



MRICS Assessments

# Chairperson guide

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# Chairperson guide

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## Foreword

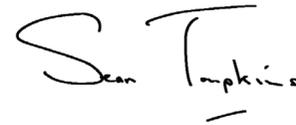
I am grateful for the contribution that you are making to RICS through committing your time and expertise to assess potential new professionals.

The MRICS Assessments are the start of a lifelong professional commitment to our standards for thousands of people each year. As an RICS chairperson 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 and credibility that the assessment process is consistent worldwide. This guide explains the criteria involved and provides guidance on how to manage the final assessment interview.

Candidates will present themselves from a variety of backgrounds, showing the diversity of the profession and that all must meet the standards required.

Thank you for your commitment to RICS and to ensuring the future of the profession. I hope you will find the role both professionally and personally rewarding.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean Tompkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Sean Tompkins**

Chief Executive

## Introduction

This guide has been written for all chairpersons who have completed RICS chairperson training. It will help you:

- understand the role and responsibilities of chairpersons in the RICS Assessments process
- support the development of new assessors
- manage the process before, during and after the interview
- agree the result of the interview, including writing referral reports.

This guide acts as a support document for your training and for future reference each and every time you act as an RICS chairperson.

### 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 a chairperson you will have access to ARC in order to download candidate submissions and details of each interview panel you are assigned to manage.

Guidance on using ARC is available at [rics.org/assessments](https://www.rics.org/assessments)

## Preparing the assessors

### Your responsibilities

As an RICS chairperson you have three core responsibilities throughout the assessment process.

1. To deliver inclusive assessments
2. To assess all declared competencies
3. To monitor assessor performance

You should consider these responsibilities at all times: before, during and after each interview.

#### Inclusive assessments

You must ensure the assessment process is unbiased.

RICS professionals represent a diverse profession, with candidates coming from a wide variety of cultures, backgrounds and specialist areas.

To ensure the the assessments are inclusive and recognise this level of diversity each interview must be approached in the same manner, covering the same level of professionalism and range of competencies as set out in the relevant pathway guide.

The result of the assessment should not be made on whether you would employ the candidate, their background, if they have previously been referred or even where they gained their degree.

The role of the assessment panel is to make a judgment on the candidates technical and professional competence as demonstrated in their submissions, presentation and performance in the interview.

### Declared competencies

You must ensure all competencies are covered in questioning during the interview. You would personally cover some of the mandatory competencies, rules of conduct and current affair questions.

If a competency is not covered in the interview you will not be able to make a decision on whether that competency has been met or not.

Where possible work with your assessors to integrate professional ethics questions into the main questioning; this will get a more natural response from the candidate. If this is not possible include it in your questioning at the end of the interview.

### Assessor performance

As the chairperson you will be naturally observing the performance of your panel members. Use these observations to provide feedback, particularly to new or less experienced assessors. If an assessor's questioning is weak talk them through how it could be improved, while always taking a supporting role. RICS is unable to audit every interview so your role as a chairperson is important to identify support needed for assessors.

Let RICS know if you have any concerns about the performance or approach of an assessor or if you feel an assessor excels and should be considered for the chairperson role.

### Pre-interview activities

For the interviews to be effective, the following three activities must be completed for all assessments.

#### Check the candidate submissions

You must check the candidate's submission for any potential conflicts of interest and to ensure they meet the requirements.

If you do not believe the submissions meet the requirements or you identify potential conflicts of interest, you must contact RICS immediately.

Candidates only come forward for assessment when they have been through a vetting stage and are approved by their counsellor (an RICS chartered professional) to proceed to interview. RICS policy is to allow candidates to proceed to interview so they are able to complete the assessment, demonstrating their competence through both assessment elements, their written submission and their performance at interview.

#### Contact the assessors

Contact panel members before the assessment day – at least one week before. This may be done by email, telephone or in person. It will provide an opportunity to

- introduce yourselves
- check there are no potential conflicts of interest
- reconfirm the objectives and criteria of the assessment the candidate is following
- discuss the candidate's background, training and experience
- reconfirm the structure and timings for

the interview

- use the questioning matrix (available to download from ARC) to decide the competencies each assessor will be covering during the interview
- coach any new assessors – ask them to share any example questions they may be thinking of asking the candidate
- ensure the assessors understand the level of competence expected of the candidate
- confirm how the final decision-making process will be conducted after the interview.

### **Meet the assessors immediately before the first interview**

Arrange for the panel to meet before the first interview. Ideally you should meet for about an hour. This provides an opportunity to revisit the points listed above and to discuss any further issues that may have arisen since the first contact. You should also confirm how you will signpost that it is time to move on from a line of questioning during the interview.

