

Quantity Surveyor



Alternate title Building Estimator; Construction Economist; Cost Engineer; Surveyor (Quantity)

Description Quantity surveyors prepare cost estimates and plans, audit projects, manage construction costs and administer construction contracts for all levels and types of construction. Quantity Surveyors work on projects ranging from office blocks, schools, hospitals, factories to bridges, railways, oil and mining development, shipbuilding and large process engineering works such as oil refineries. Anywhere, indeed, that major construction work is carried out.

As advisers they estimate and monitor construction costs, from the feasibility stage of a project through to the completion of the construction period. After construction they may be involved with tax depreciation schedules, replacement cost estimation for insurance purposes and, if necessary, mediation and arbitration.

Typical duties

- liaise with architects, engineers, builders, contractors, suppliers and project owners;
- study architectural and engineering drawings and specifications;
- prepare a 'Bill of Quantities', which lists the individual components required to construct the project;
- check on changes of design to assess the effects on cost;
- assess and recommend payment to contractors during construction;
- prepare monthly cash-flow forecasts for clients and tax depreciation schedules;
- undertake feasibility studies to assist in decisions about the worth of a project proceeding;
- act as consultants to business and government.

Personal requirements

- analytical and logical;
- able to concentrate for long periods
- good oral and written communication skills
- able to work accurately with figures
- able to work as part of a team
- able to work independently
- aptitude for working with computers.

Qualification

- The names of qualifications vary from institution to institution. Some examples are:
- Bachelor of Building Construction Management
- Bachelor of Construction, majoring in economics or management
- Bachelor of Construction Management
- Bachelor of Applied Science (Construction Management)
- Bachelor of Planning and Design, majoring in construction management



Entry pathway

To become a quantity surveyor you usually have to study a quantity surveying, construction management or construction economics degree at university. To get into these courses you usually need to pass your HSC/VCE or equivalent with English and preferably mathematics and physics. The various universities have different prerequisites and some have flexible entry requirements or offer external studies. Contact the universities you are interested in for more information as requirements may change.

Graduates may be eligible for membership of the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors or for probationary membership of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. It is also possible to become a student member of both institutes while studying. Qualifications are recognised worldwide.

Job prospects

Quantity Surveyors work closely with architects, financiers, engineers, contractors, suppliers, project owners, accountants, insurance underwriters, solicitors and Courts and with all levels of government authorities. They can work as individual consultants or as part of a small or medium sized firm. Some may find employment in government agencies. Those in the building industry usually work on larger scale projects such as office complexes, high density residential projects, hotels, factories and hospitals.

It is a small occupation with reasonable employment opportunities. However, job prospects can fluctuate depending on the level of building activity.

Related Jobs

- Architect
- Building Contractor
- Building Site Manager
- Building Economist
- Property Developer

Further information

Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (National) [www.aigs.com.au/]
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (National Office) [www.rics.org/]

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