

Conservation Register Handbook



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RIBA 
Architecture.com

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Cover Image: Abseilers repointing masonry on G.G. Scott's chapel tower at St. John's College, Cambridge © Freeland Rees Roberts

RIBA 
Architecture.com

Royal Institute of British Architects
66 Portland Place
London
W1B 1AD
T 020 7580 5533
conservation.register@inst.riba.org
www.architecture.com

 **RSUA**
The Royal Society
of Ulster Architects

In association with the Royal
Society of Ulster Architects

RSAW 

In association with
the Royal Society of
Architects in Wales

The RIBA would like to thank the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland for its generous advice and assistance in the development of the RIBA Conservation Register.



Cadw, DfC, HE and HES support conservation accreditation and certification schemes to assist clients in identifying professionals with the relevant specialist conservation knowledge, skills, and experience needed to work on historic sites, buildings, structures, objects and collections.



1

Introduction and Aims



Introduction and aims

'Conservation of cultural heritage is now recognised as resting within the general field of environmental and cultural development. Sustainable management strategies for change which respect cultural heritage require the integration of conservation attitudes with contemporary economic and social goals...'¹

'The object of conservation is to prolong the life of cultural heritage and, if possible, to clarify the artistic and historical messages therein without the loss of authenticity and meaning. Conservation is a cultural, artistic, technical and craft activity based on humanistic and scientific studies and systematic research. Conservation must respect the cultural context.'²

¹ <https://www.icomos.org/en>

² <https://www.icomos.org/en>



Bristol Old Vic Exterior, Bristol, Haworth Tompkins © Philip Vile

The RIBA promotes architecture as a profound expression of our cultural heritage. We therefore seek to support the conservation, sensitive adaption, repair, restoration and protection of historic buildings, monuments, and sites. Due to their architectural merit, artistic and/or historic interest and significance, these sites form an integral part of the heritage of our built environment.

The sustainability of existing buildings is vital to their ongoing use and maintenance. It is essential that both owners and architects are sufficiently informed in their understanding of how these buildings function and how they should be maintained, repaired and enhanced for future viability. This is especially important in light of the climate crisis and current demands on how buildings perform optimally in terms of energy as well as operationally.

The RIBA promotes architectural conservation as an integral part of the practice of architecture, including through its core CPD curriculum.

To assist clients in the selection of an architect to provide them with professional services in architectural conservation, the RIBA has developed a system to recognise two differing levels of specialist conservation expertise. You can navigate a full list of RIBA accredited Specialist Conservation Architects (SCAs) and Conservation Architects (CAs) here:

<https://www.architecture.com/working-with-an-architect/conservation-register>

The RIBA believes that architects have a primary role in identifying the potential challenges and opportunities of historic buildings, areas and places including finding appropriate technical and design solutions and managing change in a sustainable manner.



Iveagh Fitness Club (former Iveagh Trust Baths), Bride Road, Dublin © Roisin Hanley Architect Ltd.

The RIBA Conservation Register aims to:

- assist those commissioning works on heritage buildings and assets to identify architects with the necessary knowledge, competence and experience;
- strengthen the profession's credibility and standing in the field of building conservation, repair and maintenance and encourage inter-disciplinary collaboration;
- recognise and promote the impact of heritage on a global scale and how the use of accredited professionals can help strengthen the cultural value of the built environment; and
- provide a focus and impetus for specialist CPD and training through an accessible and progressive system.



Stonemasons from Bakers of Danbury at work at St. Mary's Church Weston Colville, Cambs
© Freeland Rees Roberts



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Structure, Philosophy and Governance



Structure, philosophy and governance

The RIBA established and operates the RIBA Conservation Register in accordance with its purpose as stated in its Royal Charter, being ‘...the general advancement of Civil Architecture and... promoting and facilitating the acquirement of the knowledge of the various Arts and Sciences connected therewith’.

There are two levels of accreditation within the RIBA Conservation Register:

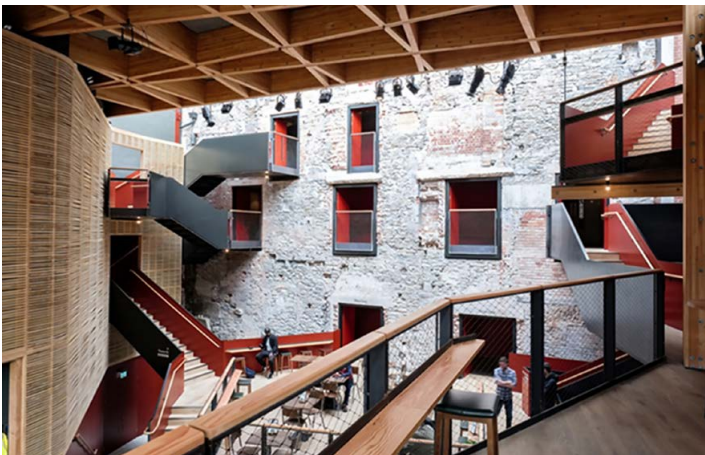
- Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA); and
- Conservation Architect (CA).

In order to encourage and support architects to become accredited, the RIBA provides a Conservation Registrant scheme (CR) that provides training, support and relevant CPD, helping individuals to move along a pathway, acquiring additional qualifications and experience. They can then apply for formal accreditation at CA and SCA levels.

The RIBA firmly believes in the value of accreditation and the benefits that employing an accredited architect will bring.

An accredited conservation architect provides a service beyond protecting existing buildings. They will also provide the client with the right advice to help achieve their objectives, mitigate risk, protect, and add value to, their heritage asset. The RIBA strongly believes that accredited conservation architects achieve better outcomes more efficiently.

An accredited conservation architect will ask the right questions and listen to and understand what the client is trying to achieve in order to ensure safeguarding of the built environment, utilising ethical design, community engagement and sustainability at all stages, whilst ensuring the historic integrity of the building and compliance with relevant conservation legislation.



Bristol Old Vic Exterior, Bristol, Haworth Tompkins © Philip Vile

Drawing on a body of highly relevant previous work and experience, they will propose combinations of repair, design and, where appropriate, sensitive intervention to help make the client's building work in the future.

Accredited Conservation Architects and Specialist Conservation Architects are rigorously assessed (and reassessed) so that clients can be assured that they are a “safe pair of hands”.

It is worth noting that Historic England and other heritage bodies highlight to clients the importance of choosing a professional who has the knowledge and experience necessary to work on older buildings and who is aware of the problems and pitfalls associated with such work (thus recognising the value of accredited conservation specialists).

As quoted from Historic England's website: “Many building professionals are trained and experienced only in modern building methods and are therefore less well qualified to identify the causes of problems or to specify appropriate and cost-effective repairs to older buildings”.

