission from the submission of another candidate (Mr YCS).

Contrary to Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct with effect from 2 February 2022

Mr Yeung is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2 (c)

36. The Panel carefully considered the evidence of RICS as presented in the hearing bundle. The Panel considered the written statements and exhibits of the witnesses on behalf of RICS, Mr Guvinder Raina, RICS Standards & Regulation Senior Specialist (dated 18 March 2025 and 28 May 2025) and Ms Jiaxin Xing (dated 28 May 2025). Both statements were signed by the witnesses and contained statements of truth. The Panel accepted this evidence and noted that it was not contested by Mr Yeung.

37. The Panel had sight of documentation in the hearing bundle which included the APC submissions submitted respectively by Mr Yeung and by Mr YCS. It noted the comparison schedule and the Turnitin Report which showed a 76% similarity between the submissions of Mr Yeung and Mr YCS.
38. The evidence also included a letter provided by Mr YCS dated 14 November 2024 in response to an enquiry by RICS in which he confirmed that he had provided his APC assessment submission to Mr Yeung.
39. The Panel took into account the comments of Mr Yeung in his communications to RICS of 2 September 2024 and 20 March 2025 when he accepted that facts, namely that he had used and copied Mr YCS' APC submission. He referred to difficult personal issues he was dealing with as the reason for doing so.
40. The Panel was satisfied on the basis of its own review of the evidence and the admissions made by Mr Yeung that the facts aspect of Allegation 1 were proved on the balance of probabilities.
41. It was clear from the evidence that Mr Yeung copied substantial extracts from Mr YCS's case study. This was confirmed by the Turnitin report as amounting to a 76% similarity and was also reflected in the comparison document. The Panel noted that the copied aspects of the submission included information about meeting RICS' mandatory and core competencies, about the candidate's experience and a case study. All of this information which Mr Yeung submitted related to Mr YCS's experience and competence rather than his own.

Dishonesty

42. The Panel considered the first element of the **Ivey** test in relation to dishonesty. In respect of Mr Yeung's state of knowledge or belief as to the facts, the Panel was satisfied that Mr Yeung was fully aware that the APC assessment was required to be his own work and that the purpose of its submission was to allow RICS to assess his competence and experience, with a view to his obtaining RICS membership. By submitting the assessment, Mr Yeung

made a representation that it was his own work. He was fully aware that it was not and that it was based to a very significant extent on the work of Mr YCS. The Panel concluded the conduct was intentionally dishonest, with a view to Mr Yeung's securing success in the APC assessment in order to further his career in the surveying profession.

43. In relation to the second element of the **Ivey** test, the Panel was further satisfied that this conduct would clearly be considered dishonest by the standards of ordinary, decent people. It is a basic societal norm that work for professional assessments by a regulator is expected to be the candidate's own work.

Rule 1 of RICS' Rules of Conduct for Members with effect from 2 February 2022.

44. Rule 1 states "*Members and firms must be honest, act with integrity and comply with their professional obligations, including obligations to RICS*".
45. The Panel has found proved that Mr Yeung acted dishonestly. Accordingly the Panel concluded that Mr Yeung's proven dishonest conduct is contrary to Rule 1.

Allegation 2

46. *On or about 31 July 2023, Mr Tsun Sing Yeung acted without integrity by submitting a formal Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) submission to RICS, intending to present it as his own original work when he knew or ought to have known that he had copied parts of his submission from the submission of another candidate (Mr YCS).*

Contrary to Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct with effect from 2 February 2022

Mr Yeung is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2 (c)

47. The underlying facts were the same as those relating to Allegation 1. The Panel found the underlying facts of Allegation 2 proved on the same basis.

Lack of integrity

48. The Panel considered, taking account of the advice given by the legal adviser, whether Mr Yeung's actions lacked integrity as explained in the guidance in the case of ***Wingate and Evans***.
49. The Panel was in no doubt, that Mr Yeung's actions did not reflect the high ethical standards which RICS, as the professional regulator for the surveying profession, expects from its members. The Panel concluded that Mr Yeung's conduct in representing the assessment as all his own work, when he was fully aware that it was not, constituted a lack of integrity.
50. The Panel was mindful that the APC process exists to assess the competence of candidates who seek admission to membership of RICS. Such candidates must be suitable to assume all the responsibilities which membership of such a professional body entails. The Panel was satisfied that submitting an assessment which was not the applicant's own work and which represented the skill and experience of another individual rather than that of the applicant would undermine the integrity of the APC process and in RICS as the regulator which has the responsibility for upholding the standards of the profession.
51. In the light of its finding that Mr Yeung had acted with a lack of integrity, the Panel concluded that his actions were inconsistent with the professional obligations which RICS requires of its members and were therefore in breach of Rule 1 of the Standards of Conduct.

Liability to disciplinary action

52. RICS alleged that Mr Yeung is liable to disciplinary action pursuant to Bye-law 5.2.2(c), that is, failure to adhere to the rules and regulations governing members' conduct.
53. The Panel had found that Mr Yeung's actions were in breach of Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct. These were serious breaches which fell far short of expected standards as they involved findings of lack of integrity and dishonesty. The Panel was satisfied that Mr Yeung was liable to disciplinary action.

Sanction

54. Having found that liability to disciplinary action was established, the Panel considered what if any sanction it should impose. The Panel received and accepted the advice of the legal adviser as to the available sanctions and the appropriate approach to its consideration of sanction. The Panel referred to RICS Sanctions Policy (Version 9, with effect from 2 February 2022) and its supplements.

