



# THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF SURVEYORS

Rules and Guide to the

## ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

Quantity Surveying Division

**September 2006**

(Revised Nov 2007)

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) reserves the right to amend the Rules and Guide without prior notice. All matters or disputes relating to the Rules and Guide are subject to the final decision of the Institute. This is not a Contractual Publication.

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## 1. OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Through its Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) Scheme, the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (hereinafter called ‘the Institute’) seeks to satisfy itself that only those whom it considers able to carry out competently the work of a Professionally Qualified Quantity Surveyor on behalf of clients or employers are admitted to Corporate Membership of the Institute under the Quantity Surveying Division.
- 1.2 In deciding whether you meet the requirements for Corporate Membership, the Institute will seek, through the APC, to establish that you:
- (a) are able to apply your theoretical knowledge through professional training and experience to attain the practical skills in quantity surveying;
  - (b) have achieved a satisfactory level of understanding and application of the skills that form an essential part of the knowledge base of the core competencies and chosen optional competencies;
  - (c) are able to pay particular attention to accuracy and essential detail to safeguard the interests of employers and clients;
  - (d) are able to act in accordance with the Institute’s Rules of Conduct, possess the highest level of professional integrity and objectivity, and recognize your duties to clients, employers and the community; and
  - (e) are able to communicate effectively - verbally, in writing and graphically - and prepare reports which are well structured, grammatical and correctly spelt.
- 1.3 In addition, you are also expected to demonstrate that you:
- (a) are a good ambassador for the Institute, your profession and employer;
  - (b) are aware of the technical, professional and commercial implications of your work;
  - (c) are able to understand your clients’ and employer’s thinking and objectives;
  - (d) have an up-to-date and developing knowledge of technical and legal matters relevant to the work of quantity surveyors;
  - (e) are able to play a role in a team and have built up experience in client contact;
  - (f) have motivation, initiative, administrative ability, and leadership potential; and
  - (g) have the confidence to work unsupervised.

## 2. PRINCIPAL PARTIES

- 2.1 Achieving the aforesaid objectives to the satisfaction of the Institute will involve a partnership among several essential parties and, if you are not to be delayed unnecessarily, their co-operation:

### You

You need to enter into the APC Scheme with enthusiasm and commitment and to follow the procedures described in this document precisely and by the deadlines.

### Your Employer

Your Employer, being a proprietor or an organization with business directly or indirectly related to quantity surveying, is expected to provide you with opportunities to acquire the appropriate professional training under proper supervision, suitable encouragement and necessary facilities and time, and to timely endorse the appropriate forms for you when being requested.

### Your Supervisor

Your Supervisor as appointed by your Employer to supervise your day-to-day work must be a professional quantity surveyor and a Corporate Member of the Institute or a corporate member of a professional body as the Institute may recognize (such as a professional engineer, architect, planner or construction manager) of not less than two years standing. Your Supervisor is expected to provide guidance on practical training and to timely endorse your Diary, Log Book and Critical Analysis when being requested.

### Your Counsellor

Your Counsellor who must be a professional quantity surveyor and a Corporate Member of the Institute of not less than five years standing is responsible for providing professional advice on your training and to timely complete the appropriate forms for you when being requested. In addition, your Counsellor is also responsible for monitoring your training progress and ensuring that you are suitably prepared before you present yourself for Final Assessment. Your Counsellor may also act as your Supervisor.

### The Assessors

Assessors are Corporate Members of the Institute in the Quantity Surveying Division of not less than five years standing. They are responsible for conducting the Final Assessment.

### The Quantity Surveying Division

The Quantity Surveying Division of the Institute will provide opportunities for Pre-Qualification Structured Learning. The QS Divisional APC Sub-Committee administers the APC and answers technical inquiries, while the Administration Office of the Institute provides the necessary administrative backups and assists in answering general inquiries.

- 2.2 You should study this booklet with great care. Any deviation from the requirements of the APC Scheme may delay you qualifying as a Corporate Member.

