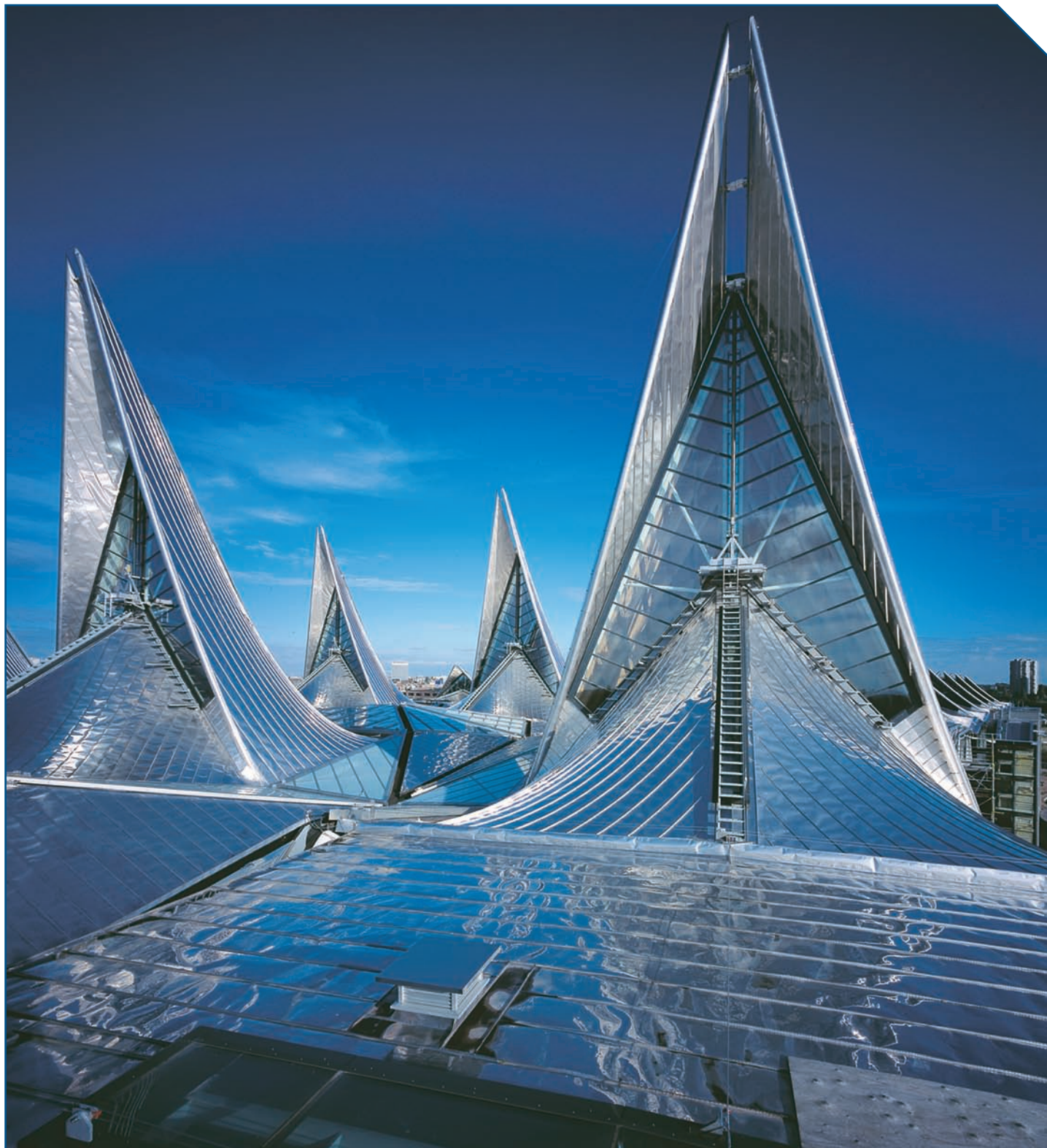


Policy and guidance on university partnerships

April 2008



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Policy and guidance on university partnerships

April 2008

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1 Introduction

This document is in two distinct sections: one detailing policy and the other providing guidance on the implementation of RICS/university partnerships throughout the world.

The present policies are subject to review and universities and other interested organisations will be notified accordingly, and consulted as appropriate.

Responsibility for implementing RICS policies for course accreditation lies with the International Education Standards Board (IESB) which reports to the RICS Standards Board. There are five Regional ESBs: Africa, India and the Middle East; Americas; Asia Pacific; Continental Europe; UK.



2 Policy

2.0 The policy framework

2.1 Background

Up to 1994, RICS ran its own professional examinations. However, from the early 1990s there has been a progressive change towards qualification through accredited courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

2.2 Status of the Profession

Elevation of the status of the profession

Richard Lay's RICS Presidential Address 'Agenda for Change' in 1998 articulated a clear vision for the future of the chartered surveyor profession to elevate the status of the RICS qualification.

Vision for high quality education

The Education Task Force set up and reporting in 'Investing in Futures' in 1999 produced a vision for 2010. This is summarised below:

- a clear attractive image of the career opportunities offered by the RICS qualification at professional and technical levels
- access to RICS membership for the best graduates in all disciplines
- strong partnerships between RICS and a limited number of recognised centres of academic excellence throughout the world characterised by:
 - i) highly competitive entry to courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level
 - ii) an appropriate range of curricula at undergraduate and postgraduate level
 - iii) excellent teaching faculties working closely with practice
 - iv) international standards of research by focused teams
 - v) increased freedom for selected universities to develop courses and methods of delivery at undergraduate, postgraduate and post qualification levels
 - vi) attractive courses promoted by RICS.

2.3 Ethics, professional identity and accountability

The elevation of the status of the profession depends not only on high quality education, but also on high standards of professional conduct.

Membership of RICS places upon every member responsibility for the delivery of 'surveying services' within an ethical context and subject to specific core values. These values underpin all RICS conduct regulations and requirements. By following a code of professional ethics, members resolve the inevitable conflicts between the interests of the professional, the client and the community at large.

Those seeking membership of RICS must demonstrate their ability to operate as technically skilled practitioners and their commitment to meet high ethical standards which ensure the integrity of the profession is maintained.

2.4 Partnership

Progressively throughout the world RICS has partnerships with universities offering accredited courses. This represents the coming together of a university and RICS to establish common goals and then to work together to achieve these goals. RICS has devolved much of what was previously controlled centrally to a series of individual partnerships with its approved universities, for example, development of new and existing courses.

RICS undertakes a rigorous process to select its university partners. Each accredited course in each partner university must meet threshold standards which reflect RICS international objectives and principles.

2.5 Objectives and principles

These key objectives have been identified for RICS's worldwide standards for its partnership universities:

- internationally respected standards of student selection on to RICS accredited courses
- that all students enjoy the highest quality teaching environment

- that all students are exposed to the most innovative ideas while being taught
- that the curriculum is highly relevant to professional practice
- that RICS has access to high calibre graduate output.

No two countries have educational and employment systems alike. Despite variations in systems between countries, partnership objectives need to be delivered to a consistent standard globally. To achieve this, **the process of establishing standards for partnerships in different countries is based on the following key principles, which are policy not guidance.**

- Standards should be found for the objectives which are relevant to the country concerned.
- Ideally, standards should be quantifiable and in the public domain.
- Standards should be relevant to national job market characteristics. For example, where the job market dictates that postgraduate courses are the main pathway into the profession, then selection standards should normally be applied at the postgraduate course level. In such countries, undergraduate courses would not normally be eligible for partnership accreditation.
- For student selection purposes, RICS would expect the minimum acceptable level for accredited courses in any country to be broadly the equivalent of the average attainment level for student selection across all subject areas.
- Standards to ensure that RICS has access to high calibre graduate output in a particular country should take into consideration the level of consistency of output grades across that country's university system.
- The process of ensuring internationally respected standards of student selection on RICS accredited courses needs to reflect variations between countries in student admission practices. Where there is an open entry system in the first year of undergraduate courses and the main selection point is entry to the second year, then the criteria should be applied at the point of entry to the second year.
- Standards for the teaching environment should be broader than just the quality of teachers; they should address the overall teaching and learning environment

and may take account of external audits and reviews as well as internal reviews.

- Students on accredited courses in all countries need to be exposed to innovative ideas; standards should relate to the university's engagement with high quality research.
- One threshold standard might cover more than one objective, for example, an employment threshold might be a way of testing both the relevance of the curriculum and the quality of the student output.
- A standard for professionally relevant courses should not seek to control the curriculum module by module, but should ensure that the overall course prepares graduates for the surveying profession. Courses should broadly map on to the requirements of the RICS Assessment of Professional Competence (APC), especially in regard to the core competencies.

All courses must meet RICS external quality assurance objectives and principles which are detailed in Section 6. Feedback from this system is an important tool for partnerships to consider and act upon.

2.6 Quality standards

Following discussion and consultation with the relevant RICS national associations and other stakeholders, RICS has established threshold standards in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK and the USA. This has allowed selection of universities which RICS is partnering, in part fulfilment of the vision referred to in 2.2 and to achieve the international objectives and principles.

Each country has so far chosen four standards which relate to selection, research quality, teaching quality and employment of graduates for each university course. It will not necessarily follow that other countries will choose the same number and type of standards to meet the objectives and principles.

2.7 Threshold standards

Each year a threshold report is sent by the university to RICS showing how each partnership course is achieving against RICS standards. This process is monitored by the Regional Education Standards Boards.

General overview

Within the partnership method of accreditation, threshold standards are measures to assess the standard of courses in respect of achieving the objectives and principles set out in 2.5. Each course must meet all threshold standards in full. Wherever possible, existing data returns are used to avoid creating unnecessary extra work for partner universities.

Once threshold standards have been established in a country, RICS does not continue with the traditional accreditation system in that country.

Full details of the threshold standards for Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK and USA are given in Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F and G.

Other countries

RICS will continue to develop threshold standards throughout the world as a means of selecting the highest quality university partners. National associations will advise on the criteria needed by higher education to meet RICS threshold standards and to ensure standards are locally relevant.

2.8 Traditional accreditation

Meanwhile RICS continues to recognise university courses on the basis of a more traditional style of auditing and monitoring in countries where partnerships have not been introduced. Details of this process are in *Policy and procedures for accredited courses*.

3.0 Partnership selection

3.1 General process

The process detailed below applies when an already accredited university is asked to move to a partnership relationship with RICS.

A university supplies a list of courses it wishes to attain partnership status and data is sought on the thresholds relating to these courses.

The responses are reviewed by the Regional ESBs. If the thresholds are met then a partnership meeting is arranged and a partnership established. If the university does not meet the thresholds immediately, it is asked to submit a progression plan covering the areas of shortfall. The progression plan should show how it would improve to meet the standards for the beginning of the partnership period. A progression plan is assessed by the Regional ESB which decides whether the university seems likely to meet the requirements credibly and sustainably. If so, a partnership meeting is arranged. If not, a second progression plan is requested often in a narrower area. This is also evaluated by the Regional ESB. A university will be invited to form a partnership at this stage if the Regional ESB is satisfied that the threshold requirements are likely to be met credibly and sustainably.

Geography and specialism are not additional selection criteria.

Diagram 1 shows the selection process for universities already offering accredited courses.

3.2 Unsuccessful universities

Universities which withdraw from the process or are unable to prove that they are likely to meet the thresholds through a credible and sustainable second progression plan, are offered a transition meeting to manage their removal from accreditation. The transition could involve discussion of courses leading to technical membership of RICS. These meetings should ideally have a similar size and composition as partnership meetings (see Section 10.2), that is generally four from RICS and four from the university. Universities have the right to appeal against a decision not to establish into partnership (see Section 8).

Accredited courses which do not achieve partnership are normally given a minimum of one further final accredited intake.

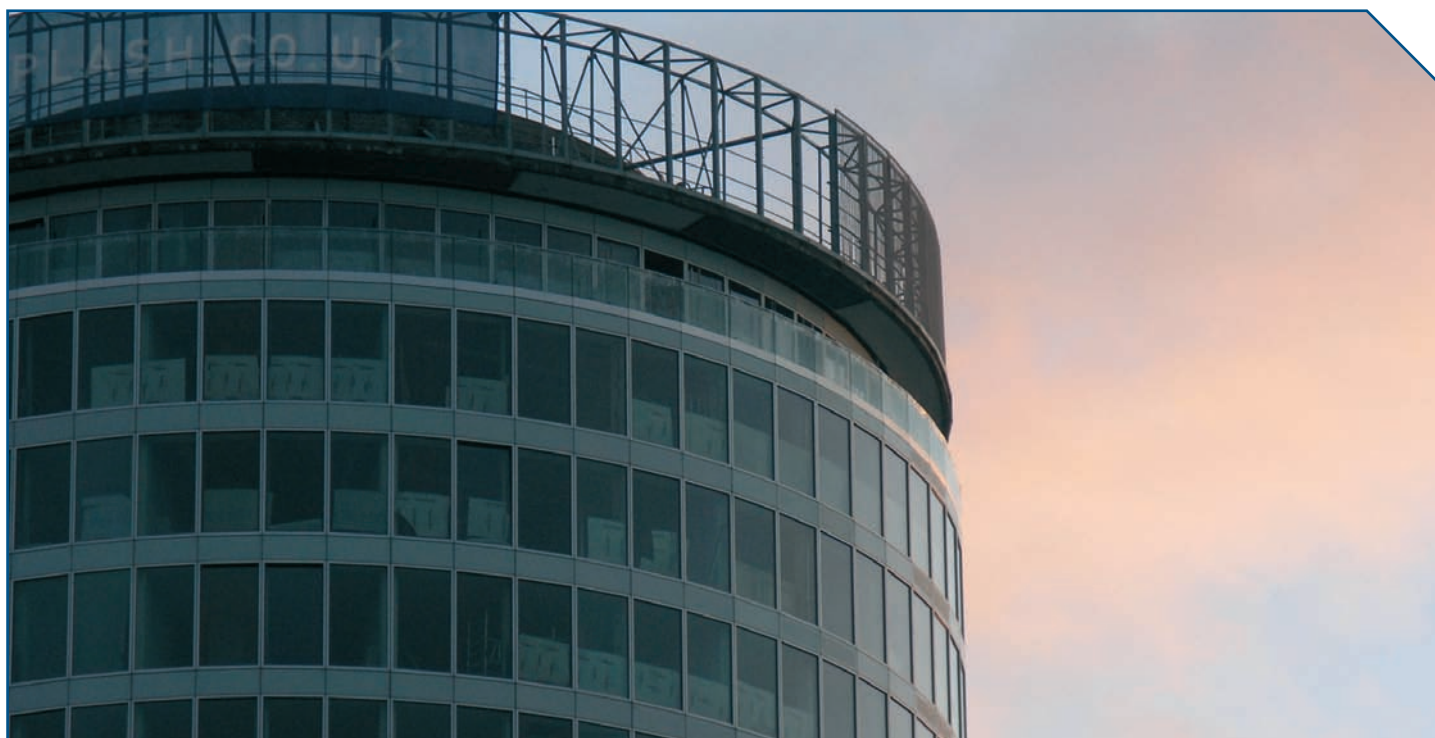
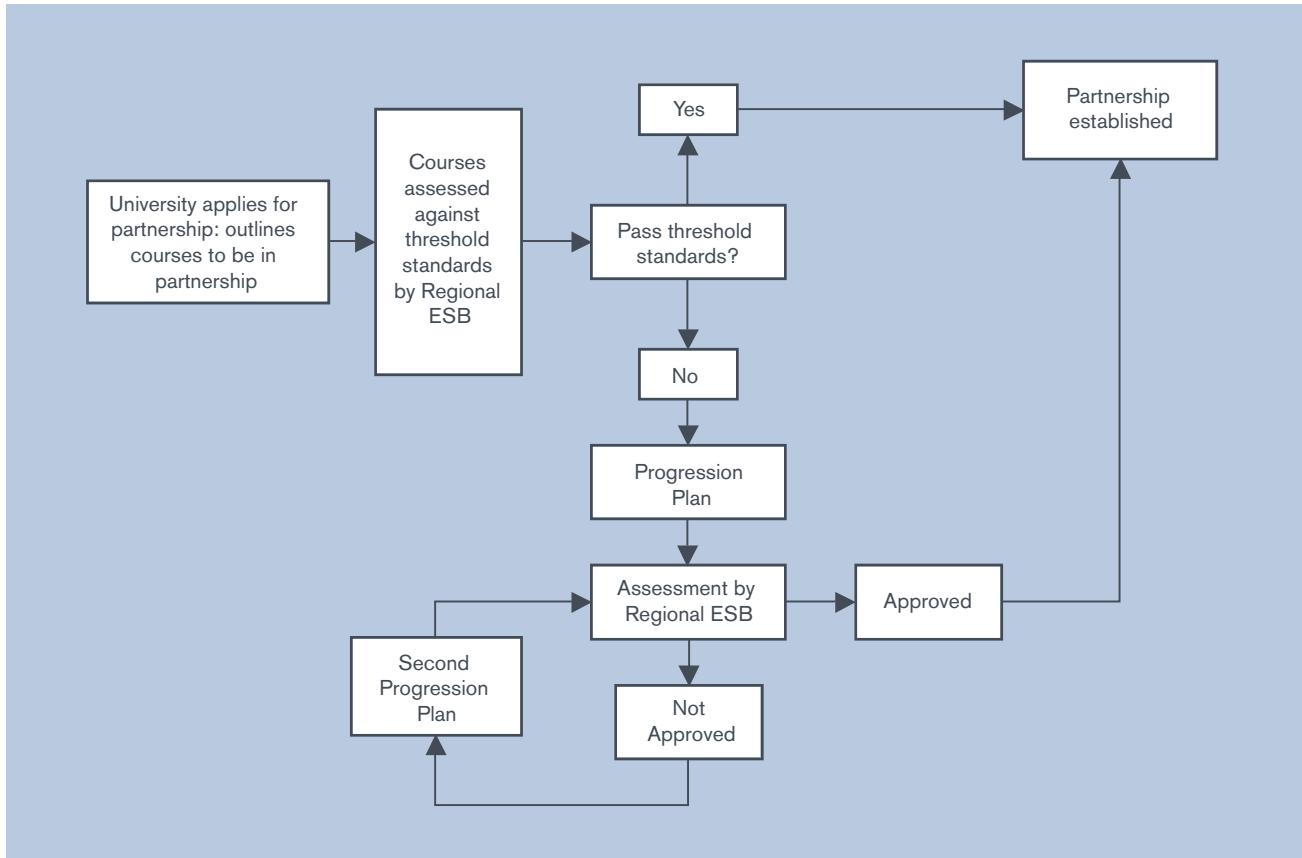


