

GENERAL PRACTICE DIVISION

Date: 30 Nov 2017

Update on progress of discussion relating to the proposed Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Membership (MMRM) between GPD of the HKIS and the counterpart of RICS

Further to our report of the captioned matter in March and August 2017 issues of GPD Chairman's message, the second Discussion Forum to update members on the progress of the proposed MMRM with counterpart in RICS was held on 20 October 2017.

Noting the comments received from GPD Council members and at the above Discussion Forum, GPD Council supported the draft MMRM based on the framework of the 2005 MMRM and we have submitted the above draft MMRM to Executive Council /General Council for record. We also agreed to convey the salient points of the latest proposal in GPD Chairman's report so that members were aware of the latest issues. The draft salient conditions of the proposed MMRM which are also agreed by our counterpart in RICS are extracted below for information:

"Corporate members of the General Practice Division of the HKIS (FHKIS and MHKIS) may upon application to RICS be admitted as a professional member of RICS (Chartered Valuation Surveyor (MRICS)) and be a member of the Valuation Professional Group, and may be entitled to all the privileges of RICS membership subject to:

- a. one year post-qualification as a Corporate member of the General Practice Division of the HKIS and professional practice relevant to the Valuation profession; and
- b. the successful completion of the RICS ethics assessment prior to admission;
- c. a professional interview conducted at the discretion of RICS to verify the applicant's competence and suitability for admission to the Valuation Professional Group.

Corporate members of RICS (FRICS and MRICS) qualified as a Chartered Valuation Surveyor, whose principal place of practice being in Hong Kong may upon application to the HKIS, be admitted as a professional member of the HKIS (MHKIS) in the General Practice Division, and may be entitled to all the privileges of HKIS membership, including the use of the designation of professional surveyors and the designatory letters, subject to:

- a. one year post-qualification as a Chartered Valuation Surveyor and professional practice in Hong Kong relevant to the General Practice Division of the HKIS; and
- b. A professional interview conducted at the discretion of the HKIS to verify the applicant's competence and suitability for admission to the Division.

This Memorandum does not apply to any corporate member of the General Practice Division of the HKIS or the Valuation Professional Group of RICS whose admission to membership is by virtue of a reciprocity agreement with another professional body.”

Comments received

Admission of membership via normal AP route

Comments were received that the proposed MMRM should only be applicable to those RICS members who were admitted via normal APC route (i.e. Not by direct entry, senior professional, specialist etc). GPD Council generally agreed that the latest draft MMRM should be based on the 2005 MMRM and our discretion to reject any application during the interview stage would address this concern. There was comment that the first Discussion Forum on 18 November 2016 and the Questionnaire results in January 2017 merely provided the mandate for GPD Council to kick off the dialogue with the RICS counterpart, but without giving any mandate to commit anything. While the second Discussion Forum held on 20 October 2017 (and the Background Paper distributed there) updated our Members on the process over the past several months, and provided the draft salient conditions for the MMRM. Comment was received that it was our obligation to let our Members know every contents (without hiding anything critical to them) before GPD Council could be in position to put forward such an important agreement for endorsement and execution.

Response from GPD Council

“Further to the various rounds of discussions amongst council members and the results from the survey and forums, members of the GPD Council generally agreed that we are in the position to adopt the draft MMRM and make a recommendation to the Excom/General Council (EC/GC) to move forward. In the meantime, we can keep GPD members informed of the progress including the draft MMRM (with amendments if necessary) and the recommendation to be made to the EC/GC. If there are further comments received before the decision of the GC, then the GPD Council can still deal with the same.”

Proposed circulation of the draft MMRM to all GPD members

Suggestion was also received to consider to circulate the draft MMRM to all GPD Members for consultation, similar to the 1-month consultation process for the HKIS Valuation Standards conducted recently. Participants at the Discussion Forum were aware that the circulation of the revised draft MMRM as mentioned would take more than 1 month having regard to our experience in soliciting view from members on the MMRM through questionnaires in December last year.

Response from GPD Council

“Regarding the suggestion to circulate the draft MMRM to all GPD Members for consultation and to make reference to the 1-month consultation process for the HKIS Valuation Standards conducted recently, we believe that for the subject matter, the GPD council has provided many opportunities for GPD members to express their views including in particular a survey (which results had been made known to our members) and two discussion forums. Whereas for the consultation for the HKIS Valuation Standards 2017, we have only allowed a one-month period and one discussion forum only. Thus, the suggestion of another round of consultation is not attractive.”

Other Proposal from RICS

RICS also proposed that (i) any professional who has failed assessment with one body ... and subsequently passes with the other body ... may not use the MMRM to access the first body; (ii) Either body may conduct a discretionary interview for any candidate and (iii) to agree to interview the first few candidates under the MMRM ... the first 5-10 in each direction ... to assess quality.

Comments were received that the other proposal from RICS as mentioned were not yet included in the Background Paper and not presented to the attendees during the second Discussion Forum. For example, HKIS Probationers who have not yet completed their HKIS APC, even if they have already passed APC of RICS and become Chartered Surveyors, they still cannot use the MMRM to become MHKIS. There may be concerns from our HKIS Probationers.

Response from GPD Council

“Regarding the other proposal from RICS as mentioned above which may affect our probationers, our HKIS/RICS Liaison Committee would liaise with RICS at our next meeting.”

Way forward

The GPD Council shall further liaise with its RICS counterpart to facilitate the reciprocity discussion through its HKIS/RICS Liaison Committee. It will convey the comments received to its RICS counterparts and update members on the progress of the discussions through future issues of *Surveyors Times*.