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Welcome to Rate QS

Welcome to **Rate QS**, the platform built to transform how construction professionals understand, compare, and benchmark costs. Whether you're preparing cost plans, reviewing tender returns, or building a live rate library, Rate QS provides a powerful, structured way to analyse your data at every level - from high-level metrics to individual line items.

At its core, Rate QS is built around the idea of **bottom-up benchmarking**. By capturing cost data at the most granular level - the individual pricing item - and then abstracting this into consistent, comparable formats using our **keyword classification model**, we enable insights that go beyond typical spreadsheets or PDFs.

You'll be able to:

- Upload and structure cost data quickly from almost any pricing document
- Analyse key project metrics like cost per m², on-cost percentages, and more
- Benchmark individual items or entire projects across your own historical data
- Use dynamic tools like the **Keyword Explorer**, **Project Benchmarking**, and **Rate Library** to gain deeper understanding and support better decisions

Whether you're a cost manager, PQS, or analyst, Rate QS was built with flexibility in mind - to slot into your workflow and scale with your needs.

Let's get started.

Benchmarking Philosophy.

When I started building Rate QS, the idea was simple: better benchmarking starts from the bottom up. I've always believed that if you can capture costs at the most detailed level – right down to individual pricing items – you unlock far more meaningful insights. With Rate QS, you can follow a project's costs from the big picture (like cost per m² or functional unit at Stage 0) all the way down to the nitty-gritty of BoQ line items.

The keyword approach

Most line items in construction pricing are packed with detail – which is great for accuracy, but not so great when you're trying to compare costs across different projects. That's where keywords come in.

PLAIN IN-SITU CONCRETE; HORIZONTAL WORK						
Plain in-situ concrete; Grade C25 GEN3 concrete						
In structures						
Not exceeding or equal to 300 thick	14	m ³	165.00	2,310.00	2,310.00	2,310.00

Keywords act as a simple, smart shortcut to make sense of complex data. Each one follows a basic structure: **ELEMENT; DESCRIPTOR**. So instead of a full sentence like “200mm thick in-situ concrete slab with A252 mesh reinforcement on blinding”, we'd just call it: Slab; in-situ concrete.

By standardising costs this way, we can roll them up across pricing documents, projects, and teams – giving you cleaner insights and making it way easier to benchmark and spot trends.

Getting started

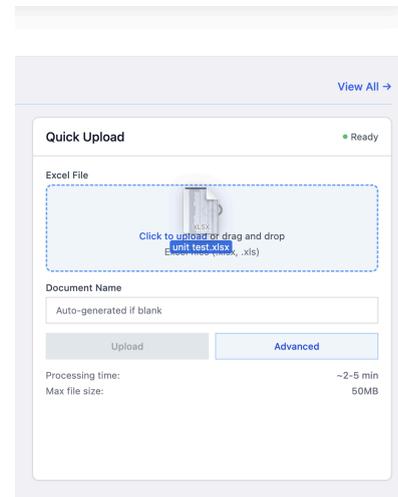
Uploading a Pricing Document

Uploading your project is super simple. From the dashboard either drag and drop your pricing document into the 'quick upload' tile or click 'advanced' to see the full page uploader.

The advanced uploader adds some more functionality, namely the ability to assign a project directly to the pricing document.

Supported formats: .CSV, .XLSX, .XLS

Document name: auto-generated or choose a more descriptive name to suit



Ingestion and classification

Once uploaded the document will initially take a few seconds to process, however once done the pricing document analyses page will reload with the following sections

Document summary

Here you will see general information about the uploaded pricing document including total cost, number of items and the assigned project (or the ability to assign to a project)

You can also choose to input the following meta information to help other users navigate.

Subtype

Tender, Estimate, Quotation etc

Document No.

Internal document number

Document Date

Date

Version

Revision tracking

Status

Final, draft, issued, etc

On-costs and allowances

BASE SUBTOTAL £836,910	TOTAL ON-COSTS £0	GRAND TOTAL £836,910
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Add New On-Cost

Name e.g., Inflation, OH&P, Risk	Type % of subtotal	Value 0	Apply To This Document	Add
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Notes (optional)
Additional notes or description

The on-cost allowance is a separate section to add below the line item costs, which are calculated based on your input either % of subtotal, per item, lump sum and you can choose across the pricing document or project

Pricing items

Under the hood Rate QS will take headings, subheadings and items and concatenate them all into the 'description' column. This allows for more accurate classification later on.