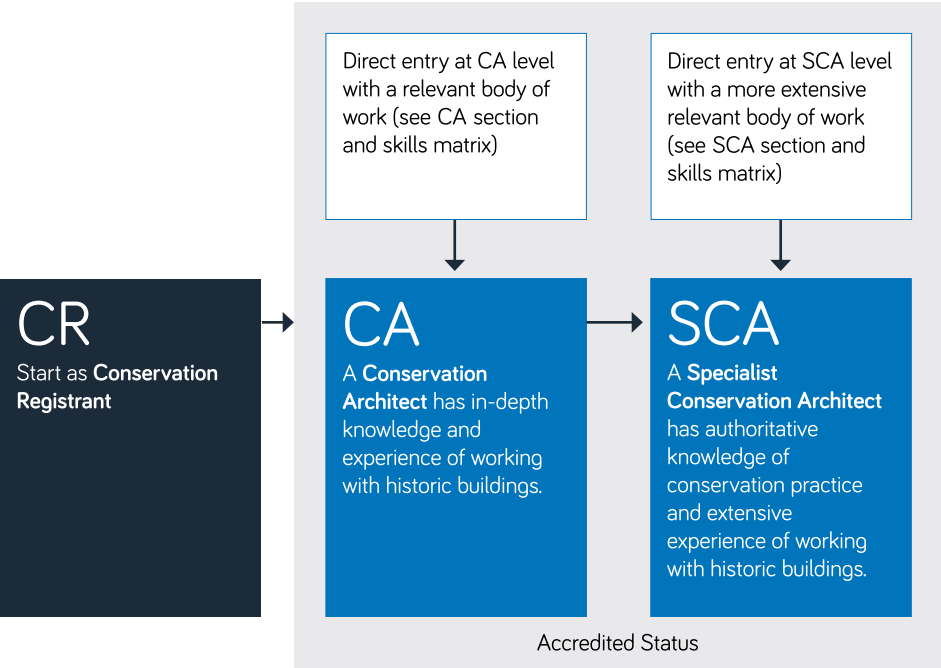
The RIBA Conservation Register is open to any Architects Registration Board (ARB) (or equivalent) registered architect who can demonstrate an understanding of conservation philosophy and the appropriate level of competency in the fourteen specialist skill areas detailed in the ICOMOS Guidelines. An understanding and application of the ICOMOS Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites (1993) is central to the success of an application to join the RIBA Conservation Register. Applicants should clearly demonstrate that they understand and apply them in their decision-making.

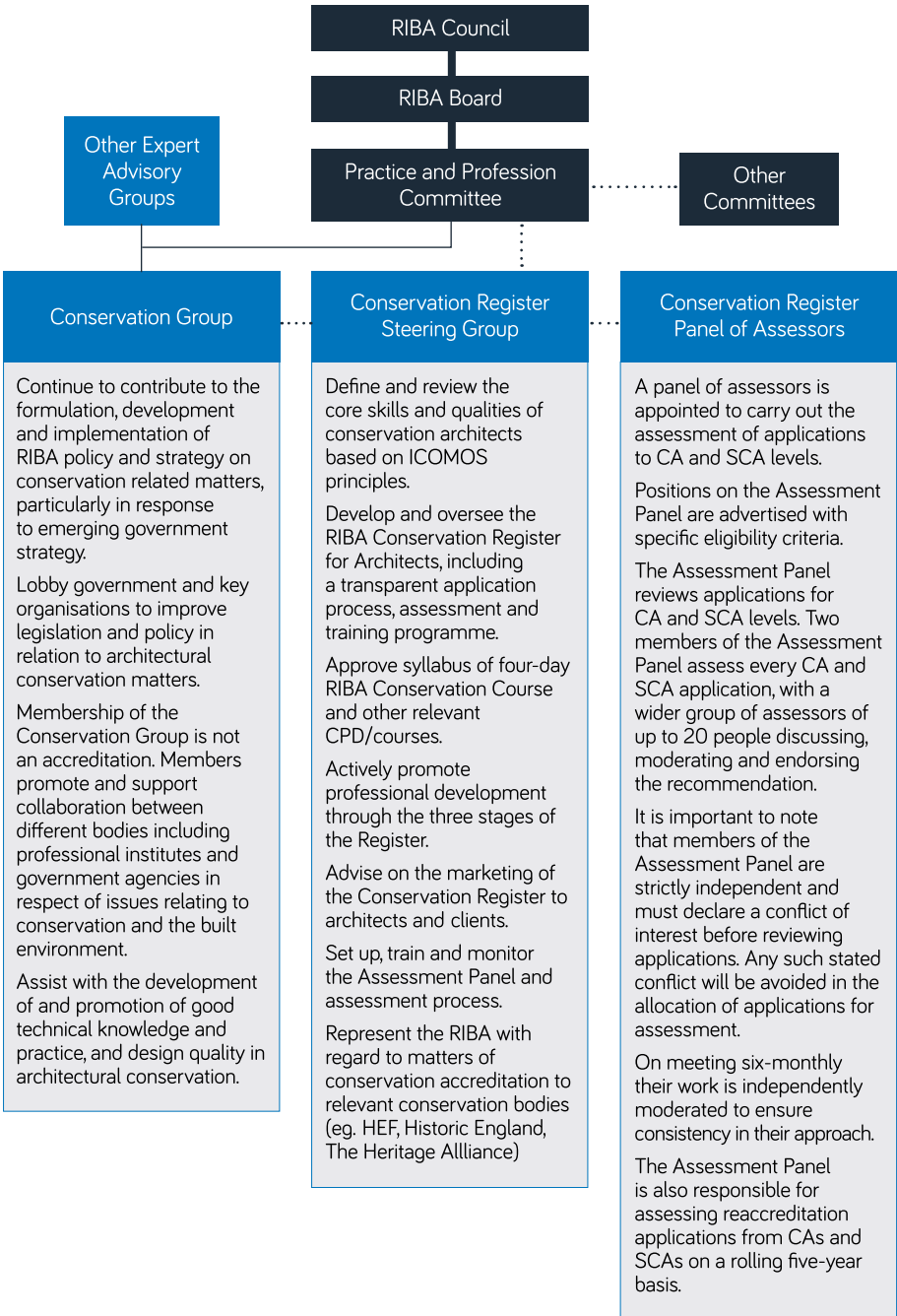
Both RIBA and non-RIBA applicants and members of the Register are also bound by the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct, in respect of which the professional conduct processes of the RIBA apply.