## **3. FORM OF THE APC SCHEME**

- 3.1 In outline, the APC Scheme comprises:

- (a) a requirement to undergo a Minimum Training Period of 24 calendar months (normally not more than 5 years after the date of entry into the APC Scheme) comprising not less than 440 working days of approved professional training and experience in Hong Kong, or mainly in Hong Kong, in specified core and optional competencies to be properly documented in the Diary and Log Book provided by the Institute;
- (b) a requirement to undertake at least 24 hours of Pre-Qualification Structured Learning for every 6 full months after entry to the APC but before taking the Final Assessment (subject to a minimum aggregate of 96 hours) complementary to the professional training or for professional development;
- (c) a requirement to submit a Critical Analysis to demonstrate your professional competence in quantity surveying practices; and
- (d) a requirement to take, after fulfilling (a) to (c) above, the Final Assessment consisting of a Practice Problem and a Professional Interview to testify your professional competence as a professional quantity surveyor.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1 To enter the APC Scheme, you must:

- (a)
  - (i) hold a undergraduate or postgraduate degree or other academic qualification recognized by the Institute; or
  - (ii) have registered in a full-time sandwich degree programme recognized by the Institute and have started the placement training; or
  - (iii) have reached the final year of a part-time or distance learning undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme recognized by the Institute; and
- (b) be in a suitable employment with an organization that can provide the appropriate professional training; and
- (c) be a Probationer of the Institute (which status shall be continuously maintained by paying the relevant membership subscriptions throughout the APC period).

4.2 If you are registered with the APC Scheme under Section 4.1(a)(ii) and (iii), you are allowed to complete your first 12 months' professional training concurrently with your studies. The second 12 months' professional training must be attained after successful completion of the degree programme.

## 5. ENTRY TO THE APC SCHEME

5.1 To apply for entry into the APC Scheme, you have to complete Form APC1/QS and submit the same, together with documentary proof of your academic qualification and the prescribed application fee, to the Institute for approval.

5.2 The Institute will acknowledge receipt of your application. You must notify the Institute in writing if acknowledgement is not received within one month.

5.3 If the Institute is satisfied with the proposed professional training arrangements, your APC period would normally commence on the date of receipt by the Institute of Form APC1/QS. If the Institute is not satisfied with the proposed professional training arrangements, it may reject the application or accept it on condition that you shall, upon the completion of the proposed professional training as submitted, obtain wider experience of a specified period under a new professional training arrangement to be approved by the Institute.

## **6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

- 6.1 You must familiarize yourself with the areas of professional training set out in this document. You should ascertain if your employment would provide sufficient opportunity for you to acquire the necessary training with adequate coverage.
- 6.2 Private practices offering professional quantity surveying services and public bodies engaged in quantity surveying are suitable grounds for acquiring practical experience. Other organizations such as contractors, developers, project management and property/facilities management companies, etc. may provide opportunities in specialized areas. Only a few employers are able to provide structured professional training. You should therefore take initiatives to seek professional knowledge from your Supervisor and Counsellor and to acquire experience upon hands-on involvement in your projects.
- 6.3 You should ensure that you have sufficient exposure to the required training areas. If the engagement in a particular employment provides only a limited scope of training, you may have to consider if you need to make alternative arrangement such as secondment to another office or change of employment to make up the inadequacy.
- 6.4 If in doubt, you may write to the Institute for preliminary opinion on the suitability of your proposed employment and professional training arrangements, which will generally be responded within six weeks.
- 6.5 When you change your Employer, Supervisor or Counsellor, you should seek the approval of the Institute on your altered professional training arrangements by making a supplementary application within one month of the change. Otherwise, experience gained after such change and before the application is received by the Institute will not be admitted.

## **7. SUPERVISION AND COUNSELLING**

- 7.1 When undergoing professional training, you should be guided and instructed by a Supervisor with the relevant expertise. In addition, you must be properly advised by a Counsellor. Normally, a Counsellor should have under his/her guidance not more than three Candidates undertaking the APC Scheme at any one time.
- 7.2 It is preferable for your Counsellor to be appointed by the Employer from within the organization, who may also act as the Supervisor as well. If for any reason your Employer is unable to provide an in-house Counsellor, you must enlist the assistance of a professional quantity surveyor of another organization to act as an external Counsellor.
- 7.3 You should frequently discuss your training progress with your Counsellor in order that you may be properly guided.
- 7.4 The “Notes for Guidance of Employers, Supervisors and Counsellors” provide further explanation of the roles of an Employer, a Supervisor and a Counsellor.

