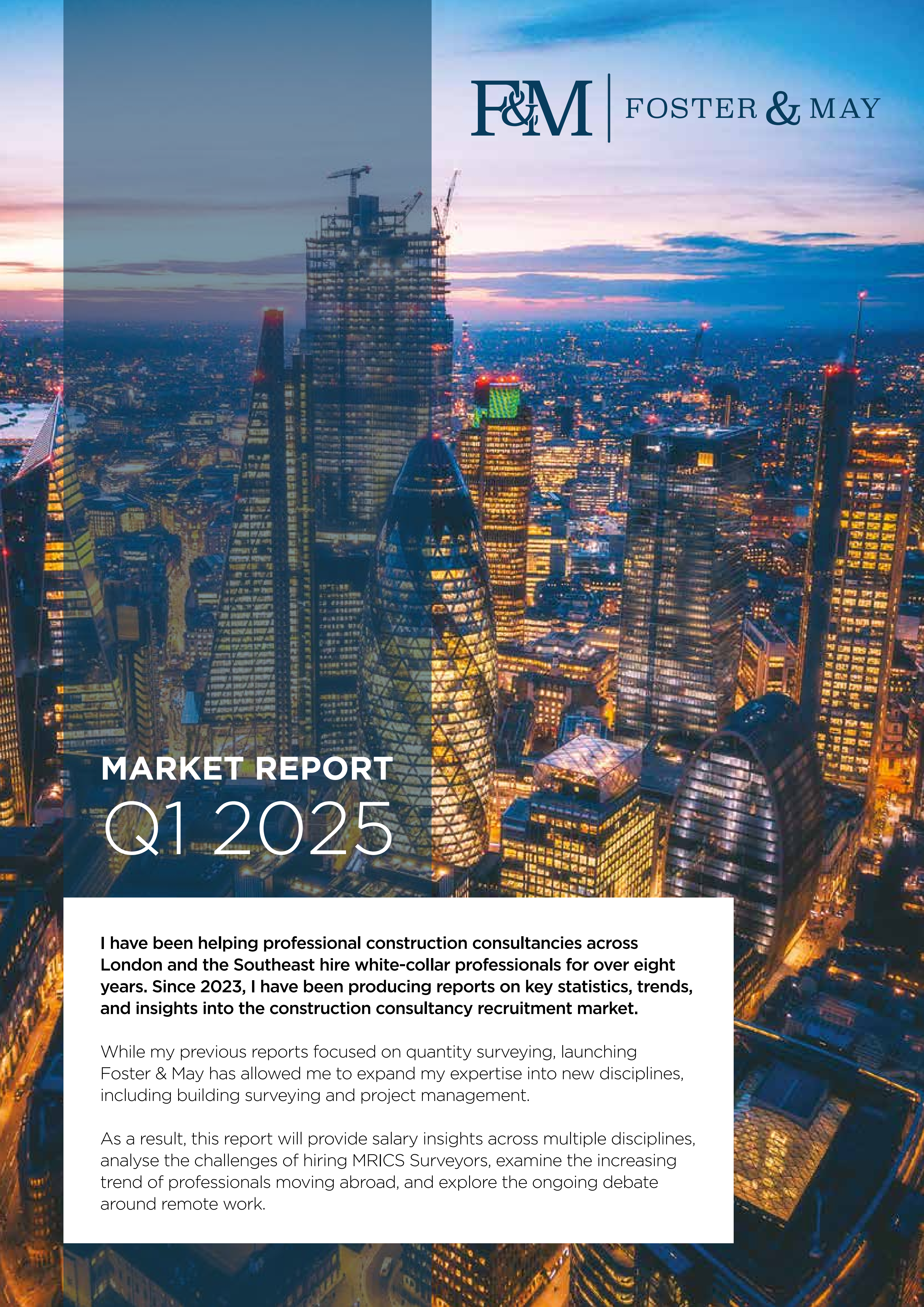

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# MARKET REPORT
# Q1 2025

**I have been helping professional construction consultancies across London and the Southeast hire white-collar professionals for over eight years. Since 2023, I have been producing reports on key statistics, trends, and insights into the construction consultancy recruitment market.**

While my previous reports focused on quantity surveying, launching Foster & May has allowed me to expand my expertise into new disciplines, including building surveying and project management.

As a result, this report will provide salary insights across multiple disciplines, analyse the challenges of hiring MRICS Surveyors, examine the increasing trend of professionals moving abroad, and explore the ongoing debate around remote work.

