

Assessment of Professional Competence

Guidance Notes for Employers

INTRODUCTION

- 1 The purpose of these notes is to explain the responsibility placed on employers and their experienced staff in order to assist candidates in fulfilling the requirements of the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC). They should be read in conjunction with the “Rules and Guide of Assessment of Professional Competence”.
- 2 Although it is not formally written into the detailed content of the assessment, the Institute places considerable importance on the need to instill in candidates a sense of professional ethics and conduct. Candidates may not have had any experience in these during their period of academic training, and it is most important that they should receive a thorough appreciation of these concepts during their period of approved professional experience.

FORMAT OF THE ASSESSMENT

- 3 There are many ways in which it is possible to complete the academic requirements for qualification as a member of the Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers. Whatever academic route is followed, however, all candidates must also pass the Assessment of Professional Competence.
- 4 The APC consists of a keeping a diary for the minimum training of 2 years of approved professional experience in areas as specified in the Candidate’s Guide. At the end of the 2 years, candidates must submit a written record of their experience and to attend an interview where their experience and/or written submission will be discussed.
- 5 The areas of experience which candidates are expected to cover during the assessment are specified in Appendix A of the Candidate’s Guide. Candidates are required to maintain a Diary of their experience and to summarise the entries in a Logbook. The object is to demonstrate that they have covered the breadth of experience laid down and fulfill the requirement that such experience is balanced and in reasonable depth.
- 6 The minimum period of approved professional experience is two (2) years from the date of election as a Probationer member.
- 7 The assessment of candidates’ experience is carried out panels of practising surveyors and valuers appointed by the Institute.

EMPLOYERS’ RESPONSIBILITY

- 8 It is the Employer’s responsibility to ensure not only that candidates in their firms or departments acquire the necessary experience but that they are properly supervised by a partner or principal or by a suitably experienced and qualified professional member of staff. In general, it is hoped that the Supervisor will be a senior professional member of staff of at least four (4) years’ standing, and that not more than two (2) candidates should be attached to the same surveyor or valuer at a time.

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- 9 Ideally, the period of practical experience calls for a “master and pupil” relationship, and it must be emphasised that the Institute expects the experience required by the assessment to be gained in an “assistant” capacity. It follows that the degree of individual responsibility and discretion given to candidates may not be high, particularly in the early part of their practice experience.
- 10 It is appreciated that some offices will not be able to provide the full breadth of experience required by the assessment by the nature of their work, which may be highly specialized or centred on only some aspects of the professional discipline concerned. In such circumstances, it is essential that candidates are appropriately warned, and it is suggested that the Employer should investigate the possibility of seconding the Candidate for a period to another office, perhaps taking a Candidate from that office in exchange for the period concerned.
- 11 When candidates apply to enter the assessment, they are required to obtain prior approval of their arrangements to acquire the necessary experience. They are required to state the nature of their employment and the areas of experience available, and the Employer, usually a partner or principal, has to sign a declaration that the appropriate experience and supervision will be provided.
- 12 The Assessors have avoided a precise definition of a “reasonable time to spend in any area”, as this will depend on the needs of individual candidates. Some will need more exposure in one area than another, and rather than lay down other than broad criteria the Assessors prefer to leave it to Employer’s discretion, bearing in mind that Employer has a responsibility to present the Candidate for assessment with the breadth and depth of experience and knowledge expected of a newly qualified accompanying the Logbook at interim and final assessment commenting on the Candidate’s progress, and drawing attention to any deficiencies (with suggestions for remedy, wherever possible).
- 13 In addition, Employers are requested to assume certain responsibilities of a control nature. As the Candidate is required to maintain the Diary and Logbook, his/her Supervisor should sign these documents at regular intervals to certify that they are accurate records. The Rules set out the intervals concerned, but generally the Diary should be countersigned weekly and Logbook monthly.
- 14 Where the Candidate has to prepare a written submission, the Employer is required to certify that the work has been carried out solely by the Candidate in question.

CONCLUSION

- 15 The Institute hopes that Employers will recognise the importance of the Assessment and give every assistance to the candidates in their offices. The Institute will be pleased to help by answering any queries that may arise.