In association with the Royal Society of Architects in Wales

In consultation with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Cadw

Endorsed by English Heritage and Historic Scotland (SCA level only for grant purposes)
The Heritage Lottery Fund recognises SCA and CA levels for its Places of Worship scheme

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.

March 2014

Cover De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, refurbished by John McAslan + Partners in 2006
Introduction

‘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...

‘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.’


The RIBA seeks to further the conservation, adaptation, restoration, protection and rehabilitation of monuments, buildings, groups of buildings and sites which, because of their architectural merit and/or historical significance, form part of the heritage of our built environment. It is RIBA policy to promote architectural conservation as an integral part of the practice of architecture.

To assist clients in the selection of an architect to provide them with professional services in architectural conservation, the RIBA has developed an accreditation system to recognise differing levels of specialist expertise. However, the system does not claim to be the sole means of identifying conservation expertise within the profession.

There are three levels of accreditation: Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA), Conservation Architect (CA) and Conservation Registrant (CR) (see Appendix 1). An architect can progress up through the levels by acquiring additional qualifications and experience and applying for accreditation at the higher level.
Aims of the RIBA Conservation Register

The Register aims to:

– assist those commissioning works on heritage buildings 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
– provide a focus and impetus for specialist CPD, and training, through an accessible and progressive system
Access to the Register

The RIBA Conservation Register is open to any ARB-registered architect who undertakes to work to international standards of conservation, and who can demonstrate that they have the appropriate level of competence in the fourteen specialist skill areas detailed in the current ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines. Non-RIBA members are bound by the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct, in respect of which the professional conduct processes of the RIBA apply.

The Register caters for architects engaged in conservation work at all levels, with the understanding that they also act with personal responsibility within the limits of their experience and expertise, as required under the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct.

To facilitate an accessible Register it has three levels relating to different complexities and sensitivities.

Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA)
Able to demonstrate authoritative knowledge of conservation practice, principles and philosophy, and to contribute to development of conservation standards.

Conservation Architect (CA)
Able to demonstrate depth of understanding of conservation practice, principles and philosophy, and to guide and take responsibility for others whilst understanding when further specialist guidance is required.

Conservation Registrant (CR)
Able to demonstrate good working and background knowledge of key aspects of conservation practice, principles and philosophy, and to understand when guidance or supervision is required.

Entry to the Register is based on demonstrating compliance with the criteria detailed in Appendix 1. Guidance on application and accreditation evidence is given in Appendix 3.
Governance

The Register is managed by the Conservation Registrar, advised by the RIBA Conservation Register Steering Group and reporting to the RIBA Practice and Profession Committee. A panel of assessors has been appointed (excluding members of the Steering Group) to carry out the assessment of applications. Positions on the Assessment Panel are advertised with specific eligibility criteria (including experience and expertise to meet the SCA standard and experience of similar processes of peer assessment). In the event of an appeal against the assessors’ decision, the Steering Group will appoint a separate set of assessors from the Assessment Panel to consider the appeal.

Two members of the Assessment Panel assess every application, with a wider group of assessors comprising six to eight people discussing, moderating and endorsing the recommendation. One of the assessors is nominated by the Steering Group to chair the moderating session. The assessors do not interview applicants; their assessment is made on the basis of the submitted accreditation evidence illustrating relevant competences and abilities of the individual applicant. This is considered against the criteria established by the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines.
Role of the Conservation Steering Group

The Chair of the Steering Group is appointed by the RIBA Practice and Profession Committee. The Chair makes nominations for the membership of the Steering Group, for approval by the RIBA Practice and Profession Committee. The Steering Group has not less than seven and not more than twelve members.

A majority of members of the Steering Group are persons with conservation experience and/or expertise. The Steering Group should include at least two RIBA Council members and two members of the RIBA Conservation Group.

The task of the Steering Group is to advise on the operation of the Register. It also ensures that the Assessment Panel carries out its work in a fair, transparent and rigorous manner, and that assessment criteria are applied to develop and maintain a high level of professional competence among architects on the RIBA Conservation Register. The Steering Group works with the Conservation Registrar to ensure that the administration and marketing of the Register are carried out efficiently and effectively, and liaises with the relevant statutory bodies and other stakeholders to ensure that the Register meets the requirements of clients and that appropriate accreditation criteria are maintained.
Equivalence
The Steering Group, with assistance from the Assessment Panel as required, will consider recognition of equivalence of other conservation accreditation schemes.

