

I am writing as a Chartered Surveyor who qualified as a Chartered Auctioneer and Estate Agent in 1961. I was one of the last surveyors to be trained as an Articled Pupil receiving the fat pay of 10s pw (50p). When I was an articled pupil the National Association of Estate Agents was made up of rogues and vagabonds.

There is no doubt that ALL those claiming to be Estate Agents and dealing with any property transaction should have a recognised qualification covering the local law for where they practice, a code of conduct to be enforced and have clients bank accounts.

No qualified agent should be permitted to take part in any form of development or any involvement in transactions which favour either them, their family or close acquaintances.

There should be more than one qualification and any letters after the name should specify what that qualification is. There is residential sales and purchases, commercial sales and purchases and property management again domestic or commercial.

The qualifications should be by examination and include ALL those who either are or wish to practice within Jersey. Qualifications from the UK or other Channel Islands should not be accepted as the Law is different in each.

If there are agents currently practising who have a property portfolio or carry out development they should declare same and either sell or remove themselves from any company or partnership which deals with the public as an agent.

The above may seem draconian but for there to be confidence that the agent is just an agent it means harsh rules and there are stories of some agents taking advantage of unsuspecting clients and profiting themselves. There are also rumours that some agents have acted for their own benefit in the past and not in their clients interest. A shareholding of 5% for an agent in any company developing property should be the maximum and should not only apply to the actual agent but to his family so that as a group they would only own no more than this 5%.