COURSE GUIDE

Certificate in fire safety in the built environment

RICS®

Course guide

Certificate in fire safety in the built environment

Duration: 09 months (enrolment period)

Language: English

CPD: 90 hours

Market sector: Building Surveying, Construction, Valuation, and Real Estate

Course type: Cohort-based training programme with tutor support

Learning level: Intermediate (CPD / Professional Development)

Welcome

We're delighted that you've chosen to study the **Certificate in fire safety in the built environment**.

This guide gives you everything you need to get started - from how the course works to tips and resources that will help you make the most of your learning experience.

Getting started with your course

1. **Review the course guidance** on the main page to understand how the programme works.
2. **Say hello** to your trainer and peers in the **Introduction to the Trainer** area of your course.
3. **Bookmark the course page** so you can return easily at any time.
4. **Use Google Chrome** for the best learning experience.
5. **Disable pop-up blockers in the settings of your Internet browser.**
6. **Turn off pop-up blockers** in your browser settings to ensure all activities open correctly.
7. **Links open in a new tab.** When you're done, just close it to return to the course.

Study mode and duration

This is a **blended learning programme**, combining **self-paced online study** with **live tutor-led**

sessions and **peer discussions**.

It offers **90 hours of CPD learning** and is designed to be completed over **nine months** at a steady pace.

It includes:

- **Seven modules**, with one module released **every four weeks** to ensure steady progression through the curriculum **(70 hours of CPD)**.
- **One month** dedicated to **revision** and **case study preparation (10 hours of CPD)**.
- **A final month** for the **end-point assessment (EPA) (10 hours of CPD)**.

To make the most of your learning experience, we recommend allocating the following **minimum study time per module**:

- **5 hours** for **eLearning**
- **1 hour** for **essential reading**
- **4 hours** for **self-study** and **reflection**

Preparing for your case study and end-point assessment (EPA)

Make sure you set aside time to complete the **non-marked case study** and prepare for **revision** before starting your **End-Point Assessment (EPA)**.

Please note that the EPA **must** be completed before your course enrolment expires.

If you need additional assessment attempts or a course extension, please contact the **Online Academy Support Team** at onlineacademy@rics.org

Learning experience activities

Each module offers a blend of interactive learning activities designed to keep you engaged and help you apply your knowledge in practice. You'll progress through:

- **Interactive, self-paced eLearning modules** featuring practical examples, professional tips, knowledge checks, and access to an online glossary.
- **Essential reading materials and useful resources** that deepen your understanding of key technical and regulatory topics.
- **End-of-module quizzes** to test your understanding and track your progress.

- **Live Q&A and consolidation sessions** to reinforce key takeaways and clarify complex areas.
- **One non-graded case study practice activity** after Module 7, where you can apply theory to a realistic project scenario and review the model answer for self-assessment.

After completing all seven modules, you'll have the opportunity to **apply your learning in a single non-graded case study practice activity**, followed by a **final online exam** as your **end-point assessment (EPA)**.

You'll also have access to **discussion forums** throughout the course, providing opportunities to connect with peers, share insights, and communicate directly with your tutor for support and feedback.

What support do you receive?

Content-related queries

Your **course tutor** is available throughout the programme via the discussion forums to answer questions about the **course content** and support your learning.

Please post any **content-related** queries in the **Discussion Forum** for the relevant module. You can normally expect a response within **3 to 5 working days**.

Technical or administrative queries

For help with **technical or administrative matters** - such as course enrolment, access issues, or problems with course materials - please contact the **Online Academy Support Team** at onlineacademy@rics.org

The support team can assist you with:

- Access or login difficulties
- Missing or broken course materials or links
- Questions about your enrolment status or course expiry date
- General technical issues affecting course functionality

Course description

This **intermediate-level training programme** equips built environment professionals with the practical knowledge and confidence to assess and manage fire safety risks effectively.

Developed by **RICS** in collaboration with leading **industry experts**, the course bridges the gap between introductory fire safety awareness and more advanced assessment or compliance responsibilities.

You'll explore key topics including:

- Passive and active fire protection systems
- Legal and regulatory frameworks across the UK and internationally
- Fire safety documentation, management, and compliance practices

With **flexible online delivery** and **expert support throughout**, this programme is ideal for professionals seeking to strengthen their fire safety competence and demonstrate accountability in an area of increasing legal, ethical and professional importance.