The pricing items pane contains all of the extracted pricing information that was contained within the original document. This is split into the following columns:

Description, Unit, Rate, Quantity, Total - Rate QS will then add its own two columns:

- Classification - this identifies page totals and items
- Keyword - this is generated by our internal processing model

When you are ready you can either generate all of the keywords at once, or click the button to do them individually. This process can take anywhere from 1-10 minutes depending on the size of your document, A progress bar shows remaining items. When it finishes you'll see the **Keyword** column populated

Schluter- Reno V, all applied as manufacturers instructions including preparation and adhesive (Outline Specification - FF07) Transition trims, adhesive, plugged and screwed to concrete	m	£29	4	£117	item	Finishes; transition trim	✓	↺	✗
British Gypsum; Concealed grid MF suspended ceiling, 12.5 thick Gyproc Plasterboard with taped and filled joints, all applied as manufacturers instructions including preparation for final pant finish - (Outline Specification - CT02) Ceilings, depth of suspension 1000 to 1500, over 3.5m above structural floor level, to concrete soffit	m2	£29	122	£3,564	item	Ceiling; suspended			

Clicking on a generated item will give you the ability to edit, change, discard or re-generate the item

Where Rate QS cannot generate a keyword it will instead return 'N/A' ; these can be filtered and we encourage you to manually add a keyword for these following the convention described above.

Projects

Projects are secondary to Pricing Documents, one project can have multiple pricing documents to reflect different tender returns, different stages of cost plan etc. Cost plans do contain meta data that identifies the project as a whole and allows for project benchmarking.

Project information

Project Information			
Detailed overview of the project status and configuration. Edit			
Project Summary An example project Project Lead Not assigned	Key Details Building Type Sector Contract Type Project Stage Floors (Above Ground) Basement Levels Gross Internal Area	Education Public Design & Build Tender 3 Not set 1,500 m ²	Project Statistics Documents 1 Location London, UK Items 360 Last Updated 05 May 2025

Project information can easily be edited by clicking on the 'edit' button. Currently we support the following metrics for tracking:

- Building type
- Sector
- Contract type
- Project stage
- Floors (for calculating cost per floor)
- Basement levels
- Gross Internal Area (for calculating cost per m2)

We also allow project leads to be assigned which is particularly helpful for larger companies with multiple members of staff involved.

Project analytics

By filling out some of the above information Rate QS will generate some key analytics which can be quickly and easily viewed to give project-by-project analysis such as cost per m2 or cost per floor.

Risk and data quality

Risk & Data Quality

Detailed review of data quality issues and potential risks

Rate Outliers 10 items

ITEM	RATE	Σ
Location - 1st floor, Rm F15, Drg 196 -3601 & 2011...	\$300.00	5.5
COBA Flooring, Plan.a Aluminium Entrance Matt - ...	\$578.79	4.6
Contractor Designed, Café front and back counter...	\$10350.00	4.2
Sound Zero, G25 melamine foam acoustic ceiling fi...	\$245.58	3.7
Sound Zero, G25 melamine foam acoustic ceiling fi...	\$245.58	3.7
Optima Technisheid 54, 30 minute fire rating inclu...	\$6266.15	3.6
Ideal Standard, Doc M Senserflow Wall hung pack ...	\$3079.14	3.0

Unclassified Items Bulk classify

23 Items with no classification (N/A)

6.8% unclassified 337 total

Potential Duplicates 7 items

DESCRIPTION	COUNT	VALUE
Schluter- Reno V, all applied as manufacturers ins...	2	£176
Little Greene Paint; Prepare, knot, prime and stop...	2	£4063
Little Greene Paint; Prepare, knot, prime and stop...	2	£657
Doorsets; 44 thick solidcore doors with robust hy...	2	£1375
British Gypsum, Shaft wall partitioning system - ...	2	£111
British Gypsum, GypWall Quiet SF partitioning sy...	2	£55
British Gypsum, GypWall Quiet SF partitioning sy...	2	£40