Fees
The RIBA charges an application fee to cover costs of assessment and re-accreditation and to cover the costs of producing the associated guidance material.

There is also an annual registration fee to remain on the Register, to cover the running costs of the Register and RIBA provision of CPD/knowledge community support.

An annual administration charge in addition to the normal fees is levied for non-RIBA members.

Any RIBA Chartered Member or ARB-registered architect may apply for accreditation. An applicant who can demonstrate through their accreditation evidence that they are able to meet the appropriate accreditation criteria is eligible for registration as Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA), Conservation Architect (CA) or Conservation Registrant (CR).
Appeals

An applicant who wishes to appeal against the decision of the assessors must do so within six weeks of the result being issued. The applicant should state in writing that he/she wishes to appeal. There is no need to provide grounds for the appeal, or further evidence. Appeals should be addressed to:

Conservation Registrar
Royal Institute of British Architects
66 Portland Place
London W1B 1AD

The appeal will be adjudicated by an independent pair of assessors from the Assessment Panel appointed by the Registrar from the Assessment Panel. No assessor who took part in the original assessment or the moderating meeting shall be appointed to consider the appeal. The assessors will undertake an independent evaluation of the accreditation evidence originally submitted by the applicant. The assessors will submit their decision on the appeal, which will be final, to the Registrar.

Complaints

An applicant who wishes to make a complaint about the conduct of the assessment may do so through the RIBA complaints procedures.
Appendix 1: 
Criteria for three levels of Conservation Register

Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA) 
Able to demonstrate authoritative knowledge of conservation practice, principles and philosophy, and to contribute to development of conservation standards.

Conservation Architect (CA) 
Able to demonstrate depth of understanding of conservation practice, principles and philosophy, and to guide and take responsibility for others whilst understanding when further specialist guidance is required.

Conservation Registrant (CR) 
Able to demonstrate good working and background knowledge of key aspects of conservation practice, principles and philosophy, and to understand when guidance or supervision is required.

Entry to the Register is based on demonstrating compliance with the criteria detailed below.

Accreditation evidence

Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA) 
either
Five years’ relevant experience as demonstrated by the submission of five papers/reports/dossiers.***
Experience on at least one project should be within the last five years, and the majority of work should have taken place within the last ten years. See Appendix 5.

or
Completion of a Conservation Training Course,* and four years’ relevant experience as demonstrated by the submission of five papers/reports/dossiers.***

or
Master’s degree or equivalent in Conservation;** and three years’ relevant experience as demonstrated by the submission of five papers/reports/dossiers.***

and
Commitment to using appropriate criteria from the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines.

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

Submission of a detailed CV.

Conservation Architect (CA) 
either
Four years’ relevant experience as demonstrated by submission of four papers/reports/dossiers.***
Experience on at least one project should be within the last five years, and the majority of work should have taken place within the last ten years. See Appendix 5.

or
Completion of a Conservation Training Course,* and three years’ relevant experience as demonstrated by the submission of four papers/reports/dossiers.***

or
Master’s degree or equivalent in Conservation;** and two years’ relevant experience as demonstrated by submission of four papers/reports/dossiers.***

and
Commitment to using appropriate criteria from the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines.

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

Submission of a detailed CV.

Conservation Registrant (CR) 
Completion of a Conservation Training Course.*

and
Commitment to using appropriate criteria from the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines.

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

Submission of a detailed CV.

The Hoover Building, Perivale, London
*Conservation Training Course*
There are a number of potential routes to fulfilling this requirement:

– existing courses run by a range of organisations that fulfill the criteria listed below
– RIBA/RSUA/RSAW courses which meet the criteria

The Understanding Conservation website (www.understandingconservation.org) may also be helpful.

Criteria
Courses are based on the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines. There is a minimum of 21 hours structured learning.

There is evidence that candidates have satisfactorily completed the course.

**Master’s degree or equivalent in Conservation**
In consultation with the Conservation Course Directors’ Forum, the Assessment Panel will give guidance on the Master’s courses that satisfy this criterion.

***Papers/reports/dossiers***
Detailed guidance notes for applicants and assessors are provided in Appendix 3 (Guidance on application and accreditation evidence) to explain what is expected in a paper, report or dossier, but in general these are to reflect the range of work areas a conservation architect undertakes. 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. It is important to note that the material submitted must be the applicant’s own work, and be chosen to reveal their competences and abilities in appropriate decision-making within the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines criteria.
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 analyze 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 appropriate to local needs, abilities and resources.