## Managing the interview

The interview will take place using video calling technology approved by RICS. Instructions on using the technology, including a tutorial and demonstration, are available separately.

### Welcome the candidate

Introduce your panel as soon as the candidate joins the video call.

Check everyone can see and hear each other.

### Ask the candidate to show you their surroundings

The candidate should complete a 360-pan of their surroundings, including the area above them and desktop/floor area in front of them. You are checking to see if the candidate has access to any support, for example books, notes, diagrams, other people, a mobile device or tablet.

If you have any concerns you should raise them with the candidate. If the candidate is able to address your concerns to your satisfaction, for example by removing any suspicious material, you can continue to proceed to the interview.

### Ask the candidate a simple opening question

This should allow them to focus their mind and reduce any nervousness.

### Ensure the candidate is ready to start the interview

Check the candidate is fit, well and ready to proceed. It is important that you do not proceed with an interview if a candidate is unwell. Seek guidance from RICS staff if required.

### Explain the interview structure

Give a brief outline of the structure of the interview as set out in **appendix 1**. Please note the difference between the APC, senior professional, specialist, and academic interviews.

### Important points to confirm with the candidate

- Any devices or materials used for the presentation should be removed from view at the end of the presentation.
- You are not allowed to record the interview.
- The time limit for the presentation is 10 minutes. You will not be interrupted during your presentation but if you exceed this I will stop you.
- The panel may view your submission during the interview and will take notes in order to reach a reasoned decision at the end.
- If there are any questions you want to come back to please let me know and make a note of them. You will be given the opportunity to make any closing comments at the end of the interview.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand any part of the interview.

### Ask the candidate to begin their presentation

**The one-hour time limit for the interview starts now.**

At the end of the presentation, thank the candidate and hand over to the first assessor to start the questioning.

### Manage time throughout the interview

Have a watch in front of you or sight of a clock.

Keep a running note of time on your notepad to ensure you keep to the agreed interview structure and make a note of any specific issue or interruptions during the interview.

Prompt the assessors if they are exceeding their time.

### Prompt the candidate as the interview progresses between each stage

This will provide the candidate with the opportunity to focus on each individual stage of the interview. It will also allow both you and the assessors to manage the time and structure of the interview.

### Draw the interview to a close

Tell the candidate that the interview is reaching the end. In the last few minutes you may allow the assessors to ask further questions – but only on areas that have already been questioned (you must not introduce new areas of questioning at this stage).

Offer the candidate the last word. This is an opportunity for them to make any additional comments or return to any question(s) they did not fully answer.

### Close the interview

Thank the candidate and confirm how the video call will end.

## Audit and quality assurance

We are committed to ensuring rigorous processes for the chartered qualification (MRICS) so that employers, clients and the public can have confidence that anyone achieving it, is competent to practise as a Chartered Surveyor.

### Use of video and microphone

The candidate must have their video and microphone on throughout the video call so you can be assured they do not have access to any support that provides, or could be perceived as providing, them with an advantage during the interview. You can request the candidate repeats the procedure showing their surroundings at any time during the interview or before the video call ends.

### Staff facilitator role

An RICS staff member trained to perform the staff facilitator role may be present on the video call. The purpose of the staff facilitator is to support the panel and candidate with the use of the video call technology. They will not participate in the interview or any pre- or post-interview discussions with the panel. Their video will be off and microphone muted for the duration of the video call unless there is a technology issue or any other unforeseen issue that requires them to intervene.

### Auditor role

An auditor trained by RICS may be present on the video call. The purpose of the auditor is to

observe the performance of the assessment panel, ensuring the process and policies for the assessment are being followed. They will not participate in the interview or any pre- or post-interview discussions about the candidate; their role is simply to observe.

As the chairperson it is your role to ensure any auditors are welcomed to your panel, the assessors are introduced and you are all prepared to share your assessment preparation work with them.

You must inform the candidate if an auditor is present: 'You will notice we have an Auditor in the room today, they are here to audit us as the assessment panel, ensuring the process and policies for the assessment are being followed. Please act as if they are not present.'

The auditor will use their video and microphone to introduce themselves before the interview starts; their video will be off and microphone muted for the duration of the interview unless they are instructed otherwise by you or the staff facilitator.

At the end of the post-interview discussion the auditor will provide you with feedback. They are there to help and advise as well as provide quality assurance of the assessments. The auditor report will also be used if the candidate appeals the result of their assessment.

## Technology issues

We recognise that issues related to the use of video call technology may occur. It is your responsibility to manage these issues to ensure the integrity of the interview.