55. RICS did not make submissions proposing a specific sanction, nor had Mr Yeung provided any submissions on the issue of sanction beyond stating in his communication of 20 March 2025 that he would accept any sanction that RICS decided to impose.

56. In considering sanction, the Panel bore in mind that the purpose of sanctions in RICS proceedings is:

- The need to demonstrate to society and to other Members or Firms that RICS takes firm action in order to protect the public interest and promote regulatory compliance;
- The need to act in the public interest by protecting the public, the reputation of the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards;
- The necessity to deter the Regulated Applicant/Member and other Members or Firms from future non-compliance.

57. The Panel bore in mind that that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive, though a sanction may have a punitive effect.

58. Given the gravity of its findings in this case, the Panel first concluded that a sanction was required.

59. In considering the appropriate level of sanction, the Panel applied the principle of proportionality. A sanction must be proportionate to the breach and all the circumstances. Proportionality requires the Panel to weigh the interests of the public with those of Mr Yeung. The Panel was mindful that it should impose the lowest sanction which appropriately

met the requirements of public protection and the public interest. The Panel adopted a proportionate approach, considering the available sanctions in ascending order of seriousness.

60. The allegations themselves involved findings of lack of integrity and dishonesty and so to that extent, those matters had already been taken account of in the Panel's decision. These were extremely serious findings.

61. As aggravating factors, the Panel considered the following were relevant:

- The significant extent of the plagiarism, 76% as stated in the Turnitin report;
- The deliberate and intentional nature of the conduct;
- There was potential professional and financial benefit by obtaining RICS membership;
- The false impression of his competence presented to RICS in the plagiarised assessment;
- The risk to the confidence of other members in RICS' APC assessment process; the risk to public confidence in the profession and in RICS as its regulator.

62. As mitigating factors, the Panel noted the following:

- Mr Yeung has no previous RICS disciplinary history;
- Mr Yeung provided evidence of very difficult personal circumstances which he was experiencing around the time of the submission and which he said led him to put forward the plagiarised APC submission. He provided evidence to confirm the issue which RICS has confirmed it accepts. The Panel took this information into account as mitigation. However, it took the view that the information was somewhat undermined, as it was open to Mr Yeung to inform RICS and seek support and further time to prepare his submission but he did not choose to do this. The Panel took the view that even the difficulties in question did not excuse conduct by an aspiring RICS member which is dishonest and lacks integrity;
- Mr Yeung has offered an apology and expressed some remorse for his conduct;
- He co-operated and engaged with RICS' investigation in the early stages;

63. In weighing these factors, the Panel concluded that there was limited mitigation in this case and the aggravating factors outweighed the mitigation.

64. The Panel was concerned that Mr Yeung does not appear to have meaningfully reflected on his past actions or demonstrated any insight. Conduct which is dishonest and lacks integrity is attitudinal and is not readily remediable
65. Having reached these conclusions, the Panel proceeded to consider the sanctions available to it, in ascending order of seriousness.
66. In light of the serious nature of the findings made, the Panel was in no doubt that the sanctions of caution and reprimand were both insufficient to protect the public. They would be insufficient to safeguard the wider public interest.
67. The Panel next considered undertakings. The Panel did not consider that the conduct found proved in this case, namely dishonesty and lack of integrity, was readily amenable to undertakings and undertakings have not been offered. The Panel also concluded such a sanction would not be an appropriate response to the issues of the maintenance of professional standards and public confidence in the surveyors' profession and in RICS as its regulator. In the view of the Panel, the same considerations applied to an order imposing conditions.
68. Similarly, the Panel concluded that in this case a fine would neither protect the public nor would it address the issues of the maintenance of professional standards, public confidence in the profession or the confidence of other members of the surveyors' profession in RICS as the regulator.
69. The Panel next considered the sanction of expulsion from membership of RICS. The Panel reached the conclusion that in the circumstances of this case, this was the necessary and appropriate sanction. The findings were serious and there was limited mitigation. These considerations in the Panel's view outweighed the interests of Mr Yeung. The Panel considered that only expulsion would uphold RICS' ethical standards and ensure public confidence in the APC process and in RICS was maintained.
70. The Panel's conclusion was that the conduct found proved was fundamentally incompatible with continued candidate membership of RICS. The Panel therefore concluded that Mr Yeung should be expelled from candidate membership.

Costs

71. The Panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser and referred to Supplement to the Sanctions Policy.
72. The Panel noted the costs application from RICS in the total sum of £4,170.00.
73. The Panel noted that RICS had sent the Schedule of Costs to Mr Yeung on 29 July 2026 which met the requirement of 24 hours in Rule 92 of the Rules. No information as to means or submissions in relation to costs had been provided by Mr Yeung.
74. In the circumstances, the Panel saw no reason not to award costs in the sum claimed by RICS which it considered were fair and reasonable.
75. The Panel concluded it should make a costs order in the sum of £4,170.00.

Publication

76. The Panel referred to Supplement 3 to the Sanctions Policy.
77. The Panel noted there is a presumption in favour of publicity. In the absence of any submissions from the parties indicating publicity was not appropriate, the Panel determined to make an order for publicity in accordance with RICS' publication policy.
78. The Panel was mindful of the importance of publication of the decision of the Tribunal in maintaining public confidence in RICS and deterring similar conduct in the future.

Right of Appeal

Mr Yeung may appeal to an Appeal Panel against this decision within 28 days of notification of this decision, in accordance with Rule 152 of the Regulatory Tribunal Rules, Version 2.

