

## Skills Initiative of the year award 2016

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In no more than 250 words, summarise why your initiative deserves to win this award in 2016. What has your initiative achieved in the last 12 months?

The secret to our success is simple.  
It is our people.

We are only as good as the consultants who work with our clients. By attracting, training, investing in and retaining the best people in the industry, we have continued to grow.

In order to continue growing, we need a constant flow of people to enter the industry. The latest Construction Skills Network Forecasts 2016 – 2020 report estimates that in order for UK consultancy firms to meet the industry's projected demand for 2020, the annual recruitment for surveyors will need to increase from 70,740 to 75,530 by 2020.

These figures highlight the importance of not only encouraging more young people into surveying but the need to support post graduates in achieving their RICS accreditation to set them firmly on their career paths.

We deserve to win the Building Skills Initiative of the Year award as we have developed a training initiative called '**Classroom to Chartership**' to support the construction industry in meeting these targets – identifying where the issues lie and developing a solution to tackle it.

### Key highlights of the Classroom to Chartership initiative:

1. In depth research undertaken into 'the source of the skills shortage' undertaken with four leading Universities
2. Working with the Construction Youth Trust to target schools and raise awareness of the opportunities within the construction industry
3. University visits and talks to promote the sector
4. Development of our APC Club, delivering a 100% success rate
5. Graduate opportunities to work in New Zealand, India, the UAE and across Europe
6. Building Good Employer 2015



"A lot of people at school assumed that the only career in construction is being a contractor/builder; there is little knowledge of the vast array of jobs available for people with different interests etc."

Describe your stand out skills initiative of the past year. What successes has the initiative had and what plans do you have for its future?

**In order to secure, attract and retain the best people in the industry we have developed the John Rowan and Partners' Classroom to Chartership initiative.**

The initiative is made up of many parts, but the stand out successes have been:

- 1. Getting to the source of the skills shortage** - Undergraduate research into the source of the skills shortage and what undergraduates want from the industry.
- 2. 100% APC success rate achieved** - The creation of the APC Club has supported and mentored 8 staff to achieve their chartership over 18 months in Quantity Surveying, Project Management, Building Surveying and Planning.

## 1 Getting to the source of the skills shortage

Over the past 8 months we have undertaken a piece of in-depth research to try and better understand attitudes of undergraduates towards the construction sector and their future careers in the construction professions. We are all aware that there is a shortage of talent in the construction sector and we wanted to ask the sector's youngest new recruits where they think the problem lies.

Through the undertaking of the research it became clear that while our construction industry has many organisations doing great works to provide resources and information to schools, our education system still lacks an awareness and understanding of the opportunities that the UK construction industry has to offer.

**Key success** – The identification of the lack of awareness in schools and with careers advisors about the career opportunities present in the construction industry.

"A lot of people at school assumed that the only career in construction is being a contractor/builder; there is little knowledge of the vast array of jobs available for people with different interests etc." Source: anonymous undergraduate February 2016

**Moving Forward** – We have developed a campaign (to be launched this summer) in order to:

- Encourage better engagement between local companies and schools in conjunction with the Construction Youth Trust
- Create a central resource and information point, bringing all the industry's resources together in one place
- Develop an industry wide PR campaign to engage with students and to create a positive image of the sector



## 2 The APC Club – helping our Graduates

The APC Club works by each candidate being allocated an assessor and supervisor, they undertake monthly meetings with both, in order to track progress and ensure they are provided with all the help and support they need. It encourages theoretical knowledge sharing and acts as a sounding board for sharing tips, coaching and any challenges people are finding.

