

# The Way Ahead

An introduction to the new RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework and an overview of its key components

CHANGE  
IS DUE,  
CHANGE  
IS HERE.

Alan Jones  
RIBA President

# The education of future chartered architects, and the professional development of those who have already achieved chartered status, needs a sharpened focus on the core knowledge, skills and experience required to respond to the immediate and mid-term challenges facing our world, society and industry.

We need to emphasise the attainment and maintenance of competencies and professional behaviours that create public confidence in the capability of chartered architects to deliver buildings and spaces that perform to the standards, and higher, that clients, building users and society rely upon. We must step forward showing leadership, accepting responsibility and demonstrating competence when asked to deal with risk and liability and to prove our expertise.

This is why the RIBA is setting out, for the first time, a single standard covering pre and post registration education and professional development. The RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework does not represent a fundamental change of direction, but rather builds upon the excellence of RIBA validated architectural education and continuing professional development requirements. It places a new emphasis on those areas of expertise and experience that impact on the quality and performance of the built environment and the health and well-being of those who use buildings and spaces, as well as our wider duties to society and the natural environment. Individuals, teams and practices will benefit from this new framework.

This *Way Ahead* document communicates a new emphasis to both students and chartered architects and to those who provide programmes of study in schools of architecture and continuing professional development for chartered architects. It is also signposting for external examiners, RIBA visiting boards, and assessors of CPD material – and signals the RIBA's commitment to setting standards of education and practice that reflect the ethical challenges, environmental concerns and knowledge requirements that will shape the future professional role of the architect.

Whether you are a qualified architect, an architectural educator or a student on your journey to qualification please explore the *Way Ahead* for lifelong learning for architects set out in this document. Change is due, change is here.

Alan Jones  
RIBA President

The RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework represents a once in a generation opportunity to take a holistic re-look at the way we support the arc of a professional career in architecture. The Framework builds upon the best of our existing structures, including the *CPD Core Curriculum*, but brings in new elements such as *Mandatory Competences* and *Career Role Levels* and also creates pathways to specialisation, recognising that whilst based on a solid set of shared core competences, architects can ultimately follow a variety of different career routes.

Wendy Charlton  
Chair, RIBA Practice and Profession  
Committee


The Grenfell Tower fire, the Edinburgh PFI schools inquiry and the collapse of Carillion, and now coming to terms with designing for a post-pandemic environment, have put the regulatory framework and the professional competency and procurement structures of the construction industry firmly under the spotlight. At the same time recognition that we are no longer in a situation of climate change, but rather a climate emergency, has focussed attention on both the lacklustre performance of the built environment sector in this area and the significant role that architects can and should have in responding to the emergency. It's right therefore that the new *Themes and Values for Architectural Education* and *Mandatory Competences* set out in the RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework place primacy on health and life safety, climate literacy and ethical practice, as well as both technical and business skills as key components of architectural education.

 Nicky Watson  
Chair, RIBA Education Committee

Ethics, health and life safety and sustainable design are not just abstract, regulatory concepts but real-world issues that students care about. The next generation of students have the ambition, capability, and drive to tackle issues facing society. Therefore, it is important to support these aspirations with an improved education curriculum. The RIBA's *Themes and Values for Architectural Education* and the RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework allow future architects to be ready to tackle the needs of society and the environment.

 Maryam Al-Irhayim  
RIBA Council Member (student)

Climate change, social equity, diversity, and inclusion are all broad societal issues, that we collectively have to address. There are clear implications on how we design and organise our future built environment; the new RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework helps show how these societal issues can be incorporated into an architectural program; as elements that can enhance design skills, and provide an ethical yet professional core which underpins the discipline of architecture.

 Lewis North  
RIBA Council Member (associate)

# The Way Ahead – A new emphasis for RIBA Education and Professional Development

The RIBA has developed a new *Education and Professional Development Framework* based around six key concepts:

**1** A single standard covering pre and post registration education and professional development;

**2** Education Themes and Values for undergraduate (RIBA part 1) and postgraduate (RIBA part 2) study;

**3** Mandatory Competences for attaining and maintaining chartered status;

**4** Career Role Levels;

**5** The RIBA Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Core Curriculum; and

**6** Advanced Study leading to specialisms and RIBA specialist accreditation

For the first time the RIBA has developed a single framework that shapes and structures the knowledge, skills and experience that characterise the achievement, maintenance and enhancement of chartered status for architects.

The RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework has been developed to offer a new model for career long learning that reflects a new emphasis which responds to the major challenges and opportunities facing the profession, not least the need to address in greater breadth and depth the health and life safety, climate change and social and ethical dimensions of contemporary practice.

As well as providing an essential qualification and career roadmap for chartered architects, the Education and Professional Development Framework provides assurance to clients that commission architects' services, and the users of the buildings that architects design, that architects have the holistic range of skills in a broad range of areas, detailed knowledge in critical subjects and necessary documented professional experience to competently undertake their professional role.

# Education Themes and Values – a new emphasis for architectural education

RIBA validated architectural education is widely regarded as a highly successful model creating generations of globally-renowned practitioners, teachers, critics, and writers. However, for nearly 40 years it has been underpinned by a legislative framework drafted primarily for European governance (the Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC).

Whilst the 11 points of the Professional Qualifications Directive have been durable, the compelling evidence of building failures in respect of fire and life safety and the squandering of natural resources in the construction and operation of buildings, with catastrophic effects on climate and biodiversity, together with a global focus on standards of urban and social development sharpened by the 2020 public health crisis, suggest that change is due, if not overdue.

Change in architectural education is being demanded by those stakeholders who will succeed the current generation of practice and institutional leadership, including students, graduates, and emerging professionals, for many of whom the current business model of architectural practice sometimes seems to pay insufficient attention to the critical questions of designing first for health, safety and wellbeing, embracing creative environmental stewardship, and placing a greater emphasis on the ethical role of the architect. This change is supported by growing bodies of evidence, literature and commentary which must now animate the debate in our universities and, consequently, the profession.

The RIBA's *Themes and Values for Architectural Education* provide a renewed basis for the validation of schools of architecture in the UK and internationally, placing importance on the social purpose of architecture and putting focus on the protection of the end user, climate literacy and responsible specification. This also places attention upon those curricular areas which contribute to the RIBA's concept of *Mandatory Competences* for addressing climate change, improving building safety, promoting ethical practice and developing business and research skills. Whilst schools of architecture must never forget their obligations to graduate students with innovative design skills expressed with visual acuity, there is here a re-emphasis on the technical agenda of architecture, requiring a new focus from our visiting boards – and a proportionate response in the work of students and teachers of architecture.



## Greater emphasis on the ethical role of the architect

# Mandatory Competences

Competence is a combination of an architect's knowledge, skills and experience. As part of the *Education and Professional Development Framework*, the RIBA has determined that the core competency for architects must encompass a fundamental level of awareness and understanding of priority subjects in order for them to be competent to practice and to provide public assurance.

The Grenfell Tower tragedy and other subsequent fires, as well as the Edinburgh PFI schools inquiry, and the subsequent 'Building a Safer Future' review of the fire safety regulatory regime and 'Raising the Bar' construction industry fire safety competency report, all revealed the need to raise levels of professional competence in relation to building safety.

RIBA Council has approved the introduction of a mandatory level of Health and Safety knowledge, including Fire Safety, for all Chartered Architects, to be tested every 5 years. This test will be mandatory for all members to complete from the 2022 subscription year. Testing will be facilitated through the new RIBA Academy online learning platform. In effect, all Chartered Architects will be re-accredited every five years in respect of *Mandatory Competences* – with an initial focus on demonstrating a minimum level of Health and Safety knowledge, including Fire Safety.