## 8. APPROVED PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- 8.1 Before any considerations are given by the APC Sub-Committee to your application to take the Final Assessment, you must satisfy the Institute that you have received a broadly based and reasonably balanced professional training in all core competencies and the chosen optional competency for the Minimum Training Period of 24 calendar months (with not less than 440 working days) and have attained the required competency standards. You may work with quantity surveying consultants, contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, developers, government departments, project management, and property/facilities management firms, specialising in building, civil engineering and/or building services works. You should endeavour to cover the core competencies and the chosen optional competencies within the Minimum Training Period, or within such extended period as may be necessary.
- 8.2 The APC aims at assessing whether you are competent to carry out quantity surveying professional work to such competency standards expected of a Corporate Member of the Institute. Competency is defined as the skill or ability needed to perform the specific task within an occupation to the standard expected for employment. After completing your academic studies and upon entry into the APC Scheme, you should have acquired the basic skills and knowledge of most practice-based competencies and theoretical knowledge (such as technical communication, business management, construction economics, information technology, environmental science, site surveying, construction technology, building services, construction law, etc.). After gaining adequate experience during the Minimum Training Period, you are expected to be able to perform most of the practice-based skills to the expected professional standards.
- 8.3 The competencies in the APC Scheme have two distinct categories:
- (a) Core competencies – covering the primary skills of quantity surveying. You are required to gain professional training in these core competencies, but not necessarily in all sub-competencies.
  - (b) Optional competencies – covering skills which vary depending on the type of employment, or enlarged or specialist skills akin to quantity surveying. You are required to gain professional training in optional competencies of your choice.
- 8.4 The approved core and optional competencies together with their corresponding competency standards are described as follows:

Core Competencies	Competency Standards
1. Measurement and Documentation	<p>1.1 Able to apply knowledge in construction materials and sciences, construction technologies and building services</p> <p>1.2 Able to identify, ask for, interpret, and raise queries to clarify drawings, specifications, variation instructions, works orders and other information necessary for measurement and documentation</p> <p>1.3 Able to apply the industry standard methods of measurement or project specific methods of measurement</p> <p>1.4 Able to measure quantities from drawings, and draft and edit item descriptions to reflect specification requirements for the purposes of preparation of bills or schedule of quantities, remeasurement of provisional quantities, variations, works orders, claims or final accounts</p> <p>1.5 Able to measure approximate quantities for cost estimating or bulk-checking of quantities including the understanding of quantity factors such as concrete steel ratios, quantities per floor areas, etc.</p> <p>1.6 Able to prepare pro-forma schedules of rates (without quantities)</p> <p>1.7 Able to interpret preliminaries and preambles and add special provisions to suit the specific circumstances</p> <p>1.8 Able to undertake quantity and other checks for any input document discrepancies and/or omissions and final output document completeness, spelling, omissions, etc.</p> <p>1.9 Able to organize and supervise the measurement, billing, editing, checking, printing and dispatch processes</p>

Core Competencies	Competency Standards
2. Estimating and pricing	<p>2.1 Able to appreciate the approximate order of costs for major construction works</p> <p>2.2 Able to enquire, search and analyse cost data including building cost and tender price indices</p> <p>2.3 Able to appreciate project, industrial and general economic factors affecting the unit costs and quantities of the constituent rates</p> <p>2.4 Able to make adjustments to past cost data or pre-fixed rates for applications in different circumstances</p> <p>2.5 Able to build up prime cost rates for labour, materials and plant, and all-in unit rates for works for the purposes of pricing preliminary cost estimates, bills or schedules of quantities, variations, work orders, claims and final accounts.</p> <p>2.6 Able to build up and analyse preliminaries items, overheads and profits</p> <p>2.7 Able to apply discounts, mark-ups, margins and other adjustment factors</p> <p>2.8 Able to understand contract conditions, specification standards, preliminaries and preambles for pricing the relevant risks</p>
3. Pre-contract cost planning and control*	<p>3.1 Able to use cost data including adjustments to various factors such as locations, specification, time and market forces</p> <p>3.2 Able to demonstrate knowledge of various factors affecting economics of a design and construction</p> <p>3.3 Able to undertake financial feasibility and comparative design studies</p> <p>3.4 Able to prepare cost plans, update cost plans and carry out cost checks and control</p> <p>3.5 Able to prepare cost estimates by various estimating techniques</p> <p>3.6 Able to evaluate alternative design solutions and life cycle costing</p> <p>3.7 Able to prepare and interpret cash flow projections and profit/loss forecasts</p> <p>3.8 Able to prepare cost reconciliation statements with previous cost estimates and with costs of similar projects</p> <p>3.9 Able to prepare and submit cost data to in-house and/or external data collection agencies</p>

