

THE JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF QUANTITY SURVEYORS

THE

BUILDING ECONOMIST

THE FUTURE
ISSUE

FEATURING

THE SKY IS THE LIMIT
SPECIAL YQS Q&A SPOTLIGHT

SOCIAL PROCUREMENT
BREAKING THE CYCLE

GEOSPATIAL CAPABILITIES
INFRASTRUCTURE AND ANALYTICS



MARCH 2018



THE SKY IS THE LIMIT!

The backbone to all good construction projects is a Quantity Surveyor. Like the cement that holds a building together, a QS is essential to the entire project, thus commanding respect from the entire industry. As such, good Quantity Surveyors are in high demand, both in Australia and internationally.

Yet this exciting career path is often overlooked, with a skills shortage facing the industry.

So BE tracked down eight young Quantity Surveying professionals, to find out what attracted them to the industry, the realities of the job, and to see if they have any advice for anyone contemplating such a career. And if these Young Quantity Surveyors are anything to go by, aspiring Qs are promised a rewarding future.



EVERYONE HAS A CHOICE AND MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, WE CHOOSE TO WANT TO BE THE BEST. WE WANT TO EXCEL IN WHAT WE CAN DO AND ALSO WHAT WE MAY NOT SEE OURSELVES DOING.

Stella Lee AIQS (Affil.)
Donald Cant Watts Corke (WA)
Quantity Surveyor
25 years old

I enjoy engaging in conversations regarding the business and finance sector. The construction industry thrives in providing the country with the growth that it needs. The industry rides on the highs and falls with the lows of the economy, whilst different areas of the country see rising needs in different sectors; there will never be a dull moment.

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING JOB YOU HAVE WORKED ON?

All projects have their own surprise element to it. Overall, I find the post contract stage of a project to be the most challenging and interesting at this point in my career. Despite similar methodologies of construction adapted to suit projects of different character, not one project (in this case, variation), has left me on auto-pilot. Personally, I find the post contract stage of a project to be overflowing with lessons of dos and don'ts which offer the enrichment I need.

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE A QS?

When I was completing my industry experience back in Malaysia. I undertook Quantity Surveying training programs for a few weeks during my summer holidays in 2012 and 2013. Being adventurous, I decided to wander into a project management training program in 2014, only to find myself drawn back to Quantity Surveying – I enjoyed the relationship that quantities and rates have with one another and how they build up into an estimate, much like how the construction of a building works.

"A QS has the ability to estimate the value of projects from an initial design stage through to the construction stage"

WHAT DOES AN AVERAGE DAY/WEEK AS A QS LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

A typical week would require my attendance to variations which at times require constant reference to the contracts, the issue of financial reports, and the estimation of schematic designs. However, when we are required to produce a Bill of Quantities, there is a great chance that it would be a day-to-day task of measuring the quantities of varying trades to great detail over the next 4 weeks.

"When I started the Construction Management course in Curtin University, I had no knowledge of building and construction. And as a young QS, there are times where I would question my own abilities because of the lack of awareness in the construction industry. It is during times like these where I would need to pause, refocus and keep my chin up - because there is only one way to go and that is onwards & upwards"

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED DURING YOUR PATHWAY TO QS OR/ & IN YOUR QS CAREER SO FAR? AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

The phrase 'failure is the mother of success' has always been repeated to me every now and then. When I started the Construction Management course in Curtin University, I had no knowledge of building and construction, and as a young QS, there were times when I would question my own abilities. It was during times like these where I would need to pause, refocus and keep my chin up – because there is only one way to go and that is onwards and upwards.



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS CONSIDERING QS AS A CAREER?

In my opinion, the QS sector is a great place to get your feet into the construction industry . It provides an excellent foundation to grow further because you gain involvement throughout the different stages of the project. That way, you have the option to stay or venture out.

"The phrase 'Failure is the mother of success' has always been repeated to me every now and then"



EVERY DAY YOU GET TO MEET DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND FACE NEW CHALLENGES. EVERY PROJECT YOU WORK ON WILL BE DIFFERENT. THAT'S WHAT MAKES THE JOB EXCITING.

Crystal Liew AIQS (Affil.)
Donald Cant Watts Corke (WA)
Quantity Surveyor
23 years old

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING JOB YOU HAVE WORKED ON?

It would be Thomas Dixon Centre, a refurbishment of a heritage listed building. It's at design stage at the moment. The exciting part is to preserve the heritage building while having an extension built alongside. The new extension has different departments to cater for the user needs. The design team has been working closely with Queensland Ballet to create a new space for them which is fully utilised. In meetings we would sit down and consider what the dancers really need, how would they use the space, how to implement the sustainability component, what option is working or what is not. There is a lot of direct involvement and coordination between the end users and the designers.

WHAT DOES AN AVERAGE DAY/WEEK AS A QS LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

My average day includes preparing cost plans / Bill of Quantities, assessing progress claims and variations and attending project meetings. I communicate with various stakeholders (contractor, client, supplier etc.) on the phone, and go out for site visits occasionally. Every day you get to meet different people and face new challenges. Every project you work on will be different. That's what makes the job exciting.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED DURING YOUR PATHWAY TO QS OR/ & IN YOUR QS CAREER SO FAR? AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

When I got my first job my biggest struggle was lack of experience. There were a lot of situations which were challenging as I had no practical experience. For instance, how to deal with different parties, building up costs in

different locations, benchmarking projects. I would get the directors to guide me through. As I progressed along my career, I started picking up tips and knowledge to tackle these issues. To me, experiences and involvement in different projects and sectors really matter to build myself as a good QS.