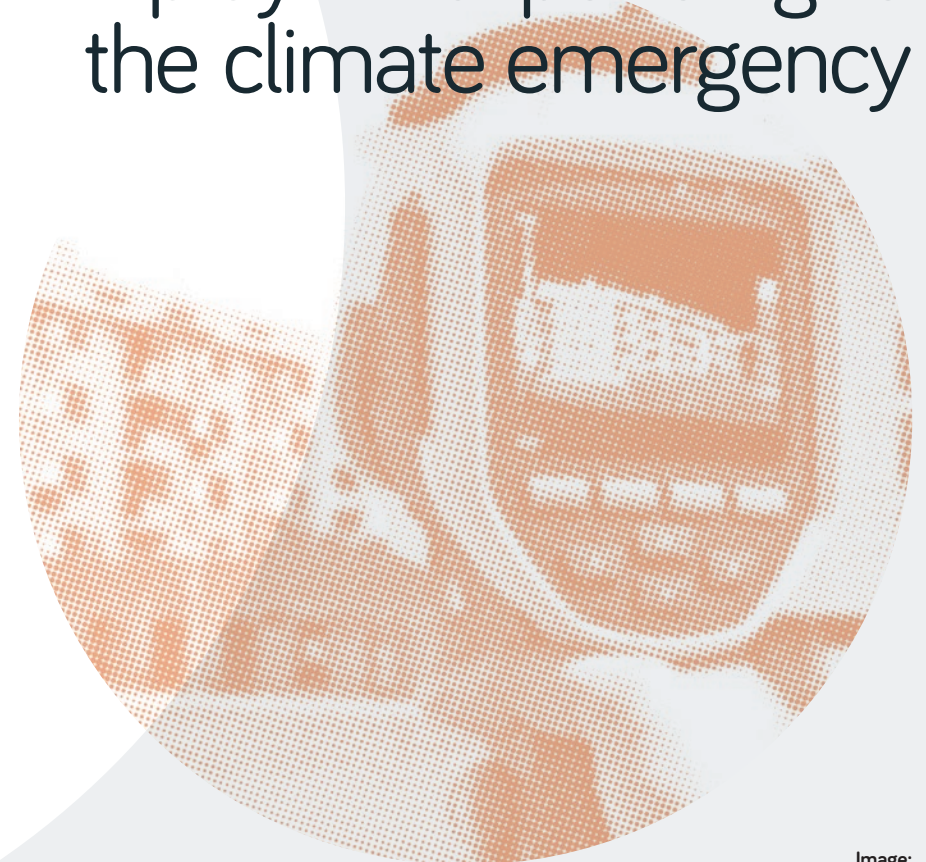
There is widespread acceptance that the built environment has an urgent role to play in responding to the climate emergency, and the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge calls on members to meet net zero whole life carbon (or less) in the buildings they design by 2030. It is anticipated that the Climate Literacy required to enable Chartered Architects to meet the 2030 Climate Challenge will follow as the second *Mandatory Competence*.

Ethics and Social Purpose is likely to be the third *Mandatory Competence* and the fourth to be Research Literacy, both flowing from the findings and recommendations of the 2018 RIBA Ethics and Sustainable Development Commission.

RIBA Publishing has produced a guide to improve standards and help members prepare for the RIBA Health and Safety Mandatory Competence test in 2022. It provides members with the guidance they require regarding site safety and design risk management to discharge their professional services and legal duties competently and safely:

<https://www.architecture.com/riba-books/books/legal-regulatory-and-statutory-compliance/health-and-safety/product/9781859469217-riba-health-and-safety-guide.html>

## The built environment has an urgent role to play in responding to the climate emergency



**Image:**  
Infrared thermal cameras measure heat loss from buildings.

# Career Role Levels

The RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework defines five Career Role Levels:

- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Student<br>(Pre Part 1)                                    | 4 | Experienced Professional<br>(Architect >5 years qualified) |
| 2 | Emerging Professional<br>(Part 1 and Part 2 Assistant)     | 5 | Business Leader<br>(Director/Partner)                      |
| 3 | Established Professional<br>(Architect <5 years qualified) |   |  |

These *Career Role Levels* enable the practical training undertaken by student and associate members, and the CPD, advanced study and specialist accreditation activities undertaken by Chartered Members to be mapped to the various stages of career development. The *Career Role Levels* provide a simple classification system to help ensure that such activities are appropriate, in terms of the depth of knowledge, skills and experience, to an individual's stage of career development and relevant to their level of responsibility. As such they provide useful reference points both for members and those organisations and companies, including the RIBA, who are providing training, professional development and learning resources to members.