Incomplete Data 20 items

ITEM	ISSUE	DOCUMENT
Head Office Visiting Staff: Contracts M...	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx
Head Office Visiting Staff: Commercial ...	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx
Head Office Visiting Staff: Design Mana...	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx
Head Office Visiting Staff: Health and S...	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx
Site Staff: Site Manager / Agent	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx
Site Staff: General Foreman / Trades Fo...	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx
Site Staff: Health and Safety Officer	Missing qty	Education BoQ.xlsx

The risk and data quality tab gives users an insight into the quality of the pricing document that has been uploaded. The tab gives insight into four key areas:

- **Rate Outliers:** Where rates lie 3 standard deviations away from the baseline these are highlighted as potential outliers (≈ the most extreme 0.3 % of values)”
- **Unclassified items:** Where items have been given the classification ‘N/A’ (where Rate QS cannot determine an appropriate keyword for the item we flag the amount of these instances. There is a link to the bulk classifier which allows users to bulk classify items into keywords easily
- **Potential duplicates:** Here we outline items that have the same description and rate multiple times
- **Incomplete data:** Where we would expect items to have quantities, rates or totals that are missing these are highlighted in this section

The list provided in this section is not exhaustive and does not mean that data quality is bad it is only meant as a flag to users of how to check the information provided to ensure that data is of high quality if you deem it necessary to amend.

Project Documents

This section lays out all of the associated documents alongside their net cost, on-costs and meta data.



Project benchmarking

The project benchmarking page allows for high level project comparison.

Filtering

The main functionality of the project benchmarking page starts from the filtering, opening the pane on the left hand side of the screen - here we can filter via building type, locations and Gross Internal Area (GIA) range. By selecting one of these projects you will see the lower drawer open. This contains all of the pricing documents associated with the project.

Cost benchmarks

Once filtered, the main content of the page will update. Here we can see the main cost benchmarks of the project alongside ranges for similar schemes and key metrics such as the GIA, on cost allowance and distribution.

The next pane shows a high level breakdown of the total cost, these views can switch between raw £ cost and % cost. Clicking on one element will filter to the other graphs and dynamically highlight the corresponding cost across all selected projects.

Project Selection
<

Filters

Building Type

Location

GIA Range (m²)

[Clear Filters](#) 4 of 4 projects

Projects [Select All](#) [Clear](#)

- Residential Project** 1 docs
Location: test Type: Residential
GIA: 1,000 m² Cost/m²: £589.79
- Harveys Project** 2 docs
Location: Test Type: Residential
GIA: 500 m² Cost/m²: £3,062.39

Documents [Select All](#) [Clear](#)

- boq2.xlsx £590K
2025-05-01
- Education BoQ.xlsx £837K

new upload page 1 docs

✓ Apply Analysis

Clear

Rate benchmarking

The analysis page allows you to inspect costs at the lowest level. Working backwards from the ingested costs and keywords the default 'keyword explorer' is the main interface.

Filtering

Filtering works in a very similar manner to the project benchmarking, users can filter based on individual projects, pricing documents or key building metrics

Keyword explorer

The keyword explorer is the main interface with the rate benchmarking page. The breakdown of this table is as follows:

Element > Descriptor > Unit > item

Based on this breakdown at any level clicking an item in the table will dynamically update the rest of the graphs on the page.

Label	Count	Avg ...	Rate
⊕ Fittings	134	1,136.29	-
⊖ Door	130	1,463.45	-
└ ⊖ stainless steel	26	110.07	-
└ ⊕ no	24	111.71	-
└ ⊕ pair	2	90.34	-
└ ⊕ metal	18	1,759.11	-
└ ⊕ fire-rated	15	2,016.53	-

Insights

We offer a wide range of insights within Rate QS, the general philosophy around this page is to start with the most useful information, metrics cards giving you a clear insight at first glance and then with each passing graph the analysis becomes much deeper e.g. plotting regression analyses based on project size and the impact this will have upon rates.