Diagram 1: partnership selection process for providers already offering accredited courses



3.3 New university providers

A new university provider, without previous RICS accreditation, may seek to become a RICS partner university. RICS World Regional Boards decide whether such a development is within the strategy for future development. If it is, then the application is referred to the Regional ESB. In such cases Regional ESB members must be involved in the process through consideration of the university's submission, attendance at a pre-partnership meeting and participation in the decision to recommend to the Regional ESB the establishment of a partnership. The pre-partnership meeting may take place relatively early in the process. It provides an opportunity to discuss the mutual aims of partnership at a preliminary stage and ensure maximum benefit from the first full partnership meeting. For example, in Canada and the USA, the pre-partnership meeting is an important part of the teaching

quality assessment. Recommendations from the Regional ESBs are normally submitted to the International ESB for final approval. It may be decided to consult existing partner universities before establishing a partnership with a new provider; this policy is followed in the UK.

3.4 Period of partnership

Partnerships were introduced in the UK in 1999/2000 for a fixed period. The UK partnerships are now ongoing arrangements, within which there can be revisions to the threshold standards as and when appropriate, subject to consultation with universities and adequate notice.

Worldwide, partnerships should initially be for five years after which the Regional ESB decides whether a country's partnerships would be ongoing or for a further fixed period.

4.0 Adding courses to a partnership

4.1 Adding courses to a partnership

Once a partnership has been established, authority to accredit additional courses is delegated to the individual partnership. Courses added to a partnership may be new ones or are already running but have not previously been considered for RICS accreditation.

Partnerships must ensure that courses will

- i) meet:
 - the threshold standards
 - course level and volume requirements
- ii) map on to the competencies of one or more APC pathways.

Guidance on issues of course design is in Section 11.

4.2 Retrospective accreditation

Partnerships can give accreditation to those who started the first level of the course one 'academic year' prior to the academic year in which the partnership agrees to the accreditation, for example this allows the possibility of automatic retrospection for one intake. Partnerships can recommend to Regional ESBs retrospective accreditation for a further two intakes back, subject to:

- there having been no major or substantive change to the content of the course, and
- an acceptable external quality assurance system having been in place.

Partnerships themselves cannot take a decision on this extended retrospective accreditation. A clear rationale must be given in any recommendation to the Regional ESB.

For new courses that, in the first year of operation recruit to both first and second levels, accreditation will apply to both levels in the academic year in which accreditation is awarded. Any second level entry in the first year a course operates will be subject to the advanced level threshold despite not having a first year cohort for any re-calculation of the entry score (see Section 9).

Partnership teams have discretion to decline bringing a new/additional course into partnership, particularly if existing provision is already considered to be adequate. Universities have the right to appeal. See Section 8.

4.3 Responsive course development – level and volume

Courses must comply with the following requirements.

- i) An accredited undergraduate award will normally be at the highest level commonly available in that country for a first degree. Its content should be at least 3600 study hours. The standard for determining the highest level of qualification commonly available for a first degree is the highest qualification which at least one third of all graduates in the country concerned gain. For example, in Scotland the qualification must be an Honours degree rather than an Ordinary degree. In countries where most undergraduate courses are four years in duration, courses submitted for accreditation should be four years in duration.
- ii) The minimum requirement for an accredited postgraduate qualification is 1800 study hours. A university can give up to 600 study hours' exemption from this requirement to suitable individuals. This includes those with cognate non accredited degrees. Exemptions are at the discretion of the university but should be given only for cognate learning achieved by an individual on a previous higher education course (ie the university determines cognisity). RICS will only accredit postgraduate courses with as few as 1200 study hours provided all students recruited to the course have completed a first degree of 4800 study hours in the same field.
- iii) Up to 1000 study hours for any accredited postgraduate course can be at the highest undergraduate level. This means, for example, that a UK graduate diploma can be RICS accredited (as can UK masters degrees and certain long postgraduate diplomas). Most universities will not allow more than 30% of a postgraduate masters course to be below masters level.
- iv) a) The minimum study hours' requirement is:
 - undergraduate – 3600
 - postgraduate – 1800

Where a recognised credit system is in place this will be used to confirm the study hours' requirement is being met.

- b) In the UK, an undergraduate award must have 360 UK credits and a postgraduate award must have 180 UK credits; 100 study hours is 10 credits.

- c) For those universities using the **authoritatively validated** European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) an undergraduate award must have at least 180 ECTS credits and a postgraduate award must have at least 60 ECTS credits.
- d) For courses not using authoritatively validated ECTS or UK credits or equivalent, evidence to demonstrate the study hours' requirement has been met must be provided.
- e) Where d) above applies, the maximum number of study hours that can be claimed per week is 45 averaged out across the duration of the course, irrespective of the mode of study.
- f) Study hours can include work based learning/practical placement provided it is formally examined against learning objectives and outcomes and is an integral part of the award.
- g) Up to 600 study hours' exemption can be given from a postgraduate course for prior cognate learning, but for courses which include work based learning students must complete a minimum of 1200 hours (40 ECTS credits) of academic study.
- h) An accredited award should map on to or be closely related to an APC pathway (see Section 11).
- i) Partnerships cannot accredit the following types of courses:
 - franchised courses (see Section 5) – these require accreditation by the Regional ESB for each university where they are delivered
 - open or distance learning courses which are not primarily delivered at the home university – these require accreditation by the Regional ESB for each university where they are delivered (see Section 5).

4.4 Uniqueness of accredited courses

RICS is concerned to ensure that there are clear and considerable differences between accredited courses and non-accredited cognate courses of any type. Such differentiation can be identified through:

- course content
- course delivery
- assessment.

The differentiation must be at least 25% for each of the above components for each year to create a separate identity between courses.

It should be noted that RICS will not have any role in a university's decisions on student entry to non-partnership cognate degree or diploma courses.

4.5 Postgraduate courses

Postgraduate courses should operate on a discrete and autonomous basis. Significant conjoint teaching and assessment is inappropriate and is only allowed by RICS to a **limited** extent. Teaching and learning strategies should be based on a range of methodologies with an emphasis on student centred techniques.

Normally, RICS expects at least 75% of each postgraduate cohort to have an undergraduate degree, and any student without an undergraduate degree to have substantial surveying experience.

4.6 Summary

Adding courses to a partnership – all courses must meet these minimum requirements

1. Threshold standards

2. Study hours:

Undergraduate: minimum 3600
Postgraduate: minimum 1800

3. Credits:

Undergraduate: 360 UK or 180 ECTS credits
Postgraduate: 180 UK or 60 ECTS credits
(NB: Courses not using an authorised credit system must produce evidence to demonstrate the study hours requirement has been met)

4. All courses must map on to or be closely related to an APC pathway

5. Postgraduate courses

75% of entrants should have an undergraduate degree.

5.0 Courses offered in more than one centre, franchised courses and distance learning

5.1 Home or local accreditation

Historically, separate local accreditation has been required if the teaching delivery of a course takes place primarily outside the home country/university. The 'home country' is the country of origin of the university. Examples of these types of course include:

- those delivered in conjunction with universities through franchise arrangements
- those delivered through open learning with significant local tutor support.

In the past, students learning materials and support have normally occurred in the same location. Now any proportion of these can occur in two or more locations. Other variables include the proportion of local students and the extent of the responsibility for admissions, examinations/assessments and of learning support by a local third party. The position is further complicated if, with jointly awarded courses, one or more university is in partnership and one or more university is either traditionally accredited or is non-accredited.

RICS requires local accreditation if a course is 'primarily delivered locally'. This is defined as where a third party university has a contract with the awarding university to contribute to deliver one or more from the following:

- admissions policy
- setting or marking assessments or examinations
- learning support.

RICS will not require local accreditation where local input comprises additional local student support only (ie over and above the central support provided by the home university).

Regional ESBs determine what accreditations are required for cross national courses where the home and local provision fall within the territory of a single Regional ESB. The International ESB determines what accreditations are required for cross national courses, where the home and local provision fall within the territory of more than one Regional ESB.

5.2 Franchised courses and other arrangements (whole or part) within home country

- i) Partnership accreditation applies to a course validated, operated and controlled by a single university. RICS recognises that the franchising of courses may produce beneficial gains in terms of widening access to higher education or facilitating regional delivery of courses.

- ii) The following principles apply:

- a) a university operating a partnership accredited course may not pass that recognition to another university under franchise or otherwise; and
- b) proposals to franchise a course, in whole or part, must be declared by universities (franchiser and franchisee) when seeking partnership accreditation of a course.

- iii) Universities proposing to franchise their courses should recognise that such a franchise can only be regarded as an extension of the course for which they already have responsibility and partnership accreditation. That accreditation cannot be regarded as divisible. It therefore follows that the threshold standards apply to the combined course.

- iv) It is anticipated that proposals for the accreditation of a franchised course will normally involve two universities with an established record in the provision of surveying courses.

- v) RICS will not consider accreditation bridging or similar course arrangements which provide access to the final year of a partnership accredited course.

- vi) In considering franchised courses, partnerships must receive details of:

- franchise agreements
- resources; and
- particular course management and quality control procedures.

5.3 Collaborative courses

For courses offered jointly or collaboratively between two or more universities, the following policy applies:

- i) at least 75% of course content/delivery, assessment and admissions must be provided by partnership universities
- ii) for joint awards involving two or more partner universities students must be allocated to one of the partner universities and that university will have the responsibility for threshold reporting
- iii) if only one of the involved partner universities makes the award then the threshold standards will be those which apply to the awarding university.

5.4 Open learning and distance learning courses

- i) A number of distance learning and e-learning courses are now being developed within university partnerships. These courses can be undertaken by students anywhere in the world and the proportion of local support is variable.
- ii) This means that all distance and e-learning courses without a third party local university involved, as defined in 5.1, would remain partnership accredited in the awarding country/university. Any e-learning and distance learning courses accredited within partnerships (ie fitting the criteria above) require students learning outside the home country to be included in threshold reports set for the home country – for example, the student entry and employability thresholds.
- iii) A partnership can consider applications for accreditation in distance learning mode. RICS recognises that courses in this format can make an important contribution to the internationalisation of the profession.
- iv) The partnership should refer to the section above on the treatment of home or local accreditation to determine if the course is to be accredited at the partnership meeting or accredited elsewhere in the world.

With the growing trend for courses to be offered in distance or e-learning modes, RICS recognises the need to define this type of learning, differentiating true distance learning courses from courses which simply have material on the web.

In considering distance or e-learning courses it is a requirement that there should be a rigorous course philosophy and design that demonstrates good pedagogy for the course.

In considering distance or e-learning courses **it is policy that partnerships must be provided with the following:**

- outline of learning packages, study guides and student handbooks to support the delivery of the course
- outline of the provision for local tutor support and delivery
- details of the provision for student support and guidance through other mechanisms, such as email and the internet

- systems for providing students with feedback on all assessed work
- security arrangements relating to assessed work particularly where examinations are offered in different time zones
- the provision for involving external quality assurers in the scrutiny and assessment of student work, particularly assignments
- details of staff development relevant to a distance learning course
- updates on consultation with external associations and branches, with professional bodies and/or employers.

Regional ESBs will be particularly concerned to ensure that students on distance or e-learning courses enjoy the same high quality teaching environment and exposure to innovation as students on campus-based courses. If adequate reassurance cannot be provided (for example in terms of internal university systems and external quality assurance) to ensure quality on these courses, then university partners will be informed that only campus-based courses can be accredited.

Regional ESBs will inform RICS local/national associations if distance or e-learning provision is being made available in their area.

The following requirements must be met.

- i) material provided to students must include bespoke guidance notes, which are specifically prepared for distance learning students to assist them in the use of blended learning material, much of which may also be used by campus-based students.
- ii) there must be an effective and robust system that provides opportunities for interaction between academic staff and students.
- iii) there must be a robust system that addresses the issues of possible impersonation and plagiarism.
- iv) at least 25% of the assessment which contributes to the final mark for the award should be from non virtual/distance/on-line assessment.

