SOCIETY OF CHARTERED SURVEYORS IRELAND

RICS/SCSI Education and Training

Assessment of Professional Competence

Candidates Guide – Graduate Route 3

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Contents

Section One

Introduction

RICS/SCSI offers this route to membership to give applicants exemption for relevant experience. If you have been working in the surveying sector, you should have been gaining the competencies you need for professional practice. A new graduate needs structured training to convert academic learning into practical competence. RICS/SCSI recognises, however, that the longer your experience, the shorter the period of structured training needed. If you have ten years' experience as a Graduate route 3 applicant (in addition to your RICS/SCSI accredited degree) you can come forward immediately for final assessment. SCSI does not require you to undertake any structured training provided you have met the required competencies. Your application must be sponsored by an SCSI member.

In order to apply, you must download the APC templates at www.scsi.ie and follow the links for final assessment. Download the templates and read the instructions carefully before starting to fill them out.

About you

- You will have a minimum of 10 years' surveying experience and will currently be in relevant employment.

- You must hold an RICS/SCSI accredited degree. If you are in doubt whether your degree is accredited please check with the SCSI Education and Membership Department by calling 01-6445500

Entry requirements Graduate Route 3	Training period	Final assessment submissions
For applicants with 10+ years' experience. RICS/SCSI accredited degree.	Straight to final assessment.	'Signed' declaration Mandatory and technical competency achievement & experience records. Professional development records for the previous 12 months (48 hours) Critical analysis (3 000 words). Résumé detailing the relevant mandatory and technical skills required by the APC pathway (submitted to SCSI at enquiry stage).

Section Two

The APC pathways

The Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) is the process by which SCSI ensures your suitability for membership.

Although Graduate route 3 applicants have considerable experience, SCSI needs to be assured that an appropriate level of technical competence has been achieved during the applicant's career.

One of the following pathways must be selected:
Arts and antiques
Building control
Building surveying
Commercial property practice
Environment
Facilities management
Geomatics (including hydrographic)
Housing management and development
Machinery and business assets
Management consultancy
Minerals and waste management
Planning and development
Project management
Property finance and investment
Quantity surveying and construction
Research
Residential property practice
Residential survey and valuation
Rural
Taxation allowances
Valuation.

Each pathway has mandatory and technical (core and optional) competencies.

The "APC Requirements and competencies" guide outlines the requirements of each pathway. There are also specific Pathway Guides which explain the competencies in more detail in the context of your chosen pathway. All the guides can be viewed at www.scsi.ie. Please read the relevant pathway guide as it is your responsibility to follow this guidance.

The competencies explained

A competency is a statement of the capabilities required to perform a specific role and is based upon behaviours, knowledge, skills and attitudes. RICS/SCSI competencies, detailed in the "APC Requirements and competencies" guide, are written in levels of expertise.

Level 1 – is about technical knowledge and understanding.

Level 2 – is about the application of knowledge and understanding.

Level 3 – is about giving reasoned advice and/or depth of technical knowledge.

Each pathway requires you to demonstrate three types of competency:

• mandatory competencies - personal, interpersonal and business skills common to all pathways

• core competencies - which are compulsory and relate to the primary skills of your chosen pathway

• optional competencies - which are selected by you from the list for your chosen APC pathway.

Section Three

Your sponsor

Your application must be sponsored by a member of SCSI. He or she must be satisfied that you have achieved the required levels in all the competencies needed for your chosen APC pathway. Your sponsor may not have first hand knowledge of your standard in all the chosen competencies; you may have achieved some of them a number of years ago, and possibly in a different job.

Your first step will be to complete your record of progress (achievement record) by listing the core competencies for your chosen APC pathway, and the optional competencies you have selected. Against each one, record the level you need to achieve. You should then complete your record of experience, which will set these competencies in the context of your career history.