If there are technology issues, or other unforeseen issues related to the use of technology, that impact on the standard of the interview, you must pause the interview. Allow the participants (candidate or assessor) to resolve the issue or rejoin the video call, as appropriate.

Keep a record of any issues that occur and how long the interview was paused. Any issue that requires the interview to be paused must be recorded as an interruption. You must extend the time of the interview to account for each interruption and to achieve the full 60 minutes as allocated for the interview.

Issues may occur that do not impact on the standard of the interview and it may not be necessary to pause the interview. You must record these issues, and their duration, but they do not need to be recorded as an interruption.

Use your judgement to decide the best course of action. If you are unsure you can pause the interview and request support from the staff facilitator. Any intervention by the staff facilitator would be recorded as an approved interruption. The staff facilitator will take over at this point and instruct everyone what to do next.

### Interruptions over 10 minutes

If the total duration of interruptions is over 10 minutes, you should consider the option of abandoning the interview. Use your discretion: consider the impact of the interruptions on the performance of the interview. If you decide to abandon, pause the interview and prompt the staff facilitator to join the video call. Advise the candidate of your decision and seek confirmation from the candidate that they accept this.

## Agreeing the result

### Allow the assessors to reflect on the interview and complete the marksheet

Make sure as a panel you take five minutes of silent reflection before any discussion. During this period each panel member will complete their marksheet. While the assessors are completing this process, you should also consider the candidate's performance. You can leave your marksheet blank until after discussion with the panel. Your marksheet must be completed to represent the panel's final view.

### Lead discussion on the candidate's performance and competence

You should encourage the assessors to contribute equally to the discussion. Your objective will be to combine the views of each assessor and reach a majority decision.

If assessors believe there are deficiencies in the candidate's competence, you should review these together against the criteria in the pathway guide. Ask the assessor to state when they identified the deficiency – was it in the submission and was it evident through the questions asked? Each deficiency identified must be evidenced. However, be prepared to take guidance from the assessors on professional or technical areas not within your expertise.

The discussion should always be controlled. Where there is a disagreement you should try to guide the assessors towards consensus.

During the discussion you should make notes on the assessors' comments to help you write the referral report if the candidate is referred.

Discussions must always take place in private and only with the panel members and appropriate RICS staff or an auditor.

### Be prepared to take responsibility

Consensus is best, but if two assessors cannot agree you must make the final decision.

### Be prepared to accept the majority decision

In a three-person panel, if the two assessors agree on their decisions, and you disagree, you are obliged to accept the majority view. In a two-person panel, if you cannot reach agreement with the assessor, the assessment must be declared null and void and RICS will notify the candidate and arrange a new assessment.

### Write the referral report, if the candidate is referred

It is your responsibility to write the referral report but it must be agreed with the assessors and based on the post-interview discussion.

### Collate and upload documents

You must collate all documents and retain these confidentially for the next 3 months. Results must be uploaded into ARC on the day of the interview. Referral reports must be uploaded 7 days after the interview.

### Outside the assessments

You are the main contact for any queries relating to the assessments you chair. RICS staff may need to contact you before or after the interview.

Candidates have a right to appeal referral decisions. If a candidate appeals, RICS staff will contact you.

## Writing referral reports

The report should set out any deficiencies in the candidate's experience, written documentation, and presentation. Most importantly it must contain clear recommendations for the candidate on how the deficiencies can be remedied.

The referral report must relate directly to the competencies and experience that they demonstrated in the submission, presentation and interview. Set out any deficiencies in the candidates training, written documentation, presentation and any shortcomings in the interview.

Individual elements of the final assessment, such as the written documentation and the presentation, are important but if you are commenting on the content, style or presentation of these items, you should ensure your comments relate to the competencies. For example, a poor quality of written submission could be referred to in the context of the competency 'communication and negotiation'.

Do not record a pass verdict against a competency: if you are satisfied that a competency has been achieved, you should not mention it in your report.

You are encouraged to provide positive reinforcement that is not specific to a competency. You should do this wherever possible; giving candidates positive comments will encourage them to continue to pursue the RICS qualification. Examples include: the candidate's enthusiasm, readiness to discuss views, confidence and professional demeanour.

The referral report is purely for guidance for the candidate and their counselor to understand

why they were referred and what needs to be completed to remedy the deficiencies identified. The report will not be shared with any future assessment panels as each interview must cover all areas of competence and professionalism and the candidate must be assessed on the same basis whether first or third interview.

## Using the referral report template

Download the latest referral report template to enable you to produce consistent competency-based referral reports.

Using the headings on the template, list the candidate's deficient competencies under the appropriate section with examples from the interview.

