

**Notes of briefing meeting for prospective Technical Assessment Candidates RIAI
18 December 2009 2pm to 4pm
Questions posed subsequent to the Briefing Session by email are also included**

Present for RIAI

- Ann McNicholl Education Director
- John Graby Registrar and Director
- Margaret Hynds O'Flanagan Admissions Director

The Briefing Session began with a welcome from the registrar John Graby which was followed by a presentation outlining the system by Margaret Hynds O'Flanagan and Ann McNicholl. Approximately 80 people had signed up for the session and the majority attended. After the presentation the floor was opened for questions from those present. All were advised that questions and answers would be noted and circulated to those present and to all seeking information on the process.

The questions shown here include those posed at the briefing and questions subsequently received by the RIAI. This document will be updated as new questions are addressed through further briefings and follow-up queries.

Question	Answer
1. Do you have to demonstrate all competencies listed?	Each of the 11 competencies listed in Article 46 must be demonstrated, but the indicators listed to clarify each of the indicators do not all have to be addressed. A 'critical mass' of the relevant indicators is required to demonstrate each competency.
2. What if some of the work used is outside the State/	It is OK to use work outside the State to demonstrate some of the competencies in Article 46 if appropriate, but work outside the State cannot be used to demonstrate the 10-year requirement. (Building Control Act, Section 22(1)).
3. What about work done in the State when employed abroad?	Work carried out in the State while based/employed abroad cannot be used to demonstrate the 10-year requirement. The principle underlying the process set out in the Act is that persons who were based/employed in other jurisdictions could have availed of the opportunity to Register there. The Technical Assessment process is designed specifically to accommodate persons based in this State where no such route was available. Work done in the State while based/employed abroad may be used to demonstrate competencies in Article 46.
4. Are projects to be presented restricted to project work where a building is the outcome? What about, for example, analysis of structures carried out as an expert witness for court cases?	This type of work (i.e. where a building is not the outcome) can be included, but other projects will be necessary to cover the remaining competencies
5. What about construction qualifications (not in architecture), can they be listed to demonstrate competencies?	Yes. Learning in a variety of fields, including the humanities, could be used to demonstrate elements of some competencies
6. Is there a deadline for submission?	No
7. Can projects completed or carried out after 1 May 2008 be included?	Answer pending legal advice
8. In the information on projects section, what do you do with experience beyond the 10-year minimum?	You are free to include it. The 10 years is a minimum and all experience before 1 May 2008 is relevant.
9. Verification – what is the limit on what a client can verify?	Clients can verify up to the level of their own expertise. So a client can judge certain issues they will have witnessed but not, for example, technical aspects in general.
10. Are design team members suitable as verifiers?	Yes, up to the level of their involvement and expertise
11. What about work completed after 1 May 2008? (argues that work past 1 May 2008 should be included for demonstrating competencies)	Answer pending legal advice
12. Can we take that as fact now?	Answer pending legal advice
13. Would that include CPD courses post 1 May 2008?	Answer pending legal advice