Durham Cathedral Open Treasure, Purcell © Andy Marshall

Pathway to accreditation







Goldsmiths CCA, London 2014, Assemble © Assemble Studio

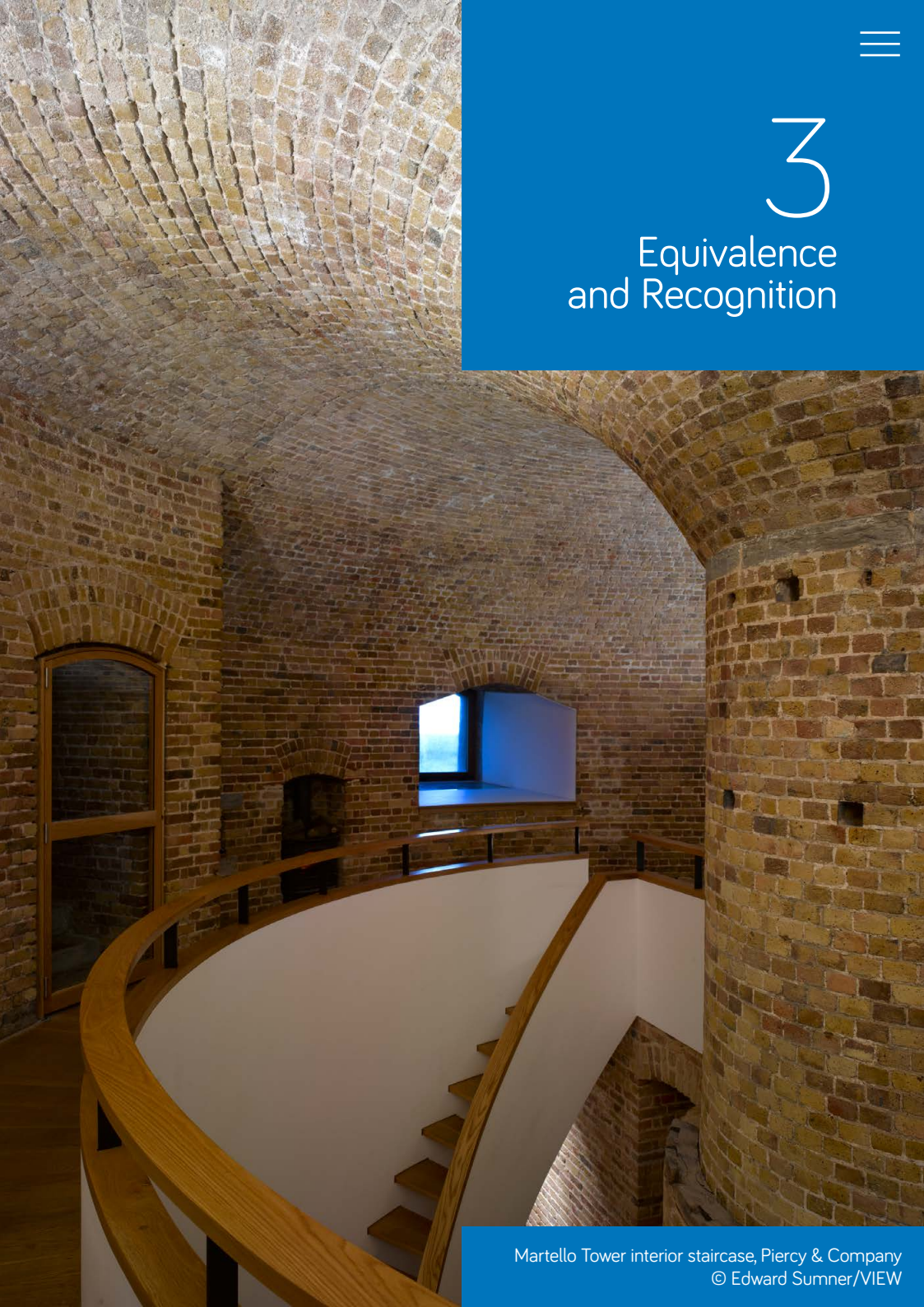


Detail from Goldsmiths CCA, London 2014,
Assemble © Assemble Studio



3

Equivalence and Recognition



Equivalence and recognition

There are several professional conservation accreditation schemes covering the built environment in the UK.

Specific to architects are:

- the RIBA Conservation Register;
- the AABC (Architects Accredited in Building Conservation) Register.
- The RIAS (The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland) Conservation Accreditation.

Using conservation accredited professionals is a mandatory requirement for various grant giving and statutory bodies to assist in conservation and repair of existing (historic) buildings, such as projects grant-aided by Historic England and Cadw, etc.

In some cases, many grant giving bodies may be able to accept other heritage specialists as the appropriate lead professional, but this would need to be discussed and agreed with the relevant body in advance of any grant offer being made.

Conservation accreditation is also often a prerequisite for architecture-related work within many religious dioceses across the country.

The Edinburgh Group, of which RIBA is a Supporter, works towards the equivalence of all current professional conservation accreditation schemes including those for architects, surveyors and engineers.

The RIBA Code of Professional Conduct and RIBA Code of Practice (2019) clearly state under Principle 2: Competence, paragraph 9, that 'Members/Chartered Practices must only carry out work affecting Heritage Assets if they are sufficiently qualified, competent or experienced to do so in the circumstances.' And that such work '...may...require specialist accreditation...'

The full documents can be found here: <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/code-of-professional-conduct>

In the UK, only architects registered with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) are eligible to join the RIBA Conservation Register at any level. In other jurisdictions, applicants to the RIBA Conservation Register must also be registered with their local regulatory body, where such a regulatory body exists.

The Conservation Register Steering Group, with assistance from the Assessment Panel as required, will consider recognition of equivalence of other conservation accreditation schemes such as the AABC.



The Queens Diamond Jubilee Galleries, Westminster Abbey, MUMA © Alan Williams



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Joining the Register



Reconstructed valley gutter to stone-tiled roof at
grade I listed medieval Llwyn Celyn hall house, Wales
© Ashley Davies

Conservation registrant (cr)

It is acknowledged that many architects will be interested in joining the Conservation Register. Many of these architects may lack the experience to do so without a period of learning and development. The RIBA encourages such architects to take the first steps by becoming Conservation Registrants, from which point they can progress to one of the two accredited levels.

Conservation Registrants are subject to the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct, including in relation to statements made in respect of their level of competence.

Conservation Registrants can progress to the formal accredited levels of Conservation Architect or Specialist Conservation Architect through submitting an application demonstrating the relevant competencies and experience by means of written accounts and supporting documents to the peer review process as their experience and knowledge develops.

Criteria to become a Conservation Registrant:

- A Conservation Registrant has an awareness of and an interest in the issues involved in working with historic buildings and has attended a conservation course recognised by the RIBA. For more information about the recognised courses, please visit: www.architecture.com/recognised-conservation-courses
- A commitment to understanding and using the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines.
- Undertaking to act professionally in compliance with the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct.
- Submission of a detailed CV with due regard to the criteria set out overleaf:



Thatcher using a Leggett, Scroggy Road, Glenavy © C60 Architects

Overview

Possesses basic knowledge and skills.

Understands when able to work with some autonomy and when supervision required.

Requires further training and development.

Able to work effectively as part of a team.

Knowledge

Good working and background knowledge of key aspects of conservation practice, principles and philosophy.