You must explain how the candidate did not meet the required level and offer the candidate guidance on ways of achieving it. Your role is to advise them of the deficiency and how they can progress; the candidate together with their counsellor will use your referral report to decide exactly how to address the deficiency.

A suggested way of phrasing comments could be

- **Level 1** – When questioned you were unable to provide a satisfactory response in relation to ... . Your response did not provide evidence of a level 1 knowledge and understanding in this area.
- **Level 2** – The panel considers that you were not able to give adequate examples of experience, when the panel attempted

to discuss ... with you from your experience record.

- **Level 3** – The panel discussed with you the advice you gave on ... . Unfortunately your answer was unsatisfactory because ... .

These suggested phrases are for guidance only. You must ensure you make your assessment personal to the candidate. You are addressing them directly so write 'you' rather than 'the candidate'.

Always think: 'how would I feel if I was to receive this referral report?' Remember the quality of the report is a reflection of your professionalism.

### Some examples

The following are examples of the sort of deficiencies that commonly occur in the documentation or the interview.

- 1 The case study is not presented as a report, is well below or greatly exceeds the 3000 word count, the content does not demonstrate the required competencies or their own direct involvement.
- 2 The candidate's presentation is based upon a project different to the one referred to in the case study.
- 3 The candidate is unable to demonstrate knowledge or experience relating to their declared competencies. This may be in one or a range of competencies. The deficiency may be from levels 1, 2 or 3. However, panels should consider the final assessment holistically and respond proportionately to the deficiencies. For example, they should not refer a candidate who is deficient in just one level 1 competency.
- 4 The candidate makes a fundamental error

when answering questions on Rules of Conduct or Ethics.

## On completion of the referral report

When you have completed the referral report, upload this against the candidate assessment record on ARC. Check you are uploading the correct report to the candidate's record.

RICS staff do not review or amend your reports before they go to the candidate so please ensure you are happy with the contents and standard of the report.

## Important points to remember

- The aim is to encourage referred candidates to develop and reapply for final assessment.
- Treat all candidates equally.
- Do not offer extra help to individuals if you would not be prepared to offer the same to any other candidate in the same circumstances. Any request for extra feedback should be communicated through RICS staff.
- Referral reports should be written as though you are addressing the candidate directly, using 'you' and 'your' throughout instead of 'the candidate'.
- Be careful when using abbreviations. Don't

assume the candidate will know exactly what you are referring to.

- The report should contain constructive criticism and guidance. You should cover all deficiencies, however minor.
- Your report will be seen by others, such as the supervisor/counsellor. Ensure you do not include any disapproving comments about any individual or organisation.

By following this guidance, your reports are more likely to be viewed positively by candidates. RICS staff may need to liaise with you to adapt your feedback where it does not comply with this guidance.

# Appendix 1 – Interview timings

## Assessment of Professional Competence [APC]

Stage	Duration [minutes]	Actions
Chairperson's opening and introductions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome the candidate</li> <li>Check everyone can see and hear each other.</li> <li>Introduce the panel</li> <li>Ask the candidate to show you their surroundings</li> <li>Ask a simple opening question</li> <li>Ensure the candidate is ready to start (fit and well)</li> <li>Explain the interview structure</li> <li>Ask the candidate to start the presentation.</li> </ul>
Candidate's presentation on case study	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe the presentation and communication skills</li> <li>Maintain interest and attention</li> <li>Avoid interrupting.</li> </ul>
Questions on the presentation	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank candidate</li> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin on the presentation</li> <li>Ask first question [optional]</li> <li>Handover to first assessor – keep time</li> <li>Handover to second assessor – keep time</li> <li>Ask any further questions, if necessary.</li> </ul>
Discussion on overall experience including CPD, technical competencies, Rules of Conduct and professional practice.	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin on competencies</li> <li>Ask first question [optional]</li> <li>Handover to first assessor – keep time</li> <li>Handover to second assessor – keep time</li> <li>Ask any further questions, if necessary.</li> </ul>
Chairperson's areas of questioning may include professional and technical matters, CPD, Rules of Conduct, mandatory competencies; and close of interview	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin on Conduct rules, ethics and professional practice [Note: this is not the only place where ethics will be covered; you should look for opportunities to cover ethics throughout the interview]</li> <li>Ask questions</li> <li>Invite further questions from assessors [only on areas that have already been questioned]</li> <li>Offer the candidate the opportunity to make any closing comments</li> <li>Draw the interview to a close; Thank the candidate and direct them out of the room..</li> </ul>