You will need them to spend some time discussing the competencies with your sponsor, referring to the Requirements and Competencies Guide and the Pathway Guide and explaining how and when, in the course of your professional experience, you have achieved them. If your sponsor is reasonably satisfied that you have achieved all the necessary competencies he or she should confirm this as required by countersigning the submission documentation.

Please copy the next section **only** (note for graduate route sponsors) and give it to your sponsor to help him or her prepare for the process.

Note for Graduate Route 3 sponsors
The person who has given you this note is applying for RICS/SCSI membership and is asking you to sponsor his/her application.

What is Graduate Route 3?

This note is part of the guidance note for applicants aiming to join RICS/SCSI through Graduate Route 3, a route to membership designed for those with an RICS/SCSI accredited degree and ten years' surveying experience or more.

Applicants must be sponsored by an SCSI member. They are interviewed by a panel of SCSI assessors and, if successful, will become RICS/SCSI members straight away without the need for any further training.

For each of the professional disciplines covered by RICS/SCSI there is a 'pathway' for aspiring members. The pathway consists of all the competencies the applicant must achieve. The pathways are set out, and the competencies defined, in the guide "APC Requirements and Competencies". There is also a specific Pathway Guide for each of the pathways, which explains in more detail how to interpret the competencies in the context of the pathway concerned.

What is required of you as a sponsor?

As a sponsor you must know the applicant's work. You should preferably be a colleague of the applicant, and ideally should be his/her line manager.

You will in effect conduct a preliminary interview with the applicant, and you will sponsor the application only if you are reasonably satisfied that s/he meets the essential requirements to go forward for assessment.

The applicant will prepare
- a schedule of the competencies s/he must achieve and the level required in each one

- a detailed list showing how and when during the course of his/her career the competencies have been achieved.

The applicant should provide you with copies of the competency definitions and the guidance that goes with them, and then spend some time with you discussing the evidence with you. For some of the competencies, you should have enough recent knowledge of the applicant's work to be able to judge from first-hand experience. However, applicants may tell you that some of the competencies were achieved in the past, perhaps ten years ago or more. For these competencies, you will have to form a judgment based on what the applicant says – you may feel you have to ask some probing questions to assure yourself that the applicant's experience is of sufficiently high quality. You should concentrate most on the level 3 competencies, as these are likely to be the main focus of the final assessment interview.

If you are reasonably satisfied that the applicant can claim to have met the competency requirements for the pathway, you should countersign the application. Please remember, when you do this, that you are signing in your capacity as an RICS/SCSI member, and that the RICS/SCSI Rules of Conduct call for you to act with integrity at all times.

Section Four

What SCSI will consider

RICS/SCSI will consider whether you meet its requirements for membership by ensuring that you

- have applied your theoretical knowledge through professional experience

- act in accordance with RICS/SCSI Rules of Conduct, possess the highest level of professional integrity and objectivity and recognise your duties to clients, employers and the community.

In addition, you must demonstrate that you

- are a good ambassador for the profession, RICS/SCSI and your employer

- are aware of the professional and commercial implications of your work

- understand your clients' and employer's objectives

- have an up-to-date knowledge of legal and technical matters relevant to the work you do and the law of the region or country in which you practise.

The process

Step 1
If you feel you meet the criteria and would like to apply for the Graduate route 3 to membership, contact SCSI and provide a copy of your résumé.

Step 2
SCSI will review your experience and qualifications and will let you know, in writing, whether you meet the criteria for this route. If so you will be enrolled by SCSI; if not, SCSI will inform you of your other membership options.

Step 3
Once you are enrolled, go to www.scsi.ie and follow the links for Graduate Route 3.

Step 4
Arrange your sponsorship interview, as set out in section three of this guide. When you have completed this, ensure your sponsor signs the submission documentation.

Step 5
SCSI provides specific dates on which you send in your submission documentation for final assessment. Once your application and submissions have been checked, you will be invited to attend a final assessment interview and advised of the date, time and venue. The interview panel consists of at least two experienced SCSI members who will discuss your experience and form a judgment on your suitability for membership of RICS/SCSI.