Standard of work

Straightforward tasks undertaken competently within guidance and control systems.

Autonomy

Able to achieve straightforward tasks using own judgement but understands when guidance /supervision required.

Coping with complexity

Appreciates levels of complexity through analysis, consequent skills and experience.

Perception of context

Sees actions as a series of steps, at least partly in terms of long-term goals.

The RIBA encourages Conservation Registrants to gain further knowledge and experience through appropriate CPD courses (structured and unstructured) as well as through work in amenity societies, or practices which focus on conservation projects.

Specialist mentoring can be valuable to architects pursuing conservation accreditation and RIBA is supportive of experienced practitioners on the Conservation Register acting as mentors.

Each of the ten RIBA CPD Core Curriculum topics is in some way pertinent to the development of a Conservation Registrant's knowledge and experience.

The RIBA CPD Core Curriculum is accompanied by a useful guide, the CPD Primer, which can help applicants understand the ten topics and their context in more detail: <https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/cpd/cpd-core-curriculum>

There are several organisations and bodies, in addition to the RIBA, that deliver seminars, courses, events, etc. related to conservation that can help a Conservation Registrant to build up their experience and knowledge in the field and move along the pathway towards accreditation. Please see Appendix 4 for more information.



Plaster restoration at the Palacio Pereira, Chile © Alan Chandler



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Conservation Architect



Conservation architect (CA):

A Conservation Architect has in-depth knowledge and experience of working with historic buildings.

The qualifications required to achieve Conservation Architect accreditation are:

Either

Four years' relevant experience as demonstrated by the submission of four written accounts.* Each written account must include a clear articulation of the effectiveness of the applicant's individual role in the conservation process and a clear explanation of how the 14 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines were considered and incorporated in the applicant's decision making.

NOTE: The experience described within at least three of the written accounts should be within the last ten years.

Or

Master's degree or equivalent in Conservation;** and three years' relevant experience as demonstrated by submission of four written accounts.* Each written account must include a clear articulation of the effectiveness of the applicant's individual role in the conservation process and a clear explanation of how the 14 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines were considered and incorporated in the applicant's decision making.

One of the written accounts may be a reflection of your master's degree, including a one-page abstract of your thesis. In addition, you can complete the account by:

- Making key observations and reflections of your learning on the course;
- Assessing its relation to, and adherence with, the ICOMOS guidelines and skills matrix; and
- Explaining and displaying how the skills learned in your studies are applicable to the practical field of architectural conservation.

And

Undertaking to act professionally in compliance with the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct.

And

Submission of a detailed CV*** with due regard to the criteria set out in the CA section of the Skills Matrix (see Appendix 1).

And

Submission of a conservation related CPD record**** for the previous five years.

And

Submission of a completed application form.

And

Payment of the application fee (via the BACS payment details found in the application guidance form).



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Specialist
Conservation
Architect



Specialist conservation architect (SCA):

A Specialist Conservation Architect has authoritative knowledge of conservation practice and extensive experience of working with historic buildings.

The qualifications required to achieve Conservation Architect accreditation are:

Either

Five years' relevant experience as demonstrated by the submission of five written accounts.* Each written account must include a clear articulation of the effectiveness of the applicant's individual role in the conservation process and a clear explanation of how the 14 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines were considered and incorporated in the applicant's decision making.

NOTE: The experience described within at least three of the written accounts should be within the last ten years.

Or

Master's degree or equivalent in Conservation;** and four years' relevant experience as demonstrated by submission of five written accounts.* Each written account must include a clear articulation of the effectiveness of the applicant's individual role in the conservation process and a clear explanation of how the 14 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines were considered and incorporated in the applicant's decision making.

One of the written accounts may be a reflection of your master's degree, including a one-page abstract of your thesis. In addition, you can complete the account by:

- Making key observations and reflections of your learning on the course;
- Assessing its relation to, and adherence with, the ICOMOS guidelines and skills matrix; and
- Explaining and displaying how the skills learned in your studies are applicable to the practical field of architectural conservation.

And

Undertaking to act professionally in compliance with the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct.

And

Submission of a detailed CV*** with due regard to the criteria set out in the CA section of the Skills Matrix (see Appendix 1).

And

Submission of a conservation related CPD record**** for the previous five years.

And

Submission of a completed application form.

And

Payment of the application fee (via the BACS payment details found in the application guidance form).

Advice on written accounts and supporting documents for both ca and sca.

The criteria for the assessment of evidence and accreditation are based on the ICOMOS 'Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites' and the principle that conservation works should only be entrusted to persons competent in these activities (see Appendix 2).

*** Written Account: i.e. describing effective personal decision-making in a project, an aspect of a project, a research document, report or professional paper, or describing key learning during a master's degree or equivalent in accordance with the ICOMOS Guidelines.**

- Each written account should demonstrate and reflect the range of work areas a conservation architect undertakes and should reveal their role, personal responsibility and competence in effective decision-making.
- The emphasis is on applicants being able to submit examples of, and reflect upon, what decisions they have made in the course of their professional work, rather than having to write significant new material. The written account must involve the expression of professional judgement in the form of analyses, professional opinion, advice, proposals and conclusions.
- The material submitted must be the applicants own work, in particular when acting as part of a team, and should be chosen to reveal their competencies and abilities within the criteria of the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines.
- Applicants may use one building, project, document, report, paper or course for no more than two written accounts, illustrating different aspects in each of those written accounts.
- Each written account may be a maximum of 12 A4 pages.

**** Master's degree or equivalent in Conservation:**

In consultation with the RIBA Conservation Register Steering Group, the Assessment Panel will give guidance on the Master's courses that satisfy this criterion. Please contact the Specialist Registrar for more information.