## Senior Professional Assessment (SPA)

Stage	Duration [minutes]	Actions
Chairperson's opening and introductions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome the candidate</li> <li>Check everyone can see and hear each other.</li> <li>Introduce the panel</li> <li>Ask the candidate to show you their surroundings</li> <li>Ask a simple opening question</li> <li>Ensure the candidate is ready to start (fit and well)</li> <li>Explain the interview structure</li> <li>Ask the candidate to start the presentation.</li> </ul>
Candidate's presentation on senior profile	<b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe the presentation and communication skills</li> <li>Maintain interest and attention</li> <li>Avoid interrupting.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of the three case studies and career, addressing the technical, mandatory and senior professional competencies</li> <li>Discussion of CPD (if necessary)</li> <li>Discussion of professional ethics; and close of interview</li> </ul>	<b>50</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank candidate</li> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin:</li> <li>Ask first question [optional]</li> <li>Handover to first assessor – keep time</li> <li>Handover to second assessor – keep time</li> <li>Ask any further questions, if necessary.</li> <li>[Note: Look for opportunities to discuss ethical issues throughout]</li> <li>Offer the candidate the opportunity to make any closing comments</li> <li>Draw the interview to a close</li> <li>Thank the candidate and direct them out of the room..</li> </ul>

Approximate weightings:  
 Senior professional competencies [50%]  
 Technical and mandatory competencies [25%]  
 Ethics, rules of conduct and professionalism [25%]

## Specialist Assessment

Stage	Duration [minutes]	Actions
Chairperson's opening and introductions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome the candidate</li> <li>Check everyone can see and hear each other.</li> <li>Introduce the panel</li> <li>Ask the candidate to show you their surroundings</li> <li>Ask a simple opening question</li> <li>Ensure the candidate is ready to start (fit and well)</li> <li>Explain the interview structure</li> <li>Ask the candidate to start the presentation.</li> </ul>
Candidate's presentation on specialist profile	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe the presentation and communication skills</li> <li>Maintain interest and attention</li> <li>Avoid interrupting.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of the three case studies and career, addressing the technical and mandatory competencies and the candidate's specialist area of work</li> <li>Discussion of CPD (if necessary)</li> <li>Discussion of professional ethics</li> </ul>	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank candidate</li> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin:</li> <li>Ask first question (optional)</li> <li>Handover to first assessor – keep time</li> <li>Handover to second assessor – keep time</li> <li>Ask any further questions, if necessary.</li> <li>(Note: Look for opportunities to discuss ethical issues throughout)</li> <li>Offer the candidate the opportunity to make any closing comments</li> <li>Draw the interview to a close</li> <li>Thank the candidate and direct them out of the room..</li> </ul>

Approximate weightings:  
 Specialist area of work and specialist profile (50%)  
 Technical and mandatory competencies (25%)  
 Ethics, rules of conduct and professionalism (25%)

## Academic Assessment

Stage	Duration [minutes]	Actions
Chairperson's opening and introductions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome the candidate</li> <li>Check everyone can see and hear each other.</li> <li>Introduce the panel</li> <li>Ask the candidate to show you their surroundings</li> <li>Ask a simple opening question</li> <li>Ensure the candidate is ready to start (fit and well)</li> <li>Explain the interview structure</li> <li>Ask the candidate to start the presentation.</li> </ul>
Candidate's presentation on academic profile and one of the four items of evidence	<b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe the presentation and communication skills</li> <li>Maintain interest and attention</li> <li>Avoid interrupting.</li> </ul>
Questions on the presentation	<b>15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank candidate</li> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin on the presentation</li> <li>Ask first question [optional]</li> <li>Handover to first assessor – keep time</li> <li>Handover to second assessor – keep time</li> <li>Ask any further questions, if necessary.</li> </ul>
Discussion on overall experience and full submission in relation to applicant's academic role, including CPD, technical competencies, Rules of Conduct and professional practice.	<b>25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin on competencies</li> <li>Ask first question [optional]</li> <li>Handover to first assessor – keep time</li> <li>Handover to second assessor – keep time</li> <li>Ask any further questions, if necessary.</li> </ul>
Chairperson's areas of questioning may include professional and technical matters, CPD, Rules of Conduct, mandatory competencies	<b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prompt candidate that questioning will begin on Conduct rules, ethics and professional practice [Note: this is not the only place where ethics will be covered; you should look for opportunities to cover ethics throughout the interview]</li> <li>Ask questions</li> <li>Invite further questions from assessors [only on areas that have already been questioned].</li> <li>Offer the candidate the opportunity to make any closing comments</li> <li>Draw the interview to a close; Thank the candidate and direct them out of the room.</li> </ul>

## 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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