Section Five

Preparing for your interview

Critical analysis

The critical analysis is a written report of a recent project or projects (undertaken up to two years before application) with which you have been involved. It must provide a critical appraisal of the project together with an outline of your learning outcomes. This provides important evidence of the competencies you have achieved. The critical analysis must give detailed evidence of your ability to work competently and to apply the knowledge relevant to your APC pathway.

Your choice of project is very important and must reflect your specific APC pathway. You may be working for a large organisation where you have been involved with a complex instruction or project. Your role and contribution could be an appropriate topic. Alternatively, the instruction or project may be more straightforward and not of great financial value. It may simply be typical of the work with which you have been involved. Ideally your critical analysis should focus on one aspect of your work. You may want to use a number of projects to highlight an issue or aspect of your work and the project may include work undertaken outside your country of practice.

You are not necessarily expected to be running the project. It is your involvement or role in the team that you must outline, analyse and comment on. If the project has been running for some time, you may not have been involved from the start, so your involvement may not have been continuous, or the project may not be finished when you prepare your critical analysis. In this latter case, you should provide a prognosis of the outcome. If you know the outcome between sending in your critical analysis and your interview, include it in your presentation.

Critical analysis format and content

The critical analysis must be:

- word processed

- a maximum of 3 000 words (excluding the appendices)

- signed and dated by you.

You must explain not only the project itself but the processes you followed and the rationale behind your decision-making. Your focus must be on analysing the project: do not simply provide a summary of what it involved. It is quality not quantity that counts. Appendices should support your report, not add to or expand on it.

You should include the following four aspects.

Key issues: your project may be complex. If you select too many key issues you will skim the surface instead of providing a detailed analysis. Be selective. Think about the depth required so you can provide evidence that you fully understand the requirements of the various competencies involved. There may be one key issue that can form the basis of your critical analysis.

Options: before proposing a solution to a client, you should consider all the options, demonstrating your ability to think logically, laterally and professionally. You must demonstrate that you have genuinely considered the options and give reasons why some options may not be feasible.

Your proposed solution: you must give a detailed account of the reasons supporting your adopted course of action. Relate your reasons to the technical competencies. Think about all the aspects that support your decision, for example client care, financial, technical, professional, Rules of Conduct, ethics and conflicts of interest.

Conclusion and analysis of experience gained: most importantly, your conclusion must provide a critical appraisal of the outcomes, with a statement of what you learned from the experience. This part of your report should comprise approximately one third of the total number of words. You should look at the project, consider what has gone well and identify areas for improvement. You can then plan how you might progress the next time you carry out a similar task.

The assessors will use your critical analysis as a starting point to question you beyond what you actually did, probing your understanding of your project's wider issues. You will need to think about these processes while you are writing your critical analysis, so that you are well prepared for the interview. Focus on matters that cross the whole project.

Points to watch

Confidentiality: you must ensure you have your employer's and client's consent to disclose any sensitive details in your critical analysis. If you cannot get this consent you should disguise facts that might otherwise make the project identifiable.

(**Note**: the information contained in your critical analysis will be treated in the strictest confidence by the panel of assessors.)

References: extracts from legislation, case law and other sources should not be quoted at length but essential references must be given.

Total word count: you must include a word count at the end. You can include notes on what you have included in the count.

If using photographs and plans, they should be no larger than A4 size when folded.

Finally: your critical analysis must reflect your abilities in the following areas:

- written and graphic communication

- professional standards of organisation and presentation

- analysis, reflective thought and problem solving

- learning from experience gained.

Professional Development

Lifelong learning/professional development is the systematic updating and enhancement of skills, knowledge and competence that takes place throughout your working life. It should be closely linked to your current work. You are required to provide proof of 48 hours' professional development for the previous 12 months. This can be taken from various sources including attending conferences, meetings or seminars, completing an academic course or informal reading. It is for you, as a professional, to judge what is appropriate.

During the interview, part of the discussion will focus on the lifelong learning that you have been involved in during the last 12 months.