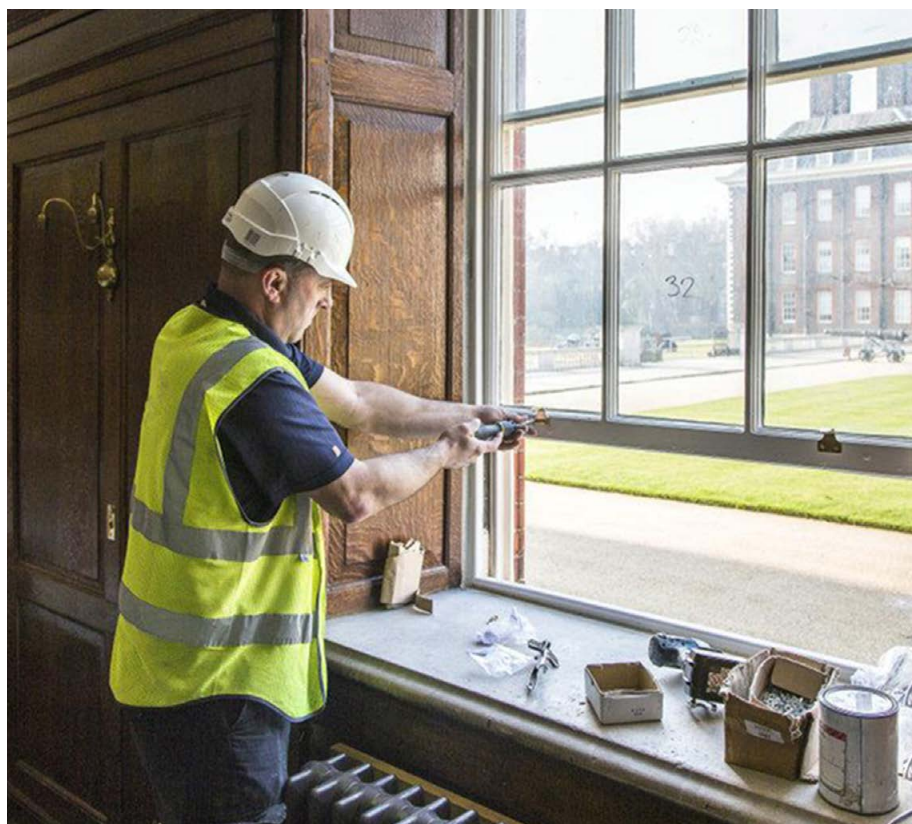
***** CV:**

- This must be reasonably detailed but limited to a maximum of four A4 pages).
- Your CV should show practical experience that aligns with the CA or SCA criteria in the Skills Matrix.
- Its focus should be on conservation, and include a list of projects undertaken/worked on with conservation content. This can include all aspects of conservation practice including academic studies, surveys, reports and practical works. This list should include building type, date, listing status (if any), project start and completion dates, and indicate clearly the phases of the project in which you were specifically involved and your role and areas of responsibility within the project.
- It should be a chronological guide to your career, detailing your architectural education and the practices where you have worked.

******CPD:**

Submission of details of specialist conservation CPD undertaken in the previous five years. At least 12 of the 35 hours of CPD required by the RIBA each year should be focussed on conservation, with at least half to be structured – i.e. attendance at relevant courses, seminars or webinars. Please note that CPD required in the application and re-accreditation processes counts as part of the annual RIBA CPD requirement and should be recorded by RIBA Members on the RIBA CPD recording platform.

NOTE: the process of putting together the application (new submission or re-accreditation) is a reflective process and therefore counts as formal (unstructured) CPD and should be recorded by RIBA Members on the RIBA CPD recording platform.



Royal Hospital, Chelsea, London: a worker refurbishing the sash windows
© Gerald McLean / RIBA Collections



7

Reaccreditation



Void linking the ground floor and the first floor,
The Graduate School, Queens University Belfast,
Consarc Conservation © Signals Photography

Reaccreditation

All successful applications to join the RIBA Conservation Register are valid for five years.

The purpose of the re-accreditation process is to give clients and statutory bodies assurance that SCA and CA accredited architects are current in their understanding of conservation philosophy, policy and practice.

Re-accreditation of Specialist Conservation Architects (SCA) and Conservation Architects (CA) is by submission of:

1. A record of specialist conservation CPD undertaken in the previous five years. At least 12 of the 35 hours of CPD required by the RIBA each year should be focussed on conservation, with at least half to be structured – i.e. attendance at relevant courses, seminars or webinars.
2. A written account* from within the previous five years. The written account must demonstrate current competency in accordance with ICOMOS Guidelines, and must be the equivalent of a written account as submitted on initial application. Applicants must clearly demonstrate in this written account their understanding and application of the ICOMOS Guidelines by providing a 300–500 word explicit summary of how the 14 ICOMOS aspects were considered and incorporated in their decision-making. The written account will be formally reviewed by the Assessment Panel.
3. A completed reaccreditation application form as found here:
<https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/membership-and-accreditation/join-the-riba-conservation-register>
4. An updated detailed CV, max four A4 pages. The CV must be particularly drafted to demonstrate the individual's conservation work within the last five years.

The Assessment Panel may ask for additional information to demonstrate currency.

The Assessment Panel will review each submission, and offer:

– Re-accreditation

or

– Deferment with a request for additional specialist CPD and/or evidence of currency of conservation practice. **If this is not received or it is not satisfactory, then the Panel may recommend suspension/removal from the RIBA Conservation Register or a move to a lower level of the Register.**

A CA on the RIBA Conservation Register may apply in any application window for accreditation at the higher SCA level but must submit new relevant accreditation evidence and pay the appropriate application fee.

Re-assessment of conservation registrants

Re-assessment of Conservation Registrants is by submission of details of specialist conservation CPD undertaken in the previous five years. At least 12 of the 35 hours of CPD required by the RIBA each year should be focussed on conservation, with at least half to be structured – i.e. attendance at relevant courses, seminars or webinars.

Additionally, Conservation Registrants need to submit:

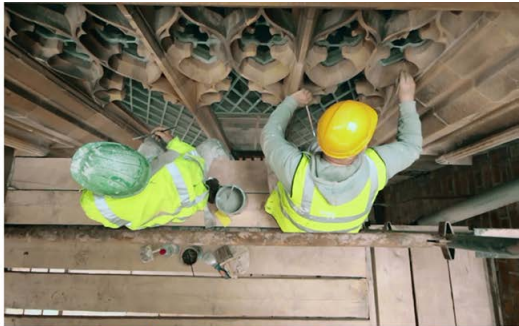
1. A completed application form as found here: <https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/membership-and-accreditation/join-the-riba-conservation-register>; and
2. An updated CV, max four pages. The CV must be particularly drafted to demonstrate the individual's conservation work within the last five years.

Conservation Registrants are strongly encouraged to apply for CA/SCA accreditation with their appropriate supporting evidence within five years of becoming a Conservation Registrant.

NOTE: CPD required in the application and re-accreditation/re-assessment processes counts as part of the annual RIBA CPD requirement and should be recorded by RIBA Members on the RIBA CPD recording platform.



The Painted Hall, Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich
© Hugh Broughton Architects / Martin Ashley Architects



Lanyon Craftsman at Work, Lanyon Building, Queens University Belfast, Consarc Conservation
© Consarc Conservation



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Appeals and Fees



Appeals

An applicant who wishes to appeal against the decision of the Assessment Panel must do so within six weeks of the result being issued, and may do so free of charge.

The applicant should state in writing that they wish to appeal. There is no need to provide grounds for the appeal, or further evidence.

Appeals should be addressed to:
Specialist Registrar
Royal Institute of British Architects
66 Portland Place
London
W1B 1AD

An appeal will be adjudicated by an independent pair of assessors. The new assessors will undertake an independent evaluation of the accreditation evidence originally submitted by the applicant. The new assessors will provide their decision on the appeal, which is final, to the Specialist Registrar.

