



Sr Prof Chung Hung Kwan, Barnabas
FHKIS, BSD, PDD

How the HKIS Grew from Infancy to Adulthood

When the HKIS was founded in 1984 with fewer than 100 members, it was merely a learned society of professionals who spoke the surveying language. It was welcomed by allied professional bodies, but not entirely respected as a full-fledged professional body.

During its early years, the HKIS simply conferred membership on those who passed the RICS Final Assessment and qualified as chartered surveyors. Assessments of local candidates on behalf of the RICS were then conducted by the RICS (Hong Kong Branch) Committee and the respective divisional sub-committees. In fact, these sub-committees operated in parallel with their respective counterparts in the HKIS Divisional Councils.

This was not at all satisfactory and the imminent task for the HKIS General Council was how to transform the learned society into a qualifying professional body.

In 1987, the BSD was the first division to respond to this challenge and introduced the BS Test of Professional Competence (TPC). Although it was primarily modelled after the RICS system and adapted for local conditions, it provided a platform for candidates to opt for the HKIS assessment and qualify as full-fledged HKIS professional surveyors.

During the TPC's inaugural year, only a handful of candidates sat for it. After two years of TPC training, the pioneer professional building surveyors who passed their final assessments in 1989 included Sr See Ping-kuen, Sr Tai Tin-shing, Sr Chan Kwok-wai, and Sr Lam Siu-kay. The BSD was indebted to the assessors who helped maintain a high standard of professional competence. They included Sr Daniel Lam Chun, Sr Lau Chi-keung, Sr David Lee Tsung-hei, Sr Raymond Bates, Sr David Lawrence, Sr Eddie Lee Shue-shing, Sr Au Choi-kai, Sr David Chan Wah-wai, Sr Graeme Baldwin, Sr Michael Mann, etc.

Having achieved that historical milestone, the HKIS truly became a qualifying body of professional

surveyors. Based on this documented qualifying mechanism, it was able to secure the Government's official recognition in 1989 as the sole professional body representing all surveyors in Hong Kong. With the same justification, it was able to enter into reciprocal agreements with the RICS and candidates who pursued the HKIS TPC would be able to get two professional qualifications through just one final assessment.

The BS TPC was modified several times over the past 30 years and is now the BS APC for candidates to demonstrate their competency through self-assessments, practical task assessments, and final assessments under the mentorship of individual counsellors. Today's assessments are no less rigorous than those in the past. The system has grown in popularity and the number of APC candidates in 2017 was over 170. Many more assessors are required to conduct the practical task assessment of candidates on the same day and the BSD has had to mobilise as many assessors as candidates for this single exercise. Final assessments, during which a panel of four assessors interviews 2-3 candidates in each session, are conducted throughout the year. This is a very assessor-intensive exercise and the BSD is indebted to every assessor who volunteered his/her time and effort to assure a quality assessment. The name of each assessor is listed under the BS Divisional Panel of Assessors annexed to the Annual Report of the Board of Education.

Soon after the inauguration of the BS TPC, the GPD, QSD, and LSD launched their own TPCs. As the PDD had only started with just a few members, it waited some ten years before it had its own APC. The PFMD introduced its APC as soon as it was created. At the very beginning, the Education Committee (forerunner of the Board of Education) set up a colour code to differentiate divisional TPC documentations and forms to facilitate the administration. The colour codes for the BSD, GPD, LSD, and QSD were blue, yellow, green, and purple, respectively. The PDD and PFMD did not select their own colours, which were replaced by electronic forms over ten years ago.

This was a big part of how HKIS matured from a learned society to a qualifying professional body.

(PS – the year 2017 is indeed the 30th anniversary of the HKIS BS TPC. Hats off to the BSD for laying the a key milestone for the Institute.)