



Senior Professional Assessment
Assessor guide

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Assessor guide

Foreword	4
Introduction	5

Section one

Applicant eligibility	6
Senior profile	6
RICS pathway	6
Senior professional competencies.....	7

Section two

Submission	8
Case studies.....	8

Section three

Conflict of interest	9
Before the final assessment interview	9
On the final assessment interview day.....	10

Section four

Final assessment interview	11
Interview structure	11
Assessment approach	11
Panel decision	12
Result	12

Foreword

I want to personally thank each and every one of you for making a major contribution to the future of your profession by assessing those that will ultimately go on to shape the future of the built and natural environments and inspire the next generations. RICS Assessments are the beginning of a lifelong professional commitment to upholding the profession's standards for thousands of people each year.

As an RICS assessor you play an important role in ensuring that only those who fulfil our ethical standards and professional and technical competency requirements become RICS professionals. It is vital to our professional status, world standing and credibility that the assessment process is consistent worldwide. This guide explains the criteria involved and provides guidance on how to conduct the final assessment interview. Ensuring standards are maintained and that ethical conduct operates at all times, is at the very heart of a profession that will enjoy long-term public confidence and trust.

Thank you for your commitment to RICS and to ensuring the future of your profession. I hope you find being an RICS assessor both professionally and personally rewarding and that you value the legacy that you are creating for many years into the future.



Sean Tompkins

Chief Executive

Introduction

The senior professional assessment involves five stages:

1. Eligibility – applicants must meet the qualification and experience requirements
2. Vetting – an initial application will be reviewed to confirm the applicant has a suitable profile for the assessment
3. Ethics – applicants complete the RICS ethics module and test
4. Submission – applicants provide evidence of their experience for you to prepare for the final assessment interview
5. Final assessment interview – applicants are assessed to determine if they are competent to practise as an RICS chartered professional.

Your role as an assessor will begin at the submission stage. This guide will explain the approach you must take to assess senior professional assessment applicants.

Assessment Resource Centre (ARC)

The Assessment Resource Centre (ARC) is 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 have access to ARC in order to download candidate submissions and details of the each interview panel you are assigned to.

Guidance on using ARC is available at rics.org/assessments

Applicant eligibility

Applicants must have 10 years' relevant experience. This is reduced to 5 years if they have an undergraduate degree (or equivalent professional qualification) and a relevant post-graduate degree (master's level or higher).

Senior profile

The definition, indicators and behaviours are designed to allow applicants to demonstrate their senior profile.

Definition

An individual with advanced responsibilities who is recognised for their impact and career progression within the profession.

Indicators

Applicants must be able to demonstrate their responsibility for:

- Leadership
- Managing people (level, numbers)
- Managing resources (extent, amount, type)

In addition, the following elements of their career may indicate their seniority:

- Position in the organisation structure
- Decision making (level, impact)
- International dimension
- Client base (type, profile)
- Recognition from peers, media, professional bodies, or industry stakeholders

Note: This list is not exhaustive. Applicants may identify other indicators relevant to their career.

Behaviours

With their senior profile applicants should be able to demonstrate how they:

- pursue opportunities to develop the industry and profession
- advocate best practice standards
- take responsibility to deliver professionalism
- act with integrity to promote responsible business.

Note: They are required to demonstrate at least one behaviour.

RICS pathway and competencies

In addition to the experience and senior profile requirements, applicants must demonstrate they are working within an RICS pathway and can provide evidence of the required competencies.

Senior professional competencies

Applicants are also required to demonstrate three senior professional competencies to Level 2. Full guidance on these competencies are on the next page.

Senior professional competencies

Competency

Level 1

Level 2

Leadership

This competency covers the characteristics and behaviour of leaders. Candidates should be aware of the alternative styles of leadership and motivation. Candidates should have an understanding of how these techniques can be applied in their area of practice.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the characteristics and behaviour of a leader. Examples of knowledge comprised within this level are:

- The different styles of leadership
- The different motivation theories
- Effective organisational design and communication strategies
- The climate necessary for the creation of high performing teams.

Provide evidence of application of your role as a leader appropriate to your area of practice. Examples of activities and knowledge comprised within this level are:

- How leadership and motivation theories can be applied in practice
- How organisational design and communication strategies can affect leadership
- The ingredients necessary to create high performing teams.

Managing people

This competency covers the principles and practice of managing people. Candidates should be aware of the skills required to manage people. Candidates should have an understanding of the appropriate application of these skills.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles and practice of managing people. Examples of activities and knowledge comprised within this level are:

- Human resource management legislation and techniques
- Effective organisational design and communication strategies
- The climate and culture necessary for the creation of high performing teams.

Provide evidence of the application of the skills required to manage people. Examples of activities and knowledge comprised within this level are:

- The principles of human resource legislation
- Applying human resource techniques
- Effecting improved human resource performance
- How use of effective organisational design and communication strategies improves human resource performance
- How climate and culture affect human resource performance.