# The RIBA CPD Core Curriculum

The RIBA expects all its Chartered Architects to have achieved and to also maintain their competence to practice.

CPD is an effective, tried and tested and widely adopted means of maintaining and demonstrating professional competence. Learning and development through regular CPD is a membership requirement for most professional bodies. All RIBA Chartered Members are required to undertake and record 35 hours of CPD each year, and we can audit our members' CPD records via our CPD recording platform.

**The RIBA mandatory ten-topic CPD Core Curriculum – with a minimum of two hours of CPD required annually under each topic – underlines the key technical, regulatory, design, business, and client competencies required:**

- Architecture for Social Purpose
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Business, Clients and Services
- Legal, Regulatory and Statutory Compliance
- Procurement and Contracts
- Sustainable Architecture
- Inclusive Environments
- Places, Planning and Communities
- Building Conservation and Heritage
- Design, Construction and Technology

# Advanced Study leading to RIBA Specialisms

Traditionally the RIBA viewed architectural practice in terms of a general practitioner model, with all Chartered Architects held to the same education and practice standards, and little formal recognition that at more advanced career stages some architects might specialise.

Of course in reality many architects do become specialists, whether by pursuing related careers, for example in academia, contracting or development, focusing on a particular building sector, concentrating on particular aspects of practice work, such as conceptual design, production information, contractual management, business operations and marketing, or developing specialist services, including building conservation, planning and access consultancy. The RIBA *CPD Core Curriculum* has sufficient breadth and flexibility to facilitate the development of specialist expertise, but the new RIBA *Education and Professional Development Framework* goes a step further by formally recognising within its overall education and career roadmap that some architects may wish to undertake *Advanced Study* and develop specific experience in *Specialisms*. The RIBA already accredits Client Design Advisers and Conservation Architects as specialists and we envisage the development of further specialist accreditation schemes.

Breadth and flexibility  
to facilitate the  
development of  
specialist expertise



**Image:**  
Many architects develop specialisms  
within design and construction.

# RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework

RIBA Education and Professional Development Framework

Education Themes and Values	Mandatory Competences	Career Role Levels	CPD Core Curriculum	Advanced Study	Specialisms
<b>E1.</b> Health and Life Safety	<b>M1.</b> Health and Life Safety	<b>R1.</b> Student (Pre-part 1)	<b>C1.</b> Architecture for Social Purpose		Academic / Researcher
			<b>C2.</b> Health, Safety and Wellbeing	RIBA Principal Designer Course	Principal Designer
<b>E2.</b> Ethical and Professional Practice	<b>M2.</b> <i>Ethical Practice</i>	<b>R2.</b> Emerging professional (Part 1 and 2 Assistant)	<b>C3.</b> Business, Clients and Services		Client Design Adviser
			<b>C4.</b> Legal, Regulatory and Statutory Compliance		
<b>E3.</b> Structure, Construction and Resources	<b>M3.</b> <i>Climate Literacy</i>	<b>R3.</b> Established professional (Architect <5 years qualified)	<b>C5.</b> Procurement and Contracts		
			<b>C6.</b> Sustainable Architecture		Sustainability Consultant
<b>E4.</b> History, Theories and Methodologies	<b>M4.</b> <i>Research Literacy</i>	<b>R4.</b> Experienced professional (Architect >5 years qualified)	<b>C7.</b> Inclusive Environments		Access Consultant
			<b>C8.</b> Places, Planning and Communities		Urban Designer
<b>E5.</b> Design Processes and Communication		<b>R5.</b> Business leader (Director/partner)	<b>C9.</b> Building Conservation and Heritage	RIBA Conservation Course	Conservation Architect
			<b>C10.</b> Design, Construction and Technology		BIM Manager
<b>E6.</b> Business Skills				RIBA MBA	Sole Practitioner Practice Manager

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