See Section 11 for best practice guidance.

6.0 External quality assurance

6.1 General

The quality standards which RICS has established are used for selecting university partners. There are also standards that RICS wishes to quality assure by means of an external audit on an ongoing basis. The objective of such an audit is to ensure that partner universities meet minimum standards which verify the quality of the student experience.

For all accredited courses, RICS requires an ongoing third party quality audit to check there is:

- i) fair assessment of students
- ii) relevant and balanced curriculum, with clear course/programme objectives and outcomes
- iii) formal feedback to the university on i) and ii) above.

Experience shows that partnerships can cover and feedback on ii), but i) above and feedback on i) should be covered by another mechanism. Traditionally RICS has insisted on the appointment of external examiners to carry out this external quality assurance. However, the RICS external quality assurance system is only required for what is identified as the necessary supplement to a local quality assurance system. The approach taken by RICS will normally be on a country wide or regional basis not university by university. Regional ESBs are responsible for the audit of i) and iii) and, following consultation with RICS regions and national associations, ensuring there is an adequate external quality assurance regime for each country/region.

The role of the RICS approved external examiners will vary depending on the necessary supplement identified for each country/region. It will be the whole or a subset of the functions detailed below.

6.2 External examiners

External examiners act as independent and impartial advisors providing universities with informed comments on standards set and student achievement in relation to those standards. External examining is an integral part of university quality assurance. External examiners verify that standards are appropriate for a specific award, assist universities in the comparison of academic standards across higher education awards, and verify that processes for student assessment, examination, and the determination of awards are sound and have been fairly conducted.

Regional ESBs will normally continue to approve external examiner appointments made by universities.

Two RICS approved external examiners are required, one academic and one practitioner (at least one of whom must be an RICS member), for all courses with the following exceptions.

- Where there are existing external examiners for a course now included in partnership, but which had not previously been accredited, subject to all new appointments following the normal procedure for RICS approval.
- Where a partner university is offering a number of courses in a related discipline, the requirement for two RICS approved external examiners remains, with them if appropriate overlapping across a number of courses. The same examiners can be used for major/minor combinations as well as for the associated straight major.
- For postgraduate courses with cohorts below 10 students, the number of RICS approved external examiners can be reduced to one.

6.3 Criteria for appointment

- i) An external examiner should have appropriate standing, expertise and experience indicated by:
 - present post and place of work
 - range and scope of experience in higher education or professional practice
 - current and active involvement in academic activities, research or professional practice related to the field of study.

For postgraduate courses, at least one of the external examiners should have either a postgraduate degree or senior level experience.

- ii) Normally an academic external examiner should have recent external quality assurance experience or comparable related experience in assessing students. A proposed examiner who has no previous experience at the appropriate level, should be supported by a co-examiner with substantial experience and have at least one of the following:
 - other external examining experience
 - extensive internal examining experience
 - other relevant and recent experience likely to support the external examiner role.

- iii) Appointments should be complementary in terms of experience and expertise.
 - iv) External examiners should be impartial in judgement, and should not have previous close involvement with the university concerned, which might compromise objectivity. Appointments will not normally be approved if a proposal results in external examinations which are reciprocal between departments or are either concurrent or consecutive.
 - v) External examiners should not normally be re-appointed by a university within five years of completing a previous external examiner appointment to the same university. Over the five years prior to the date of appointment, the proposed examiner should not have been a member of staff, a governor, a student or a near relative of a member of staff in relation to the course.
 - vi) The proposed external examiner should not normally be, and must always declare if he or she is:
 - personally associated with the sponsorship of students on the course
 - required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the course
 - corporately or personally responsible for students regarding bursaries or other financial support to students on the course being examined.
- any other recommendations arising from the assessments.
 - ii) The purpose of the report is to enable the university to judge whether the course is meeting its stated objectives and to make any necessary improvements, either immediately or by the next review.
 - iii) The external examiner(s) may require the university to refer a report to the Regional ESB if there is a concern about standards of assessment and performance, or if the assessments are being conducted in a way which compromises fair treatment of individual students or the standards of RICS. Best practice guidance on fair assessment is given in Section 11.5.
 - iv) If an external examiner has matters of particular concern which when raised with the university are not properly taken account of, these may be reported directly to the Regional ESB which reserves, at any time, the right to call for external examiners' reports from the university or from the external examiner.
 - v) The external examiners' reports may have implications for the way in which the course is designed and delivered. It is for the university rather than the external examiners to consider what changes should be made as a result.
 - vi) When considering university course assessment and award regulations, external examiners should apply the general principles, set out in Section 4 of this document, relating to the level of awards and the minimum number of study hours.

6.4 Feedback

- i) External examiners are required to report annually to the university on the conduct of the assessments just concluded and on issues related to assessment, including:
 - the overall performance of the students in relation to their peers on comparable courses
 - the strengths and weaknesses of the students
 - the quality of knowledge and skills (both general and subject-specific) demonstrated by the students
 - the professional relevance, the structure, organisation, design and marking of all assessments
 - the quality of teaching as indicated by student performance
 - the lessons of the assessments for the curriculum, syllabus, teaching methods, resources and the management and review of the course

6.5 Partnership meetings

- i) External examiners' reports must always form part of the documentation used in course review. The external examiners' reports and the partner university's response must be submitted to the partnership for consideration at the annual partnership meeting.
- ii) An external examiner should be included in the partnership group. RICS is responsible for choosing the external examiner representative on the partnership group, taking account of the main disciplines represented on the group. External examiners' reports and the university's response, identifying any necessary follow-up or corrective action, should be a standing item at partnership meetings.

7.0 Education Standards Boards

7.1 General

A global framework for the operation of education standards issues has applied since 2002, providing the following:

- i) move to accredit courses worldwide on a partnership model, with international standards determined by the International ESB and applied by the Regional ESBs
- ii) a devolved course accreditation process
- iii) five Regional ESBs for Africa, India and the Middle East, the Americas, Asia/Pacific, Continental Europe, the UK and an International ESB
- iv) decentralised education development staff resource within and without the Education and Qualification Standards Department.

7.2 Roles of International and Regional ESBs in the context of partnerships

International ESB:

- approves threshold standards for each country where a partnership approach is being introduced or continued
- approves establishment of partnerships
- comprises the chairmen of the five regional ESBs and vice-chairman of the UK ESB.

Regional ESBs:

- consider individual applications for partnership and make recommendations to the International ESB
- consider annual threshold reports
- review threshold standards
- debate policy issues and inform the policy making process through the International ESB
- attend pre-partnership and partnership meetings.

The only currently acceptable language for a submission for partnership is English.

Regional ESBs are responsible for standards and all education issues relating to partnerships. RICS regions and national associations administer partnerships.

8.0 Appeals

An appeal may be made by:

- an already accredited university which is asked to move to a partnership and is unsuccessful
- a university which has not previously had any courses accredited by RICS and is unsuccessful in its application for partnership
- a partnership university in respect of an individual course which has previously been partnership accredited and has failed to meet a threshold standard
- a partnership university which, having been in partnership has failed to meet a threshold standard such as research which affects either the whole partnership or all courses within a particular School/Department.

A university which makes an appeal based on any of the above situations has the right to appear before the appeal panel, either 'in person' or by teleconferencing or video conferencing.

When a partnership accredited course is deemed to have failed to meet a threshold standard, the university will be given 14 days from the date of the RICS letter to decide whether it will appeal against the decision. During that 14 day period no action is taken by RICS in respect of the course. If a university does not appeal within 14 days, then the normal follow up action is taken by RICS. If a university appeals no action will be taken by RICS until the appeal has been heard.

Appeals in respect of individual courses will be heard within two calendar months of the letter referred to above. All other appeals will be heard within four calendar months of notification of the RICS decision.

Any costs incurred by the university in respect of its appeal must be met by the university.

The appeal panel will comprise two RICS members, normally members of the International ESB and not involved in the Regional ESB for the appellant University. For all appeals there must be one IESB member, with the possibility of the other member being from the Standards Board.

9.0 Threshold reporting

9.1 Overview

Annual threshold report

Annual threshold data should be submitted to RICS by the appropriate deadlines set for each world region. RICS will respond as soon as possible if the submission is satisfactory. If there appear to be any difficulties, the annual submission will be referred to the relevant Regional ESB.

Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F and G include details of how to apply each threshold in the countries with partnerships, what is expected in the threshold report for each threshold and what constitutes under-performance. RICS, in its evaluation of the selection threshold, does not differentiate between courses on the basis of mode of study.

Sanctions

A commitment of all partnerships is **that at all times** the threshold standards are met in full. The maximum sanction is that RICS could withdraw from the full partnership if this is not achieved.

However, the Regional ESB would normally remove the affected course(s) from the partnership for the immediate cohort, where the student entry did not meet the threshold and for the next intake, if research or teaching quality did not meet the required standard. **The accreditation of individual students on these intakes would be honoured.** A course would normally be re-introduced to partnership as soon as it had achieved the threshold standards. **If any threshold is failed twice within the partnership period (normally five years) or within any five year period if the partnership is on-going, then that course cannot be re-introduced to the partnership during that period.**

9.2 Application of employment threshold

In all countries where threshold standards have been applied a standard based on the employment of graduates has been introduced.

The employment threshold is a threshold for which the potential member does not know his/her partnership accredited status until up to four years after making their course decision. This is because employability is an output threshold.

A university does not have total control over the employability threshold as the responsiveness of any

changes that the university makes cannot be seen for one to four years after the student has started the course. The application of this threshold should not unduly disadvantage a student who had realistically believed that he or she had joined a partnership accredited course only to find up to four years later that the course is not partnership accredited. The following application of the threshold will be applied.

- i) If a course fails to meet the employment threshold for any particular cohort, then the students in that cohort who graduated that year, will normally still be deemed to have satisfied the academic requirement of RICS.
- ii) Any individual who started the course in a successive cohort while the course was still accredited will be allowed entry as an individual via the normal APC pathway to RICS membership. Further intakes will normally not be partnership accredited for example, intakes after the employment threshold is known to have been failed.
- iii) In the event of a recession in the economy, defined as two successive quarter years of negative growth, the employability threshold will be reduced at the discretion of the Regional ESB to a suitable percentage, taking into account the percentage stated in the respective employment threshold for that region, for the graduates at that time. The Regional ESB will also exercise discretion in respect of the aftermath of a recession.
- iv) If a cohort fails to meet the employment threshold in a year then the course falls out of partnership accreditation. In the succeeding year, if the next cohort meets the employment threshold, then the partnership accreditation of the affected course would be reinstated **retrospectively.**

The effect of (i) and (ii) above is that all individuals originally promised RICS accreditation when starting a course will have that accreditation safeguarded. The effect of removal of partnership accreditation is on the opportunity for a university to market its course to any new potential intake as being RICS partnership accredited.

9.3 Advanced entry to undergraduate courses

To ensure the maintenance of the quality of student entry on an RICS partnership accredited course, the student entry threshold will take into account any transferring students to the second and third levels (full time

equivalence) of accredited undergraduate courses. The attainment these candidates achieved prior to starting the course from which they transferred will be used in the calculation of the accredited course's student entry score.

Calculation of the student entry threshold for advanced entrants

RICS has two different methods for incorporating advanced entrants into the threshold calculation. Partner universities should confirm which methods have been adopted for their country or region in the appropriate appendix (Appendices A – G).

i) Partner universities can choose to report all students given entry to a course during each year as if they were a single cohort regardless of their entry level. Students given advanced entry to join an accredited course can therefore be added to the first year intake for the calculation of the entry standard. (See exemptions from this re-calculation in 9.4 below).

ii) Alternatively, the first year entry score on the partnership accredited course can be re-calculated for any transferring student(s) (with any original entrants who have since left remaining in the revised calculation). (See exemptions from this re-calculation in 9.4 below). The same entry tariff must be used for transferring students as was used in the original calculation for the first year intake which these students are joining.

First year entry is calculated with all modes combined. Re-calculating the score to take account of any advanced entry is complicated by the differing length of course for full-time, part-time and distance learning modes. For example, for advanced entry into the second level, the attainment that these students achieved before joining the second year of a full-time course, (who are not exempt from the re-calculation) must be used to re-calculate the first year full-time and part-time combined entry score, from the first year.

As a further example, for advanced entry into the third level of a part-time course, the attainment that these candidates achieved before joining that year, (who are not exempt from the re-calculation) must be used to re-calculate the first year full-time and part-time combined entry score from the first year, as re-calculated in the second year. **Irrespective of mode and differing length, the re-calculation must always be based on the original entry calculation.**

Advanced entry with cognate non-accredited degrees

Students who have achieved a high standard in the first level of a cognate but non-accredited degree may, at the discretion of the course leader, transfer to the second level of a similar partnership accredited degree. However, irrespective of whether there has been a meritorious performance in all subjects, the attainment that these students achieved prior to starting the course from which they transfer, must be used in re-calculating the accredited course's student entry score. The same policy must be followed for students transferring from a cognate, but non-accredited degree, to the third level of a partnership accredited course, if they transfer on a level by level basis, rather than on completion of the award for which they originally registered.

9.4 Exemption from the re-calculation or combined calculation of the entry score for transferring students

There are exemptions from the threshold calculation for those students who have shown substantial added value in their learning on the feeder course. These include:

- TechRICS members,
- students who transfer from an accredited course (partnership or traditional accreditation) to a partnership accredited course either at the same university or at another university.
- holders of cognate non-accredited degrees joining the final year.

Details of other exemptions are given in Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F and G.

There is no fixed limit to the percentage entering at second or third level who are exempt from the re-calculation or from the initial calculation if combined with the first year intake.

The definition of other cognate degrees is decided by the partner university.

9.5 Additional guidance

Additional guidance on the application of the thresholds and threshold reporting may be circulated by the relevant regional Education Development Manager or Education and Qualification Standards Department. It is recommended that partner universities refer to this guidance in preparing their annual threshold return.

10 Guidance

10.0 Partnership development

10.1 General

In countries where threshold standards have been established, a university is able to proceed to a partnership at any time when it can demonstrate that it meets the thresholds, that its courses meet the key objectives set out in 2.5 and its curriculum meets the objective 'to ensure that the curriculum is highly relevant to professional practice'. (See Section 11 on course design). Additionally, the RICS world region must be supportive of the development of the partnership.

In some countries there is a formalised but non legal joint Statement of Arrangements between RICS and the university. This is reviewed at each partnership meeting. This Statement includes a mutual commitment to five generic aims and any specific aims agreed by the partnership.

The Statement of Arrangements is intended to set out the contribution and activities of the partners. It does not create any legally binding obligation or relationship.

10.2 Summary of partnership approach

Once RICS has selected a partner, a partnership can be formed. Partnerships normally have five generic aims. Many partnerships also agree specific aims. The generic aims are normally:

- maintaining threshold standards
- attracting bright entrants into the profession
- promoting innovation in surveying related areas

- more responsively developing courses to meet the needs of the profession
- improving professional and educational links.

Normally, the partnership will meet once a year. The partnership meetings are not to assess whether the university has met the thresholds. The purpose of the meetings is to review mutual aims and objectives and to develop actions to achieve them.