Fees

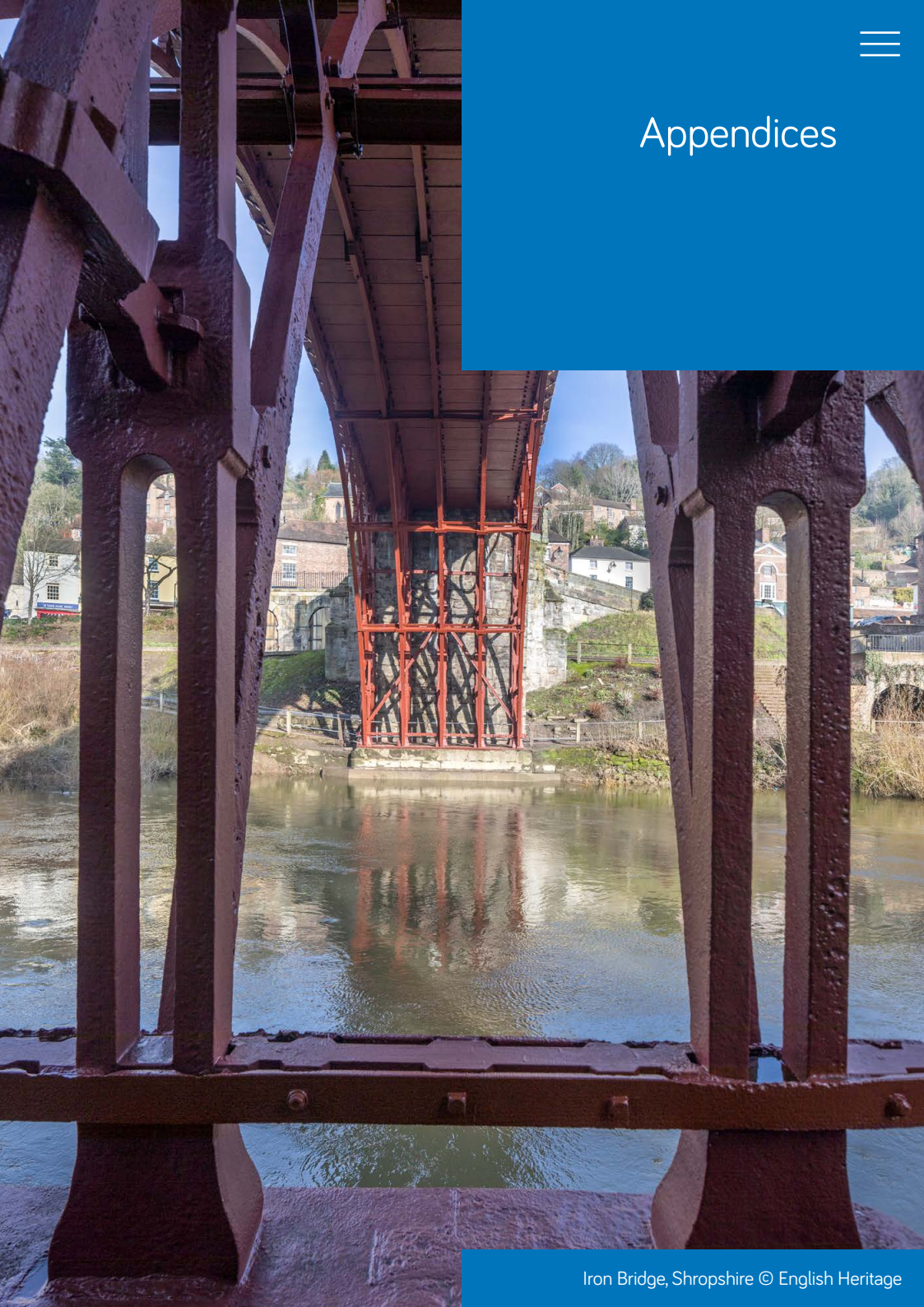
The RIBA charges an application fee to cover the costs of assessment and re-accreditation/re-assessment. There is also an annual registration fee to remain on the Register, to cover the running costs of the Register. An annual administration charge in addition to the normal registration fees is levied for non-RIBA members.

An applicant who can demonstrate through their accreditation evidence that they meet the appropriate accreditation criteria is eligible for registration as Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA), or Conservation Architect (CA).

Successful applicants are entitled to use the relevant suffix, SCA or CA. Conservation Registrants are not entitled to use a CR suffix as this is not an accreditation. Details of fees are set out on the website at www.architecture.com.



Appendices



Appendix 1: skills matrix³

Overview	Knowledge	Standard of work	Autonomy	Coping with complexity	Perception of context
Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA)					
Very substantial personal autonomy Acknowledged by others as an authority	Authoritative knowledge of conservation practice, principles and philosophy and contributor to debate on development	Excellence achieved with relative ease and consistency	Able to contribute to development of standards, practice, principles and philosophy of conservation Able to take full responsibility for own work	Holistic grasp of complex situations Moves between intuitive and analytical approaches with ease	Sees overall picture and alternative approaches, and a vision of what may be possible
Conservation Architect (CA)					
Possesses requisite knowledge and skills to perform effectively Able to work with considerable autonomy Understands when specialist training or guidance required	Depth of understanding of conservation practice, principles and philosophy	Competent delivery of services achieved routinely	Able to guide and take responsibility for others	Deals with complex situations holistically with confident decision making	Sees overall picture and how individual actions fit within that

Applicants are advised that the submitted CV should be prepared in accordance with either SCA or CA intentions. Submitted CVs are used by the assessors to confirm the relevance of the level of accreditation applied for. The submitted CV should therefore be laid out in accordance with the Skills Matrix to clearly illustrate that the relevant level is being applied for.

³ Adapted from Dreyfus model of skills acquisition (1981 and 1984 for PACR)

Appendix 2:

Icomos education and training guidelines

The criteria for the assessment of evidence and accreditation are based on the ICOMOS 'Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites' (1993) and the principle that conservation works should only be entrusted to persons competent in these activities. This competence demands the ability to:

- a. read a monument, ensemble or site and identify its emotional, cultural and use significance;
- b. understand the history and technology of monuments, ensembles or sites in order to define their identity, plan for their conservation, and interpret the results of this research;
- c. understand the setting of a monument, ensemble or site, their contents and surroundings, in relation to other buildings, gardens or landscapes;
- d. find and absorb all available sources of information relevant to the monument, ensemble or site being studied;
- e. understand and analyse the behaviour of monuments, ensembles and sites as complex systems;
- f. diagnose intrinsic and extrinsic causes of decay as a basis for appropriate action;
- g. inspect and make reports intelligible to non-specialist readers of monuments, ensembles or sites, illustrated by graphic means such as sketches and photographs;
- h. know, understand and apply UNESCO conventions and recommendations, and ICOMOS and other recognized Charters, regulations and guidelines;
- i. make balanced judgements based on shared ethical principles, and accept responsibility for the long-term welfare of cultural heritage;
- j. recognize when advice must be sought and define the areas of need of study by different specialists, e.g. wall paintings, sculpture and objects of artistic and historical value, and/or studies of materials and systems;
- k. give expert advice on maintenance strategies, management policies and the policy framework for environmental protection and preservation of monuments and their contents, and sites;
- l. document works executed and make same accessible;
- m. work in multi-disciplinary groups using sound methods;
- n. work with inhabitants, administrators and planners to resolve conflicts and to develop conservation strategies with appropriate design, community engagement and sustainability.