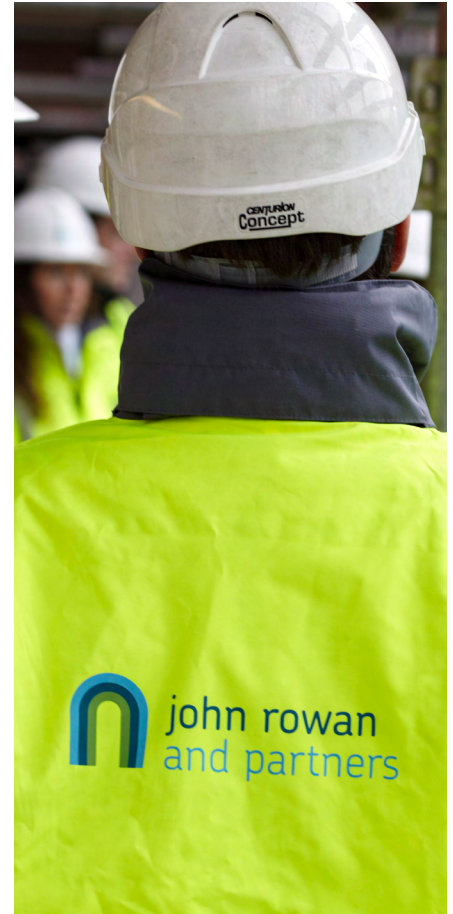
To get the candidates used to the APC process we have a dedicated team of internal chartered surveyors closely supporting the candidates. To get them ready for final assessment we run mock interviews with the company Board and we use an external coach to help develop both presentation and interviewing skills with the candidates. We've found that this type of one on one coaching really helps them to get a broad review and prepare them for the APC process. The company funds all the required training, travel, resources, and a weeks' dedicated study leave for every individual.

**Key Successes** – This year's APC Club has delivered a 100% successful pass rate.

**Kim Reid a Senior Quantity Surveyor:** "The process really helps you to develop your ability to talk confidently around your understanding of the relevant subjects. For me passing the RICS charterhip is a great career achievement and I think there is great value to being part of such a highly respected professional body and the opportunities that come with it."

**Recently chartered Amar Mahil, Senior Quantity Surveyor:** "I feel that passing the APC has been a greater academic achievement than graduating from my degree course. I'm very pleased to say that with the APC club I passed first time and have been rewarded with a promotion and pay rise."

**Moving Forward** – While the APC club is one of the final steps in the 'Classroom to Chartership' initiative, it does not stop there. Amar Mahil explains; "I am now going full circle with the process as I have become a supervisor for the APC Club. I work with the latest candidates to review documents prior to submission and observe and feedback on the mock interviews."



### Detail how much you have invested in the initiative in both absolute terms and as a percentage of turnover, over the past year.

In the past year, John Rowan and Partners has invested a total of **£29,742** into the Classroom to Chartership initiative.

This represents **0.6%** of the company's total turnover.

In addition to this, a total of **£75,000** has been invested in training over the year,

representing **1.5%** of turnover.

£29k

0.6%

£75k

1.5%

## How is your initiative helping to address the skills challenges faced by your business and/or the wider industry?

The **Classroom to Chartership** initiative is our solution to the skills shortage and success lies in four key areas: **Identify, Inform, Attract** and **Support**. We have:

### Objective 1 – Identifying where the issue lies within the sector

Our research project found that there is a lack of career guidance for school children interested in the construction professions. The problem therefore is not that school children can't find information about careers in the construction industry, it's that they are not even looking. The issue for the sector to solve is how to get the children asking the questions in the first place.

### Objective 3 – Attract those studying construction related degrees to the company

Attracting the best people to our company is critical to our continued success.

We have:

- Undertaken University talks
- Attended University career fairs at Reading, Nottingham Trent, Kingston and Loughborough
- Provided summer placements for undergraduates
- Provided spaces for year out students
- Undertaken a Graduate day for all applicants to visit the company and meet the team



### Objective 2 – Inform young people about the opportunities within the sector

We recognize that decisions about entering the construction professions need to be made at the age of 16 when career choices are being formed.