It is advisable to keep each partnership group to around 10, with a similar number of representatives from the university and from RICS. RICS representation has a core of five; a Regional ESB member, an employer or representative of the local/national association, an RICS external examiner, a representative from RICS Education and Qualification Standards Department or Regional Education Development Manager, and the Regional Director. The local employer representative has a significant ongoing role to play in the partnership and will normally be an important point of contact between meetings. Similarly, links with the relevant RICS faculties should be established through the partnership. Others who may be appropriate include representatives from the external quality assurance system or RICS specialist staff. For example a university may welcome a representative from the RICS Research or Education Trust. RICS chooses the representative from the local external quality assurance system for the partnership but, in doing so, will take into account the main disciplines represented on the partnership group. The following table outlines the relationship between Regional ESBs, partnerships and external quality assurance:

People	Regional ESB	RICS partnership team	External quality assurance
Composition	RICS members representative of academia and practice	Regional ESB member (1) Local Employers (1) Representative from local external quality assurance system (1) Staff representative(s) from regions/national association (1) Staff representative from RICS Education and Quality Standards Dept (1) Other staff representatives from RICS depending on main issues eg Policy Unit, Research, Marketing	
Role	Monitors and sanctioners	Developers	External quality assurers
Tools	Annual threshold report	Statement of Arrangements or similar action plan	APC pathways guidance in Section 11 of this document

Extra representation is by mutual consent. Typically, the group meets annually and covers those issues which are common aims of the partnership, for example, course development and increasing international links. The meeting will also consider new course proposals. Partnerships establish action plans to achieve the mutual aims. Through the partnerships, RICS works with partner universities to:

- develop networking events for students, alumni, staff and RICS members
- promote routes to RICS membership to alumni
- develop professional development events and publications
- promulgate professional information, market data and analysis
- facilitate links between the worldwide network of universities accredited by RICS
- maintain the highest standards of education and of professional ethics globally.

10.3 Mechanics of running a partnership for RICS regions and national associations

Day to day management of the partnership relationship is the responsibility of RICS Regions and national associations. This reflects the importance RICS attaches to the Regions and national associations maintaining a strong link with partner universities which, in turn, plays a significant part in converting more graduates into members. (See Sections 2.4 and 2.5 for a summary of the partnership approach).

The annual formal partnership meeting is ideally planned four to six months ahead. However, the partnership should be a living relationship with differing contact and issues addressed continually. The following checklist provides guidance on the procedures to be followed by the RICS Regions/national associations for the formal meeting.

Setting up the formal meeting:

- liaise with the RICS representatives and with the university to agree the date
- check with the university whether any other attendee(s) from RICS would be helpful, for example, from RICS Policy, Marketing, Research, Faculty
- ask the university for a list of its representatives – normally not more than five (see Section 10.2).

For UK partnership meetings: remind the university to prepare and submit its report for the threshold standard for research and innovation for circulation at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Setting the agenda:

- ask the university to arrange a meeting with a cross section of students as part of the agenda
- decide with the university who will chair the meeting and take the notes. It is helpful to rotate between RICS and the university
- normally timetable a 30 minute pre-meeting for RICS representatives prior to the start of the meeting (To ensure all RICS attendees understand the partnership approach and their role)
- check if any new courses will be put forward
- entry to postgraduate courses should be a standing item for discussion at partnership meetings.

For UK partnership meetings: time should be allocated on the agenda for the university's presentation on the threshold standard for research and innovation and subsequent discussion. This item should be chaired by the representative from the UK ESB.

Sending out the papers:

- agenda
- notes of last meeting
- Statements of Arrangements (if appropriate)
- any summary/update information provided by the university
- copy of university pages from RICS online course search (if appropriate)
- *RICS Policy and guidance on university partnerships*
- information on any new course(s) being put forward for partnership (see Section 4)
- summary of external examiner reports and university responses (if appropriate)
- any other formal documentation required by the Regional ESB
- for UK partnership meetings: the university's report for the threshold standard for research and innovation should be circulated to the RICS representatives two weeks prior to the meeting.

After the meeting:

- prepare and circulate notes of the meeting
- coordinate follow up action.

The Education and Qualification Standards Department staff member or Regional Educational Development Manager attending the partnership is responsible for:

- providing an update on education and membership issues at the meeting
- confirming any changes to courses in the partnership or new courses being brought into the partnership
- dealing with education policy issues at and between meetings.

The International ESB, Regional ESBs and Education and Qualification Standards Department have responsibility for all education policy issues including threshold standards, threshold monitoring and course accreditation.

The remaining parts of this section are best practice guidance for partnerships.

10.4 Responsive course development – evaluating and reviewing

Each partnership meeting should provide the opportunity for discussion of:

- annual course review reports including, where appropriate, the university's response to these
- number of students entering the partnership courses including advanced entrants, entry profile details, cohort progression and graduate output statistics
- reports from the local external quality assurance system including, where appropriate, the university's response
- details of any staff or other resource changes in the preceding 12 months
- revised course proposals and re-validation reports, where applicable
- how research and/or other innovations in surveying practice is fed back into courses.

10.5 Maintaining threshold standards

Partnerships are developmental. RICS will advise on any technical issues surrounding the application of thresholds.

However, this is not the primary goal when discussing this issue. Rather, partnership is recommended to look at how collectively it can raise standards.

Some of the environmental factors (and indicators) which could affect standards generally are listed below.

Partnerships may wish to discuss:

- financial and physical resource provision
- quality and quantum of staff resources
- teaching, learning and assessment methods
- wastage rates
- student experience
- staff development
- output quality and employment characteristics
- provision of specialist lectures
- identifying practitioners for assistance with the local external quality assurance system.

10.6 Attracting bright entrants into the profession

It is suggested that indicative areas for discussion include:

- enrolment levels – numbers/quality
- evaluation of 'local' labour market needs
- development of access to joint careers promotion
- promotion of job vacancies.

10.7 Promoting innovation in surveying related areas

It is suggested that indicative areas for discussion include, (other than when a Regional ESB requirement):

- involvement with RICS Research
- access to commissioners of research
- listing of current and proposed research areas within the university
- identification of mutual areas of research activity
- potential sponsorship, organisation and attendance at conferences for example, real estate societies, COBRA
- facilitation of student and staff exchange internationally
- access to property transaction and building cost data.

10.8 Course review

A partnership may wish to consider the following when reviewing existing courses:

- operation, management and resourcing of the course
- achievement of aims and objectives
- the relevance and balance of course content including teaching methods and assessment
- student performance, cohort progression and achievement and, where appropriate, employment destinations
- results of consultations with students, employers and the profession
- external quality assurance
- internal review results.

10.9 Improving professional/education links

RICS wishes to foster active liaison between partner universities and members of the profession. Members may be able to provide a service by way of special lectures, seminars, case study material and general information on shifts in the pattern or direction of professional practice. In addition, RICS matrices, the RICS organisation for new entrants to the profession, has student liaison officers at national and regional levels in the UK and other parts of the world, who provide points of contact for universities. Partner universities are encouraged to support student participation in professional activities and promote student membership of RICS.

It is suggested that other areas for discussion could include:

- development of advisory panels of employers
- employer perceptions
- provision of regular consultation on educational policy development and APC pathways
- access to publishing plans
- developing international and national links
- links to RICS Faculties and Forums
- short term course provision for practitioners.



11.0 Design of courses for accreditation

11.1 Introduction

Each course is considered on its merits. A wide spectrum of courses should be encouraged, ranging from those with a specialist focus to those which are more broadly based with a higher emphasis on business and management. Continued expansion of postgraduate entry to the profession through the growth of conversion courses and specialist postgraduate awards should be encouraged.

11.2 All courses

- i) RICS has traditionally accredited courses specifically designed to meet the requirements of its APC pathways. Course applications which relate to the identified markets within which surveyors operate, or indeed emerging markets but which do not yet have an APC pathway, may also be acceptable. However the partnership would have to work with the appropriate Faculty to ensure a pathway could feasibly be created.
- ii) RICS is not prescriptive in terms of course design. It positively welcomes a diversity of provision. Universities with appropriate expertise, skills and resourcing, are encouraged to design courses to their particular strengths and specialisms which will allow for greater differentiation, relevant innovative course developments and reasonable variety of approach. Particular attention should be given to their relationship to specified areas of surveying activity for which students are being prepared. When proposing a course for partnership, the university should provide a clear course philosophy and evidence of a proven demand.
- iii) RICS's prime aim is to ensure that it only accredits courses of quality. An objective is to maintain and improve existing standards of provision. This can best be achieved by ensuring that courses are based on a sound philosophy and delivered within a surveying context. Due emphasis should be given to the identification and development of core surveying skills and the integration of subjects, particularly within modular courses.
- iv) Course design should take account of the mandatory competencies common to all APC pathways, as set out in Section 11.7 on curriculum guidance.

11.3 Postgraduate courses

- i) RICS welcomes submissions from existing partnerships where development can be based on substantial undergraduate provision.
- ii) RICS believes that suitable courses can be designed in either full-time or part-time modes and involve distance learning. Current accreditations include one year (12 months') full-time and two year part-time courses. (See Section 4.2 on minimum volume requirement). RICS accredits both postgraduate diplomas and masters awards (as well as graduate diplomas); in all cases, they must meet the criteria set out in Section 4.2 in terms of study hours. A postgraduate course for which partnership accreditation is sought, must be rigorous, have sufficient depth and breadth, and cover the key study skills which the graduate Chartered Surveyor will require.
- iii) Partnerships should apply the same general criteria for accreditation of postgraduate courses as that applied to undergraduate courses. The objectives of conversion courses should be to maximise the intellectual potential of the entrant, while establishing the necessary competencies to equip students with the prerequisite knowledge for employment in a professional surveying environment. Postgraduate conversion courses will need to include significant amounts of study material, consideration of which will start with principles but will move rapidly to analysis and application (for example, at a faster pace to that adopted for undergraduate courses).
- iv) Postgraduate conversion courses typically attract graduate entrants from a wide range of disciplines. This is beneficial and reflects the broader base of many large practices, agencies and surveying consultancies. The intellectual and professional rigour demanded from this type of course should necessitate high entry standards.
- v) There is only a threshold selection standard for postgraduate courses in South Africa and the USA. In all other parts of the world normally 75% of entrants would have a first degree.

Partner universities offering Professional Doctorates will be encouraged to promote the opportunity to join RICS through the Senior Professional route. Requirements for Fellowship by Achievement will refer explicitly to the acceptability of Professional Doctorates towards Fellowship.

11.4 Open and distance learning

The following best practice guidance has been developed by RICS for open and distance learning courses.

- Study material should be regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with an established timetable. The updating process should be rigorously quality controlled with a system for recording when updated material is issued and to whom. Material should be developed as a source of reference for students, with cross references to other sources to ensure a broad study experience
- guidance should be given to students on techniques for studying by distance learning, how to gain maximum benefit from their work experience and how to learn experientially
- students should have timely academic support, with advice on response times for dealing with different types of queries (eg administrative, academic) and for return of marked work, and the mechanism for doing so (email, telephone)
- there should be scheduled opportunities for students to receive support from tutors, these may include an actively managed discussion forum to assist students in different time zones
- adequate feedback should be given on submitted work, for example either by commentary or by an outline answer approach which highlights a student's strengths, weaknesses, omissions etc
- adequate time should be allocated for the course leader to co-ordinate the work of tutors
- discussion forums for students and staff should be established
- appropriate IT systems should be available
- staff training should include updates on distance/ e-learning techniques

- some face to face teaching or alternative web based methods of interaction or collaborative learning opportunities should be provided and students encouraged to participate
- application forms should include a photograph of the student.

11.5 Fair assessment

The following points are not prescriptive on universities in terms of their degree awarding powers. They represent best practice guidance. However, RICS would expect any significant departure from this guidance to be supported by an appropriate rationale.

- i) Assessment should include a balance of assessment methods and should normally include at least 50% of material assessed by examination excluding dissertations or similarly assessed independent study units.
- ii) Examination covers a wide range of assessment including formal closed written papers, open book examinations, multiple choice, phase tests, computer based exercises, vivas and other forms, provided the individual student is assessed at the time or point of assessment without recourse to another person, or to resources other than permitted materials. The assessment should be completed within a specified period of time during which the student is under invigilation or supervision.
- iii) At the final stage of a course the contribution of a group mark towards a unit or module should not be greater than 25% of the individual's mark for that unit or module.
- iv) Compensation and condonement should only apply where a candidate shows strength in other subjects for example achieving marks/grades well above pass level in other subjects.
- vi) External examiners should be consulted over, and approve in principle, all forms of assessment of an award.
- vii) External examiners should be consulted over any change to the strategy and method of assessment.
- viii) Award regulations should define plagiarism, collusion and other forms of cheating. RICS would not expect a student found proven of intentional cheating to proceed without penalty.

1 1.6 Guidance on new courses (or existing courses put forward for partnership accreditation for the first time)

The following is guidance from which a partnership may choose items to consider before accreditation of a course.

General information

- Department (or School) and Faculty responsible for the course
- title of the course and proposed starting date
- duration and mode of study
- statement on future strategy and development of the university.

Course details

- rationale and philosophy of the course including employer opinions
- likelihood of meeting threshold standards and leading to an existing APC pathway
- employment destinations (if existing course)
- identification of specific challenges which the course is designed to meet
- identification of the core areas of the course, the essential supporting subjects and any optional elements
- target or actual enrolments (minimum and maximum numbers)
- wastage rates (existing courses only)
- relationship to other related courses
- structure and outline content, including curriculum
- assessment, progression and award arrangements
- the nature and composition of the course planning and development team
- staffing for the course – the range of expertise, qualification and experience of staff
- current staff development policy
- support resources
- financial provision for the course and/or Department
- existing external quality assurance, internal course validation and review reports

- the students' experience of the course
- related continuing professional development (CPD) courses and/or research strengths.

Additional details required for franchise courses are given in Section 5.2, and for distance or e-learning courses in Section 5.3.

1 1.7 Curriculum guidance

In considering the relevance of accredited courses to the APC the following should be noted.

- i) The APC requirements specify a common set of mandatory competencies across all APC pathways for which university courses can provide an important grounding. These competencies are a mixture of personal, business and practice skills required by all chartered surveyors. A standard of attainment must be demonstrated for each mandatory competency at one of three defined levels. These levels are outlined below:

Level 1: knowledge and understanding

Level 2: application of knowledge and understanding

Level 3: reasoned advice and depth of technical knowledge.

The current set of mandatory competencies with the required level of attainment is listed below.

To Level 3:

- Conduct rules, ethics and professional practice

To Level 2:

- Client care
- Communication and negotiation
- Health and safety

To Level 1:

- Accounting principles and practice
- Business planning
- Conflict avoidance, management and dispute resolution procedures
- Data management

- Sustainability
 - Teamworking
- ii) Any particular course curriculum should aim academically to prepare an individual student for one of the following APC pathways:

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 comprises technical (core and optional) competencies. For further details see the *APC requirements and competencies guide* and the individual pathway guides which are available on the RICS website (www.rics.org).