Course structure

Module 1 – Fire safety perspectives

- Part 1 – Global fire safety challenges
- Part 2 – Fire safety objectives and perspectives

Module 2 – Fire science and prevention

- Part 1– Common causes of fire and key concepts
- Part 2 – Fire safety management and fire risk assessments

Module 3 – Fire protection

- Part 1 – Fire severity and types of protection systems
- Part 2 – Active fire protection systems
- Part 3 – Passive fire protection system
- Part 4 – Fire and rescue services

Module 4 – Legal and regulatory framework

- Part 1 – Evolution of UK fire safety legislation
- Part 2 – Key fire safety legislation (UK and global)
- Part 3 – Fire safety compliance under UK building regulations including fire engineering

Module 5 – Means of warning and escape & the application of fire engineering principles

- Part 1 – Evacuation strategies & means of warning and escape
- Part 2 – Application of fire engineering principles

Module 6 – Documentation and record keeping

- Part 1 – Record keeping under the building regulations
- Part 2 – Fire Safety Act 2021and Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (England and Wales)
- Part 3 – Building Safety Act 2022

Module 7 – RICS Ethics, competencies and standards

- Part 1 – Ethics and professional standards
- Part 2 – Ethics in practice
- Part 3 – Technical competencies

Case study practice

Final assessment

- Online exam

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

Module 1 – Fire safety perspectives

1. Explain the significance of fire in early human development and how historical fires have shaped approaches to fire safety.
2. Explain how rising global temperatures contribute to the frequency and severity of wildfires, and how wildfires exacerbate climate change.
3. Describe emerging fire safety risks associated with modern technologies, including lithium batteries, e-bikes, and mobility scooters.
4. Explain how the Grenfell Tower fire highlighted the dangers of combustible cladding, the failures in building safety, and the wider impacts of the global cladding crisis.
5. Summarise the benefits and fire safety challenges of modern methods of construction (MMC).

6. Explain the significance of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in protecting vulnerable residents during emergencies.
7. Distinguish between life safety and property protection objectives in fire safety, using examples to show where both may apply.
8. Recall how fire safety regulations in different countries prioritise life safety and property protection, including the main factors that influence these priorities.
9. Recognise how fire safety in the built and natural environment is integral to RICS strategic goals.
10. Describe the global role of the IFSS Coalition and how its common principles and pillars of action aim to improve fire safety worldwide.
11. Describe the global role of the IFSS Coalition and how its common principles and pillars of action aim to improve fire safety worldwide.

Module 2 – Fire science and prevention

1. Identify the common causes of fire
2. Recognise how to limit fire occurrence
3. Identify the specific circumstances that lead to the occurrence of fire.
4. Recall how compartment fires develop, and the factors that influence them.
5. Appraise the requirements for fire safety management within buildings and how occupant use effects this.
6. Conduct a basic fire risk assessment.

Module 3 – Fire protection

1. Recognise the effects that the products of combustion can have on the environment and individuals.
2. Identify methods of fire protection and outline their appropriate uses.
3. Explain the different types and categories of fire detection and alarm systems.
4. Describe the process of how suppression can hinder fire development.
5. Explain how fire suppression systems influence building design.
6. Outline the different types of smoke ventilation systems, their applications and the

legislation that is relevant to them.

7. Outline the need for fire doors as part of a building's overall fire strategy.
8. Identify the various forms of compartmentation within buildings and how this has an effect on the overall fire strategy for the building.
9. Identify the facilities that the fire service require in different buildings in relation to firefighting operations/means of escape.
10. Recognise the main types of external wall systems and EWS1/PAS 9980 processes.

Module 4 – Legal and regulatory framework

1. Recall several major UK fires that led to legislative and/or regulatory changes.
2. Summarise the key lessons learned from major UK fires.
3. Identify the relevant fire safety legislation applicable in England & Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.
4. Explain the differences between the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Fire Safety (Scotland) Act 2005, and the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.
5. Describe the purpose and scope of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
6. Explain how the Fire Safety Act 2021 strengthens existing fire safety legislation.
7. State the objectives of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
8. Explain how the Building Safety Act 2022 enhances fire and building safety across regulated buildings.
9. Describe the three approaches to complying with Part B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations.
10. Distinguish between Building Regulation Requirements and Approved Documents.
11. Explain how the Building Standards in Scotland support compliance.
12. Explain how the Building Regulations Technical Booklets are used to achieve compliance in Northern Ireland.

Module 5 – Means of warning and escape & the application of fire engineering principles

1. Explain what a fire evacuation strategy is and how it sets the assumptions for occupant behaviour, fire detection and warning systems, and means of escape in meeting the life safety objectives of Requirement B1.
2. Identify the key building-related factors that influence the choice and continued suitability of a fire evacuation strategy, including when a review may be required.
3. Explain why fire evacuation strategies must explicitly address the needs of disabled persons and how differences in mobility, sensory ability, cognition and health affect evacuation behaviour and risk.
4. Identify when and how Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs), and Residential PEEPs are used to support lawful, inclusive evacuation planning, including the key legal duties that apply.
5. Describe how means of warning support the life safety objectives of Building Regulation Requirement B1.
6. Explain what is meant by an appropriate means of warning.
7. Distinguish between fire detection and alarm system categories used in domestic and non-domestic buildings, and recognise how building characteristics influence their selection.
8. Determine the number of exits and widths of exits required for a safe means of escape from a room or storey.
9. Explain the limitations on travel distance and occupancy figures where escape is only available in one direction.
10. Explain why different buildings require different evacuation policies.
11. Assess a simple building layout and make recommendations for adequate provision of escape.
12. Explain the different types of emergency lighting.
13. Specify where escape lighting should be provided in a building.
14. Identify compliant and non-compliant signage.
15. Explain the shift from prescriptive fire safety guidance to performance-based fire engineering, including how functional Building Regulation requirements enable alternative compliance approaches.
16. Describe how BS 7974 uses fire engineering principles, including ASET and RSET, to assess fire risk, evacuation performance, and life safety beyond the limits of prescriptive guidance.
17. Explain how BS 9999 applies a structured, risk-based approach to fire safety design, including the role of assumptions about fire development and occupant behaviour.