Appendix 3: Guidance for panel of assessors

Accreditation criteria

The criteria for accreditation are based on the ICOMOS 'Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites' and the principle that conservation works should only be entrusted to persons competent and skilled in these activities.

Evaluation

Please see Appendix 1 for the basic requirements for accreditation at Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA) and Conservation Architect (CA) levels.

Evaluation will be based on reasonable and objective standards related to the range of skills necessary to carry out the services involved. Demonstration of relevant experience should include evidence of conservation-led practice.

'Conservation-led practice' means work on older buildings in which conservation principles have been carefully considered in arriving at the appropriate professional judgements.

Accreditation at a particular level requires evidence of effective decision-making and experience of buildings appropriate to the level being applied for. Within that context the quality of the conservation intervention/ judgement displayed in the documentation is the critical question to be addressed. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation of the application of effective decision-making guided by conservation principles to the project including having sought expert advice when appropriate.

The conservation principles on which evaluation will be based are those set out in international charters (for example, the Venice Charter, 1964; the Washington Charter, 1987; the Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994; the Burra Charter, 1999).

Procedures

Evaluation will be based on the following:

- academic qualifications and/or successful completion of a conservation training course
- experience of effective decision-making
- publications
- research

The evaluation will be based solely on the accreditation evidence in the application form, written accounts, CPD record and detailed CV.

All information relating to a candidate's application must be available to the assessor. An Application Summary Sheet will be prepared prior to evaluation and will be available to each assessor.

Where possible the assessors will not be sent a submission from an applicant who is based in the same regional area as them, to avoid conflicts of interests.

Evaluation will be based on the accreditation evidence submitted.

The assessors have the right to seek from the candidate further information or clarification.

The assessors will make their decisions based solely on the evidence provided. Personal knowledge of assessors will not be drawn on to fill gaps in the information provided by an applicant, as to do so would discriminate against applicants not known to the assessor.

Where the evidence provided is insufficient to allow the assessors to reach a decision the application will not be processed further and the applicant will be so informed.

On completion of assessments and under an independently chaired moderation session, the assessors will meet with the other pairs of assessors working in the assessment round, in order to review and moderate the assessments.

The Assessment Panel will record in writing in each case the reasons for their decisions mapped against the accreditation criteria.

In the case of refusal, the applicant will be sent a copy of the Assessment Panel's reason(s) for its decision.

The independent Assessment Panel Chair will carry out the following duties:

- Chair and conclude the moderation process;
- Ensure that assessors' decisions and the reasons for these are recorded on each Application Summary Sheet;
- Ensure that a Summary Sheet recording the final decisions of the assessors in relation to all applications submitted is signed by the relevant assessors; and
- Ensure that all documentation is returned to the Specialist Registrar or is confidentially destroyed.

All business in relation to the application process will be conducted in strict confidence.

Appendix 4: Useful resources

This is a non exhaustive list of resources which applicants to the RIBA Conservation Register may find useful.

Selected reading (books):

Practical Building Conservation Series: 10 volume series: Basics /Mortars Renders and Plasters / Stone /Timber /Metals /Glass and Glazing /Concrete /Earth Brick & Terracotta /Roofing /Building Environment, Routledge, London UK 2015 Historic England

The Production of Heritage: The Politicisation of Architectural Conservation (Alan Chandler & Michela Pace)

Conservation of Historic Buildings (Bernard M Fielden)

Conservation: RIBA Plan of Work 2013 Guide (Hugh Fielden)

A History of Architecture (Sir Banister Fletcher)

Understanding Historic Building Conservation (Forsyth M ed)

New Design for Old Buildings (Roger Hunt and Iain Boyd)

Living Buildings: Architectural Conservation, Philosophy, Principles and Practice (Donald Insall)

An Introduction to Architectural Conservation: Philosophy, Legislation and Practice (Nick Lee-Evans)

Rescue and Reuse: Communities, Heritage and Architecture (Ian Morrison)

Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets (Charles Mynors and Nigel Hewitson)

Architectural Conservation: Principles and Practice (Aylin Orbasli)

The Pevsner Architectural Guides (Sir Nikolaus Pevsner)

Sustainable Building Conservation: Theory and Practice of Responsive Design in the Heritage Environment (Oriel Prizeman)

Building Pathology: Principles and Practice (David Watt)

Legislative documents:

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National planning guidance (PPG)

BS 7913: 2013 – Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings

UNESCO conventions and recommendations

Free online publications:

Advice and Guidance, Historic England

Historic England's Planning Advice (see Good Practice Advice notes (GPAs) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs))

understandingconservation.org

Organisations and amenity societies:

Ancient Monuments Society

Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Buildings

Cadw

Canal & River Trust

Churchcare

Council on Training in Architectural Conservation

Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association

Historic England

Historic Environment Scotland

Historic environment service of the Welsh Government

Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation

International Council on Monuments and Sites

RIBA Drawings Collection

SAVE Britain's Heritage

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Society of Architectural Historians

Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance

The Georgian Group

The Heritage Alliance

The Institute of Conservation

The Twentieth Century Society

The Victorian Society

Appendix 5: Application Checklist

Applications for SCA and CA level must include:

- Detailed CV (max 4 pages). All the submitted CVs will be considered against the context of the Skills Matrix intentions, relative to the level being applied for
- Twelve pages maximum supporting evidence per written account. This can include relevant extracts from reports, drawings, photographs etc. Each written account must include a clear articulation of the effectiveness of the applicant's individual role in the conservation process and a clear explanation of how the 14 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines were considered and incorporated in the applicant's decision making.
- Completed application form
- Application fee
- Submission of a conservation related CPD record for the previous five years.

SCA and CA re-accreditations after five years must include:

- An updated detailed CV, max four pages. The CV must be particularly drafted to demonstrate the individual's conservation work within the last five years.
- A completed reaccreditation application form
- One written account as in the original application process, demonstrating currency across as wide a range of the ICOMOS guidelines as possible.
- The conservation element of the applicant's CPD record over the last five years, but not the whole record. Of the 35 hours' CPD you are required to do every year, 12 hours should be related to conservation – divided between structured and unstructured CPD.