12 Threshold Reporting

Appendix A

Threshold reporting: Australia

A1 Minimum standards

- 75% of first year entrants to each undergraduate course must have a State Tertiary Admission Service TER/ENTER ranking of 80, or equivalent.
- A minimum mean student evaluation score across all subjects, on an RICS partnership accredited course, must be neutral, and a minimum RICS external examiner grading of each course of no more than two grade 2s or below in any of six key areas of the teaching environment.
- A minimum mean average research output for all staff teaching on an RICS partnership accredited course must be 0.67 (where a single refereed paper as defined by Department of Education, Science and Technology (DEST) is valued at 1.00) over a three year period.
- 75% of graduates who are in full time employment in the year following graduation must be in relevant employment.

A2 Student selection threshold

For each undergraduate course, combining all modes together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year, or who subsequently joined during the academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score.

If a university has granted advanced entry for candidates then these should be reported with the first year entrants as a single cohort for the calculation of the entry threshold. (For those exempt from the threshold calculation see Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4). Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

First year cohorts

The minimum standard is that the median rank for 75% of the first year student intake to an undergraduate course must be a State Tertiary Admission Service TER/ENTER ranking of 80 or equivalent.

RICS will accept all State Tertiary Admission Service TER/ENTER rankings whether gained on completion of school leaving examinations or through further study at diploma or tertiary level. Where the State Tertiary Admission

Service TER/ENTER ranking is not provided students will be allocated into the 25% for non-standard entrants.

RICS has tariffs for school leavers and diploma holders for many other countries which are available from the Educational Development Manager for Oceania.

Students entering the first year of a course with an RICS approved cognate diploma will be excluded from the calculation, if they have at least a meritorious performance (70% pass overall) in the approved diploma.

Non-cognate graduates entering the first year of a degree will be excluded from the calculation.

Advanced entry

Policy on advanced entry to partnership accredited undergraduate courses is given in Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4.

Exemption from the calculation of the entry score for students who have shown substantial added value in their learning in the feeder course is available on the following basis.

Students entering an RICS accredited course with an RICS approved technical qualification (diploma or certificate), will be excluded from the entry calculation if they have at least a meritorious performance. Further information on the definition of a meritorious performance for the relevant qualification is available from the Educational Development Manager in Oceania.

If students do not have the required minimum meritorious performance their original TER/ENTER ranking will be included in the calculation of the first year intake score for the current academic year. (Even if the diploma is gaining entry to a later year of the course.)

A3 Teaching quality threshold

For RICS threshold purposes, there are two requirements which must be met for each year of the partnership.

- i) The minimum mean average student evaluation scores across 50% of CORE subjects (all years) on an RICS accredited course, shall be 0 (or 3 on a scale of 1-5). Student evaluation data should be submitted for all subjects and all years.

Student evaluation of subjects is graded on either a five point scale or a -100 to +100 scale as follows;

-100	-50	0	50	100
1	2	3	4	5

It is for each university to determine the core units on a course. These may be defined as those delivered within the Department, School or Faculty. However, so that RICS can verify this, a list of all subjects comprising a course, with an identification of who is the full-time or part-time academic leading the module and whether the module has been deemed core, should also be supplied.

NB: The questionnaire scores sought are NOT the post graduation 'Course Evaluation Questionnaires' required by the government.

ii) The minimum requirement is for a course to achieve no more than two grade 2s or below in any of the following six key areas of the teaching environment as assessed annually by an RICS external examiner:

- curriculum design, content and organisation
- teaching, learning and assessment
- student progression and achievement
- student support and guidance
- learning resources
- quality assurance and enhancement

A completed teaching environment table for each course, with a score from 1- 5 next to each question is required, which must be signed and dated by an RICS external examiner for each course.

These six areas are developed below.

Curriculum design, content and organisation

- are the levels and modes of study appropriate
- do staff cope with specialisms
- is the course coherent
- are the learning outcomes appropriate in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills
- are there recent developments in teaching and learning
- is currency provided through research and scholarly activity.

Teaching learning and assessment

- is there evidence of sound teaching and learning taking place
- are staff appropriately trained and developed
- is the student workload appropriate
- does assessment match the intended learning outcomes
- is good written feedback given to students
- is there consistency in outcomes on the course.

Student progression and achievement

- are the entry qualifications appropriate
- do students progress satisfactorily through the course
- are the awards appropriate
- does students' work exhibit knowledge, understanding, application and key skills
- are students entering appropriate employment
- are students' comments on their course positive.

Student support and guidance

- are there effective admission and induction arrangements
- do students receive timely academic guidance
- is there a sound pastoral system in place
- are the systems in place appropriate for the student profile
- does the university provide effective central support to students
- are students provided with career enhancement opportunities.

Learning resources

- is the library adequate
- is computer hardware modern and accessible
- is there adequate general and specialist computer software

- are laboratories adequately equipped
- are teaching rooms appropriate for the courses
- are there sufficient numbers of academic staff to support the course.

Quality management and enhancement

- does the course team meet regularly and are minutes taken
- is there regular (annual) monitoring of the course
- are issues dealt with quickly and robustly
- are there mechanisms to obtain the views of employers
- is staff development appropriate
- is the quality of the course being enhanced

A4 Research threshold

The threshold standard used by RICS is based on the points criteria issued by the Department of Education, Science and Technology (DEST) for assessment of research in Australian universities. RICS is seeking a calculation of research output by individual course rather than by department, school or faculty.

A partnership university should achieve a minimum mean average research output, for all staff teaching (full and part-time) core subjects on an RICS accredited course, over the previous three year period of 0.67. A single refereed paper, as defined by DEST, is valued at 1 point.

The research threshold will be assessed pre-partnership and every three years thereafter.

A5 Employment threshold criteria

Annual threshold report data requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details for example, job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the courses is employability. RICS wants to see that graduates from its accredited courses move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual course is that at least 75% of graduates, who are in full-time employment in the year following graduation, must be in surveying related employment.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge they have acquired through their partnership accredited degree. The returns to RICS must show where the graduates are in the year after graduation. A minimum response rate of 50% of students graduating from courses in any year is required.

RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula.

Employability

- Examine job descriptor
- Count towards target (75%);
 - i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited course)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual)
- Remove from any calculation;
 - i) unknown destinations
 - ii) unemployed
 - iii) short term career options including travel
- Count contrary to the target all other occupations.

Application of the threshold

The employment threshold is applied in Australia as set out in Section 9, 9.2.

Appendix B

Threshold reporting: Canada

B1 Minimum standards

- 75% of new entrants admitted to each undergraduate program must have at least 75% in the High School Final Award.
- At University or Department level, either a Medical or Doctoral University, or, if a Comprehensive University, the program has 80% of relevant staff in receipt of funding by Research Councils, or is housed within a School that offers PhDs.
- At Department/School level, a satisfactory standard must be achieved in each of three specified areas relating to teaching quality.
- From a return of 50% of all graduates, at least 75% of graduates must be in relevant employment within 12 months of graduation.

B2 Student selection threshold

For each undergraduate program, combining all modes together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score. Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

If a university has granted advanced entry for candidates then the threshold report must also include the re-calculation of the top 75% of the revised cohort. (For those exempt from the re-calculation please see section 9, 9.3 and 9.4).

First year cohorts

The minimum standard is that 75% of new entrants admitted to each bachelors cohort (for those registered on the first day of the program) must have achieved at least 75% in their High School Final Award.

All other first year entrants, including those with alternative qualifications, must be considered within the non standard 25%.

Advanced entry

Policy on advanced entry to partnership accredited undergraduate program is given in Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4.

B3 Teaching quality threshold

Threshold data requirements

For RICS threshold purposes, an assessment will be conducted through the Americas ESB prior to the establishment of a partnership. The Board will grade the teaching environment within which surveying courses are delivered. A pre partnership satisfactory assessment will meet the threshold requirement for the duration of the partnership period.

Measurement of the teaching environment

The Americas ESB will assess the teaching environment at department level across three key areas:

- i) curriculum design, content, organisation
- ii) teaching, learning and assessment
- iii) quality assurance and enhancement.

In each of these key areas academic departments will be assessed whether satisfactory.

These three areas are further developed below.

Curriculum design, content and organization

- organizational chart – governing structures such as senate and academic board
- rationale and demand for degree program
- duration and mode of study – the estimated number of hours that it would normally take a student to complete the degree program: this should also cover non-contact hours for example, private study, seminars, site visits
- program outline
- management of the degree program
- connections with the local profession and their links into degree design
- structured links with practice: site visits, internships, industrial placements.

Teaching, learning and assessment

- the program's teaching and learning strategies, for example, the proportion of direct teaching, tutorials, seminars, practical work, block weeks of study, project work or other forms of teaching

- an assessment rationale – what are the methods of assessment by program, and why were they chosen for example, examinations, course work, dissertation etc
- selection process of the examiners and any process of moderation and/or appeals
- external examiners (see section 6 on the importance RICS attaches to this aspect of degree programs)
- current research areas (only briefly) and how this relates to the teaching of the degree program
- teaching faculty/student ratios.

Quality assurance and enhancement

- the university's structures to review degree programs, to address issues raised at department and faculty levels, critical evaluation, examination boards, student questionnaires etc
- evaluation of learning material
- evaluation of the degree program – what structures are in place to evaluate the degree program and its impact upon the students and their future careers
- accreditation by any other professional bodies and/or authorization by the national or state authority or government agencies
- arrangements for obtaining student opinion and feedback, and for incorporating this in quality enhancement.

The minimum requirement for departments to achieve the RICS teaching quality threshold will be a satisfactory standard in each of the above three areas.

The following three areas will be discussed at the partnership meetings.

Student progression and achievement

- awards/titles the students receive once they have successfully completed the degree program - are there any staged awards; can students stop at any stage and still gain a title, even if of lesser value
- failure/pass rates
- opportunities for re-sits.

Student support and guidance

- career guidance
- counselling or mentoring
- nature of scholarships.

Learning resources

- funding of the degree program
- library – students' access to books, long-term book loans, journals, size of library, types of books available
- accommodation dedicated to the degree program
- dedicated computers, hardware, software.

B4 Research threshold

The threshold standard used by RICS is that a partnership university is a Medical/Doctoral university or one of certain Comprehensive universities as defined by Macleans. For Comprehensive universities, 80% of staff must be in receipt of Research Council funding. The 80% test is applied to the teaching faculty which is involved in teaching the accredited program. This is assessed on a full time equivalence basis for example, a professor whose teaching load is entirely on the accredited program counts as one member of staff but a professor whose teaching load is only 25% on the accredited program, counts as a quarter of a member of staff. For a Comprehensive university, the 80% test will be applied pre-partnership and a satisfactory assessment will meet the threshold requirement for the duration of the partnership.

B5 Employment threshold criteria

Annual threshold report data requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details for example, job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the programs is employability. RICS wants to see that

graduates from its accredited programs move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual program is that at least 75% of graduates, who are in full-time employment in the year following graduation, must be in surveying related employment.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge they have acquired through their partnership accredited degree. The returns to RICS must show where the graduates are in the year after graduation. A minimum response rate of 50% of students graduating from accredited programs in any year is required.

RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula.

Employability

- Examine job descriptor
- Count towards target (75%);
 - i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited course)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual).

Application of threshold

The employment threshold is applied in Canada as set out in Section 9, 9.2.



Appendix C

Threshold reporting: Hong Kong

C1 Minimum standards

- 75% of first year entrants to undergraduate courses must have a minimum Hong Kong A level score of 14 points.
- A Hong Kong University Grants Committee Research Assessment of 40% in the 'cost centre' within which a university's surveying provision falls.
- A teaching environment assessment carried out by a representative from the local external quality assurance system with a minimum requirement for Departments to achieve no more than two grade 2s or less in any of the six key areas.
- 75% of graduates who are in full time employment, in the year following graduation must be in surveying related employment.

C2 Student selection threshold

For each undergraduate course, combining all modes together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score. Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

If a university has granted advanced entry for candidates then the threshold report must also include the re-calculation of the top 75% of the revised cohort. (For those exempt from the re-calculation see Section 9, 9.4).

First year cohorts

The minimum standard is that the top 75% of each cohort for each undergraduate course (for those registered on the first day of the course) must have a minimum score of at least the equivalent of 14 Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination points. Grades are valued as follows:

Advanced levels

A=10 points

B=8 points

C=6 points

D=4 points

E=2 points

Advanced Supplementary (A/S)

A=5 points

B=4 points

C=3 points

D=2 points

E=1 point

All other first year entrants with alternative qualifications must be considered within the non standard 25%.

Advanced entry

Policy on advanced entry to partnership courses is given in Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4.

C3 Teaching environment assessment

Threshold report data requirements

In Hong Kong there are no measurable, independent assessments of a university teaching environment. For RICS threshold purposes this assessment will be conducted by two RICS approved external examiners prior to the establishment of a partnership. These external examiners will grade the teaching environment within which surveying courses are delivered. RICS will choose two examiners per academic department, identifying one as the lead examiner.

A pre partnership satisfactory assessment will meet the threshold requirement for the duration of the partnership period.

Measurement of the teaching environment

The external examiners will grade each academic department across six key areas:

- curriculum design, content and organisation
- teaching, learning and assessment
- student progression and achievement
- student support and guidance
- learning resources
- quality assurance and enhancement.

In each of these key areas academic departments will be graded on six indicators of quality.

These six indicators are further developed below.

Curriculum design, content and organisation

- are the levels and modes of study appropriate
- do staff cope with specialisms
- is the course coherent
- are the learning outcomes appropriate in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills
- are there recent developments in teaching and learning
- is currency provided through research and scholarly activity.

Teaching learning and assessment

- is there evidence of sound teaching and learning taking place
- are staff appropriately trained and developed
- is the student workload appropriate
- does assessment match the intended learning outcomes
- is good written feedback given to students
- is there consistency in outcomes on the course.

Student progression and achievement

- are the entry qualifications appropriate
- do students progress satisfactorily through the course
- are the awards appropriate
- does students' work exhibit knowledge, understanding, application and key skills
- are students entering appropriate employment
- are students' comments on their course positive.

Student support and guidance

- are there effective admission and induction arrangements

- do students receive timely academic guidance
- is there a sound pastoral system in place
- are the systems in place appropriate for the student profile
- does the university provide effective central support to students
- are students provided with career enhancement opportunities.

Learning resources

- is the library adequate
- is computer hardware modern and accessible
- is there adequate general and specialist computer software
- are laboratories adequately equipped
- are teaching rooms appropriate for the courses
- are there sufficient numbers of academic staff to support the course.

Quality management and enhancement

- does the course team meet regularly and are minutes taken
- is there regular (annual) monitoring of the course
- are issues dealt with quickly and robustly
- are there mechanisms to obtain the views of employers
- is staff development appropriate
- is the quality of the course being enhanced.

External examiners will score how far a department is meeting each indicator of quality with a rating between 1 and 4.

- 1 does not meet RICS requirements
- 2 needs some improvement to satisfy RICS requirements
- 3 satisfies RICS requirements
- 4 exceeds RICS requirements.

The minimum requirement for departments to achieve the RICS teaching environment threshold will be no more than two grade 2s or less in any of the six key areas.

C4 Research threshold

Calculating the research standard

The threshold standard used by RICS for a university is a Hong Kong University Grants Committee Research Assessment (RA) of 40% in the 'cost centre' within which a university's surveying provision falls. This will be assessed prior to the establishment of a partnership.

