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Communities of Practice – Professional Ethics

Catch Up Session

08 April 2024

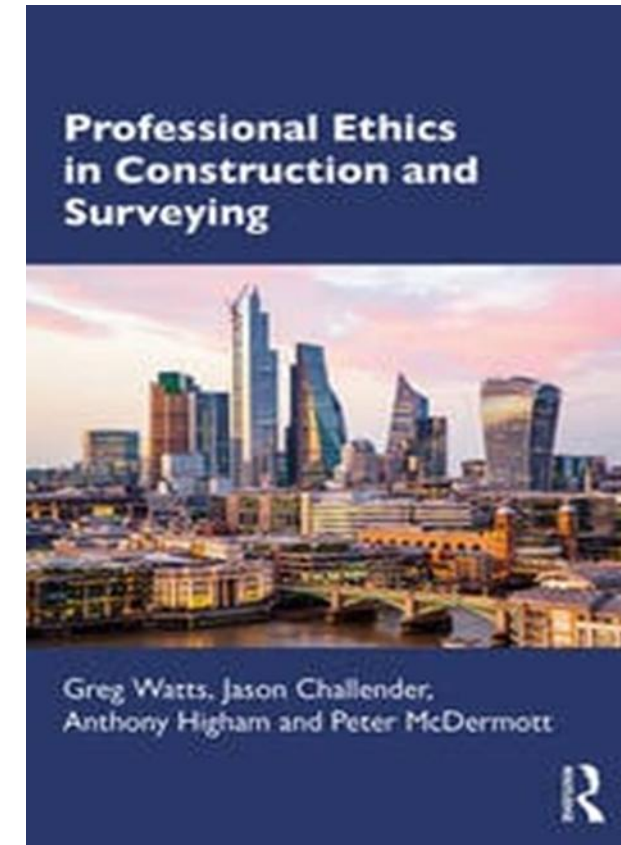


Communities of Practice – Professional Ethics

1. CIOB's ethical standards and compliance
2. RICS – Quick Updates
 - A. Rule 4 of the RICS Rules of Conduct – Supporting Greater Diversity
 - B. The curious case of plagiarism in an RICS APC interview
 - C. Adopting a 'Zero Tolerance' approach to the misbehaviour of RICS members

1. CIOB's ethical standards and compliance

1. About CIOB
2. Code of Conduct
3. Professional Conduct Committee
4. Disciplinary procedures:
 - Reprimand.
 - Suspension, with or without conditions.
 - Expulsion.
 - or as an alternative, or in addition to any other penalty, an Undertaking .
5. Illegal activities
 - CSCS fraud.
 - Misappropriation of funds.
 - Bribery.
 - Inferior materials.
6. Key topics
 - Diversity.
 - Equality (Equality Act 2010).
 - Modern Slavery.



2. RICS – Quick Updates

A. RICS update to Rule 4 of the RICS Rules of Conduct

On Tuesday 20 February 2024, RICS launched a new guidance to supplement RICS' Rules of Conduct Rule 4, which states: **Members and firms must treat others with respect, encourage diversity and inclusion.**

The guidance, named '**Developing an Inclusive Culture**' aims to support members and member firms by demonstrating good practice in DEI and equip RICS professionals with the skills and knowledge to deliver better outcomes for their stakeholders and the wider public, and promote ethics and professionalism for the public advantage.

The guidance will be of value to all RICS professionals worldwide. However, it particularly aims to support **SMEs and sole practitioners** by providing access to specialist DEI advice, helping to attract and retain the best candidates and optimise their DEI practices.

Actions for firms of different sizes

Sole practitioners

- Think about how your offices could be made more accessible for visiting clients
- Incorporate different viewpoints into event planning, ensuring spaces are accessible – both online and offline – and welcoming to all
- If you are involved in any speaking engagements, ask about inclusion – is the speaking panel diverse, is the venue accessible?
- Consider how to make your website and other communications accessible to all prospective clients
- If you offer work experience, think about whether you could offer opportunities to people from different backgrounds
- When you are with others, challenge behaviour that is exclusionary
- Explore ways to diversify your supply chain and champion minority-owned businesses

Smaller firms with employees

- Think about how you recruit to attract a wider range of talent – consider where and how you advertise
- Write job descriptions and adverts to be inclusive
- Consider flexible working practices to attract and retain more talent
- Put in place policies covering: acceptable behaviour, parental leave and caring responsibilities, adjustments and well-being
- Create consistent onboarding processes
- Think about how you measure performance and reward it – does it exclude anyone?
- Ask staff about the culture of your company and your behaviour as a leader
- Organise staff events that everyone can attend and enjoy

