



The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland

RIAI skills matrix for conservation projects

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Introduction

The **RIAI Skills Matrix for Conservation Projects** is intended to assist practitioners, clients and the general public in understanding the different levels of skill of RIAI Conservation Accredited Architects and in assigning projects accordingly. Currently, there are three grades of RIAI Conservation Accredited Architect in Ireland.

RIAI Grade 1 Conservation Architect (the highest grade)

An Architect accredited at Grade 1 has been assessed by an expert Accreditation Board which carries out a rigorous in-depth evaluation of the specialist qualifications, expertise and experience of the applicant. A Grade 1 Conservation Architect has considerable length of experience and highest level of expertise.

RIAI Grade 2 Conservation Architect

An Architect accredited at Grade 2 has been assessed by an expert Accreditation Board which carries out a rigorous in-depth evaluation of the specialist qualifications, expertise and experience of the applicant. A Grade 2 Conservation Architect has extensive experience and significant level of expertise.

RIAI Architect Accredited in Conservation Grade 3

An Architect accredited at Grade 3 has successfully completed the RIAI Conservation Induction Module covering basic general information on the principles and practice of conservation.

An Architect accredited at Grade 3 is expected to have a good general knowledge of the legislation, philosophy and technical requirements, but not to have the range of expertise to carry out all the tasks undertaken by Grade 1 and Grade 2.

For a more detailed breakdown of the relevant skills, please consult the *Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for RIAI Conservation Accreditation*.

How to use the RIAI skills matrix for conservation projects

The designated skill level in each category is the **minimum requirement**. In every case, it is important to remember that the appropriate level of expertise should be informed by the complexity of the work and the significance of the building element where the works are proposed.

Where a building is deemed to be of potential significance, a registered architect should consult with an appropriate grade RIAI conservation accredited architect for advice. This does not preclude a registered architect from proceeding with the proposed works in consultation with a RIAI conservation accredited architect if necessary.

Some RIAI members with demonstrated expertise in conservation work have not yet sought RIAI Conservation Accreditation. The RIAI Conservation Accreditation system does not claim to be the sole means of identifying conservation expertise within the architectural profession.

When consulting the **RIAI Skills Matrix for Conservation Projects** please refer to the accompanying Glossary of Terms. The Matrix uses the following abbreviations:

G1 denotes RIAI Grade 1 Conservation Architect (the highest grade)

G2 denotes RIAI Grade 2 Conservation Architect

G3 denotes RIAI Architect Accredited in Conservation at Grade 3

RA denotes RIAI Registered Architect

RIAI skills matrix for conservation projects

Skills	Designation Of Building Or Site						No Designation
	National Monument	Protected Structure or NIAH International Importance	Protected Structure or NIAH National Importance	Protected Structure or NIAH Regional Importance	Protected Structure or NIAH Local Importance	Not on RPS but within Architectural Conservation Area	
Works entailing new build, alteration or change of use		G1	G1	G2	G2/G3*	G3/RA*	
Significant works within the curtilage		G1	G1	G2/G3*	G3	G3/RA*	
Minor works within the curtilage		G1	G2	G2/G3*	G3	RA	
Preparation of Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment	Seek the advice of G1 or G2 before proceeding with works	G1	G1	G2	G3	G3/RA*	Seek the advice of G1 or G2 before proceeding with works
Significant repair works		G1	G1	G2	G3	G3/RA*	
Minor repair works		G1	G2	G2/G3*	G3	G3/RA*	
Maintenance works of special significance		G1	G1	G2	G2	G3	
General maintenance		G2	G2	G3	G3/RA*	RA	
General advice		G1	G2	G3	G3/RA*	RA	

*Complex structures require the higher Grade.

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glossary of terms

Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

Under Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 each planning authority is obliged to keep a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) as part of its Development Plan. The RPS must include every structure in the planning authority's area which it considers to be of special interest. Inclusion in the RPS means that the importance of the structure is recognised, it is legally protected from harm, and all future changes to the structure are controlled and managed through the development control process.

Protected Structure

A Protected Structure is a structure that a planning authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical point of view and is included in its Record of Protected Structures (RPS). It may be a building or part of a building which is of significance because of its architectural or artistic quality, or its setting, or because of its association with commercial, cultural, economic, industrial, military, political, social or religious history.

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage is a state initiative under the administration of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Its purpose is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland and provide the basis for the recommendations on structures to be added to the RPS. It is up to the planning authority to decide if any of the structures recommended should be included in the RPS.

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glossary of terms

Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)

The Record of Monuments and Places is the most widely applying provision of the National Monuments Acts. It comprises a list of recorded monuments and places and accompanying maps on which such monuments and places are shown for each county.

National Monument

A National Monument is a structure or site, the preservation of which has been deemed to be of national importance and therefore worthy of state protection. Legislation under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2014 is complex and brings considerable responsibility. Architects should be aware that later structures may contain fabric which might come under the ambit of National Monuments legislation. Any proposed works to, at or in proximity to archaeological monuments may only be carried out in compliance with the National Monuments Acts and failure to do so is an offence. Depending on the protection afforded the monument, notice of intention to carry out work or Ministerial Consent may be required.

Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape which is either of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in its own right, or which contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. This could include, for example, a terrace of houses, buildings surrounding a square, or any group of buildings which together give a special character to an area. In a rural setting an ACA could include a group of structures associated with a mill or with a country house estate. An architectural conservation area could also include protected structures. If a Planning Authority considers that any 'place, area, group of structures or townscape' requires preservation, then it must declare the area to be an Architectural Conservation Area and define it as such in the Development Plan.

Potential Significance

In the context of assessing potential significance it is important to remember that a monument, building or site not included on the RPS may be of significance that has yet to be identified. The significance of a monument, building or site may derive from the structure in its own right, or from within its local context and environment. The significance may arise from architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

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glossary of terms

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA)

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessments are prepared to accompany proposals for new build or alterations which may impact a Protected Structure. The requirement for an architectural heritage impact assessment will generally come about for one of two reasons: a) as part of a development application in order to provide sufficient information for the planning authority to make an informed decision on the potential impact on the architectural heritage, or b) where permission has been granted for works to a protected structure or a proposed protected structure, to record the existing fixtures or features which contribute to its special interest and which would be lost or altered as a result of the works.

RIAI Registered Architect

The title Architect is protected in Ireland under Section 18 (1) of the Building Control Act 2007 and the RIAI maintains the statutory Register of Architects. All registered architects meet the standards set down in the *RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Practice as an Architects*. Conservation is a core element of this Standard.

Architects' Code of Conduct

All Registered Architects must comply with the *Architects' Code of Conduct* in line with Section 56 of the Building Control Act, 2007. The *Architects' Code of Conduct* reflects the responsibilities of architects to the public, clients, employers and colleagues. Architects are expected to be guided in their conduct by the spirit of the code as well as by its express terms.



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