Core Competencies	Competency Standards
4. Procurement strategy	<p>4.1 Able to understand the general principles of laws relevant to the construction industry</p> <p>4.2 Able to apply knowledge in various forms of construction and installation contracts including main contracts, nominated and domestic subcontracts, supply contracts, and maintenance term contracts, etc</p> <p>4.3 Able to assess the rationale for using different procurement methods to suit the specific project requirements</p> <p>4.4 Able to apply the above knowledge in formulating and implementing the appropriate tendering procedures and contractual arrangements</p>
5. Tendering process	<p>5.1 Able to apply the principles, practices and procedures of single stage and two stage tendering process</p> <p>5.2 Able to prepare the appropriate tender documentation including main contracts, nominated and domestic subcontracts, supply contracts and maintenance term contracts, etc (excluding “measurement and documentation” under core competency 2)</p> <p>5.3 Able to co-ordinate the tendering process including pre-qualification of tenderers, invitation to tenders, dispatch and receipt of tender documents, tender addenda, tender clarification letters, tender questionnaires, tender opening meeting, etc.</p> <p>5.4 Able to evaluate the received tenders including the submission of the required tender information, checking of any arithmetic errors, identification of any apparently anomalous rates and pricing strategies, comparison of quantities measured by tenderers, evaluation and clarification of any qualifications submitted, and negotiation with tenderers</p> <p>5.5 Able to compile the formal contract documents from tender documents and other tender submissions</p>

Core Competencies	Competency Standards
6. Contractor's tendering and cost control*	<p>6.1 Able to examine tender documents received and determine the information required for estimate, workload, timetable and resource needs</p> <p>6.2 Able to appreciate the project including the method statement, tender programme and site visit</p> <p>6.3 Able to prepare enquiries for materials and subcontractors, analyse and compare quotations received, and negotiate with suppliers and subcontractors (Note: "estimating and pricing" are covered under core competence 2).</p> <p>6.4 Able to prepare estimator's report and tender adjudication</p> <p>6.5 Able to undertake financial management including regular monitoring and reporting on cash flow and analysis of variances between budgeted and actual costs</p>
7. Contract administration	<p>7.1 Able to survey, measure and record site information</p> <p>7.2 Able to monitor proposed construction methods/sequences and report on actual requirements including preparing cost benefit reports on alternative construction methods</p> <p>7.3 Able to prepare valuations for interim payments and insurance loss assessments</p> <p>7.4 Able to carry out post-contract cost control including preparation of final costs and reporting on financial effects</p> <p>7.5 Able to carry out day-to-day contract administration of a project including attending site meetings and drafting correspondence on contractual issues</p> <p>7.6 Able to prepare or interpret cost/value and other reconciliation statements for management purposes</p> <p>7.7 Able to report on, evaluate and negotiate contractual, financial and extra-contractual issues</p> <p>7.8 Able to prepare and agree final accounts and contra charges</p>

\*Note: You are permitted to take either the core competency 3 or 6, or a combination of the two, depending on your status of employment (see Paragraph 8.5). If you work for a professional quantity surveying firm, you should choose "Pre-contract cost planning and control", whereas if you work for a contractor, you should choose "Contractor's estimating and tendering".

Optional Competencies	Competency Standards
8. Dispute resolution	<p>8.1 Able to understand various techniques in dispute resolution including negotiation, mediation, conciliation, adjudication, arbitration, independent expert determination and litigation</p> <p>8.2 Able to apply knowledge of the practices and procedures of dispute resolution</p> <p>8.3 Able to apply knowledge of the relevant law governing dispute resolution procedures, including evidence of fact and expert evidence</p>
9. Project management	<p>9.1 Able to identify the client's objectives and develop the client's brief</p> <p>9.2 Able to carry out feasibility studies, including risk analysis and value analyses</p> <p>9.3 Able to establish the budget and project programme</p> <p>9.4 Able to advise on the selection of project team</p> <p>9.5 Able to establish the lines of communication and manage the integration and flow of design information</p> <p>9.6 Able to establish the time, cost and quality control systems, and monitor, control and report from inception to project completion</p>
10. Real estate development	<p>10.1 Able to identify organisational processes and mechanisms involved in implementing economic policies, and their impact on real estate development</p> <p>10.2 Able to identify, select, assemble and analyse data relevant to carrying out development appraisals using the appropriate technique and methodology</p> <p>10.3 Able to identify factors affecting the ability to obtain finance for investment projects, identify appropriate sources of finance and understand the principles for securing finance for different real estate developments</p> <p>10.4 Able to apply principles of development process to a project and relate these to the client's objectives in the project</p>