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED

"I have always wanted to get into construction industry"

TO BE A QS?

I have always wanted to get into the construction industry. I knew I wanted to be a QS when I got into university and started learning about Quantity Surveying, and taking internships. The experiences and exposure into real projects was a great revelation.

WHAT IS A QS?

A QS is a cost consultant working with design consultants to establish the cost for a construction project in feasibility stage. Throughout the design phase, a QS plays an important role to make sure the design updates and changes incorporate the approved budget and ensure that the project is built to its maximum value. During construction phase, they monitor the construction cost by assessing monthly progress claims and variations.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS CONSIDERING QS AS A CAREER?

A lot of people think that Quantity Surveying is related just to maths. I am going to say this is a big misconception. Yes, there are a lot of measuring tasks,



but it's so much more. We talk to lots of different people and continually deal with different needs. I think you have to be passionate about your job; being intrigued by how things work and how they are built. Having an interest in the building industry is really important. Do get a lot of hands-on experience when you are studying too, it really helps in doing your assignments and studies.

WHO INSPIRES YOU?

My dad has always been an inspiration to me. He is an engineer and he used to take me to his sites when I was studying. That triggered my interest in getting into the construction industry. I always wanted to know how a building is built, especially a high-rise building. I am always amazed at how pieces of materials are put together to become a functional building!

CRYSTAL'S YQS PATHWAY

Date	Role	Location
Sept 2016 - Current	Quantity Surveyor	Donald Cant Watts Corke (QLD) Pty Ltd
Sept 2015 - Sept 2016	Cadet Quantity Surveyor	
Dec 2014 - Feb 2015	Quantity Surveyor Intern	Langdon & Seah (Malaysia)
Dec 2013 - Jan 2014		
Mar 2014 - Nov 2014	Cadet Quantity Surveyor	Mitchell Brandtman
	Qualifications	Bachelor of Urban Development (Quantity Surveying) with 1st Class Honours (Queensland University of Technology)



INTERESTING, STIMULATING AND REWARDING

Yeru (Ruky) Wang MAIQS
Donald Cant Watts Corke (WA)
Quantity Surveyor
26 years old

DESCRIBE QUANTITY SURVEYING IN 3 WORDS?

Interesting, stimulating and rewarding

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE A QS?

I had always been interested in working in the construction industry, so when I started my bachelor degree, I chose to study Building and Construction Management. During my studies I discussed my career options with my lecturers and professors. They spoke about Quantity Surveying, so I researched the profession and decided to do my industry work experience in QS. I really enjoyed the challenge and variety during my work experience, so decided to focus on the QS career path.

WHAT DOES AN AVERAGE DAY/WEEK AS A QS LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

Since I started working as a QS, I have been exposed to a variety of projects that involve measurement, cost planning, Bills of Quantities, bank reports and depreciation reports.

WHAT IS A QS?

QS is a proactive professional role from the cost and value perspective of the construction industry. It involves coordinating and working in numerous roles across the industry, providing professional advice through the whole life cycle of a project. Quantity Surveyors help their clients to manage and monitor the cost from the concept stage.

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING JOB YOU HAVE WORKED ON?

I have worked on numerous projects, all of them have given me different experiences and impressed me in a number of ways. The '33 Allara Street

Canberra' project enhanced my technical skills in a comprehensive way. I worked on this project from the concept design stage to post contract stage including the DA and pre-tender stage, preparing the high-level cost plan, pre-tender estimate, tender analysis and progress claims for the project. I have also been involved in contract administration, such as variations assessment, and my communication skills have been enhanced through invaluable experience in dealing with clients, architects, engineers and project managers.

"This experience gave me confidence to follow my career in Quantity Surveying. My enthusiasm and positivity as a QS is constantly growing"

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO IN YOUR CAREER AS A QS?

As a young QS and with my level of experience, I am looking forward to engaging with experienced professionals to develop and understand the role of a QS and the potential to add value for clients from different angles. I want to understand how the QS can drive the project and achieve the best outcome. I am still keen to improve myself as a QS and that excites me.

HOW WAS YOUR CADETSHIP?

Who did you do your cadetship with? How did it go?

I had my cadetship with Donald Cant Watts Corke (DCWC) in the Canberra office before I completed my degree. My supervisors gave me a comprehensive picture of the role and responsibilities of a QS in different situations and taught me a high level of professionalism. This experience gave me confidence to follow



my career in Quantity Surveying. My enthusiasm and positivity as a QS is constantly growing.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS LOOKING TO GET INTO THIS CAREER?

The Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (AIQS) is a good and reliable source of information for Quantity

Surveyors. At the same time, exposure to the industry through work experience, and talking to current AIQS members is also useful.

The best advice I have received in regards to how to get into Quantity Surveying was from my lecturers, they strongly encouraged and supported me to talk to the people from the industry.

YERU'S YQS PATHWAY

Date	Role	Location
Dec 2015 Present	Quantity Surveyor	Donald Cant Watts Corke (DCWC) Canberra Office
Dec 2014 – Dec 2015	Cadet Quantity Surveyor	Donald Cant Watts Corke (DCWC) Canberra Office
Feb 2012 – Dec 2014	Student	Bachelor of Building and Construction Management - University of Canberra