The Hong Kong RA rates the research output of cost centres. It determines 'research indices' for each 'cost centre' in a university and then the indices for all cost centres in each UGC-funded university are aggregated, to obtain an overall research index for that university. Although only the university wide research index is published, RICS requires departments to provide (confidentially) cost centre specific research scores covering all courses which are to be included within a partnership.

The assessment of each 'cost centre' in Hong Kong assesses the proportion of all academic staff in a 'cost area' (normally a department) whose research output meets a defined quality of output threshold, as below.

'Quality of output' equates to an attainable level of excellence appropriate to the discipline in Hong Kong, and showing some evidence of international excellence.

Staff can submit up to five pieces of journal refereed published research but may meet the required threshold based, for example, on one excellent piece of research.

A pre-partnership satisfactory assessment will meet the threshold requirement for the duration of the partnership period.

C5 Employment threshold criteria

Annual threshold report data requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details for example, job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the courses is employability. RICS wants to see that graduates from its accredited courses move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual course is that at least 75% of graduates, who are in full-time employment in the year following graduation, must be in surveying related employment.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge they have acquired through their partnership accredited degree. The returns to RICS must show where the graduates are in the year after graduation. A minimum response rate of 50% of students graduating from courses in any year is required.

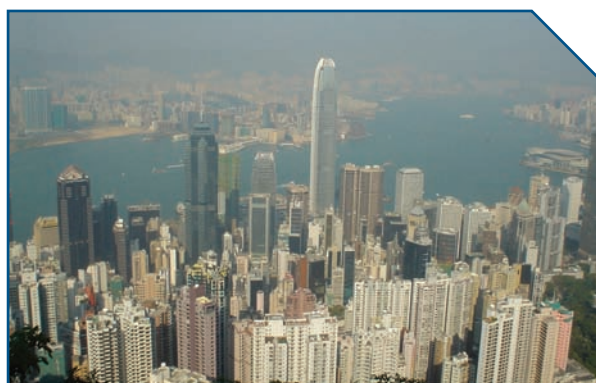
RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula.

Employability

- Examine job descriptor
- Count towards target (75%);
 - i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited course)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual)
- Remove from any calculation;
 - i) unknown destinations
 - ii) unemployed
 - iii) short term career options including travel
- Count contrary to target all other occupations.

Application of threshold

The employment threshold is applied in Hong Kong as set out in Section 9, 9.2.



Appendix D

Threshold reporting: New Zealand

D1 Minimum standards

- 75% of first year entrants to each undergraduate course must have as a minimum, a median average score of 80 credits, at NCEA level 3 (credits can be Unit Standards and Achievement Standards).
- A minimum of 2.96 at either institutional or subject area level in the 2006 Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) research assessment exercise.
- At course level, a satisfactory standard must be achieved, no more than two grade 2s or below, in each of six specified areas relating to teaching quality.
- 75% of graduates who are in full-time employment in the year following graduation must be in relevant employment.

D2 Student selection threshold

For each undergraduate course, combining all modes of study together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score.

If a university has granted advanced entry for candidates, then these should be reported with the first year entrants as a single cohort for the calculation of the entry threshold. (For those exempt from the threshold calculation see Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4). Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

First year cohorts

75% of first year entrants to each undergraduate course must have as a minimum, a median average score of 80 credits at NCEA level 3 (credits can be Unit Standards and Achievement Standards).

UK/Cambridge A Level Scores Tariff

The following tariff must be used for the conversion of UK/Cambridge A level scores and UCAS points to NZ NCEA credits. One NCEA credit at level 3 is worth 2.85 UCAS points.

Table 1: UK/Cambridge A level scores/ UCAS points conversion

UK or Cambridge A Level scores/UCAS points	NZ NCEA Level 3 credits
120	42
140	50
157	55
171	60
185	65
200	70
214	75
228	80

Advanced entry

Holders of New Zealand NQF (Level 6) National Diplomas in land, property or construction subjects with a meritorious performance (at least 60% overall) are excluded from the entry threshold. Tariffs for diplomas offered in other countries are available from the Education Development Manager for Oceania.

D3 Research threshold

The threshold standard used by RICS is that a partnership university has achieved a minimum of 2.96 at either institutional or subject area level in the 2006 PBRF research assessment exercise.

Where a subject area score is provided this must be relevant to the course(s) seeking inclusion in the partnership. Relevancy will be judged by RICS taking into account any definitions made by the PBRF and the RICS competency definitions for an RICS APC pathway.

D4 Teaching environment assessment

Threshold data requirements

The minimum requirement for a course is to achieve no more than two grade 2s or below in any of the following six key areas of the teaching environment as assessed annually by two RICS external examiners:

- curriculum design, content and organisation
- teaching, learning and assessment

- student progression and achievement
- student support and guidance
- learning resources
- quality assurance and enhancement.

A completed teaching environment table for each course, with a score from 1- 5 next to each question is required which must be signed and dated by an RICS external examiner for each course.

Where no external examiners are currently in place the RICS Asia Pacific ESB will initially assess the teaching quality provision.

These six areas are developed below.

Curriculum design, content and organisation

- are the levels and modes of study appropriate
- do staff cope with specialisms
- is the course coherent
- are the learning outcomes appropriate in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills
- are there recent developments in teaching and learning
- is currency provided through research and scholarly activity.

Teaching learning and assessment

- is there evidence of sound teaching and learning taking place
- are staff appropriately trained and developed
- is the student workload appropriate
- does assessment match the intended learning outcomes
- is good written feedback given to students
- is there consistency in outcomes on the course.

Student progression and achievement

- are the entry qualifications appropriate
- do students progress satisfactorily through the course

- are the awards appropriate
- does students' work exhibit knowledge, understanding, application and key skills
- are students entering appropriate employment
- are students' comments on their course positive.

Student support and guidance

- are there effective admission and induction arrangements
- do students receive timely academic guidance
- is there a sound pastoral system in place
- are the systems in place appropriate for the student profile
- does the university provide effective central support to students
- are students provided with career enhancement opportunities.

Learning resources

- is the library adequate
- is computer hardware modern and accessible
- is there adequate general and specialist computer software
- are laboratories adequately equipped
- are teaching rooms appropriate for the courses
- are there sufficient numbers of academic staff to support the course.

Quality management and enhancement

- does the course team meet regularly and are minutes taken
- is there regular (annual) monitoring of the course
- are issues dealt with quickly and robustly
- are there mechanisms to obtain the views of employers
- is staff development appropriate
- is the quality of the course being enhanced.

D5 Employment threshold

Annual threshold report data requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details for example, job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the courses is employability. RICS wants to see that graduates from its accredited courses move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual course is that at least 75% of graduates are in relevant employment within 12 months of graduation.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge they have acquired through their partnership accredited degree. The returns to RICS must show where the graduates are in the 12 months after graduation. A minimum response rate of 50% of students graduating from courses in any year is required.

RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula:

- Examine job descriptor
- Count towards target (75%);
 - i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited course)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual).
- Remove from any calculation;
 - i) unknown destinations
 - ii) unemployed
 - iii) short term career options including travel
- Count contrary to the target all other occupations.

Application of threshold

The employment threshold is applied in New Zealand as set out in Section 9, 9.2.

Appendix E

Threshold reporting: South Africa

E1 Minimum standards

- 75% of first year entrants to an undergraduate programme must have 17 unweighted Matric points or equivalent.
- 75% of first year entrants to a postgraduate programme must have completed either a four year undergraduate degree or Honours degree.
- A minimum requirement at department level is that a satisfactory standard must be achieved in each of six specified areas relating to teaching quality.
- A research rating of 0.8 per full time academic staff member, calculated as a rolling average over three years.
- At least 60% of graduates must be in relevant employment within 12 months of graduation.

E2 Student selection threshold

For each undergraduate and postgraduate programme, combining all modes of study together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score. Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

If a university has granted advanced entry for candidates then the threshold report must also include the re-calculation of the top 75% of the revised cohort. (For those exempt from the re-calculation see Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4)

First year cohorts

Undergraduate

75% of first year entrants must have 17 unweighted Matric points or equivalent in accordance with the following table:

Symbol	Higher grade	Standard grade
A	5	4
B	4	3
C	3	2
D	2	1
E	1	0
F	0	0

The Regional ESB is currently developing equivalent entry standards to reflect the new national senior certificate and admissions points system (APS). Universities will be advised accordingly.

Postgraduate

75% of first year entrants must have completed either a four year undergraduate degree or Honours degree.

E3 Research threshold

The threshold standard used by RICS is that partnership university departments must achieve a rating of 0.8 per full time academic staff member, calculated as a rolling average over three years, in accordance with the following:

Agreed weightings for research outputs Research Activity	Number	Weighting	Total
DoE Subsidy Earning Accredited Articles		1.0	
Non Subsidy Earning Intl Peer Reviewed Articles		1.0	
Intl Peer Reviewed Books		4.5	
Intl Peer Reviewed Chapters in Books		1.0	
Published Intl Peer Reviewed Conference Proceedings		0.5	
Abstracts in Proceedings of International Conference		-	
Other (eg trade journals and course manuals)		-	
Patents		1.0	
			A

A = total score.

N = full time academic members of staff (excluding vacancies) in department

Standard: $A / N > 0.8$

E4 Teaching quality threshold

Threshold data requirements

For RICS threshold purposes, an assessment will be conducted by two representatives from the local external quality assurance system, prior to the establishment of a partnership. The representatives will grade the teaching environment within which surveying programmes are delivered. A pre partnership satisfactory assessment will meet the threshold requirement for the duration of the partnership period.

Measurement of the teaching environment

The minimum requirement at Departmental level is to achieve a satisfactory standard in each of the six key areas of:

- curriculum design, content and organisation
- teaching, learning and assessment
- student progression and achievement
- student support and guidance
- learning resources
- quality assurance and enhancement.

These six areas are developed below.

Curriculum design, content and organisation

- are the levels and modes of study appropriate
- do staff cope with specialisms
- is the programme coherent
- are the learning outcomes appropriate in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills
- are there recent developments in teaching and learning
- is currency provided through research and scholarly activity.

Teaching learning and assessment

- is there evidence of sound teaching and learning taking place
- are staff appropriately trained and developed

- is the student workload appropriate
- does assessment match the intended learning outcomes
- is good written feedback given to students
- is there consistency in outcomes on the programme.

Student progression and achievement

- are the entry qualifications appropriate
- do students progress satisfactorily through the program
- are the awards appropriate
- does students work exhibit knowledge, understanding, application and key skills
- are students entering appropriate employment
- are students' comments on their program positive.

Student support and guidance

- are there effective admission and induction arrangements
- do students receive timely academic guidance
- is there a sound pastoral system in place
- are the systems in place appropriate for the student profile
- does the university provide effective central support to students
- are students provided with career enhancement opportunities.

Learning resources

- is the library adequate
- is computer hardware modern and accessible
- is there adequate general and specialist computer software
- are laboratories adequately equipped
- are teaching rooms appropriate for the programs
- are there sufficient numbers of academic staff to support the programmes.

Quality management and enhancement

- does the programme team meet regularly and are minutes taken
- is there regular (annual) monitoring of the programme
- are issues dealt with quickly and robustly
- are there mechanisms to obtain the views of employers
- is staff development appropriate
- is the quality of the programme being enhanced.

E5 Employment threshold criteria

Annual threshold report data requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details ie job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the courses is employability. RICS wants to see that graduates from its accredited programme move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual programme is that at least 60% of graduates are in relevant employment within 12 months of graduation.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge they have acquired through their partnership accredited degree. The returns to RICS

must show where the graduates are in the 12 months after graduation.

RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula:

Employability

- Examine job descriptor
- Count towards target (60%);
 - i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited programme)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual).
- Remove from any calculation;
 - i) unknown destinations
 - ii) unemployed
 - iii) short term career options including travel.
- Count contrary to the target all other occupations.

Application of threshold

The employment threshold is applied in South Africa as set out in Section 9, 9.2.



Appendix F

Threshold reporting: UK

F1 Minimum standards

- 75% of first year entrants to undergraduate courses must have an average score of 270 UCAS points, or a minimum of 230 UCAS points.
- Successful fulfilment of the research and innovation threshold with a 'fully satisfactory' grading (from September 2008).
- A relevant teaching quality score, England, Northern Ireland and Wales: 'confidence' and Scotland: 'broad confidence'.
- 75% of graduating students in relevant employment as defined by the HESA return or alternative submission, with a minimum return rate of 50% for each cohort.

F2 Student selection threshold

For each undergraduate course, combining all modes together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score.

The average or minimum score for the top 75% of each cohort should be calculated. Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

First year cohorts

The minimum standard is that the average score of the top 75% of each cohort must be at least 270 UCAS points, or the minimum score of students in the top 75% of each cohort must be at least 230 UCAS points. Universities have the choice of whether to operate a minimum or average based standard, and may decide annually which standard to use on a course by course basis, provided they choose to report their first year and advanced entry students together (see below).

Advanced entry reporting

Universities can report all students given entry to a course during each year as if they were a single cohort, regardless of their entry level. Students given advanced entry to join an accredited course, and who are not excluded from the tariff can be added to the first year intake for that year for the calculation of the entry standard.

Alternatively universities can choose to continue to report advanced entry students, who are not excluded from the tariff, by re-calculating the first year entry score for any advanced entry student(s) as outlined in Section 9, 9.3. Further details on exemptions from the tariff are provided in Section 9, 9.4 and later in this section.

“Non-standard” entry

Universities may choose to base the number of places in the 25% category in any one year, on the size of the cohort, either in that year, or in the previous year. Universities which choose to use the previous year's figure will know how many “non-standard” entrants they can have for the next year. For example, with a total of 20 entrants to an accredited degree in September 2007, five non-standard entrants could be admitted to the course in September 2008. All the other entrants would have to meet the 230 minimum or 270 average requirement.

RICS tariff

RICS uses a modified UCAS system for its tariff. It has added other qualifications where UCAS has no tariff, for example Higher National Diplomas and Certificates (HNCs and HNDs), to be of practical use to RICS and partner universities.

Points scores can be aggregated from different qualifications eg GCE Advanced/Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Vocational A levels, GCE Advanced and HNC/D. There is no ceiling to the number of points which can be accumulated. There will be no double counting and students cannot count the same or similar qualification twice, National Diploma (ND) and HND or an AS level and an A level both in the same non cognate subject cannot be counted twice. The highest points score takes precedence over the lesser one.

Points scores for Key Skills achievement are not counted by RICS although UCAS does count them

UK qualifications

This section provides the tariffs for UK qualifications for entry to the first year of an accredited undergraduate course.

Table 1: GCE/VCE qualifications and BTEC Nationals

Points	1 unit award 1	GCE AS/AS VCE	GCE AS Double Award	GCE A level/ AVCE	GCE/AVCE Double Award	BTEC Nationals		
						Award	Certificate	Diploma
360								DDD
320								DDM
280								DMM
240					AA		DD	MMM
220					AB			
200					BB		DM	MMP
180					BC			
160					CC		MM	MPP
140					CD			
120			AA	A	DD	D	MP	PPP
110			AB					
100			BB	B	DE			
90			BC					
80			CC	C	EE	M	PP	
70			CD					
60		A	DD	D				
50		B	DE					
40		C		E			P	
30		D						
28								
20	A	E						
17	B							
13	C							
10	D							
7	E							

Key

1 covers stand-alone GCE Advanced Mathematics units, and Vocational A level Advanced units over and above those require to achieve the double award.