Managing resources

This competency is about managing the effective use, allocation and costing of resources (not including human resources).

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the resources required and their cost for the effective operation of a business. Examples of knowledge comprised within this level are:

- Types of resources required
- How to manage financial resources
- Accounting techniques
- Budgeting techniques
- Forecasting techniques
- Methods for obtaining resources and monitoring their use
- Personal resource management
- Costing of resources
- Relationship between cost and value of resources.

Provide evidence of the application in your area of practice, giving reasoned advice on the most effective use, allocation and cost of resources. Examples of activities and knowledge comprised within this level are:

- Setting financial objectives
- Constructing a budget
- Monitoring and managing financial resources
- Setting personal objectives
- Preparing reports and recommendations for the use and allocation of resources.

Submission

You will have the following information on which to base the interview.

Application details

The application details include:

- Qualifications
- Professional body memberships (if any)
- Employment history
- Statement on senior profile
- Organisation chart or description of the organisation structure (in context of applicant's role).

This will provide you with an overview of the type and level of work the applicant does.

Declared competencies

A list of the competencies and levels the applicant has selected – you should assess only against this. It will allow you to begin to identify areas of questioning.

Record of continuing professional development (CPD)

The record of CPD will add to your understanding of the applicant's training and experience and will also give you ideas for areas of questioning in the interview.

The applicant must provide a record of CPD from the previous 12 months that meets the requirements set by RICS Regulation. This must amount to at least 20 hours of learning activities – visit [rics.org/cpd](https://www.rics.org/cpd) for more details.

Case studies

Applicants will submit three case studies (1,000-1,500 words each) based on projects they have worked on. They are recommended to select projects in which they have played a leading role in terms of strategy, management, decision making, problem-solving and client relationship management.

The project could be related to a technical or professional service for a client or an internal or external activity/initiative for the applicant's employer/business.

If candidates have worked in more than one country, they must submit at least one case study on a project in the country in which they are being assessed. The applicant's involvement in each project must be within three years of their application for final assessment.

Case study on senior professional competence

1000-1500 words covering a project that demonstrates experience against the leadership, managing people and managing resources competencies.

Case study on technical competence 1

1000-1500 words covering a project that demonstrates experience against a minimum of two core technical competencies selected for the pathway.

One competency must be required to Level 3.

Case study on technical competence 2

1000-1500 words covering a project that demonstrates experience against a minimum of two technical competencies (different from other case study) selected for the pathway.

Applicants are asked to include the following in each case study:

- A brief overview of the key issues
- An account of their role/personal involvement
- An outline of any problems and the experience used to resolve these problems
- A note of the outcome and successful delivery with emphasis on the role they played.

All case studies should provide evidence of the applicant's senior profile, and relevance of their experience to the pathway and the mandatory competencies, especially conduct rules, ethics and professional practice. For each case study applicants will state the technical and mandatory competencies they have demonstrated.

Conflict of interest

All RICS members are bound by their professional ethics to ensure the credibility of the final assessment process. In particular, it is important that potential conflicts of interest between assessors and applicants are properly identified and managed.

A conflict of interest arises, in the context of final assessment, where a chairman or assessor is privy to certain information or interests which could influence, or could be perceived as influencing, their decisions in relation to an applicant.

'Influences' could include friendships, loyalties to a firm, or loyalties to fellow members of an organisation. Factors of influence could include the possibility of financial gain or other advantages, whether to the individual panel member or to a person or organisation they are connected with.

There is no definitive list of situations where a conflict would arise.

The following is only to illustrate relationships which could give rise to conflict.

- friend
- acquaintance
- any family relationship (even remote)
- neighbour
- friends in common
- colleague past or present
- client
- competitor
- does business with you or your firm.

Example questions to ask yourself

- Do I or my firm have an ongoing commercial relationship with the applicant or his/her firm?
- Has there been any conflict between our firms or the applicant in the past, regarding services provided, or financial charges?
- Could the outcome of the assessment positively/negatively affect the assessors' business interests?

'Personal' versus 'Prejudicial' distinctions

There is a distinction between personal interests and prejudicial interests.

- 'Personal' interests: in certain circumstances, there may be a connection between the assessor, and the applicant, but this may not present an issue to the applicant in practice. For instance, the individuals may have met at a CPD event or know of one another in a professional capacity.
- 'Prejudicial' interests: where the assessor either stands to benefit from the outcome of an assessment interview or might otherwise be perceived as being influenced, the assessor must declare the conflict and should recuse themselves from the panel.

Before the final assessment interview

- RICS uses all reasonable endeavours to identify and avoid any obvious conflicts of interest, when selecting a panel of assessors, prior to the interview going ahead.
- Once in receipt of the candidate's final assessment documentation the chairperson and assessors should further ensure that they do not have a conflict of interest and if so declare it to RICS, who will decide whether the panel needs to change or is okay to proceed.