14. If there has been one employer overseeing all the work, is one verifier /verification acceptable?	Yes, but the verification must explicitly cover all relevant claims made
15. Can we include supporting documents to expand on the references in the competencies index?	The range of supporting documentation that may be submitted is wide and is set out in the <i>Guidance for Applicants</i> .
16. More than one source of verification is recommended, but if there was one employer for the whole period, is that adequate?	Yes, as long as the verification explicitly lists all claims being verified.
17. In some cases the Index uses terms that are of a higher order than those required in the competences in Article 46.	The points were first drafted pre-1985 for the Architects Directive and then replicated in the Qualifications Directive. Since that time there has been substantial development and refinement of the theory and terminology relating to evaluation of learning. It is this terminology that was used in development of the indicators. In addition, where evaluation is to be based on practical experience rather than academic examination 'ability', which can be demonstrated by performance, is a more appropriate measure of a competence.
18. What if you can demonstrate 90% of the competences but not 10%?	Under the terms of the Act all 11 competencies listed in Article 46 must be demonstrated. However, within each of those 11 competencies there is room for judgement that the critical mass has been reached without fully demonstrating all elements. The Assessors will be trained in this area and the Board has an oversight role to ensure the requirements are being applied appropriately
19. Why are there no grades applied i.e. 70% or 80%	This is a 'demonstrated/not demonstrated' test based on the overall judgement of three Assessors in the first instance. It is the competencies for Article 46 that must be demonstrated in full, not all of the 63 indicators used to explain and clarify them.
20. With regard to employer reference, what can be done when the employment was some time ago and the employer can't be found	Use everything you can that is relevant and helpful and do your best to get appropriate verifications. You can only get what is possible/available.
21. What about an employer 35 years ago	As at 20 above. Ideally the focus would be on more recent work as that is the work most likely to demonstrate your highest skill level.
22. What about including all elements of the entire schedule of works, should these be included	Only include what is relevant to your demonstration of the criteria and can be verified.
23. If I'm self employed do I need references for absolutely everything?	Only for the elements you are seeking to demonstrate.
24. Information on projects – If, for instance, I don't have the full cost of a project, for example a housing estate project I participated in but was not in overall control of, do I have to find out the full information	No. Just provide sufficient information for the Assessors to form a reasonably accurate picture of the scale and type of project.
25. Are the competences "weighted" (either the parts of Article 46 or the 63 indicators)?	No
26. Does the application fee cover the cost of an appeal?	No
27. If an application fails to demonstrate the 10years does the assessment stop (and is a refund made)?	No. Under the system as set out in the Act all criteria are assessed at once. Only the expert Assessors can really make a judgement on whether or not the work was <u>at the required level for the required period of time</u> . The Act does not provide for stages in the assessment or for any purely administrative assessment of the 10-year criterion.
28. If you have concentrated entirely on residential work, will that be a problem?	Possibly. 'Scale and complexity' are covered in the criteria and there may be a difficulty in demonstrating them with a limited portfolio. It will be a matter of judgement
29. Will there be a priority system for applicants i.e. if my business is at risk can I be assessed sooner than others?	No. Applications will be processed in the order in which they are received.
30. How do I demonstrate an 'awareness' of something?	The project analysis section provides for this by allowing for reflection.