Table 2: Scottish Framework Qualifications

Points	Advanced Higher	Higher	Intermediate	Standard Grade Credit
120	A			
100	B			
80	C			
72	D	A		
60		B		
48		C		
42		D	A	
38				Band 1
35			B	
28			C	Band 2
24		E		

Table 3: OCR Nationals

Points	Certificate	Diploma	Extended Diploma
360			D1
320			D2/M1
280			M2
240		D	M3
200		M1	P1
160		M2/P1	P2
120	D	P2	P3
80	M	P3	
40	P		

Please note the following:

- GNVQs have been renamed and restructured as 'Vocational' A levels. These are worth the same as one A level (6-unit award) or two A levels (12-unit award). RICS is retaining a different tariff for pre-2001 GNVQs from post-2001 Vocational A levels.
- GCE Advanced Subsidiary scores will be subsumed into Advanced Higher scores in the same subject.

Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma

The Welsh Baccalaureate (WBQ) is an overarching qualification, incorporating a core programme of study with a range of options comprised of existing awards (A levels, NVQs etc.).

RICS will award 120 points for the core, but only when a student has successfully achieved the overarching qualification of the WBQ Advanced Diploma, and with options which are recognised by the RICS tariff. Points should be awarded for the options in line with the tariff and combined with the points awarded for the core.

No points will be awarded for the core where the options are qualifications not recognised by the RICS tariff such as NVQs.

Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

From September 2008 all English, Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh non-cognate HNCs and HNDs, for first year entry to an accredited undergraduate course in the UK, irrespective of level of attainment, are worth 230 points. Previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies can also be counted.

Cognate English, Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh HNCs and HNDs are excluded from the threshold calculation for first year entry, irrespective of level of attainment.

IFS Certificate in Financial Studies and Music Awards

- Institute of Financial Services (IFS) Certificate in Financial Studies
- The Music Awards of the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music (ABRSM), Trinity College, Guildhall School and London College of Music.

Table 4 provides details on the allocation of points.

NB: Music Awards – the practical and theory awards are complementary and can be counted individually. However the music awards duplicate GCE A level music and there should be no double counting if applicants have both awards, with tariff points only being awarded for the A level.

Table 4: IFS Certificate in Financial Studies and Music Awards

IFS Certificate in Financial Studies	Points	Music Awards – ABRSM, Trinity College, Guildhall School & London College of Music					
		Practical			Theory		
Grade		Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
	75			D			
	70			M			
	65						
A	60		D				
	55		M	P			
B	50						
	45	D					
C	40	M	P				
	35						D
D	30						M
	25	P				D	P
E	20					M	
	15				D	P	
	10				M		
	5				P		

Foundation years

There is no RICS tariff for foundation years. Students with this qualification should either be put into the 25% non-standard entry category, or their previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies be counted.

Certificate/Diploma of Higher Education

Non-cognate Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education (CertHE/DipHE) from an English, Northern Irish or Welsh University are worth 230 points, irrespective of level of attainment. Previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies can also be counted.

Non-cognate Scottish CertHE are worth 230 points with 60 credits at 60% or above, and an overall average of 60% or above. Non cognate Scottish DipHE are worth 230 points with 120 credits at 60% or above, and an overall average at 60% or above. Previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies can also be counted.

Cognate Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education from an English, Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh University are excluded from the threshold calculation for entry to first year of an accredited undergraduate course, irrespective of level of attainment.

Foundation degrees

Cognate foundation degree holders (240 UK credits) are excluded from the threshold calculation for entry to the first year of an accredited undergraduate course irrespective of level of attainment. Non-cognate foundation degrees are worth 230 points. Previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies can also be counted.

Degrees

Non-cognate undergraduate degrees (ordinary and honours) are worth 300 points, irrespective of level of attainment. Previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies can also be counted. Cognate degree holders are excluded from the threshold calculation (see Section 9.3).

College of Estate Management's Diploma in Surveying Practice

For first year entry, holders of this qualification, irrespective of level of attainment, are excluded from the threshold calculation.

TechRICS membership

TechRICS members are excluded from the threshold calculation. (see Section 9.4)

Older qualifications

Pre 2004: National Diploma (E&W). All merits = 230 points; NC (E&W). All merits = 150 points Add 10 points for every unit with distinction, and deduct 10 points for every unit with a pass.

pre 2002:

	Dist	Merit	Pass
OND/ONC (obsolete)	240	160	60
12 unit GNVQ (pre-2002)	160	110	60

International qualifications

The most common non UK qualifications are included in the current tariff for six of the countries from which non-UK students most commonly come to the UK to study surveying (ie Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Ireland, France and Germany).The tariff also includes the International Baccalaureate. Tables 5 and 6 outline the RICS tariff for qualifications from these countries.

RICS will provide an annual list of non-standard qualifications which are acceptable for entry at first year and advanced entry on to an accredited course. An argument and supporting evidence must be presented for any others to be included in the tariff (including references from NARIC for example). RICS will not research the evidence. The onus is on the university to provide a satisfactory level of evidence, otherwise the students must go into the university's 25% for non standard entry.

Table 5: Non-UK qualifications

Points	A levels (Malay STPM, Hong Kong ALC, Singapore)	French Bacc	German Abitur
330		17	
320			1.5
315			
310		16	
300			1.8
290		15	
280			2.2
270		14	
260			
250		13	
240			2.8
230		12	
225			
220			3.0
210		11	
200			
190		10	
180			
160			
150			
140			
120	A		
100	B		
80	C		
60	D		
40	E		
10			



Table 6: Irish Leaving Certificate and International Baccalaureate

Points	Irish Leaving Certificate		International Baccalaureate
	Higher	Ordinary	
768			45
744			44
722			43
698			42
675			41
652			40
628			39
605			38
582			37
559			36
535			35
512			34
489			33
466			32
442			31
419			30
396			29
373			28
350			27
326			26
303			25
280			24
90	A1		
77	A2		
71	B1		
64	B2		
58	B3		
52	C1		
45	C2		
39	C3	A1	
33	D1		
26	D2	A2	
20	D3	B1	
14		B2	
7		B3	

Advanced entry

Policy on advanced entry to partnership accredited undergraduate courses is given in Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4.

Students can gain advanced entry to an accredited undergraduate course with a cognate HNC/D, cognate Scottish Cert/DipHE, cognate Foundation degrees (England & Wales) (240 UK credits) or the College of Estate Management's Diploma in Surveying Practice. These students must be included in the threshold calculation and their tariff score calculated using their previously attained UCAS tariff point equivalencies. They can either be reported with the first year entrants as a single cohort or by recalculating the first year entry score as outlined in Section 9, 9.3.

Students who have shown substantial added value in their learning during their feeder course are exempt from the recalculation of the entry score and may enter the second level of an accredited course in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Advanced entry is also available for entry on to the second and third level of an accredited course in Scotland.

The policy on advanced entry and exclusion from the threshold calculation has been reviewed. Previously students have had to demonstrate high achievement across all units/modules of their course. Following the policy review in 2007 the focus will be on student achievement at the highest level of a course, rather than at all levels. New advanced entry tariffs have been approved which reflect this change in policy and are effective from September 2008 entry onwards.

Advanced entry to an accredited course in England, Northern Ireland and Wales

College of Estate Management's Diploma in Surveying Practice

Holders of the Diploma who have achieved an average score of at least 60% over the highest level (level 2) modules of the course may enter the second level of an accredited course and be exempt from the threshold calculation.

240 UK credit cognate foundation degree (England and Wales)

Holders of a cognate foundation degree who have achieved an average score of at least 60% for all the highest level modules (intermediate or level 4 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) of the course may enter the second level of an accredited course and be exempt from the threshold calculation.

English, Northern Irish and Welsh Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

A new tariff has been introduced with effect from September 2008 entry onwards based on the unit level indicator (H1 or H2). The existing tariff will also continue to be available for September 2008 entry only in order not to disadvantage students.

For September 2008 and subsequent entry the following tariff applies.

Holders of a cognate English, Northern Irish or Welsh HNC or HND, who have achieved a minimum of all merits in all H2 level units, may enter the second level of an accredited course and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

Compensation for a pass in one H2 unit with a distinction in another H2 is permitted. However compensation between H1 and H2 units is not permitted.

The following will continue to be available as an alternative for September 2008 entry only.

Holders of a cognate English, Northern Irish or Welsh HNC or HND, who have achieved merits in all units at all levels (or Hong Kong – 10 merits out of 28 units), may enter the second level of an accredited course and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

Compensation for a pass in one unit with a distinction in another unit is permitted.

Scottish Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

Students with Scottish HNCs and HNDs are eligible for advanced entry on to an accredited course in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The following tariff applies from September 2008 entry onwards;

HNCs and HNDs with merit statements:

Holders of a cognate Scottish HNC or HND, who have

achieved at least 10 merits, may be admitted to level two of an accredited course in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and are exempt from of the threshold calculation.

HNCs and HNDs with graded units:

Holders of a cognate Scottish HNC or HND, who have achieved a minimum of Grade B (60% or above) in their graded units and passes in all other units, may be admitted to level two of an accredited course in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

Scottish qualifications for advanced entry to an accredited course in Scotland;

Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

Scottish HNCs and HNDs have been revised and from September 2008 entry, a new advanced entry tariff has been introduced for students with the revised qualification using graded units. The existing advanced entry tariff for students, with the older style qualification using merit statements, will continue to apply and universities should use the appropriate tariff, depending on which style of qualification a student possesses.

HNCs with merit statements:

Holders of a cognate Scottish HNC, who have achieved at least 10 merits or above, may be admitted to level 2 of an accredited course in Scotland, and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

HNCs with graded units (from September 2008):

Holders of a cognate HNC, who have achieved a minimum of Grade B (60% or above) in the one graded unit and passes in all other units, may be admitted to the level 2 of an accredited course in Scotland and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

HNDs with merit statements:

Holders of a cognate Scottish HND, who have achieved at least 10 merits out of 28 units or above, may be admitted to level 3 of an accredited course in Scotland and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

HNDs with graded units (from September 2008):

Holders of a cognate HND, who have achieved a minimum of Grade B (60% or above) in the all three graded unit and passes in all other units, may be admitted to the level 3 of an accredited course in Scotland and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education

Holders of a cognate Scottish CertHE, who have achieved 60 credits at 60% or above and an overall average at 60% or above, may be admitted to level 2 of an accredited course in Scotland and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

Holders of a cognate Scottish DipHE, who have achieved 120 credits at 60% or above and an overall average at 60% or above, may be admitted to level three of an accredited course in Scotland and are exempt from the threshold calculation.

Cognate non-accredited degrees

Students who have achieved a high standard in the first or second level of a cognate, but non-accredited degree may, at the discretion of a course leader transfer to the second or third level of an accredited degree. See Section 9.3 for further information.

TechRICS for advanced entry

- i) TechRICS members who achieve their membership grade on the basis of a cognate non-accredited degree are eligible for final level entry to an undergraduate accredited course.
- ii) TechRICS members are eligible for advanced entry to the second level of an accredited undergraduate degree course irrespective of the academic attainment of the applicant.
- iii) TechRICS members transferring to a partnership accredited degree (any level) are exempt from the re-calculation of the threshold.

TechRICS members are also eligible to be considered at a university's discretion for entry to an accredited postgraduate degree. TechRICS members who achieved their membership on the basis of a cognate non-accredited degree could seek 600 study hours exemption from the university.

F3 Research and innovation threshold

Threshold report data requirements

The threshold standard for research/innovation will be an annual assessment at school/department level to demonstrate how students are exposed to innovation. This will be undertaken at the annual partnership meeting and will be based on performance against the following headings:

- research output and environment
- research informed teaching
- engagement with professional practice and industry

An overview report of the activities within each of these headings must be submitted to RICS at least two weeks before the annual partnership meeting. At the meeting the school/department will be invited to expand on its activities and provide evidence of these. It will also be asked to demonstrate how these activities have fed into the accredited courses.

Further guidelines on the production of the report are available from the Education and Qualification Standards Department.

Assessment of threshold

The RICS attendees at the partnership meeting will provide a report to the UKESB. There is no reason for RICS to believe that any school/department will fail to meet the threshold and, a satisfactory response will be reported to the board. In the unlikely event that a university does not produce a satisfactory response, the matter will be referred to the UKESB for further consideration. The board will review and assess the response and make a formal decision on the threshold and respond to the university on the actions arising from its decision.

New partnerships

New partnerships will initially be assessed on their performance in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Universities seeking to establish a partnership prior to the publication of the results of 2008 RAE are required to have achieved a 2D or above, with a 3E or above regarded as equivalent to a 2D in the 2001 RAE. The standard will be reviewed following the publication of the results of the 2008 RAE.

F4 Teaching quality threshold

Threshold report data requirements

This threshold requires each partner university to achieve a minimum stated outcome from the official reviews undertaken by the relevant quality assurance agency in England and Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Each country has its own Higher Education quality assurance system and, although adopting a similar assessment methodology, has chosen to use differing grading terminology. RICS requires the following grading to be achieved to meet the threshold:

- English or Northern Irish partner universities must achieve a 'confidence' rating from their institutional audit.
- Scottish partner universities must achieve a minimum of a 'broad confidence' rating from their enhancement-led institutional review.
- Welsh partner universities must achieve a 'confidence' rating from their institutional review.

F5 Employment threshold criteria

Annual threshold report data requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details ie job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

This should be submitted for all accredited courses. Undergraduate data must be submitted to RICS by 1 March. Postgraduate data should be submitted as soon as possible after 1 March (if not available by that date) and not later than 15 July.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the courses is employability. RICS wants to see that graduates from its accredited courses move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual course is 75%. A minimum response rate of 50% of students graduating from courses in any year is required.

This data may be available from the return that universities must provide on undergraduate courses for HESA.

An alternative to the HESA return for undergraduate courses is acceptable provided it contains sufficient information (ie job title and employment sector). For postgraduate courses most university careers offices collect this data already as best practice.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge they have acquired through their partnership accredited degree.

RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula.

Employability

- Examine job descriptor
- Count towards target (75%);
 - i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited course)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual).
- Remove from any calculation;
 - i) unknown destinations
 - ii) unemployed
 - iii) short term career options including travel.
- Count contrary to the target
 - i) all other occupations.

RICS recognises that it may be difficult to track students once they have left university. However, universities have agreed with HESA a reporting level of 80% for UK domiciled students and 50% for EU domiciled students. Consequently RICS would normally expect data returns to include at least 50% of each cohort. The UKESB will keep under review the rate of return overall and, consider on a case by case basis universities which fail to report on a high enough percentage of their graduates.

Application of threshold

The employment threshold is applied in the UK as set out in Appendix A, A1.

F6 External examiner data

RICS no longer approves the appointment of external examiners in the UK. RICS criteria for appointment (see Section 5.3) remains best practice guidance.

UK partner universities should inform RICS of their external examiners for each partnership accredited course as part of their annual threshold data submission. Sanctions may apply if universities do not submit this information.