Optional Competencies	Competency Standards
11. Facilities management	11.1 Able to apply principles of business management to achieve the client's corporate objectives 11.2 Able to apply principles of facilities management to provide solutions to issues affecting both owners and occupiers of real estate 11.3 Able to keep up-to-date maintenance information to determine and implement operational maintenance 11.4 Able to undertake the proper procurement process, including invitations to tender, tender enquiries, evaluation of offers received, receipt of non-compliant or alternative offers 11.5 Able to manage project costs, time and quality from inception to completion, including value management, risk analysis and financial evaluation
12. Commercial management of construction	12.1 Able to apply principles of business management to achieve corporate objectives of contracting organisations 12.2 Able to plan or program construction works, determine and purchase construction resources (i.e. labour, plant and material), and evaluate productivity methods 12.3 Able to undertake financial management of contracting organisations including regular monitoring and reporting on cash flow and analysis of variances between budgeted and actual costs
13. Risk management	13.1 Able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nature of risks in construction project 13.2 Able to apply various methods and techniques used to carry out risk assessment taking into account all relevant factors 13.3 Able to implement risk management system in relation to specific projects

Optional Competencies	Competency Standards
<b>Other specialist competencies</b>	
14. Value management	The competency standard for all “specialist competencies” is subject to the same criterion as the core and optional competencies that you are able to perform the specific task at the professional level.
15. Quality management	
16. Advanced information technology	
17. Taxation allowances	
18. Bankruptcy, liquidation, determination and termination	
19. Insurance	
20. Third party technical audits	

- 8.5 You should attempt to obtain a reasonably balanced experience among each competency. The minimum requirements on the number of training days for each competency are as follows:

<b>Competencies</b>	<b>Minimum Working Days</b>
1. Measurement and documentation	120
2. Estimating and pricing	-
3. Pre-contract cost planning and control	30
4. Procurement strategy	20
5. Tendering process	30
6. Contractor's tendering and cost control	30
7. Contract administration	90
8. All optional competencies	30

Notes: (a) You are permitted to take either the core competency 3 or 6, or a combination of the two, depending on your status of employment. However, the minimum training period of 30 days, whether solely on competency 3 or 6, must be met.

(b) Meeting times should be recorded against the most relevant competency.

- 8.6 The estimating and pricing skills are core skills which are required to serve other tasks and it would not be practicable to precisely record the time spent on exercising skills in estimating and pricing as distinct from the tasks employing the skills. Therefore, the time spent in the estimating and pricing skills should be recorded against the tasks employing these skills.

## 9. DIARY

- 9.1 You are required to maintain a Diary of your professional training throughout the Minimum Training Period and any extended period of training that may be required.
- 9.2 Entries in the Diary should be clear and concise as you are required to analyse the work carried out every month for summary in your Log Book. Entries for the work carried out in any one week should appear only on the page relating to that week.
- 9.3 When you change employment, the Diary should be continued in the usual way, but a clear indication of the change (with details of the new employment and the date) must be given on the relevant page. It is of course necessary for you to seek the approval of the Institute in respect of your new employment by submitting a supplementary application.
- 9.4 The Diary must be signed by you and your Supervisor at the end of every week certifying correctness of entries, and by your Counsellor at the end of every three months. This is an opportunity for your Counsellor to review the progress and to ensure the adequacy and relevance of your training.
- 9.5 The Diary provides important evidence of your professional training and should therefore be kept in safe custody. It is also advisable that a copy is made before the original is submitted for assessment.

## 10. LOG BOOK

- 10.1 You are required to keep a Log Book which is an analytical account of your professional training in chronological order based on entries in the Diary, to enable the evaluation of the adequacy and balance of your professional training. It will also provide easy references to any particular aspect of training set out in the Diary.
- 10.2 The details required should be drawn from the Diary. The training received in each month must be analysed and entered in whole days or half-days under the core and optional competency and month headings of the relevant Analysis of Diary Sheet. The Log Book must be signed by you and your Supervisor, and counter-signed by your Counsellor once every three months.
- 10.3 Before the Log Book is submitted, the time spent on each area of training must be totalled both vertically and horizontally on the Analysis of Diary Sheets.
- 10.4 You must send a copy (not original) of your completed Log Book within one month of completion of your first 12 months' training for the purpose of interim assessment record.
- 10.5 Like the Diary, the Log Book provides important evidence of your professional training and should therefore be kept in safe custody. It is also advisable that a copy is made before the original is submitted for Final Assessment.

