



Guidance

The Role of the RICS Counsellor

March 2021



Introduction

If you are acting as, or thinking of becoming, a Counsellor the following sets out the key responsibilities and requirements. More information can be found in the guides at the end of this document.

Counsellor role

It can be a rewarding and satisfying role, and all candidates will remember the support that they were given by a trusted and supportive professional. But being a Counsellor brings with it a serious commitment. It is the Counsellor who will finally sign the declaration before the candidate can be assessed:

Your candidate cannot apply for final assessment until you have certified that, in your opinion, they have reached a level of proficiency that justifies attending the final assessment. When you approve a candidate as ready for the final assessment interview in the Assessment Resource Centre (ARC), you are confirming that not only can the candidate do the task in their current organisation but, allowing for minor differences, could also do so in another organisation.

Most importantly, you are confirming that you consider this candidate to be suitable to become a Chartered Surveyor who will uphold the rigorous standards of RICS. You are signing a declaration in your capacity as an RICS professional and as such you are bound by RICS ethics, rules of conduct and professionalism.

'RICS Counsellor Guide 2019'

All candidates need to appoint a Counsellor at enrolment, candidates may change their Counsellor along the way, to support and guide them through the process.

Counsellor role profile

Criteria

You will need:

- to be qualified as a chartered or associate surveyor
- to be able to make the necessary time commitment to carry out the role
- to be an RICS chartered professional (MRICS or FRICS).

Knowledge and understanding

- **Mandatory Counsellor training:** When you are nominated by a candidate, you will be given access through ARC to the free online Counsellor module. If you haven't been nominated yet, and would like to do this module anyway, please get in touch [here](#). The module can be recorded as two hours' CPD
- **Ethics test:** It is compulsory for our candidates and assessors to complete the ethics module before being eligible for the final assessment. Counsellors are also encouraged to view and complete the ethics module. If you wish to gain access to the ethics module, please get in touch [here](#). The ethics dimension of a candidate's assessment is extremely important as this is a limiting judgement, in other words, if the candidate falls down on ethics, they will be referred, no matter how well they have demonstrated their other competencies. As an RICS professional you should understand how the RICS ethical standard and professional practice underpins RICS as a chartered body, for this reason, it is vital that Counsellors understand what is required.
- **Pathway guides:** It is essential the candidate selects the correct pathway. Your candidates can only choose one pathway and the candidate must choose the pathway relevant to their current job role. The pathway is relevant throughout the assessment and once a candidate becomes qualified. If successful at the final assessment interview the candidate will be awarded with their pathway's designation. You do not need to be on the same pathway as your candidate, but you do need to understand the candidate's pathway. A suite of pathway guides is available to support you and the candidate through their assessment. These guides help to put individual competencies into the context of the candidate's surveying area and provide sector specific guidance.

You can download the pathway guides [here](#)

Expectations

How much you connect with your candidate will depend on their route to membership, qualifications, experience, and confidence. Nevertheless, you should expect to have a catch up with your candidate at least twice a year. The following list isn't exhaustive, but should give you a good idea of what is expected of a Counsellor:

- Read the candidate guide and candidate's chosen pathway guide
- Help the candidate choose the appropriate pathway and competencies
- Support, guide and encourage the candidate
- Plan and monitor their continuing professional development (CPD)
- Discuss whether they need additional experience or training and agree who will organise it and how they will gain it
- Discuss arranging reviews: use their diary to assess them against their competencies and review their overall progress. Judge what competencies they have achieved and when. Work on updating their summary of experience and diary.
- Agree progress and focus for the coming months
- Discuss the topic for their case study. What project have they worked on 24 months prior to submission that best demonstrates their analytical ability and ability to give sound professional advice?
- Advise and guide your candidate to help them in preparing for the final assessment presentation and interview.
- Read and review the submission to make sure the candidate is using the best examples of their experience of applying knowledge, and particularly how they have given advice. Test the candidate on why they gave that advice and how they can explain their thinking as preparation for the interview. Level 3 competencies are where candidates often fall down.
- In the event of an APC or Assoc referral, support the candidate so that they can improve at their next assessment. For Prelim candidates, work through the review feedback document so that they can either resubmit or come forward for final assessment.
- Conduct a mock interview to help them prepare for the type of questions they may get asked. Click [here](#) to access the APC Mock Final Assessment Interview video. You can use this to show what to expect and how the interview is broken down – you can then discuss this with the candidate to understand how they should approach the interview.

What support can you expect?

- There are guides and a YouTube tutorial to support your role:
[MRICS Counsellor guide](#)

[ARC Counsellor guide](#)

[YouTube ARC Counsellor tutorial](#)

- We provide a free online training module about your Counsellor role [request here](#)
- RICS training provide a two part course for Counsellors and supervisors – this is a commercial product and there is a cost, but you may feel that [this](#) is a good investment in your Counsellor role
- The Stakeholder Engagement team, Helen O'Brien, Lisa O'Connor, and Gill Quinn, are able to answer any questions you have, and over the coming months our plan is to provide more support and development, so please get in touch, and watch this space! You can contact us [here](#)

Next Steps

There are two ways to become a Counsellor:

1. You can let us know that you are happy to be matched with a candidate and we will put you both in touch for a preliminary call or email to decide if you are the right Counsellor, and that you feel you can help the candidate. If this is agreed, the candidate will let us know [here](#) and we will set this up, and you will then have access to ARC and your candidate's progress
2. Your candidate may be someone you know or work with so they can just let us know [here](#) that you are their Counsellor, and we will set this up, and you will then have access to ARC and your candidate's progress