
RIBA Employment Policy

The Royal Institute of British Architects is committed to promoting best employment practice and equal opportunities in the architecture profession. The following policy statement applies to the RIBA and its members:

The RIBA believes that good employment practice, by and for its members, will contribute positively to the effectiveness and influence of the architectural profession. It will also improve business opportunities, employment diversity and personal development, and is vital to the profession's role in raising the quality of our built environment and benefiting society.

Purpose

The benefits of adopting good employment practice are numerous and well documented. Business benefits can include reduction in turnover of employees and therefore costs associated with recruitment and training; increased staff morale and productivity; and a diverse workforce that brings a wider knowledge base and experience and skills to offer to clients.

Improving employment practice in the architectural profession is also about providing wider benefits to society. Architecture reflects the society that builds it, but it also affects the way that society develops. This means we need to recruit, retain and promote architects who can respond to the different needs and values of all sections of the community.

The RIBA expects that its members will follow their legal obligations as employers and their professional obligations as set out in the RIBA Code of Conduct. The purpose of this policy is to encourage RIBA members as employers and employees to promote best practice in employment and to support members in fulfilling their professional obligations.

N.B. The resolution of disputes concerning employment matters will generally be outside the Institute's competence, and should therefore be referred to appropriate complaints procedures such as an employment tribunal.

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To achieve this policy, the RIBA is committed to the following:

1. Supporting members' awareness of their legal requirements as employers and rights as employees

Role of the RIBA:	The practice/employer:	The employee:
Include employment matters in the Code of Conduct	Be aware of and abide by employment legislation and the RIBA Code of Conduct	Be aware of and abide by employment legislation and the RIBA Code of Conduct
Develop and maintain a model employment policy	Adopt and monitor an employment policy; ensure that training and promotion of employees is carried out regardless of age, race, gender, sexuality, etc	Encourage your employer to have an employment policy in place and monitored
Publish model employment contracts for qualified employees	Provide your employees with a written contract (e.g. based on the model contract)	Make sure that you have a written contract (e.g. based on the model contract)
Publish model employment contracts for students; ensure architecture schools are aware of these	When employing students, use model contracts and training guidance provided by the RIBA	As a student, check that you are being employed using model contract conditions
Inform RIBA members and students of architecture of employment obligations and rights, changing legislation and new employment practice, with case studies (e.g. through RIBA website, articles in RIBA Journal, Practice e-bulletins, members information line, etc)	Use the RIBA and other employment information sources to gain a full understanding of employment issues and stay up to date with changing employment legislation	Use the RIBA and other employment information sources to gain a full understanding of employment issues and awareness of your rights and obligations as an employee
Organise CPD events linked to employment guidance to cover e.g. setting up a business, hiring employees, changing employment legislation, etc	Include employment matters in your CPD plans and those of your employees	Include CPD events on employment matters within your CPD programme

2. Encouraging best practice in employment

Role of the RIBA:	The practice/employer:	The employee:
Recognise best practice by adding Investor in People listings to the practice directory and encourage membership through articles in RIBA Journal	Achieve Investor in People status, or follow its principles (see website www.iipuk.co.uk)	Encourage your employer to apply for Investor in People status, or to follow its principles
Reward best practice by the introduction of a Student Employer of the Year Award	Comply with student employment guidance and enter the award	Advise your employer of the award if they are unaware of it
Provide information on good practice in student employment and professional training through the Professional Experience Development website (www.pedr.co.uk)	Employ students according to good employment guidance. Consider mentoring schemes to supervise the development of employees.	Offer to act as a mentor to a student in your office
Update the education criteria to further promote good business/employment practice. Encourage schools of architecture to provide structured support and advice for students on their rights and expectations on entering the workplace	Ensure that all students know their rights and are offered opportunities for training and experience equally in the workplace.	Know your rights and support students in your office
Provide a diverse range of CPD training courses and promote the overall benefits of CPD training	Review training needs or opportunities in the practice and ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to develop their skills and put them into practice	Suggest training to your employer that would benefit you and the practice
Address the long hours culture by promoting work/life balance and researching how it can be addressed in architectural practice	Promote a healthy work/life balance for your employees. Keep records of working hours and overtime. If excessive investigate different working methods to reduce this without detriment to the practice.	Keep records of your working hours and suggest to your employer any ideas for improving working methods, efficiency and conditions

3. Promoting the business, social and environmental benefits of good employment and diversity in architectural practice

Role of the RIBA:	The practice/employer:	The employee:
Promote the added value of diverse architects to the built environment (the business case for using architects)	Promote diversity at <i>all</i> levels within your organisation and publicise the added value that the diverse skills of your practice brought to a scheme (financially, socially or environmentally), via articles, participation in seminars, etc	Ensure your employer is aware of your skills; be confident in promoting yourself
Continue to improve the image of the profession and encourage new members and retention of membership by using a range of role models	Allow a diverse range of employees to act as mentors or company representatives at RIBA or industry events and to clients and other architects	Offer to act as a mentor or company representative at RIBA or industry events, etc
Inform and maintain dialogue with government on the implications of legislation and procurement methods that discourage good employment practice and diversity	Make the RIBA and your MP aware of problems and barriers to improving employment practice and diversity	Make your employer aware of barriers to improving your employment conditions

4. Recruiting, retaining and promoting RIBA members throughout life and career changes

Role of the RIBA:	The practice/employer:	The employee:
Provide and promote returners courses for members who have taken time out from practice	Inform, train and support employees returning after a long absence	Consider attending a returners course to re-enter practice after a long absence
Find out why members join or leave the RIBA and what would make them return; encourage all graduates to join	Encourage your employees to be members of the RIBA and to participate in RIBA activities	Become and stay a member of the RIBA throughout your working life and participate in RIBA activities
Promote benefits of RIBA membership continuity to non-practising architects e.g. maintaining skills, value of informal networks, etc	Promote CPD courses, events or social opportunities to employees on career breaks such as maternity/paternity leave	Attend CPD courses, events or social opportunities while on career breaks if possible
Investigate reduction of RIBA membership costs and CPD requirements for part time or career break practitioners	Inform employees taking a career break/working part time that these benefits exist	Retain membership of the RIBA during part time work/career breaks