## 11. PRE-QUALIFICATION STRUCTURED LEARNING

11.1 In addition to the professional training obtained as part of normal work during the Training Period, you must undertake a minimum of 24 hours of Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSL) for every 6 full months after entry to the APC but before taking the Final Assessment for the first time subject to a minimum aggregate of 96 hours. This helps you gain skills and knowledge which are not always possible to obtain within day-to-day business of the practice. This may consist of any of: (Revised Nov 2007)

- (a) courses or training events or discussion meetings on technical topics organized by the Institute, universities or vocational training institutes, other professional bodies, and other relevant course-providers;
- (b) special courses, training events or discussion meetings on technical topics organized by your Employer (On-job training organized by your Employer is important but is considered as an inherent and unavoidable part of your work and is therefore not normally counted towards PQSL. To qualify as special under this category, the training must be on something special and not on routine tasks, and should be offered to a group of people irrespective of their experience and present or immediately forthcoming work tasks. Training on measurement rules and techniques, induction training to new recruits, briefing training upon beginning of a work task, day-to-day training to deal with a work task are essential but are not considered as special.);
- (c) correspondence courses, or other supervised study packages, being a programme of reading or recorded lectures;
- (d) technical research or post-qualification studies; or
- (e) authorship of published technical work.

- Notes:
- (i) Hours recorded under a single course under (a) or (c) should not be more than 50% of the total hour required.
  - (ii) Hours recorded under (b) should not be more than 80% of the total hour required.
  - (iii) Reading of books and journals and viewing CPD/PQSL videos are also important but are not counted towards PQSL because of the casual nature of reading and viewing and the difficulties in proving them done.
  - (iv) You are encouraged to record more than the required minimum hours in case some of the hours are not accepted by the Institute.

11.2 The PQSL should relate either to the prescribed core/optional competencies or the development of personal and professional practice skills (including communication, client care, information technology, team working, dispute resolution, code of conduct, and structure and role of the Institute).

- 11.3 The PQSL hours should be calculated as follows:
- (a) The time attributable to any event shall be the duration from the formal opening and formal closing of an event, calculated to the nearest half hour.
  - (b) If you attend part of an event, only the attendance time should be counted.
  - (c) The time spent in administering a qualifying event should not be counted.
- 11.4 You are required to keep a record of all Pre-Qualification Structured Learning undertaken and submit such record to the Institute at the time of submitting the application for Final Assessment. Such record shall include the dates of events, durations of events, names of the events, organizers and principal speakers, description of learning undertaken, location of event and other relevant details.

## 12. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

- 12.1 Upon completion of 21 months of professional training, you are required to prepare and submit, in triplicate, a Critical Analysis describing and critically examining two cases concerning the core and/or optional competencies. These cases must be on project(s) in which you have been involved and have gained sufficient experience during the Training Period, and must relate to the entries in your Diary.
- 12.2 You are not expected to be running the whole project(s). It is your involvement or role in the team that you should describe, analyse and comment on. It is recognized that the project(s) may have started for some time, you may have not been involved from the start, or your involvement may not have been continuous, or the project(s) may not have been finished when you write and submit your Critical Analysis. In these cases, you can provide comments on how your role in the project(s) might contribute to the final outcomes.
- 12.3 The Critical Analysis must
- (a) be word processed;
  - (b) be in a maximum of 3,000 words including the appendices, if any;
  - (c) include photographs and plans (no larger than A4 size when folded); and
  - (d) be signed and dated by you and certified by your Supervisor and Counsellor.
- 12.4 The Critical Analysis must give the Assessors detailed evidence of your ability to apply the prescribed core and chosen optional competencies. You should not only understand the project(s) itself, but also the processes you followed and the rationale behind your actions and decision-making. You should further understand the alternative approach as well as other issues surrounding the project(s).
- 12.5 It is advisable that you present your Critical Analysis under the following headings:
- (a) **Key issues** : the issues for case study must be selective and can provide the required depth for detailed analysis. It should be related to one of the prescribed core and/or optional competencies.
  - (b) **Options** : before proposing a solution to a client, you must consider all the options, demonstrating your ability to think logically, laterally and professionally. You must give reasons why some solutions may not be feasible.
  - (c) **Proposed solution:** you must give a detailed account of the reasons supporting your adopted course of action. The solution must be related to the application of the prescribed core and/or optional competencies, taking into consideration of all the aspects that can support the decision: financial, technical, professional, rules of conduct, ethics and conflicts of interests. But you do not have to look at each of these if it did not form part of your decision.