18. Analyse how risk profiles are derived and applied within buildings, including how factors such as occupancy, use, and fire protection measures influence design outcomes.
19. Explain and apply the evacuation timeline and ASET/RSET principle to assess whether escape conditions are sufficient for safe evacuation.
20. Explain how BS 9999 determines travel distances and escape route capacity, and how these may be modified through risk profiles and additional fire protection measures in comparison with Approved Document B.

Module 6 – Documentation and record keeping

1. Explain the importance of recording fire safety information during building design and construction, and what should be documented.
2. Describe the legal requirement for conducting a fire risk assessment (FRA) under UK legislation, including scope, responsible person duties.
3. Identify key fire safety arrangements, including planning, prevention measures and assigned responsibilities.
4. Describe the purpose, scope and methodology of a fire risk appraisal of external walls (FRAEW).
5. Identify the required contents of the fire safety information pack.
6. Describe the purpose of building safety risk assessment and how it informs the safety case.
7. Explain the function of a safety case report.
8. Outline the principles of the golden thread of information.
9. Identify the key components of a resident engagement survey.
10. Describe what constitutes a mandatory occurrence report.

Module 7 – Production of the WLCA report

1. Explain how the RICS Rules of Conduct relate to ethical and professional behaviour in fire safety roles.
2. Identify how you would apply key principles of professional behaviour to real-world fire safety contexts.

3. Identify the International Ethics Standards (IES) and explain how they complement the RICS Rules of Conduct in guiding ethical decision-making in fire safety practice.
4. List the potential consequences of breaching RICS Rules of Conduct in fire safety practice.
5. Recognise common ethical challenges faced by fire safety professionals and propose appropriate actions in response.
6. Analyse real-world fire safety case studies and demonstrate how to apply ethical reasoning and RICS standards in decision-making processes.
7. Identify how core and technical competencies apply to fire safety roles.
8. Describe how the mandatory RICS competencies apply to maintaining competence in evolving fire safety legislation.

How each module is structured

Each module follows a consistent structure, offering the same types of learning resources presented in the recommended order to support your progress through the course.

Discussion forums

Each module includes a dedicated **discussion forum**, located at the **top of the module page**, where you can engage with peers and your tutor.

Forums are a great place to exchange ideas, ask questions, and share insights related to the module content.

Tutors usually respond within **3 to 5 working days**.

Please refer to the "**Discussion Forum – Guidance and Code of Conduct**" on the course page before posting.

eLearning module

The **interactive**, **self-paced eLearning modules** bring the theory to life through practical examples and real-world context.

Content is presented in short, engaging sections and includes examples, interactive practice activities, top tips, and knowledge checks to help reinforce learning.

To complete this activity, you must complete all lessons in the module.

Essential reading

These are key reading materials we recommend reviewing before after the eLearning module. They provide the background knowledge needed to get the most from the lessons that follow.

To complete this activity, you must view the reading files.

Useful resources

In addition to your core learning materials, you'll find extra resources to help you deepen your understanding or explore related topics.

End of module knowledge check

At the end of each module, take a non-graded short quiz to test your understanding and track your progress.

To complete this activity, you must attempt it and receive a grade.

Consolidation Q&A session

Each module includes a 1.5 hour live Q&A session that consolidates key takeaways from the module.

While attendance is not mandatory, we strongly recommend joining the live session or watching the recording and downloading the slides to deepen your understanding.

Case study practice

The **case study practice** activity becomes available **after Module 7** and gives you the opportunity to apply what you've learned across the entire programme.

It's a **non-graded activity** based on a realistic project scenario, giving you the opportunity to put theory into practice and reflect on your approach.

You can share your completed case study in the '**Case Study Exchange**' forum, where you and your peers can discuss ideas and learn from one another's perspectives.

Once submitted, you'll gain access to a model answer for self-assessment and comparison.

To complete this activity, you must submit your case study in the 'Case Study Exchange' forum.

End-point assessment (EPA)

The end-point assessment (EPA) is your **final online exam**, available from the dates shown in the **course calendar**, which you'll find just below the course banner on your course page.

The EPA consists of:

- 50 multiple-choice questions
- A 75% passing grade
- A 70-minute time limit
- Two attempts (the second available 24 hours after the first)

A **Certificate of Completion** will be awarded once you achieve a passing grade and complete the **Feedback Survey**.

"We wish you every success in your learning journey, and look forward to supporting you as you strengthen your expertise in fire safety and the built environment."

- RICS Professional Development & Learning Team
