



RICS NORTHERN IRELAND



# RICS NI 'Shaping the Future' Event Insight Paper

Lets delve into the questions raised by NI members  
June 2024



## RICS NI 'Shaping the Future' in Northern Ireland Insight Paper

Please see below the response to questions sent in advance. As a number of questions submitted were QS based, we will be setting up a meeting with QS Professional Group Panel (PGP) and RICS experts to explore further feedback on standards and what action can be taken.

If you have any further questions, please send them to [uktourquestions@rics.org](mailto:uktourquestions@rics.org)

- 1) **Contractors Quantity Surveyors** - there currently is no designation for the Contractors QS. With many contracting entities having more quantity surveyors in their ranks than many private practices we believe there should be a designation created for this particular field to attract these QS's into the RICS rather than the likes of the CIOB. APC assessments and interviews should be similarly tailored to ensure that the line of assessment/questioning is relevant to that field. Have the RICS any plans to ensure this is rectified?

**ANSWER** - Although the above wasn't a question we could answer in the room, we are grateful for the time to be able to speak to the right people at RICS.

The question was taken to our Education and Qualification Standards Team who are running the Entry and assessment review, as it's clear there is an issue with the lack of pathway for Contractor QS's.

To resolve this issue, we need the help of the members, specifically QS Contractors working in NI to enable us to drill down on this further and make sure we get it right.

We are going to hold an in-person roundtable in NI within the next month or so (date TBC, invites will be sent), where we will be joined by the executive team including the head of professional practice for construction at RICS, this will be an opportunity to give all those in attendance the chance to have some frank and open conversations and enable us to better understand what is required in order to create the QS Contractor specific pathway needed, which we are committed to doing. There will be other similar F2F roundtables run across the UK to feed into this also.

- 2) **Universities** - there has been a visible downgrade of the importance of measurement over several years with students leaving with high honours degrees but little knowledge of measurement which should be the backbone of any quantity surveyors skillset. What do the RICS plan in terms of working with the major universities to ensure this is put properly back on the agenda?

**ANSWER** - Chris Alder, Senior Executive, Standards and Regulation, was present on the day and has asked his team to pick this up as part of the universities accreditation as





well as referring it to the Knowledge and Practice team. In addition, David Hourihan who is a member of Governing Council, and was at the meeting when the question was raised, went back and spoke to his QS colleagues at UCEM regarding this issue and they are arranging further training.

- 3) **APC** - will the RICS be bringing back face-to-face (F2F) Final Interview Assessments as the current model of Teams/Zoom calls is not appropriate for a professional standard assessment?

**ANSWER** - During the Covid period, all final interview assessments were moved to online, and this enabled RICS to continue to deliver its assessments. The Qualification Assessments Committee has reviewed the question of reverting back to F2F interviews and has consulted with candidates, assessors and members. As a result of this the QAC decided to maintain the current approach, particularly as it had been positive in increasing accessibility of the assessments and reduced costs for candidates and assessors.

However, we recognise that there is a strength of feeling amongst a number of its members to bring back F2F final interview assessments, which is why we have made this a key part of our Entry and Assessment Review. We would urge all of our members to take part in this extremely important consultation and you can do so by clicking [here](#)

- 4) **Publications/Services** - access to publications/ services such as ISURV and APC learning material should be covered under the annual fee if the RICS is to continue to attract new talent. Why is this charge?

**ANSWER** - All standards, guidance and practice information is available free of charge as part of our members CPD Support Pack and this includes, Modus, journal articles, podcasts and numerous webinars covering regional, regulatory and technical topics. We are looking at the future of ISURV right now and we will ensure that this feedback is inputted into that review.

With regards to Modus, we know that many members would like to see written publications made available and we are pleased to say that members will soon be able to opt in to receive printed Modus and journals. We are working on this right now with a view to bringing it in at the end of the year.

- 5) **Measurement / Cost Modelling** – if you can't measure it, you can't build it. There is an increasing lack of understanding of what is required in buildings leading to budgets being nowhere near what they should be, and inordinate amounts of risk being passed to the builder. How does the RICS propose to bridge the gap where incomplete designs



are adequately challenged before being issued to market for tender.

**ANSWER** - We have taken this feedback to the relevant Professional Group Panel (PGP) and asked them to review this.

The purpose of the PGP's is to maintain and develop the knowledge and practice of surveying and they collate market input - you can contact them via [PGP@rics.org](mailto:PGP@rics.org)

**6) Impartiality** - how can the RICS help improve the impartiality of the QS role within Client Teams?

**ANSWER** - We will reinforce this message that QS members are to remain impartial in their work, to ensure compliance with the Rules of Conduct, through our communications, training, and our standards.

**7) There is no reciprocation of RICS qualifications in Australia even though the RICS has a presence in the country. Why is this?**

**ANSWER** - RICS and a number of RICS activities are recognised in several Australian states. To expand this further, we have been working with UK Department of Business and Trade (formerly Department of International Trade, formerly Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy) to encourage reciprocity of RICS qualifications and recognition of the surveying profession. Developing and enhancing RICS recognition, and working with professional bodies in Australia, is a key part of RICS' Asia Pacific market strategy.

**8) Procurement specialist advisors to the Civil Service now tend to be lawyers and accountants. What are the RICS plans to ensure that QS's who should be at the forefront of procurement are advising and helping shape government policy and application.**

**ANSWER** - It is worth noting that there will be RICS QS members working within the 'accountants' noted in the question (for example, advisers such as EY or KPMG) and therefore there are already QS's advising Government on specific projects and/or wider policy making. Having said that, we will do more to encourage Government to seek specialist QS advice. As a result, we will be facilitating a meeting with interested members and the government to discuss how Chartered Surveyors can help government better understand the cost in public procurement.

**9) Capital Project Budgets** – do the RICS believe that there is a lack of adequate training in design gap analysis leading to the underestimating of capital projects?



**ANSWER** - We have asked the QS PGP to investigate this and to implement any changes required to our standards as a result.

As the QS PGP has taken a number of actions as a result of these questions, we are going to arrange for a follow-up Teams call with those people who are interested in the relevant specialists. This call will be to engage and hear the members feedback on the standards within QS and consider any additional support that is required.

**10) Have the RICS plans to make representation in Build UK or CLC and if not, what are the reasons?**

**ANSWER** - We are officially represented on the CLC (Construction Leadership Council) by the CIC (Construction Industry Council) chaired by Graham Watts on which RICS are a Tier 1 member – Gary Strong is the RICS staff lead who manages liaison with CIC.



## Delivering confidence

We are RICS. Everything we do is designed to effect positive change in the built and natural environments. Through our respected global standards, leading professional progression and our trusted data and insight, we promote and enforce the highest professional standards in the development and management of land, real estate, construction and infrastructure. Our work with others provides a foundation for confident markets, pioneers better places to live and work and is a force for positive social impact.

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