- (d) **Conclusion** : most importantly, your conclusion must include a critical appraisal of the outcomes, together with a statement of what you learned from the experience. You should look at the project(s), consider what has gone well and identify what has not gone well. You should stand back from the project(s) and reflect on what you have learned.

- Notes: (i) Confidential information must not be disclosed. Where necessary, fictitious names and address may be used.
- (ii) Extracts from Ordinances, case laws and other sources should not be quoted at length but essential references must be given.
- (iii) Because the Critical Analysis is not prepared under examination conditions, the Assessors will expect a high standard of technical, literacy and presentation accuracy.

12.6 Finally, above all, your Critical Analysis must reflect your abilities in:

- (a) written and graphic communication;
- (b) professional standards of organization and presentation;
- (c) analytical, reflective thinking and problem solving; and
- (d) learning from experience gained.

### 13. FINAL ASSESSMENT

- 13.1 In anticipation that the Minimum Training Period or such extended period that may be required will be fulfilled by the time of Final Assessment, you may submit an application for Final Assessment before the deadline set each year and the application must be accompanied by the following documents:
- (a) Diary and Log Book (less records for the three months immediately preceding the Final Assessment);
  - (b) A record of Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (less records for the three months immediately preceding the Final Assessment); and
  - (c) A Critical Analysis (three copies).
- 13.2 The records for the three months immediately preceding the Final Assessment which are essential for fulfilling the minimum requirements must be submitted before the date of Final Assessment.
- 13.3 If the Institute considers that you do not fulfil or are unlikely to fulfil the minimum requirements before the Final Assessment based on the submissions at Section 13.1 or Section 13.2, your application will be rejected.
- 13.4 The Final Assessment is designed to satisfy the Institute that you:
- (a) have achieved the objectives set out in Section 1;
  - (b) can demonstrate your understanding of the knowledge gained and competencies achieved during the Training Period;
  - (c) have an acceptable understanding of the role and responsibilities of a professionally qualified quantity surveyor;
  - (d) can apply your professional and technical skills to benefit those who employ your service; and
  - (e) can express yourself clearly both orally and in writing.

13.5 The Final Assessment of the APC consists of the following two parts:

(a) Practice Problem

You will be required to sit in an examination hall/room to answer a number of written practical problems in quantity surveying. The Practice Problem is divided into two papers. Paper 1 mainly covers the pre-contract competencies and Paper 2 mainly the post-contract competencies.

(b) Professional Interview

After you have passed the Practice Problem (i.e. both Papers 1 and 2), you can proceed to attend a professional interview. During the interview, you will be given about 10 minutes to present your professional training gained over the training period and your Critical Analysis, followed by discussions of about 45 minutes. If you marginally fail the Practice Problem, you may at the discretion of the APC Sub-Committee on the recommendation of the Assessors be invited to attend the Professional Interview. Your Practice Problem will be considered failed if you fail the Professional Interview. (Revised Nov 2007)

13.6 The Professional Interview will be conducted by a panel of Assessors who will be looking for the following attributes from you:

- (a) adequacy in breadth and depth, and in balance, of your professional training;
- (b) adequacy and relevance of your Pre-Qualification Structured Learning;
- (c) general knowledge of professional quantity surveying practices;
- (d) professional ethics, the Institute's rules of conduct, legal liabilities of quantity surveyors and current issues of concern to the profession; and
- (e) professional demeanour, appearance and presentation skill.

13.7 The Assessors will be trying to determine your general level of ability. They will be looking to ensure that you have achieved the minimum standard of competence in key areas of the clients being served, and that you understand the professional conduct expected of a Corporate Member of the Institute.

13.8 The results of the Practice Problem and Professional Interview will normally be notified within three months and one month respectively.