Larger firms

- Leaders can welcome new starters with an email explaining the behaviours you value
- Consider reverse mentoring or coaching
- Look at ways you could remove bias from recruitment, using structured interviews and diverse hiring panels
- Collect data about the diversity of your workforce and use it to drive your DEI actions
- Publish appropriate diversity data and make commitments using recognised accreditations
- Support employee groups that support different communities
- Provide training for staff on your policies and inclusive practice

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)

Source: [Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-homepage.pdf](#) [Accessed: 04/04/24]

2. RICS – Quick Updates

B. The curious case of plagiarism in an RICS APC interview

Decision of the Disciplinary Panel

Date of Decision: 04 August 2021

Case of: ■■■ ■■■

RICS Membership Number: ■■■■■

Location: Cambridge, UK

The formal charges against ■■■ ■■■ are:

1. On or about 7th February 2019 ■■■ ■■■ acted dishonestly by signing the declaration on his submission to become an Associate member of RICS confirming that it was written by him in his own words, when **he had plagiarised parts of an RICS submission** completed by IV.
2. On or about 7th February 2019 ■■■ ■■■ acted dishonestly by submitting an RICS Associate Submission Document that contained examples of Technical Competencies which did not, and which he knew did not, accurately represent his own work but were modified examples of Technical Competencies demonstrated by IV in an earlier RICS submission. The false examples were included in the **“Measurement and inspection of land and property”** section of his submission, namely:
 - a. “I measured a large field on behalf of an existing client. I used Promap to measure the site areas requested; the full field area, the top woodland and the middle paddocks in order to satisfy my client’s requirements. I measured stable units within the area on a gross internal area basis and listed these separately on the marketing particulars for clarity.” and/or,
 - b. “For a Market Appraisal instruction, I inspected a commercial office unit in Bartlow occupied by a grain trading business. I used my company’s pro-forma to provide relevant detail. I noted that there were stud walls in place to create a ‘service counter’ as well as a purpose-built bank vault with alarm access codes on each internal door.” And/or,
 - c. “During our graduate training, we were tasked with inspecting a rural farmhouse near Bath and presenting our considerations to our peers. I observed the age, condition and construction of the property, and was able to correctly identify that the building was listed due to its location and period features.”
3. ■■■ failed to act with integrity by plagiarising parts of IV’s RICS submission in his submission to become an Associate member of RICS on or about 7th February 2019.

Contrary to Rule 3 of the Rules of Conduct for Members 2007. ■■■ ■■■ is therefore liable to disciplinary action under RICS Bye-Law 5.2.2 (a) and/or (c)

Finding: Proved

Sanction: Expelled

2. RICS – Quick Updates

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AGENCIES & PEOPLE | REGULATION & LAW

Exclusive: RICS expels senior surveyor for plagiarism in Associate application

and his employer

are 'discussing the implications of the decision' by a disciplinary panel.

Nigel Lewis

23rd Aug 2021

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11,351

1 minute read

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A land agent and senior surveyor working for national chain in Suffolk has been expelled from RICS following a disciplinary hearing that found he had 'acted without integrity'.

who is based at the firm's Cambridge office and specialises in the sale and purchase of land farms and estates but also works closely with the firm's residential division, has been expelled after a disciplinary panel hearing found that in 2019 he had "acted dishonestly".

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2. RICS – Quick Updates

Following the panel hearing, [REDACTED] has released the following statement: “We have recently been advised by [REDACTED] about the outcome of a disciplinary hearing conducted by the RICS. [REDACTED] is now discussing the implications of the decision with [REDACTED].”

[REDACTED] is also a member of Propertymark, which has told The Negotiator that: “In the light of recent reports, Propertymark is conducting an internal investigation into [REDACTED] membership and conduct. We expect members to behave in a professional and ethical manner and will be taking appropriate action once our information has been reviewed.”

2. RICS – Quick Updates

Adopting a ‘Zero Tolerance’ approach to the misbehaviour of RICS members

- ‘Behavioural Ethics’ for Chartered Surveyors.
- RICS are currently reviewing its **complainant behaviour policy**. The aim of the policy was to provide anyone (the public, members, staff) who interacts with the organisation with a clear and transparent policy and process for how RICS manages and escalates certain complainant behaviours.
- The policy was brought to Governing Council in January ‘24 because RICS has seen an increase in challenging complainant behaviours that goes beyond the limits of acceptable feedback, complaints or critic.
- The points being considered:
 - Adopting a **zero-tolerance** approach to unprofessional member behaviour, particularly on **social media (also to be included: general communications such as telephone calls, emails etc and behaviours at online or in-person events)**.
 - Ensuring that the policy does not conflate medical conditions or disability with bad behaviour.
 - Working through whether the escalation process proposed was the right one, and if for example, a series of warnings would be warranted in certain circumstances.
- Next steps: A **cross departmental group** has been formed with representatives from Regulation, Markets, HR, Communications, Governance and legal.



Communities of Practice – Professional Ethics

Thank you for your time today!