Graphs make up a large part of this page, in order:

- **Rate distribution (column)** - Shows individual rates for up to 15 unique items in the selection. Includes percentile and mean lines for reference.
- **Rate spread (box plot)** - Visualizes rate distribution: the box shows the middle 50% (Q1-Q3), the line is the median. Whiskers extend to data within 1.5x the box height. Dots are outliers.
- **Rate distribution** - Displays the frequency distribution of rates (blue bars). A theoretical normal distribution curve (red line) is overlaid if enough data exists.
- **Rate volatility** - Shows the percentage variability of rates within the selected category. Higher bars indicate more volatile pricing.
- **Cross project benchmark** - Compares the selected keyword rates across different projects. Shows both mean and median rates for each project.
- **Distribution shape** - Shows the shape of the data distribution with density curves. Combines box plot quartiles with distribution visualization.
- **Rate v project size** - Shows the relationship between rates and project size (GIA). Each point represents a data item colored by project.

Customisation

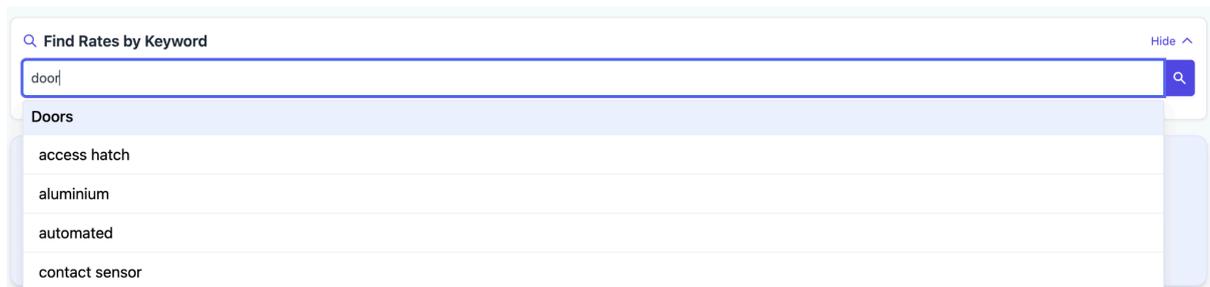
Each graph has an options tab that allows you to modify the data and how its shown depending on each individual graph.

Rate library

The rate library is designed for deep analysis of one individual unit rate at a time.

Searching for rates

The search pane is two-tiered

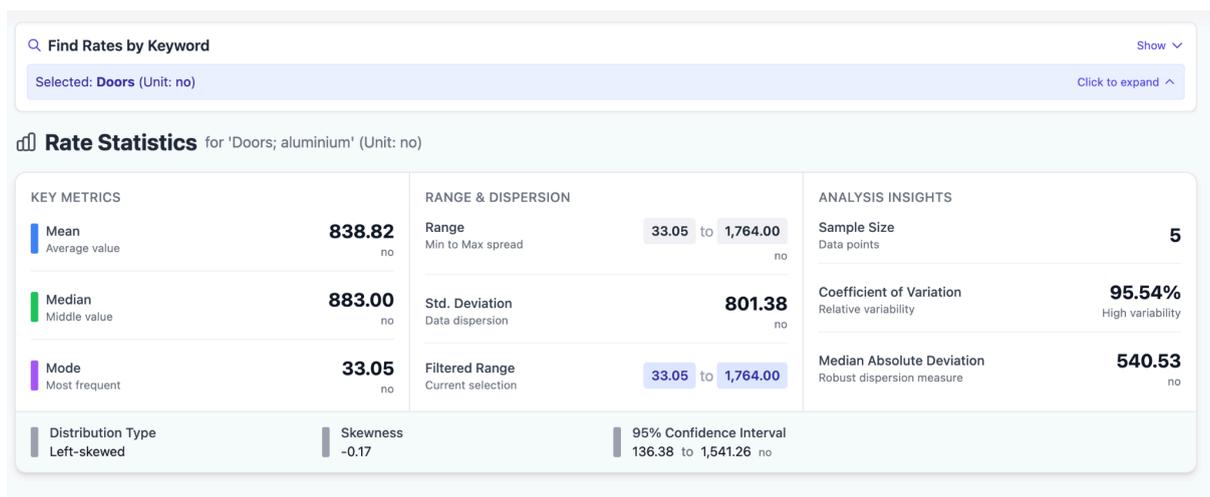


In the above example we are searching for 'door' this is an element but also could be a descriptor. The highlighted result (in blue) is an element and will thus inherit all of the below keywords into its analysis.