## SALARY INSIGHT

As I mentioned, launching Foster & May has enabled me to support construction consultancies across a much broader range of roles, including:

- Project Managers
- Building Surveyors
- Quantity Surveyors
- Structural Engineers
- Accountant / Bookkeepers
- Sustainability Consultants
- Fire Engineers
- Facilities Managers
- Health & Safety Consultants

### Quantity Surveying – Average Salary Requirements

| Level | Average Salary Requirement |
|---|---|
| Graduate | £29,125 |
| Assistant | £34,679 |
| Quantity Surveyor | £52,882 |
| Senior | £72,667 |
| Associate | £86,667 |
| Director | £100,000 |

### Building Surveying - Average Salary Requirements

| Level | Average Salary Requirement |
|---|---|
| Graduate | £30,400 |
| Assistant | £34,667 |
| Building Surveyor | £45,000 |
| Senior | £67,500 |
| Associate | £80,000 |

### Project Management - Average Salary Requirements

| Level | Average Salary Requirement |
|---|---|
| Assistant | £38,333 |
| Project Manager | £55,083 |
| Senior | £72,500 |
| Associate | £86,667 |

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# IS RICS TO BLAME?

In January, we noticed a significant trend: several MRICS Quantity Surveyors from contractor and developer backgrounds were actively applying for roles on the PQS/consultancy side. Their motivations were clear—they wanted to enhance their skill set, gain a more holistic view of quantity surveying, and improve their work-life balance and career progression.

What stood out was that, despite their higher-than-usual salary expectations, it didn't hold them back. Many secured multiple interviews with ease—a surprising outcome, even after all my years recruiting Quantity Surveyors.

But should I really be surprised, given the intense demand for MRICS-qualified Surveyors in construction consultancies?

## Here's my question for you:

Do your clients truly understand the severe shortage of Surveyors—let alone those with MRICS status? Do they realise just how few MRICS Surveyors exist, not only in the UK but globally? Are they aware of the fierce competition to secure the signature of a good Surveyor?

If they do understand this, and continue to make the same demand, is the real issue with the RICS?

*"RICS develops and enforces leading international standards to protect consumers and businesses, ensuring the highest level of professionalism is employed across the built and natural environment."*

But has this once-respected professional body evolved into something else—one that has conditioned clients to believe that without MRICS, a Surveyor is somehow lesser?

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# YOUR FLIGHT IS READY TO DEPART

Just when you thought finding good Quantity Surveyors and Project Managers couldn't get any harder, we are now seeing more QSs and PMs moving abroad to destinations like the USA and the Middle East. This trend is making it even more challenging for construction consultancies to secure experienced professionals.

## America

The US construction market has increasingly recognised the value of Quantity Surveyors with a PQS/Consultancy background for roles that were traditionally handled by Project Managers or Estimators. This growing demand may also explain why several American companies are investing in UK consultancy firms, such as Gardiner & Theobald and Robinson Low Francis (now MGAC).

When you factor in significantly higher earning potential—without the requirement to be MRICS—it's easy to see why many UK-based professionals are making the move.

## Advice?

It would be easy to say, "just increase salaries," but I understand that's not always commercially viable. Instead, consider making small, cost-effective adjustments that could make a big difference when a candidate is deciding whether to join your company.

- **Increase Annual Leave Allowance** – Many candidates are surprised when companies offer less than 25 days of annual leave (excluding bank holidays). A more generous allowance could set you apart.
- **Career Development** – In the USA, Quantity Surveyors are not restricted in terms of salary or promotion based on their chartership status. Can you confidently say the same for your firm?
- **Culture & Innovation** – The younger generation entering the job market is more tech-savvy and mindful of their work environment. While change isn't always easy, staying ahead of industry trends is essential to attracting top talent.

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# BE TRUE TO YOUR CULTURE

It's impossible to please everyone. When COVID forced us into lockdown, remote working became a necessity. Over time, we adapted and recognised its benefits. However, as some began to take advantage of this flexibility, and with office spaces sitting empty despite high costs, businesses started encouraging staff back into the office.

## The Difficulty

Now, in 2025, there is still no industry-wide consistency regarding WFH policies among consultancy practices. In a sector already facing a skills shortage and a highly diverse workforce, a new challenge has emerged: how much flexibility do employees actually want? More than ever, professionals across Project Management, Building Surveying, and Quantity Surveying are divided. Some thrive in a remote environment, while others prefer the sense of collaboration and inclusion that comes with being in the office.

## What's the answer?

Do what's best for your company and its culture.

If your business thrives on in-office collaboration, set a policy that reflects that—and vice versa. Yes, some employees may leave, but natural turnover is inevitable. Those who move on were likely not the right fit long-term and would have left eventually.

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## FINAL THOUGHTS

The construction consultancy sector is constantly evolving, and firms that remain adaptable and openminded shall be well positioned to attract and retain top talent. Whether it's adjusting hiring expectations, considering new working arrangements, or embracing global opportunities, staying ahead of market trends will ensure long-term success.

If you would like tailored recruitment insights or assistance in securing the best professionals for your team, Foster & May is here to help.

**Daniel Foster**
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