



## Building Estimator

**Alternate Titles** Quantity Surveyor, Construction Economist, Cost Engineer, Surveyor (Quantity)

**Description** Building estimators prepare the budget for construction projects from a single house to much larger commercial sites. They prepare cost estimates and plans, audit projects, manage construction costs and administer construction contracts for all levels and types of construction. With greater experience the building estimator will be involved in the analysis and negotiation of prices and rates.

### Job Prospects/Employment Opportunities

Building estimators work with architects, building contractors, developers, engineers and project managers. They can work as individual consultants or as part of a small or medium sized firm. Some work as academics in universities. Some may find employment in government agencies. Those in the building industry usually work on larger scale projects such as office complexes, high density residential projects, hotels, factories and hospitals.

Job prospects are generally good, but vary with building activity. Building estimators are currently in demand in South Australia.

- Typical Duties**
- Talk to architects, engineers, builders, contractors, suppliers and project owners
  - Study architectural and engineering drawings and specifications
  - Prepare a 'Bill of Quantities', which lists the individual components required to construct the project
  - Check on changes of design to assess the effects on cost
  - Assess and recommend payment to contractors during construction
  - Prepare monthly cash-flow forecasts for clients and tax depreciation schedules
  - Undertake feasibility studies to assist in decisions about the worth of a project proceeding
  - Act as consultants to business and government

### Personal Requirements

- Analytical and logical
- Able to concentrate for long periods
- Good oral and written communication skills
- Able to work accurately with figures
- Able to work independently or as part of a team
- Aptitude for working with computers

### Working Conditions

Quantity surveyors usually work in offices. They also visit building sites, clients and other members of construction teams.

- Entry pathway** There are two pathways to become a building estimator in South Australia:
- **Practical experience pathway:** This would usually involve either
    - Completion of a related apprenticeship followed by a Certificate IV; or
    - Completion of a Certificate IV in conjunction with extensive experience in the building industry.From here it is possible to gain entrance into one of the higher qualifications.
  - **Academic pathway:** Undertake a degree or diploma in building or construction management, and then gain relevant practical experience to supplement the formal qualification.

Some people may complete a pre-apprenticeship or pre-vocational course before entering an apprenticeship. If you are still at school, **doorways2construction™** is the best first step into this career. Ask your VET coordinator for more details.

With experience, progress to managerial positions in the construction industry is possible.

### Qualifications

University of South Australia - City East Campus

- Bachelor of Construction Management and Economics (4 years full time or equivalent)
- Associate Degree in Built Environment

TAFE SA (Building and Furnishing)

- Diploma of Building
- Certificate IV in Building

### Professional membership

Graduates may be eligible for membership of the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors or for probationary membership of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. It is also possible to become a student member of both institutes while studying. Qualifications are recognised worldwide.

### Further information

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- CITB [[www.citb.org.au](http://www.citb.org.au)]
- Construction Industry Skills Board [<http://www.constructionskills.com.au>]
- **doorways2construction™** [<http://www.doorways2construction.org.au/>]
- Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (National) [[www.aiqs.com.au/](http://www.aiqs.com.au/)]
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (National Office) [<http://www.rics.org/Networks/Regions/Oceania/>]
- Master Builders Australia SA Branch [[www.mbasa.com.au](http://www.mbasa.com.au)]
- Housing Industry Association [[www.hia.asn.au/](http://www.hia.asn.au/)]
- Big Plans [[www.bigplans.com.au/](http://www.bigplans.com.au/)]
- Be Constructive [[www.beconstructive.com.au/](http://www.beconstructive.com.au/)]