In the search drop-down, items marked in blue are elements; grey items are descriptors only.

Whereas if we just selected 'aluminium' we would only see analysis for aluminium doors.

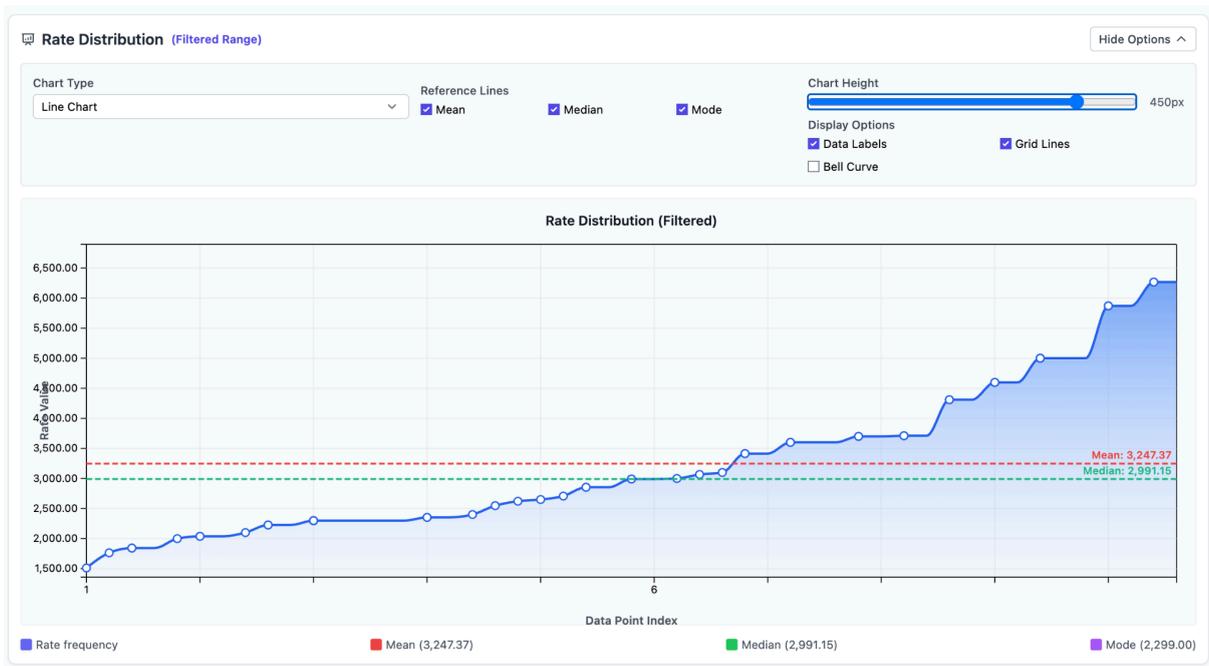
Deep analysis



This page is designed to give you a deeper understanding of the rate you have selected. With advanced and deeper insight than shown in any other view on the Rate QS platform.

Alongside this we also provide customizable graphs

Graphs



We allow several graphs to be rendered:

- Line charts
- Bell curves
- Histograms

Each chart can be fully customised with colours, averages shown, theoretical bell curves drawn etc

Rate detail

DESCRIPTION	RATE	UNIT	PROJECT
External Window; 2400x1900mm; WF02-A	1,512.00	no	Healthcare project
External Window; 2800x1900mm; WF02-B	1,764.00	no	Healthcare project
External Door; 2600x1850mm; NFR; Service entrance door; DX12-A	1,843.00	no	Healthcare project
External Door; 2600x1850mm; NFR; Waste & Pump room door; DX13-A	1,843.00	no	Healthcare project
Contractor Designed, Training Kitchen complete as Drg 196-3630, 196-4101, 5020 and Product Specification Workstation (Lift side), 2200 x 400 stainless steel high level wall units with 3nr double doors, Drg 96-5020	2,000.00	no	Education Project
External Door; 2600x2100mm; NFR; Bike parking door; DX23-B	2,038.00	no	Healthcare project

Alongside all of this we include a rate detail pane that shows where the above data comes from. We allow for filtering, sorting and export of all of this data and associated graphs.