

Professional Registration of Quantity Surveyors in South Africa: Barriers and Pathways Forward

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SUMMARY

Professional registration is a critical milestone in the career development of quantity surveyors, ensuring competence, accountability, and recognition within the construction industry. It not only validates professional expertise but also serves as a mechanism for protecting the public by ensuring that only qualified individuals are licensed to practice. While a significant body of literature exists on competency assessment and professional registration in general, limited research has examined the specific challenges faced by quantity surveyors in South Africa. Registration is a key step in career progression, yet candidates often encounter considerable barriers when navigating the process. This paper reviews literature on the complexities, obstacles, and support mechanisms associated with professional registration. An archival approach was adopted, drawing on online databases that provided access to academic studies on professional registration in other countries, as well as South African statutes, policies, and professional frameworks relevant to the quantity surveying profession. The review highlights systemic gaps in the South African framework that may hinder timely entry into the profession. These include limited workplace training opportunities, inconsistencies in mentorship, high registration costs, and misalignments between academic curricula and professional competency requirements. Collectively, these barriers risk slowing career advancement, discouraging new entrants, and undermining broader transformation goals within the built environment sector. The paper concludes that strengthening the professional registration framework is essential to promoting equitable access and enhancing professional standards. It recommends that South Africa draw on selected international best practices, such as structured mentorship schemes, clearer competency assessment guidelines, and supportive financial mechanisms, to address current shortcomings. By identifying both the barriers and possible pathways forward, this study contributes to ongoing debates on professional education, regulation, and capacity development in the South African construction industry.

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