We have targeted schools by:

- Working with the Construction Youth Trusts' Budding Brunel programme to provide work experience to school children to showcase the career opportunities within the construction industry
- Undertaking an 'adopt a student' to mentor 6th formers at the Lilian Baylis Technology School
- Developing an awareness raising campaign for school career advisors (launched later this year)
- Developing young talent through work experience and internships, providing mock interviews and CV writing, and assisting with jobs fairs
- Working with the Young Enterprise Challenge, an inspiring project using student-led plans for school redevelopments

### Objective 4 – Support our graduates towards chartered status

The increased number of RICS accredited surveyors strengthens our capability and experience.

We support our graduates through:

- 10 paid study leave days a year
- Pay for study materials needed
- Annual membership fees / subscriptions paid
- Creation of the APC club to support our staff to achieve chartered status – now 100% pass rate!



Aside from the main initiative you are entering for this category, what other initiatives have you undertaken on skills and training over the past year?

## Funding further education

As part of our continued support of our staff's development we offer time and funding for our staff to continue their further education. This year we have:

- **Gemma Kaling** (marketing team) undertaking a Project Management degree
- **Michael Walker** (admin support) completing a Masters in Building Surveying
- **Charlotte Comer** (Administrator in Residential team) undertaking a Project Management degree



## What has been the average number of training hours per employee over the past year?

On average, all qualified and post qualified staff have each undertaken 17 hours of training in 2015/2016.

**Demonstrate how you are a good employer and how you motivate staff. Highlight any staff benefits you think appropriate and any evidence that your firm promotes diversity amongst its workforce.**

We have been Investors in People since 2006 and a Building Good Employer for 10 years.

Our staff benefits include:

- Gym membership
- Healthcare
- Pension
- Professional membership
- Cycle scheme
- Interest free public transport ticket loan
- Company car / allowance
- Profit share
- Bonus holiday days
- Meal vouchers
- Task based management
- Flexible working hours (36.5 hours per week)
- Enhanced Maternity package
- £1,000 Return to work Maternity bonus
- Enhanced Paternity package
- Paid time off for community work
- Increased events / training (40 hours on average, per employee)
- Increased opportunities to work abroad, in Europe, New Zealand, India, the UAE and Africa



**Demonstrate how you are a good employer and how you motivate staff. Highlight any staff benefits you think appropriate and any evidence that your firm promotes diversity amongst its workforce.**

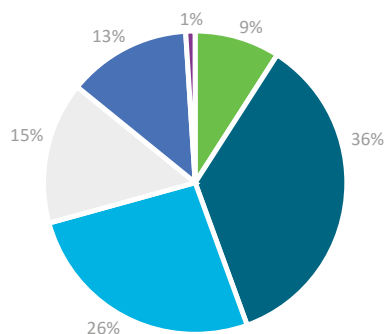
### Opportunities

We operate an Equal Opportunities policy (throughout all other policies), which is monitored annually and all our staff undertake equal opportunities training as part of their induction into the company.

26% of our staff are from non-white ethnic background and 19% are female (non-administrative) staff.

### Age range at John Rowan and Partners

■ 16-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-44 ■ 45-54 ■ 55-64 ■ 65+



### Social days out!

- Treasure hunt and quiz
- Bowling and dinner
- Annual sports day
- Cricket, football, netball and softball matches
- The John Rowan and Partners Property Cup at Millwall football ground.
- The John Rowan and Partners Sports Foundation has £50,000 pledged over 10 years
- We have introduced Give As You Earn (GAYE) so all staff can donate to the cause of their choice on a monthly basis
- Raised a total of £14,800 for various charities this year
- Support Reading University Construction society
- We offer paid time off for staff to take part in community activity
- Green Boot Camp – this consists of a week-long series of events, presentations and talks to engage, inform and educate staff in sustainability issues
- Reduction in waste - We have reduced daily waste to landfill from 10 waste bags, to a maximum of two, despite doubling the number of staff

**Between April 2015 and March 2016, how many people have left your business and how many people have joined?**

- 19 people left our business and 12 joined

**What is your percentage staff churn for the year April 2015 to March 2016 (defined as the percentage of full time PAYE staff who leave and have to be replaced)?**

- Our current staff churn rate of full time employees is 12%.