Top Detail of egg and dart cornice
Above Terraced housing at Beverley, East Yorkshire
Appendix 3: Guidance on application and accreditation evidence

Accreditation evidence
The accreditation evidence required for the three levels – Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA), Conservation Architect (CA) and Conservation Registrant (CR) – is outlined in Appendix 1.

Criteria for accreditation
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).

Detailed CV
Your CV should be detailed (to a maximum of four A4 pages), with its focus on conservation, and include a list of projects with a 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 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.

Papers, reports and dossiers
For architects who are employed in the public sector, as academics or in advisory roles, and whose work does not involve built works, the submission of academic research papers or advisory conservation reports (or extracts thereof) to a maximum of 12 A4 pages per paper/report/dossier) on heritage structures or on proposed work to heritage structures will be admissible evidence.

A paper may relate to any topic within the field of architectural or building conservation, must be substantial in content and must have been published in a refereed journal or other publication subject to scholarly peer review.

An essential characteristic of the submitted evidence is that it involves the expression of professional judgement in the form of conclusions, opinion, advice or proposals. For example, an inventory or survey of the building would not, on its own, constitute a conservation report.

For architects working in private conservation practice, applications for accreditation categories where papers, reports or dossiers are required must include at least three dossiers.

The purpose of the dossier is to demonstrate that you have the necessary skills for the successful administration of a project involving works to a heritage or protected structure.

It is important to note that work on a listed building or historic building does not of itself provide evidence of conservation expertise. For example, extensive ‘refurbishment’ to render a building suitable for re-use or insertion of a contemporary intervention, without evidence of appraisal as to the appropriateness of this strategy, would not suffice.

The evidence submitted must show how you exercised your responsibility for analysis of the building and decisions on the conservation approach to be taken.
Your dossier should present, in an economical fashion, an account of the steps you have taken when involved in the project, problems encountered and significant decisions taken. Obviously the steps will vary from one project to another but might be expected to include survey, historical research, condition report, analysis and proposals. The historical research should be sufficient to demonstrate the significance of the buildings, and the analysis, which forms the basis for the conservation approach adopted, is essential. This would be followed by a record of the works carried out, how the works actually carried out related to the works originally proposed and how any changes were recorded. The successful dossier will demonstrate exemplary application of conservation principles in the approach adopted.

The dossier must include evidence of your role and areas of responsibility in the project. If it is your practice for conservation projects to obtain the services of a conservation expert for those aspects of a project, your dossier should set out the respective responsibilities of the parties involved. Applicants relying extensively on the advice of conservation experts are unlikely to achieve accreditation as Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA).

Conservation reports or dossiers will be assessed by the Assessment Panel in terms of the standards of conservation practice obtaining at the time the work was carried out, under the overall remit of the ICOMOS guidelines.

The best submissions will be those from applicants who clearly understand the meaning of conservation, have appropriate experience over the required period of time and who, through the documentation submitted, demonstrate that experience in a way that makes clear the basis for the conservation judgements arrived at.

Submissions should demonstrate:
- a conservation-led approach to architecture
- clarity as to your role and responsibilities
- the exercise of judgement and decision-making in a progressive manner over the period of relevant experience

You are advised to keep a copy of all documentation included in your submissions.

Applicants in preparing their submissions are advised to read carefully the RIBA Conservation Register Handbook, including Appendix 5 (Guidance for the Conservation Assessment Panel).
Format
The front cover of the paper, report or dossier should show clearly:
– your name
– article/project/building name
– paper/report/dossier number

Three hard copies of the papers/reports/dossiers should be provided.

Contents
Matters that must be covered in a conservation report or dossier include:
– status/importance of the building
– nature and purpose of the report/project
– your job title and role; documentary evidence of this role must be provided
– project team make-up, respective responsibilities and method of working
– critical analysis of the project
– the basis for conservation judgements made; if work involves design interventions to a historic building you must explicitly address the issue of the appropriateness of the intervention
– a summary assessment of your role in the project, outcome relative to actions proposed, etc.
– which relevant ICOMOS guidelines have been met