To ensure adequate consideration of issues raised by external examiners, universities are asked to submit to their RICS Regional Director ahead of the annual partnership meeting for distribution to the RICS attendees on the partnership a report on the latest external examiners' reports and the university's response.



Appendix G

Threshold reporting: USA

G1 Minimum standards

- 75% of those admitted to a Masters program must have a GMAT score of 540, or a GPA of 3.10, or a GRE score of at least 460 (verbal) and 620 (quantitative) or already have a postgraduate degree.
- 75% of first year entrants to a Bachelors program must have a SAT score of 1 000 or an ACT score of 22.
- At campus level, an A1 Carnegie score for research (under review).
- At Department/School level, a satisfactory standard must be achieved in each of three specified areas relating to teaching quality.
- From a return of 75% of all graduates, at least 75% of graduates must be in relevant employment within 12 months of graduation.

G2 Student selection threshold

Based on labour market characteristics in the USA, RICS has decided that construction degrees should be accredited at bachelors or masters level, while property degrees should be accredited at masters level only. Student selection standards have therefore been established for bachelors and masters.

For each undergraduate and postgraduate program, combining all modes together, RICS requires a list of all students (whom it is not necessary to name) who were registered on the first day of the current academic year. RICS also requires their entrance qualifications and grades and calculated individual tariff score. Data on all students irrespective of country of origin is required.

If a university has granted advanced entry for candidates then the threshold report must also include the re-calculation of the top 75% of the revised cohort. (For those exempt from the re-calculation see Section 9, 9.3 and 9.4)

First year cohort Undergraduate

The minimum standard is that 75% of first year entrants to each accredited program (for those registered on the first day of the program) must have a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) of at least 1000 or an American College Test (ACT) of at least 22.

Where RICS accreditation is given only to students who take a particular specialism, rather than to the overall

degree program, it will be necessary for the entry standard to be measured across all students starting the degree program.

Postgraduate

The minimum standard is that 75% of entrants to each accredited program must have a Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) score of at least 540 and/or, a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.10, or already have a postgraduate degree.

Advanced Entry

Policy on advanced entry to partnership programs is given in Section 9, 9.3, 9.4.

All students transferring from outside into the undergraduate partnership program, or changing major inside the university, should have a GPA of 3.25. If not, then the previous SAT score of the individual involved must be used and what represents the top 75% reviewed.

G3 Teaching quality threshold

For RICS threshold purposes, an assessment will be conducted through the Americas ESB prior to the establishment of a partnership. The Board will grade the teaching environment within which surveying programs are delivered. A pre partnership satisfactory assessment will meet the threshold requirement for the duration of the partnership period.

Measurement of the teaching environment

The Board will assess the teaching environment at department level across three key areas:

- curriculum design, content and organization
- teaching, learning and assessment
- quality assurance and enhancement.

In each of these key areas academic departments will be assessed whether satisfactory in all three areas of quality.

These three areas are further developed below.

Curriculum design, content and organization

- organizational chart – governing structures such as senate and academic board
- rationale and demand for degree program
- duration and mode of study – the estimated number of hours that it would normally take a student to complete the degree program: this should also cover non-contact hours eg private study, seminars, site visits
- program outline
- management of the degree program
- connections with the local profession and their links into degree design
- structured links with practice: site visits, internships, industrial placements.

Teaching learning and assessment

- the program's teaching and learning strategies, eg the proportion of direct teaching, tutorials, seminars, practical work, block weeks of study, project work or other forms of teaching
- an assessment rationale - what are the methods of assessment by course and why were they chosen eg exams, course work, dissertation etc
- selection process of the examiners and any process of moderation and/or appeals
- external examiners (see separate information on the importance RICS attaches to this aspect of degree programs)
- current research areas (only briefly) and how this relates to the teaching of the degree program
- teaching faculty/student ratios.

Quality assurance and enhancement

- the university's structures to review degree programs, to address issues raised at department and faculty levels, critical evaluation, examination boards, student questionnaires etc

- evaluation of learning material
- evaluation of the degree program – what structures are in place to evaluate the degree program and its impact upon the students and their future careers
- accreditation by any other professional bodies and/or authorization by the national or state authority or government agencies
- arrangements for obtaining student opinion and feedback, and for incorporating this in quality enhancement.

The minimum requirement for departments to achieve the RICS teaching quality threshold will be a satisfactory standard in each of the three areas.

The following three areas will be discussed at partnership meetings

Student progression and achievement

- awards/titles the students receive once they have successfully completed the degree program; are there any staged awards; can students stop at any stage and still gain a title, even if of lesser value
- failure/pass rates
- any opportunities for re-sit.

Student support and guidance

- career guidance
- counselling or mentoring
- nature of scholarships.

Learning resources

- funding of the degree program
- library – students' access to books, long-term book loans, journals, size of library, types of books available
- accommodation dedicated to the degree program
- dedicated computers, hardware, software.

G4 Research threshold

The threshold standard used by RICS has required a partnership university at campus level to have achieved A1 status under the Carnegie system for example, to be an Extensive Doctoral/Research University. This is under review.

G5 Employment threshold criteria

Annual threshold requirements

The return should comprise a list of all graduates (who do not have to be named) and their employment details for example; job title and employment sector in the year following graduation.

Calculating employability

The threshold standard which measures the output of the programs is employability. RICS wants to see that graduates from its accredited programs move into the profession. The minimum acceptable from any individual program is that at least 75% of graduates are in relevant employment within 12 months of graduation.

Relevant employment covers any employment in which graduates use the knowledge acquired through completing the accredited program, including further study or research. Graduates whose employment destination cannot be ascertained will be removed from the calculation, but graduates known to be unemployed will be counted as not

in relevant employment. The returns to RICS must show where the graduates are in the 12 months after graduation. A minimum response rate of 50% of students graduating from programs in any year is required.

RICS examines the return and calculates using the following formula:

- examine job descriptor
 - count towards target (75%);
- i) those in surveying jobs as defined by the RICS Faculties (able to demonstrate utilisation of core competencies developed through the accredited program)
 - ii) researchers into allied subjects
 - iii) teachers of allied subjects
 - iv) those undertaking further degrees (any, as the first degree may still be relevant when a final career is determined by the individual).

Where RICS accreditation is given only to students who take a particular specialism, rather than to the overall degree program, the employability standard will be measured across only those graduates who have completed the specialism, rather than covering all students who started the degree program.

Application of threshold

The employment threshold is applied in the USA as set out in Appendix A, A1.

Appendix H

TechRICS requirements

H1 Existing entry pathways

RICS has introduced a simpler, more market-relevant process for its technical qualification in the UK. Access to the qualification has been broadened but the quality of the RICS mark remains. This approach will gradually be introduced worldwide.

RICS has compiled a points-based qualification system to determine eligibility for final assessment. Candidates must accumulate at least 100 points from the RICS calibration list before their application for final assessment will be accepted. Further information on the calibration list is available from the Education and Qualification Standards Department.

A layered approach to final assessment enables different types of skills displayed by technical staff to be captured. The assessment is in two parts.

- i) Completion of an online exercise proves awareness of RICS' ethical requirements.
- ii) Demonstration of sector-specific competencies is achieved through a number of written submissions.

Overall, the two outcomes of an RICS final assessment are a pass or referral. In the minority of cases, where submissions provide insufficient evidence of a candidate's ability, an interview may be necessary.

Information on moving from TechRICS to chartered membership is available from the Education and Qualification Standards Department.



13 Glossary

Partnership and Accreditation	
Accreditation	The process of appraisal, inspection and monitoring whereby RICS ensures that specific degree courses meet its standards; holders of accredited degrees are deemed to satisfy the academic requirements for RICS membership.
Approval	Usually means accreditation.
Bologna/Berlin framework	An agreement to create a common model for higher education in Europe, including a three- or four-year bachelor degree, a second stage leading to a Masters degree, and a third stage leading to a doctoral degree. Ministers decided to specify degrees in terms of learning outcomes rather than simply number of hours of study.
Cognate	A course or degree (or diploma) which is in a subject area closely related to an RICS Faculty and an area(s) of surveying practice.
Cohort	The student year group on a degree course. For example, on a full time course, the “2005 cohort” includes students who start the first year (level 1) of the course in 2005 and those who enter (join) the course at level 2 in 2006 and level 3 in 2007. See also intake.
Condonement	Allowing/discounting a poor performance in one subject of an examination or other assessment, normally because of a good performance achieved in another subject.
Contact hours	The number of hours in which a student is in contact with teaching staff during lectures, tutorials, lab sessions etc.
Course	A full programme of study leading to an award or formal qualification. Commonly referred to as program in North America
Course volume	The number of study hours a course comprises, or credits it is worth, including private study.
Credit	A method, quite commonly used in the UK, in Europe and more widely in North America, for counting academic progression, facilitating student transfers between courses and universities, and for exempting students from parts of courses. In the UK, where credits are applied, 1 credit = 10 study hours. In continental Europe, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is based on the principle that 60 ECTS represent the workload of a full time student during one academic year.
Degree	An academic award at undergraduate or postgraduate level.
Exemption	Where students are not required to complete all the normal requirements of a degree because of their prior qualifications and attainment.
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System. Based on the principle that 60 ECTS represent the workload of a full time student during one academic year.
External examiner	A form of external quality assurance, to ensure the integrity of degree awards, involving the independent review of students’ marks normally by an academic from another university and a practitioner.
First degree	An academic qualification awarded for successfully completing a course at a university. It usually takes at least three years on the basis of full time study. RICS accredited first degrees must comprise at least 3 600 study hours. At least 1 000 of these should be at level 3 – the highest undergraduate level.
Foundation degree	A vocational qualification introduced in England in 2001. In England it sits between a Higher National Diploma (HND) and a Bachelor of Science or Arts (BSc/BA). It is similar in level to the American associate degree. It is typically two years’ long and is intended to give a foundation in a subject, enabling the holder to go on to employment in that field. Foundation degrees were designed in partnership with employers and further education colleges.
Graduate	A person who has successfully completed a first degree course; equivalent to an alumnus in North America. Not the same as a “graduate student” in North American terms: in RICS documents this level of student is referred to as a “postgraduate student”. Similarly in RICS documents, a “graduate course” in North American terms is referred to as a “postgraduate course”.
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency. A UK public body responsible for UK university statistics, including data on student admissions and employment destinations.
Honours degree	The definition varies from country to country. In RICS documents, unless otherwise specified, it is the highest level of undergraduate degree commonly available.
Intake level	A group of students who start a course (or a level on a course) at the same time. Generally refers to the level of study on a degree course – on a full time Honours degree course, level 1 is the level of study expected in the first year. In the case of part time degrees, the year of study does not normally correspond to the level of study – students starting the third year of study will usually be entering level 2.

Masters	Postgraduate degree awarded after completion of taught courses, programmes of research, or a mixture of both. Longer research based programmes often lead to the degree of MPhil. Most Masters courses last at least one year if taken full time, and are taken by students with an Honours degree or equivalent. Some accredited Masters degrees are awarded after extended undergraduate courses lasting, typically, one year longer than the Honours degree course. RICS requires accredited courses at Masters level to involve at least 1 800 study hours, except that Masters courses of 1 200 study hours may be accredited provided that all students recruited to the course have completed a 4 800-study-hour first degree in the same field.
Module	Part of a degree course; in North America usually referred to as a “course”.
Partnership	The coming together of a university and RICS to establish common goals and then to work together to achieve these goals. RICS undertakes a rigorous process to select its university partners. Each accredited course in each partner university must meet threshold standards that reflect RICS’ international objectives and principles.
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency. A UK public body responsible for overseeing academic standards in UK universities.
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise. Systems, in operation in Hong Kong and the UK, for evaluating the standard of research undertaken by university departments.
Sandwich course	A degree course in which periods of academic study are integrated with industrial/professional placement(s). The student’s performance on the placement normally counts towards the degree assessment.
Study hours	The total number of hours of study assumed for completion of a unit of a course or for a complete degree course. Hours of study are notional and in practice, the actual hours of study taken to complete the unit will vary. Includes lectures, seminars and other contact time as well as private study, revision etc.
Threshold standards	The threshold standards that each course from each RICS partner university must meet reflect RICS’ international objectives and principles. In countries where partnerships have been established, different numbers and types of threshold standards are chosen to reflect the market. Universities are required to submit information relating to the standards. A university with no courses meeting the standards cannot be offered a partnership.
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admission Service – the organisation that processes admissions applications to UK colleges and universities.
Validation	The process of internal academic review whereby universities ensure that existing and proposed courses meet their own standards and objectives. RICS is not normally involved in course validation.

Member selection and post qualification

APC/ATC	Assessment of Professional Competence/Assessment of Technical Competence – the membership selection processes of RICS. The processes normally involve a period of structured training that ends with an interview to assess the aspiring chartered/technical surveyor’s competence to practise.
Competency	A skill or ability that must be met to a certain level by APC/ATC candidates who have chosen it as part of their APC/ATC pathway. There are also competencies that are mandatory to all candidates.
CPD	All professional members (MRICS and FRICS) must undertake relevant continuing professional development (CPD). They must keep records and submit these when requested to do so by RICS.
Faculty	A specialist membership grouping of RICS. Members of RICS can join up to four faculties, one of which should be the faculty covering the particular APC/ATC pathway through which they qualified. Faculty is used in many parts of the world for a member of the academic staff.
National association	This is the body representing the interests of chartered surveyors in a particular country.
Pathway	The path by which a candidate completes the APC/ATC. Each pathway has core and optional competencies relevant to the particular area of surveying practice.
Professional development	Candidates must annually complete a minimum of 48 hours’ professional development during the APC. This provides the opportunity to gain knowledge that might not be available in a practice context, or to extend or build upon professional knowledge.
Route to membership	The route a candidate follows to join RICS depending on academic and professional experience. Different routes have different structured training and submission requirements.

More Talent, More Choice



RICS Recruit website

RICS Recruit is the leading global recruitment website for property professionals.

Re-launched in November 2007, the site, which lists the details of hundreds of employers, over 1 000 live job vacancies and thousands of registered candidates, already receives an average 16 000 visits every month.

What's new

A host of features enables employers to advertise jobs and attract the best industry talent while candidates can search for the most suitable student placements, graduate jobs, and international job opportunities.

For property professional candidates:

- CV upload facility
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- dedicated zones for graduates, student work placements, international jobs
- job opportunity updates via email
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For employers:

- advertise student placements FREE
- 'featured jobs' advertisement slots
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- dedicated advertising zones (graduate jobs, work placements, international jobs)
- premium A-Z listings
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The RICS Recruit website delivers unrivalled access to the top talent and employers in the surveying, construction and property industry at the click of a mouse.

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RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) is the leading organisation of its kind in the world for professionals in property, land, construction and related environmental issues. As part of our role we help to **set, maintain and regulate standards** – as well as providing **impartial advice** to Governments and policymakers. RICS has 140 000 members who operate out of 146 countries, supported by an extensive network of regional offices located in every continent around the world.

To ensure that our members are able to provide the quality of advice and **level of integrity** required by the market, RICS qualifications are only awarded to individuals who meet the most rigorous requirements for both education and experience and who are prepared to maintain **high standards** in the public interest. With this in mind it's perhaps not surprising that the letters RICS represent the mark of property professionalism worldwide.

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