Job description
A building surveyor provides professional advice on all aspects of the construction of new buildings and the maintenance, repair, alteration and renovation of existing ones. Building surveying is less of a desk-bound job than some of the other branches of surveying, with a large proportion of the working day spent on site.

Building surveying work may include the design, maintenance, alteration, repair, refurbishment and restoration of existing buildings. Building surveyors organise structural surveys, ensure projects are completed in time, carry out legal work that will include negotiating with local planning bodies, and advise clients on areas such as sustainability or the preservation of historical or listed buildings.

Work activities
• Carrying out inspections on buildings before purchase to assess the quality of, and to identify any structural faults, of buildings.
• Locating the cause of structural problems and recommending/providing solutions.
• Drawing up schedules of dilapidations, schedules of condition and schedules of works of necessary repair.
• Dealing with planning applications and advising on property legislation and building regulations.
• Obtaining approvals required under the Planning law, Building Regulations and bye-laws and other relevant legislation.
• Designing, building, maintaining, renovating and extending new and existing buildings.
• Project-managing, controlling budgets and supervising building projects on site.
• Keeping reports on the progress of work.
• Providing advice and assistance to builders.

Work conditions
Travel: can be frequent during the working day – if not located on-site.
Working hours: mainly Monday to Friday office hours.
Location: mainly in towns and cities throughout the country.
Opportunities for self-employment: possible.

Typical employers
• Large building firms
• Local authorities
• Specialist property consultancies

Career development
Much depends on employer; however, being a member of the Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS) can fast-track your career and optimise your earning potential. Chartered status is the gateway to senior management roles and increased earning potential.

Salaries
Pay rates vary widely depending on type of employer, and tend to increase according to experience rather than qualification.
Entry requirements and training

A degree in construction studies or building surveying is recommended. However, it is possible to obtain a position in a surveyor's office and complete a correspondence course and sit examinations (building surveying) of the Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS).

Specific degree subjects required

BSc Building Surveying.

Other relevant degree subjects

• Construction studies
• Construction economics.

Postgraduate study

A pre-entry postgraduate qualification is not a requirement; however, if you do not possess an accredited qualification, you must consider further study on a Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS) or Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) accredited course.

Training

In order to become a professional member of the Society of Chartered Surveyors you must have an accredited qualification and have successfully completed the APC (assessment of professional competence). APC is a structured period of practical training and experience, which when combined with academic qualifications, leads to chartered status. The graduate route is a 24 month period of structured on-the-job training and experience ending in a submission and a one hour competency based interview.

Tips for applications

Gain work experience in any sector of the construction industry. Become an associate trainee member of the Society of Chartered Surveyors while enrolled on an SCS/RICS accredited course.

Skills and qualities

• Excellent team working skills.
• Strong communication skills.
• A creative and enquiring mind.
• Excellent problem solving ability.
• Mathematically and technically minded.
• Good management skills.