Applications for Conservation Registrants must include:

- Detailed CV (max 4 pages)
- A copy of the certificate for the Conservation Course undertaken
- A completed application form
- Application fee and annual Registration fee

Conservation Registrant re-assessments after five years must include:

- An updated detailed CV, max four pages. The CV must be particularly drafted to demonstrate the individual's conservation work within the last five years.
- A completed reaccreditation application form
- The conservation element of the applicant's CPD record over the last five years, but not the whole record. Of the 35 hours' CPD you are required to do every year, 12 hours should be related to conservation – divided between structured and unstructured CPD.

Appendix 6: Frequently asked questions

1. I don't have the time to complete the application.

Consider completion of the application as CPD. Giving a double benefit, this can also be a useful way of completing part of the required annual CPS total. Many find that the reflection / self-criticism of their decisions undertaken during project work as required in completion of the application a useful part of their personal development and abilities as a Conservation Architect.

2. What is the professional and monetary value of being at one of the accredited levels?

Being an accredited professional is usually a requirement for the administration and progress of grant funded works. So, being accredited opens potential new markets relative to an unaccredited Architect.

Grant funded projects to larger or higher grade listed buildings will often require a lead Specialist Conservation Architect accreditation, so the RIBA higher level of accreditation is a gateway to being qualified to take on some of the most prestigious projects.

The work that you will gain from holding the accreditation will more than pay for itself.

An increasing number of advertised professional vacancies also include a call for conservation accredited status to be part of the application process, so job opportunities can also arise.

3. I have conservation experience but have never worked on a listed building before.

Can I still apply?

A building does not have to be listed to be constructed of identical materials during the same period and have similar challenges that need to be addressed. So, relevant experience can also be gained through appropriate decision-making when working on a broader range of structures.

It is the conscious understanding and application of the 14 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines which is important. There are un-listed buildings in Conservation Areas and elsewhere which will still require that proven understanding gained through accreditation. Applying conservation principles and practice to un-listed building in any event is still very good practice.

If you still feel you may not have the experience you may wish to initially join the Register as a Conservation Registrant. You can then develop yourself via available CPD and training programmes using the RIBA Conservation Register CPD Pathway guidance document to find where to enhance your skills and knowledge. The Pathway will encourage the ability to engage with owners of Listed Building's in a way that will help secure projects. Then, experience can develop the right conservation awareness and documentation required to apply to one of the RIBA's accredited levels.

4. I have made a previous application, but it was rejected for not enough technical experience. How can I gain this experience without having to wait for the right projects to come along?

A difficult conundrum which most of us have all experienced when we want to re-focus on architectural conservation, especially in a smaller practice. Adopting a CPD approach to remote on-line learning more about architectural history, building materials and their performance-in-use benefits and pitfalls, in addition to joining amenity groups and going on short courses will introduce a broader understanding of conservation attitudes and its vocabulary.

Much relevant information on what can readily assist with personal development is contained in the RIBA Conservation Register CPD Pathway document, much of which identifies freely available on-line content.

5. I feel there is a lack of detail guidance on what needs to be included and how to structure my dossiers where can I find this?

The starting point is to read and follow the information contained in the RIBA Conservation Handbook.

Applicants need to demonstrate judgement and confidence in the way they assemble knowledge, determine the significance of that knowledge and how it is applied through succinctly describing how they made appropriate and effective decisions during project work. Each of the 14 individual ICOMOS Guidelines provides the framework of what needs to be considered and included in the submitted dossiers.

Combined, any heritage conservation project will demonstrate some or all these principles. The structure of the dossiers should emphasise what “you personally decided” in the project’s decision-making process, not what “we did” as a practice. A constant concern of applicants is how to reference the 14 ICOMOS Guidelines in the dossiers (see page 31). To facilitate smooth reading of the content it is important to describe why and what Guideline is important in the supportive descriptive texts.

6. I have not yet applied as I am waiting for the perfect project to use for one of my dossiers.

Submitted dossiers need not be founded on ‘perfectly completed projects’. The assessment of the submitted evidence is based on the stated range of appropriate decisions which combined to demonstrate the applicants’ adequate overall conservation knowledge, ability and expertise and how relevant decisions were taken in accordance with the ICOMOS Guidelines.

The way the dossier is compiled does not have to be based on a “great project” – e.g. appropriate decisions taken on restoring a set of historic railings in accordance with the ICOMOS Guidelines has, in the past, proven to be an excellent dossier because of its descriptive clarity and approach.

7. What makes a good dossier submission.

Read the Conservation Handbook instructions carefully and take note of its requirements.

The quality of writing the dossier accounts reveal much about the personal commitment, interest and engagement in the submission.

- Keep it as concise and relevant as possible.
- Ensure the ICOMOS Guidelines are succinctly referenced in the text as being appropriate to each of the decisions.
- Demonstrate a good comprehension of technical conservation issues.
- Ensure relevant support drawings, and illustrations are readable at an appropriate scale.
- Make the dossier look professionally attractive.

8. Can I use one project for multiple dossiers?

Yes, if you have made a range of personal and appropriate conservation-orientated decisions as part of a large project that has entailed several different aspects of conservation work, this can be detailed across more than one dossier. Again, the 14 ICOMOS Guidelines can provide the framework within which this can be determined and split.

9. How do I know if my experience is enough to make a successful application?

- As a first step, identify where your current employment position fits within the RIBA Skills Matrix, and apply for a CA or SCA accredited status, as appropriate
- Secondly, as you think about compiling your application documentation, and wish to seek relevant support information to do so :
 - Read the RIBA Conservation Handbook application guidelines and advice carefully.
 - Consider attending one of the 6-Module on-line RIBA Conservation Courses.
 - Consider obtaining the RIBA Conservation Guide Conservation Course support publication
 - Attend one of the bi-annual RIBA conservation application on-line webinars which gives an insight on the process.
 - Pair up with one of the RIBA Conservation Accreditation scheme mentors
 - Consider obtaining the RIBA Plan of Work Conservation Overlay
 - Ensure your CPD record reflects, or better, the RIBA CPD Core Curriculum requirements.

10. I have had period of absence from work due to personal reasons (maternity/redundancy etc) how will this affect my application in regard to CPD hours/experience?

You can discuss this with the RIBA Specialist Registrar in the first instance. However, this should not deter you from applying as gaps in CPD can be mitigated.

There is also much on-line free, yet highly valuable sources of knowledge available, but this does require some time commitment to pursue which could be considered relevant CPD.

11. How can I demonstrate individual specialism or expertise without feeling that I have fully gained it somewhere first?

Working on any pre 1919 traditionally constructed building occasions a variety of conservation issues – even working on a modern post-war structure can present issues of technological history and significance. Across the spectrum, conservation issues linked to the climate emergency and safeguarding embodied carbon can arise. Our building stock is simply a manifestation of these issues. Gaining accredited status helps develop a sensitivity and greater awareness to what matters and how, technically, they can be conserved and made to continue to perform effectively into the future.

