

From estate agency to residential surveying and business ownership

Callum Walker AssocRICS

Sava graduate, Surveyor and Director at WR Surveying



What was your background before becoming a surveyor?

I was a valuer for a corporate estate agent. I had previously worked in estate agency for just under 6 years and my roles included sales and lettings negotiator and valuer.

What made you consider a career in residential surveying?

I've always had an interest in property and after meeting surveyors during my estate agency roles and shadowing them, I knew it would be a career I would enjoy and it would be a challenge.

What was it that drew you to Sava as a training provider?

Sava was recommended to me by another graduate, so I decided to go to one of the open days in Manchester. I think the main selling point was that I could carry on working full-time whilst doing the course.

How did you find learning alongside your role?

I won't lie and say it was easy. I was mainly doing my assessments during the evenings, weekends and work

breaks. I needed good time management skills to get through all the work but it was well worth it!

Would you recommend the Sava diploma to others looking to pursue a new career?

Yes. In fact, I have recommended two people already, mostly down to how engaging and in-depth the learning is and the fact it's all based on residential property.

Since qualifying, what have you been up to?

I qualified in March 2020 and, despite going into Covid lockdown less than a month later, I joined SDL Surveying to carry out mortgage valuations. I then moved to Home Surveying in January 2022 where I was able to undertake more condition surveys. Fast forward a year and a half and I've now set up my own surveying business, WR Surveying.

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I've always wanted to own my own business, but needed to get some experience under my belt. When I lost my dad unexpectedly in January 2023, I needed something to concentrate on and, whilst it was a couple of years earlier than planned, it felt like the right thing to set my mind to. I already had a network of clients who were happy to refer me, so I thought 'why not?'

What's it been like setting up your own business?

It's been nerve racking but I'm dead happy that I've done it now. The pace is better and I do less surveys a week than I used to. I can fill the time with admin. It's nice knowing that I'm providing a complete service to my customers from start to finish.

What has been the highlight of your surveying career so far?

A few years ago I'd have told you it's the networking with and learning from other industry professionals. However, since setting up on my own, the tables have turned. I've had a number of people message me for advice on how to set up an independent surveying practice. It feels really validating when other professionals ask for your expertise, especially when imposter syndrome sets in and you need to reiterate to yourself that you do, in fact, know what you're talking about.

What are your aspirations for the future?

For the business, ideally by mid-2024 I'd like to employ another surveyor and an administrator. For my own development, I'm also getting into energy efficiency and am currently in the process of undertaking my Domestic Energy Assessor training. I love property so am keen to explore other avenues within the sector.

Now that you're well rooted in the industry, would you say the Sava diploma is good value for money?

Yes, definitely. I was aware that it was a lot of money to pay out, but I knew I'd be on a good salary after qualifying. I paid for the course on finance over a few months and by the time I'd paid it off, I'd made my money back and some within the first year.

Looking back now, how do you feel about your decision to study for the Sava diploma?

It's the best thing I've ever done from a career perspective.

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Sava's
surveying
diploma