31. Could I write a paragraph into the index against an element to demonstrate the necessary awareness?	Unfortunately not. Based on legal advice, the Index can only reference documents contained in the Submission. It cannot contain any additional information.
32. How do I show I know about different types of contracts I have not actually used.	Use the project analysis section
33. Can an applicant address in the interview certain issues not addressed properly in the written submission?	The assessors will have a set of issues to cover in the interview, but applicants will also be given the opportunity to raise issues.
34. How can I demonstrate how strongly I feel about architecture and my role as an architect?	If it can't be covered in the written submission, it should be possible to convey your commitment in the interview.
35. What about the 10 years - how can I be sure when they started from the assessors perspective	The early years probably won't be as good as the later years. Progress is to be expected so the assessors won't be looking for an identical level for the entire period.
36. In what circumstances would the Board made a decision to re-interview a candidate? Surely not at all, logically?	The decision to re-interview lies with the Board. There will probably be circumstances when the Board considers a second interview appropriate, either to clarify matters and satisfy itself with regard to an opinion of the assessors, or as a general measure of assurance that they are satisfied with the standard being applied.
37. If we fail, can we do the assessment again?	No. The option is to appeal, pursue the Register Admission Examination (or any other route that might apply in an individual case) or consider a change of title.
38. I am self employed for almost 9 years. How do I prove authorship?	Verifications by a combination of clients and other professionals such as structural engineers or similar.
39. Can I get one person to provide a general verification? i.e. that I worked as an architect for 10 years	No. While a single verification may be acceptable in some circumstances, it must explicitly list all of the relevant projects and items being claimed for the purposes of demonstrating the criteria
40. Can I use letters of appointment?	They are valid evidence but cannot be used in isolation.
41. Do I have to demonstrate 10 years of independent practice?	No, it is 10 years working as an architect at the required level. You can have been an employee for that entire time.
42. In the Information on Projects section I assume several projects per year should be submitted to demonstrate 10 year duties. Is there a restriction on this and do each year's projects have to be broad ranging or is this considered over 10 year period?	There is no restriction on the number of projects per year in the Information on Projects section. Nor does every year have to include a broad range of projects. The objective is to show that over the 10 or more year period, taken as a whole, you have conducted a broad range of architectural duties.
43. I have amassed over 600 projects in 21 years. Is there a guideline as to how many projects per year should be put into the Information on Projects section?	See Query 42. An applicant who has an extensive body of work can be selective about the projects included, bearing in mind the purpose of the exercise. If you choose to be selective, you must ensure that the projects included show the range of work done, duties performed and competencies required, as well as demonstrating the ten year requirement and being capable of verification.
44. The Information on Projects section is in A4 portrait format. Can one fold larger drawings to A4 size, or do you want this section to be A4 sheets exclusively?	The Information on Projects section should not contain any folded drawings. One thumbnail size drawing and/or photo per project is all that is required or permitted. The purpose of the illustration is simply to help the Assessors form a basic mental image of the project.
45. For the purpose of demonstrating competencies can the planning stage of a project be used for example to demonstrate appropriate planning knowledge even if the project never proceeded beyond this?	Yes.
46. Should all Portfolio projects have been completed or can one be selected to planning stage to demonstrate particular knowledge?	It is not necessary for all projects in the Portfolio to have been completed. But be sure to include other Projects to cover the remaining stages.
47. In the Competencies Index is it acceptable to respond to a Competency (e.g. e1, f7, g1, j1, j3, k3, k5, k8) by indicating in the submission reference – "See Project Portfolio"?	The reference must be to specific reference number/s, e.g., P.1.2; P.1.4; P.4.6; etc., not simply "See Project Portfolio". Otherwise the volume of material in a submission will render it unlikely that an Assessor will be able to identify the relevant evidence.
48. With regard to verifications (pg 4) does "Equal or Higher than a Registered Architect" refer to only	See Query 9. The criterion for persons other than "colleagues in a professional category" is that they be

<p>“Colleagues in a Professional Category” or all persons providing a verification e.g. Clients, Building Contractors etc?</p>	<p>competent to make the judgment required for the purpose of the particular verification.</p>
<p>49. Can a ‘Ministers List’ Architect and now Registered Architect provide verifications?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>50. At the Technical Assessment Briefing Sessions, it was confirmed that if you have more than 10 years experience it should be indicated. Will you be assessed on more than the 10 years experience? If you are indicating projects for more than 10 years is it necessary to provide the detailed information on projects (detailed information, thumbnail drawing, verification) or is it necessary to just list the projects?</p>	<p>See Queries 41 and 42. An applicant <u>may</u> indicate if they have more than 10 years of experience and may include projects from outside the 10-year period to demonstrate the required criteria including competencies. However, any projects included must have detailed information, thumbnail and be covered by verification/s.</p>
<p>51. Who will make the decision about the outcome of an application? Is it the architect assessors or the Technical Assessment Board itself?</p>	<p>The assessors give the Board their opinion (Section 22(5)(c)) but the decision lies with the Board which may request additional information and may choose to re-interview any candidate. The Board can decide a) that an applicant is eligible for registration in which case the chairperson advises the Admissions board of the decision or b) that the applicant is not eligible for registration, in which case the chairperson sends a notice to the applicant advising the applicant about the decision, the date on which it was made and the reasons for it. (Section 22(8))</p>