If you think a conflict of interest might exist you should declare this immediately and in advance of the interview. You should contact your chairperson and explain the circumstances fully. Together you need to decide whether the personal interest is 'prejudicial'. Could the interest affect your judgement? Would a member of the public reasonably think it could? If it is decided that the personal interest is not prejudicial, the interview can go ahead.

If it is decided that the personal interest is prejudicial, alternative arrangements will be made. The chairperson must inform the RICS team as soon as possible so an alternative assessor can be assigned. If it is the chairperson who has the personal interest, the other assessors should decide whether the interest is prejudicial. If they think it is, or if they cannot agree, the interview should not go ahead. Contact RICS for support and alternative arrangements will be made.

On the final assessment interview day

In the unlikely event an applicant or panel member does consider there is a conflict of interest, the chairperson should decide whether the interview should go ahead with the panel member in question OR whether the panel member should sit out of the interview. If this is only a two-personal panel and a conflict is raised on the day of the interview, then the interview will need to be deferred and rescheduled for another date.

Note: Whenever a potential conflict of interest arises please contact your local RICS office, so they can advise you.

Final assessment interview

Interview structure

Chairperson's opening and introductions	5 minutes
Applicant's personal introduction	10 minutes
Discussion of the three case studies and career, addressing the technical, mandatory and senior professional competencies Discussion of CPD [if necessary] Discussion of professional ethics [Note: Look for opportunities to discuss ethical issues throughout].	40 minutes
Closing remarks and final comments from applicant.	5 minutes
Total	60 minutes

Use of electronic equipment

You can use electronic devices to facilitate the interview and refer to a candidate's submission. However, please ensure:

- Wi-Fi is turned off.
- Silent mode is enabled.
- No recording facility is activated.
- The device is fully charged and does not require mains power.

You should position your device so it does not present a barrier between you or the candidate but ensure that the screen is not visible to the candidate.

Assessment approach

Please take account of the applicant's experience and seniority. Your task is to determine whether the applicant is competent to practise as an RICS chartered professional. You should approach the interview as a professional structured discussion.

The most important thing to bear in mind is that an applicant may not currently be doing technical work, but will often be managing others who do. Your emphasis is on the management skills.

Your questions should focus on the applicant's career experience, concentrating mostly on recent experience. The application details and case studies will be a good source of evidence for this.

Be aware that applicants are likely to have had little previous exposure to RICS terminology, so may express the concepts behind the RICS competencies in different ways: you should be prepared to adapt the way you express these concepts so that the applicant understands clearly.

Applicants may have gained experience in some technical competencies earlier in their career, and progressed to a management role. It is acceptable to judge an applicant as competent if you are satisfied that the required levels of a competency were achieved at some point in the applicant's experience.

Applicants may also have gained experience from other geographical locations. As an assessor, you will be expected to take a holistic approach

and take into consideration and ask questions on also the broader experience gained that has been submitted. 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.

Use your judgement. If you feel a level 3 question more appropriate you may start your questioning there; if the candidate answers it competently you may decide that it is unnecessary to go into detail about levels 1 and 2 and may move on to another competency.

You should be able to identify the mandatory competencies when applicants discuss their career history.

Sole practitioners

Some applicants may be in a consultancy role. An individual working as a consultant may not currently practise the same people management skills as he/she did in the former role. These applicants will normally follow the specialist assessment. However, if they choose to be assessed as senior professionals, you are entitled to take into account their management experience as long as it is in the reasonably recent past. As in all assessments, you should use your discretion in this.

Panel decision

The applicant should demonstrate technical competence (achieved at some point in their career).

You should apply the most weight to the senior professional competencies and the level of advanced responsibility the applicant performs. As a manager and leader, a senior professional applicant is in a position to set an example and dictate the tone of an organisation or other colleagues. Ethics are therefore of vital importance and you must ensure you cover this in your decision.

Your decision should be based broadly on the following priorities.

Senior professional competencies and senior profile	50%
Technical pathway competencies and mandatory competencies	25%
Ethics and professionalism	25%

Result

The result will be pass or refer. If you refer an applicant the chairperson is required to produce a referral report.

The RICS APC assessor manual and chairperson supplement guide provide guidance on writing referral reports: please contact RICS if you need more information.

If the applicant has been referred, the chairperson should cover the following:

- Explain why the referral decision was reached
- Provide guidance and advice to enable the applicant to be successful in the near future.

Any major concerns about the applicant's suitability should be discussed with RICS.

Advice and guidance should be provided and, in particular, any specific advice about presentation or interview skills. RICS will contact the applicant to discuss the next steps and send a referral pack.



Confidence through professional standards

RICS promotes and enforces the highest professional qualifications and standards in the valuation, development and management of land, real estate, construction and infrastructure. Our name promises the consistent delivery of standards – bringing confidence to markets and effecting positive change in the built and natural environments.

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