## **14. ARRANGEMENTS FOR UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES**

- 14.1 First time candidates whose professional training experience is considered deficient in coverage or depth will not be allowed to take the Final Assessment. They will be required to undertake an extended period of training before re-assessment. Such further period of training may relate to specific competencies which are deficient and will not be less than 6 months. Candidates will need to continue to maintain their Diary and Log Book for such extended period and to suitably amend/update their Critical Analysis.
- 14.2 First time and referred candidates whose Pre-Qualification Structured Learning are considered insufficient may be required to undertake supplementary Pre-Qualification Structured Learning of such hours as the Assessors may specify, normally not less than 12 hours, on top of the regularly required hours and submit a revised record of Pre-Qualification Structured Learning.
- 14.3 Candidates who fail in their Practice Problem or Professional Interview may apply to re-take in the next attempt. These referred candidates must continue to maintain their Pre-Qualification Structured Learning until they are successful in the Final Assessment. They should have Pre-Qualification Structured Learning of not less than 20 hours for every 12 months immediately preceding the date of assessment and have the records submitted 7 days before the date of assessment, failing which their application to re-take will not be processed any further with the application fee forfeited. Any shortfall in the PQSL hours in a period shall be made up with 1.5 times of the shortfall hours in the next period before the application for Final Assessment is considered. (Revised Nov 2007)

## **15. APPEAL**

- 15.1 All APC results are final and are not subject to appeal. No correspondence with Candidates will be entered into in respect of any request for explanation of such decisions or appeals against such decisions.

## 16. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

- 16.1 Your applications in pursuance of the APC should be made on the relevant forms, fully and correctly completed, duly endorsed by your Employer, Supervisor and Counsellor where required, and submitted with the prescribed fees where appropriate.
- 16.2 The following table lists out the various APC Forms to be used throughout the APC period:

APC Form	Description	Time of Application
APC1/QS	Application to enter the APC.	At any time.
APC1S/QS	Application for Approval of Change of Employer/ Supervisor/ Counsellor	Within one month of the change
APC6/QS	Application for Final Assessment	Before 30 June each year
APC6/QS/F	Application for Further Assessment	Before 30 June each year

- 16.3 All applications must be accompanied by the appropriate fee and submitted to the Education Department of the Institute in person or by registered post, recorded delivery or ordinary post. If by ordinary post, you must ensure that you obtain the Post Office a certificate of posting.
- 16.4 The Institute will acknowledge receipt of your application. You must notify the Education Department of the Institute in writing if acknowledgment is not received within one month.
- 16.5 Late applications will not be accepted.

## 17. FEES

- 17.1 The entry fee for the APC shall be that prescribed by the Institute and prevailing at the time, payable in full at the time of application on Form APC1/QS. The entry fee includes a portion as an administration fee (the amount of which shall be as prescribed by the Institute and prevailing at the time), and this administration fee shall be non-refundable in the event the application is not approved. (Revised Nov 2007)
- 17.2 An application fee (the amount of which shall be as prescribed by the Institute and prevailing at the time) is payable for every re-application for Final Assessment and is non-refundable in any event. (Revised Nov 2007)
- 17.3 The fee scale is subject to change from time to time and you are advised to check with the Institute before submitting your application.

## 18. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 18.1 These Rules and Guide, subject to the following transitional arrangements, shall also be applicable to those Candidates who have entered the APC before September 2006 and who take the Final Assessment in September 2008 or later for the first time or subsequent time. (Revised Nov 2007)
- 18.2 Those who have already satisfactorily completed their approved professional training in accordance with the previous APC Rules and Guide by September 2006 are not required to record the Diary and Log Book further. However, they are subject to the further requirements in Clauses 18.4 and 18.5 below. (Revised Nov 2007)
- 18.3 Those who have not completed their approved professional training in accordance with the previous APC Rules and Guides by September 2006 may select to follow either the old or the new APC Rules and Guide in regard to the recording of the Diary, Log Book and PQSL hours subject however to the further requirements in Clauses 18.4 and 18.5 below. (Revised Nov 2007)
- 18.4 All the above mentioned Candidates taking the Final Assessment for the first time or subsequent time should also satisfy the requirement that the Pre-Qualification Structured Learning shall be not less than 20 hours for every 12 months immediately preceding the date of assessment and have the records submitted 7 days before the date of assessment, failing which their application to re-take will not be processed any further with the application fee forfeited. Any shortfall in the PQSL hours in a period shall be made up with 1.5 times of the shortfall hours in the next period before the application for Final Assessment is considered. (Revised Nov 2007)
- 18.5 They all should submit the Critical Analysis. (Added Nov 2007)