Gothic Revival decorated roof at St Mary’s Church, Studley Royal, North Yorkshire
# Appendix 4: Skills matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Standard of work</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Coping with complexity</th>
<th>Perception of context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation Registrant CR</strong>&lt;br&gt;Aware/capable</td>
<td>Possesses basic knowledge and skills&lt;br&gt;Understands when able to work with some autonomy and when supervision required&lt;br&gt;Requires further training and development&lt;br&gt;Able to work effectively as part of a team</td>
<td>Good working and background knowledge of key aspects of conservation practice, principles and philosophy</td>
<td>Straightforward tasks undertaken competently within guidance and control systems</td>
<td>Able to achieve straightforward tasks using own judgement but understand when guidance /supervision required</td>
<td>Appreciates levels of complexity through analysis, consequent skills and experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation Architect CA</strong>&lt;br&gt;Skilled/proficient</td>
<td>Possesses requisite knowledge and skills to perform effectively&lt;br&gt;Able to work with considerable autonomy&lt;br&gt;Understands when specialist training or guidance required</td>
<td>Depth of understanding of conservation practice, principles and philosophy</td>
<td>Competent delivery of services achieved routinely</td>
<td>Able to take full responsibility for own work&lt;br&gt;Able to guide and take responsibility for others</td>
<td>Deals with complex situations holistically with confident decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialist Conservation Architect SCA</strong>&lt;br&gt;Expert</td>
<td>Very substantial personal autonomy&lt;br&gt;Acknowledged by others as an authority</td>
<td>Authoritative knowledge of conservation practice, principles and philosophy and contributor to debate on development</td>
<td>Excellence achieved with relative ease and consistency</td>
<td>Able to contribute to development of standards, practice, principles and philosophy of conservation</td>
<td>Holistic grasp of complex situations&lt;br&gt;Moves between intuitive and analytical approaches with ease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Dreyfus model of skills acquisition (1981 and 1984 for PACR)
Appendix 5:
Guidance for the Conservation Assessment Panel

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 in these activities.

Evaluation
Please see Appendix 1 for the basic requirements for accreditation at Specialist Conservation Architect (SCA), Conservation Architect (CA) and Conservation Registrant (CR) 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 experience of buildings appropriate to that level. 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 and application of 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 or successful completion of a conservation training course
- experience
- publications
- research

The evaluation will be based solely on the accreditation evidence in the application form, papers, dossiers, reports and detailed CV.

In the case of an architect working in a strategic or policy role, and whose work does not involve ‘projects’, academic research papers and advisory conservation reports on listed buildings or historic buildings will fulfil this requirement. In the case of an architect working in conservation practice, the submission of at least three dossiers is mandatory.

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 be available to each assessor.

- 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, 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 mapped against the accreditation criteria for deciding that accreditation should be granted or refused.
- In the case of refusal, the applicant will be sent a copy of the Assessment Panel’s reason/s for its decision.

The nominated Chair for the assessment round will carry out the following duties:
- Chair and conclude the moderation process.
- Ensure that the decision, and the reason for the decision, of the assessors is 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.
- Return all documentation to the Conservation Registrar.

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

First floor colonnaded room in the Link Building, Chiswick House, London.
Appendix 6: Re-accreditation

Accreditation is valid for five years at any level. The purpose of a re-accreditation process is to give clients and statutory bodies assurance that accredited architects are current in their understanding of conservation policy and practice. The RIBA is keen that the re-accreditation process should be of benefit to the continuing personal and professional development of members.

Re-accreditation of Specialist Conservation Architects and Conservation Architects is by:

1) Submission of details of specialist conservation CPD undertaken in the previous five years. At least 12 of the required 35 hours a year should be spent on conservation, divided into the three ICOMOS groupings, with at least half to be structured – ie attendance at a course or seminars.

2) The submission of a case study of a relevant conservation project you have been personally involved in within the previous three years; this could include a research study. The case study will need to demonstrate current competency in accordance with ICOMOS, and is the equivalent of a dossier as submitted on initial application. This will be formally reviewed by the Assessment Panel, and no interviews will take place.

3) 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 request for additional specialist CPD and/or evidence of currency of conservation practice, and re-accreditation following satisfactory response. If this is not received then the panel would recommend suspension from the Conservation Register.

Re-accreditation of Conservation Registrants is by submission of details of specialist conservation CPD undertaken in the previous five years. At least 12 of the required 35 hours a year should be spent on conservation, divided into the three ICOMOS groupings, with at least half to be structured – ie attendance at a course or seminars.

The Assessment Panel will review this and offer:

Re-accreditation or Deferment with recommendation for further specialist CPD and re-accreditation following satisfactory response.

An architect on the RIBA Conservation Register may apply at any time for accreditation at a higher level, but must submit full accreditation evidence and pay the appropriate application fee. Those at CR level are strongly encouraged to apply for CA or SCA level within a five-year period.

Please note that CPD required in the application and re-accreditation processes counts as part of the annual CPD requirement.