
Guidance for membership applicants under the APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) route - 2025

Please read these notes carefully to ensure that you fully understand the application process.

Being a member of the Residential Property Surveyors Association demonstrates that, as a residential surveyor, you work to the highest standards in the industry in respect of quality, professionalism, ethics and conduct. Our clients rely on us to provide them with reliable and comprehensive information to help them make life changing decisions.

To ensure that all RPSA members achieve these demanding standards, we place requirements on all those applying to join the Association.

Membership of the RPSA is open to those who hold specific qualifications and accreditations, or those who are studying to achieve relevant surveying qualifications. These are identified on our website www.RPSA.org.uk within the membership section.

However, we recognise that there are many competent surveyors who, for a wide range of reasons, do not fall within the identified categories for membership. In such circumstances it is necessary for us to establish that those individuals recognise, and are able to demonstrate, that they have the competency, knowledge and skills to inspect and report on residential property to the standards described by the RPSA.

The APEL route to RPSA membership requires the applicant to submit 3 recent Building Survey reports (as described by the RPSA Survey Inspection & Reporting Standards Edition 1 v5.2 Nov 20) which will be assessed according to our recognised Quality Assessment programme. These reports should be prepared within a period of a maximum of 6 months prior to the date of first application. Once the review process is complete a report will be prepared for consideration by the RPSA Council to confirm the applicant's acceptance into membership.

The fee for the APEL application process is **£495 plus VAT**. This fee is non-refundable and covers the cost of all, or any part of, the APEL application process.

To assist applicants in preparing surveys for assessment, the RPSA will provide:-

1. A copy of the RPSA Survey Inspection & Reporting Standards Edition 1 v5.2 Nov 20.
2. A Building Survey template in Word format - while the use of this format is not a specific requirement of the application process, alternative survey formats may hamper the ability of an applicant to fully demonstrate compliance with the RPSA Survey Inspection & Reporting Standards.
3. The contact details for their **Applicant Mentor** who will be their first point of contact for all matters relating to their application.

The application process:-

The applicant should submit the following to their Applicant Mentor:

1. Full name
2. Address and contact details
3. Company details if relevant
4. A form of photo identification such as copy of passport or driving licence
5. CV detailing experience, qualifications and current accreditations

Upon receipt of the above the RPSA will submit to you our invoice for £395 plus VAT for the cost of APEL application - please note that this fee is **non-refundable** and covers the cost of **all, or any part of**, the APEL application process. The decision of an assessor is final and is not open for appeal.

Upon receipt of payment, RPSA will provide copies of the RPSA Survey Inspection & Reporting Standards and Building Survey template in Word format.

You can then prepare and submit your first survey report for assessment.

YOU SHOULD ONLY SUBMIT ONE COMPLETED SURVEY REPORT AT A TIME. YOU SHOULD WAIT FOR THE FEEDBACK FROM YOUR ASSESSMENT BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR NEXT REPORT.

Your report will be assessed across a range of categories on which you will be given specific feedback. These are:-

- Pre-survey and desk study
- Report content, nature of inspection and limitations
- Report photographs
- Report General - phraseology, spelling, grammar etc.
- Report specifics - description detail, relevancy of text to photos, limitations, defect analysis etc.
- Services

Our assessment process has been developed as a 'positive mentoring' experience intended to help surveyors recognise their strengths in report preparation, and identify those areas that can be further improved through guidance and recommendations provided by the assessor.

Assessors are qualified surveyors who have considerable experience in reviewing survey reports submitted by all types of residential surveyor. As such, their opinion, while subjective, is based on consistent judgement supported by relevant technical skill and knowledge.

Our experience tells us that applicants benefit from implementing recommendations made by their assessor in their subsequent reports. For this reason, you should not commence preparation of subsequent reports before reading the conclusions of your previous assessment.

For each of the six categories identified above, your assessor will allocate a score as follows:-

Score 1 - This category achieves a high standard of quality and meets all expectations

Score 2 - This category has been completed to a satisfactory standard but would benefit from some additional information.

Score 3 - This category would be greatly improved with only modest amounts of additional work and information.

Score 4 - This category would benefit from wider and more thorough reporting as, currently, it would be unlikely to meet the needs of a client.

A report can, therefore, attract a total score of 6-24, and these are categorised as follows.

6-9	This is a great report which will really please the client.
10-15	A good report that meets most expectations. It would benefit from some additional information/adjustments to add some final polish.
16-20	There are some areas within the report that could do with additional information, clarity, or explanation. The basics are there but it could do with some extra polish
21-24	This report would benefit from significant review and adjustment. It is lacking in a number of areas and does not meet the minimum standard required.

To achieve the minimum required standard for entry into RPSA membership by the APEL route, the total score of all three surveys reviewed (the 'total final score') must not be more than 52 with the final report achieving a maximum of 15.

While there is no specific 'pass or fail' for each report within this process, reports falling within the range of 21-24 are considered to be below an acceptable standard. Whilst an applicants' first report might be within this score range, we would expect subsequent reports to show consistent improvement.

Applicants scoring greater than 52 points as a total final score may request to submit one additional report for review. There will be an additional charge of £150 plus VAT for this service. In such circumstances, only the scores of the three latest reports will be taken into account within the total final score.

Where the applicant's total final score is 52 or less, the Applicant Mentor will prepare a report for the benefit of the RPSA Council to consider. The report will include the CV and contact information of the applicant, and a review of their performance during the assessment process. In most cases, it would be unlikely that the Applicant Mentor would submit their report to the RPSA Council unless they felt that the applicant had achieved the standards required.

As a condition of application through the APEL route you agree:-

1. For RPSA to use your contact details, and all other information provided, for those purposes in connection with your application and other activities of the Association. Your personal data will not be shared with other third parties.
2. To receive notifications, updates and other information from RPSA. Your personal information will not be provided to other organisations for marketing purposes.
3. Not to share, distribute or copy templates, assessment processes or other documents which have been provided to you by the RPSA, except where they are already in the public domain.
4. That the decision of an RPSA approved assessor is final and is not subject to appeal.

Failure to achieve the required standard

If, having completed the APEL application process your Applicant Mentor does not believe you have achieved the required standard, your application will be rejected.

In such circumstances, you may make a subsequent application, either through another membership route, or through the APEL route, no less than 12 months after notification from your Applicant Mentor of failure to gain acceptance into membership from your initial application.

The same conditions and fees will apply to subsequent applications as would apply to all other applications.

Successful achievement of the required standard

Most suitable candidates will ultimately achieve the standard required for their Applicant Mentor to recommend to the RPSA Council that they be invited into membership of the RPSA.

Upon approval by the Council, your Applicant Mentor will provide details to our membership department who will make direct contact with you to complete the membership application process.

Notes

The APEL route to RPSA membership has been created to enable competent residential surveyors to benefit from the support and credibility provided by being a member of the Association. By asking you to demonstrate that you have the skill, knowledge and competency to inspect and report on a residential property to a high standard, we are helping to ensure that consumers can have faith and trust in appointing an RPSA surveyor.

We are proud to be members of the Residential Property Surveyors Association and look forward to working through this process with you to help ensure that RPSA continues to set the standards in residential surveying.