The résumé of experience

You should submit an updated version of your résumé, which will then be provided to the assessment panel. Please remember to relate your past 10 years' experience to the individual competencies so that the panel can decide whether or not you meet the requirements of your chosen APC pathway.

Conduct rules, ethics and professional practice

There will be a major emphasis on professional practice in the interview.

If you are a member of another professional body you will already be well versed in the subject. However, you must take time to understand it fully from an RICS/SCSI standpoint.

You must ensure you download the Rules of Conduct and associated guidance from www.scsi.ie, and study them thoroughly.

Mandatory and Technical Achievement Record - Concentrating on the key competencies

You must provide the assessors with evidence to support experience across the full range and depth of competencies of your chosen APC pathway. Some of this evidence may be drawn from the earlier part of your career, possibly up to 10 years ago.

You may not have achieved all the required competencies of the APC pathway to the required levels in the last two years. It is acceptable if those requirements have been met in the last 10 years. It will not be possible or appropriate to test the full 10+ years' of experience in a 60 minute interview. The panel will therefore assess which competencies are covered adequately in your written submissions and identify where further questioning is appropriate. You may, however, have to answer questions about any of your competencies to convince the panel of your knowledge and experience.

You will need to consider your submissions carefully so that you identify which competencies can be evidenced by your résumé and critical analysis. Where possible you should identify at what point in your career these competencies were achieved. Your sponsorship interview will have helped you in this process. This approach will be particularly relevant to the

core and optional competencies. The assessment panel will be concentrating mainly on the level 3 competencies.

In the interview you will be invited to make a presentation on the basis of your critical analysis. This is an important opportunity for you to make an impression. You must not exceed the allotted time, so practise the presentation to ensure that it takes no more than 10 minutes. Prepare any visual materials carefully and make sure you know exactly how you are going to use them. Anticipate the questions that are likely to arise and prepare your answers.

There will be no equipment available to use for your presentation. For instance, if you require a laptop or flipchart pad, you will need to provide your own resources. Laptops must not be plugged in, and can only be run by battery, which is your responsibility.

Structure of the interview

The interview structure is as follows: • Chairman's opening and introductions	3-4 minutes
• Applicant's presentation on critical analysis	10 minutes
• Questions on the presentation	10 minutes
• Discussion on overall experience including lifelong learning, competencies, Rules of Conduct and professional practice	25 minutes
• Chairman's areas of questioning may include professional and technical matters, Rules of Conduct, mandatory competencies, lifelong learning	10 minutes
• Chairman to close.	1-2 minutes
Total	60 minutes

Notification of outcome

You will be notified by SCSI of your results 4-6 weeks after your interview. It is your responsibility to check SCSI has your up-to-date contact details.

You will receive either a pass or a referral. If you are successful you will be awarded professional membership of RICS/SCSI (MRICS/MSCSI). If you receive a referral you will be informed of the next steps to be taken.

For security and data protection reasons, SCSI will not give results to a third party.

Section Six

Referral requirements

If you are unsuccessful, you may re-apply for final assessment at the next session. When you apply for further interview after being referred, you will be obliged to submit a fresh copy of the submission documentation. You will complete the referral checklist, declaration and referred candidate's record, and your application for re-assessment must be signed by an SCSI member (preferably your sponsor).

Your right to appeal

If you are referred, you may appeal against that decision. You will have 21 working days from the date of the confirmation of results letter from SCSI, to make an appeal. Appeals will be considered only if they are on one of the following grounds:

- administrative or procedural matters: for example, if the panel was not provided with the correct information

- questioning and testing of competence that has concentrated too much outside the main areas for Graduate route 3 applicants or outside the APC pathway

- any form of discrimination.

A successful appeal does not mean you automatically become a member of RICS/SCSI. It means that the referral is void and you are given a fresh interview as soon as possible. For full details of the appeal process and fees, please see www.scsi.ie
If you need any help please contact:
SCSI Education and Membership Department
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