RIAI STATEMENT OF POLICY ON EDUCATION

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Objective

Education enables each person to think for themselves in their own situation and equip them with the basic tools for understanding, creating and communicating. This policy sets out to recognise and support the outstanding contribution that architecture makes to our society and the fundamental underpinning role of education in forming, framing and advancing this.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 THE RIAI

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) is the Professional, Regulatory and Support body for Architects in Ireland; support services are also provided for Architectural Technologists.

The RIAI is designated as the Registration Body and Competent Authority for architecture in Ireland per EU Directive 2005/36/EC and the Building Control Act 2007, the RIAI is committed to discharging its obligations for administration of the Register of Architects in Ireland.

The RIAI engages with architects and architectural technologists, government, the other professions, industry, clients, education providers and the public to promote the value of quality and design in architecture: to deliver attractive and sustainable built environments; to enrich our distinctive culture and heritage; to contribute to the competitiveness of our economy; and to improve quality of life for the people of Ireland, today and for generations to come.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE RIAI

The main object for which the RIAI is established is to undertake and encourage the general advancement of architecture for the benefit of the community and to promote and facilitate the acquisition of the knowledge of the various arts, sciences and skills connected therewith. The RIAI seeks to achieve this object by being a centre of excellence for the advancement of education, practice, information, advice and support in all matters related to architecture.

Other objectives of the RIAI include:

(a) To develop outreach programmes to achieve a wider social, cultural, political and public awareness and appreciation of architecture.
(b) To promote the need for research and development in architecture, conservation, construction, urban design, the built environment and associated arts and sciences.
(c) To provide professional education and training to architects and to support architects practising in Ireland.
(d) To foster and promote union, professional integrity, and honourable practice and relations in the architectural profession (the “Profession”) and discourage and bring an end to any dishonourable and unprofessional conduct or practices which may arise in the Profession.
(e) To promote good feeling and friendly intercourse among architects and afford means of adjusting professional differences (including differences with clients of members), and to decide all questions of usage or courtesy in connection with the Profession.

(f) To do all such things necessary to carry out and give full effect and purpose to the Institute’s role as “Registration Body” as defined in the Building Control Act 2007, the aims of which Act include the betterment of the quality of the built environment and for the protection of consumers generally, and as “Competent Authority” in Ireland as defined in the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC).”

RIAI Constitution

The RIAI believes that the essential foundations of the professions are established and sustained through education and practice. Consequently, the quality of this education beginning at primary school, through secondary and into third level institutions influences the continuous learning required of a professional and is a key factor in determining the capacity of architects and architectural technologists to achieve professional standards and contribute to improving the built environment. Architecture has a central role to play in confronting the challenges of sustaining and enhancing human life.

This policy promotes and encourages the role of the RIAI within architecture and architectural technology programmes, especially at the beginning and pre-graduation stages. To aid this all accredited colleges are requested to facilitate points of contact between the RIAI and students in the first and final year.

The RIAI has a role in advocating for the profession through the educational process, highlighting the reality of both its challenges and its potential. The RIAI also has a role in advising members and architectural practices in their educational role and providing advice on mentoring schemes.

This policy acknowledges and promotes the collaborative roles of Architect and Architectural Technologist in this process and its delivery. This policy further supports education-practice interconnectivity and encourages development and application of research skills at all career stages.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE RIAI

RIAI strategy is directed by a Council which is elected by the Membership.

The RIAI’s Chief Executive Officer leads a permanent staff which serves the Institute’s Council and Committees and also implements the sections of the Building Control Act dealing with the registration of architects.

The Board of Architectural Education (BAE), which is a subcommittee of the RIAI Council, consists of not less than eleven people, including the President and Honorary Secretary, of whom at least seven shall be Members or Fellows of the RIAI. The functions of the BAE are to consider and investigate any subject appertaining to the branches of the profession with which it is entrusted and to make reports and recommendations thereon to the Council and to perform such duties as shall from time to time be assigned to it by the Council.

1.4 POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

In 2015 RIAI Council and the Board of Architectural Education (BAE) convened an expert group to review the RIAI Statement of Policy on Architectural Education, (last reviewed in 2001). The expert group comprised representatives from the RIAI Council, Practice Committee, Board of Architectural Education, and the RIAI Executive. As part of the review process the group convened a series of forums with the various stakeholders in architectural education.
This included students, graduates, early career architects and architectural technologists, as well as the educators of architects and architectural technologists and the heads of the accredited schools of architecture and architectural technology. The main purpose of the forums was to facilitate discussion on the significant issues that each stakeholder thought the policy should address.

The discussion concluded with a wider forum which included representatives of all stakeholders including the RIAI, educators, students, recent graduates, recently registered architects and experienced architects and architectural technologists in practice.

The RIAI gratefully acknowledges the contribution of all those involved in the formulation of this policy.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Since the previous policy was adopted the context in which all levels of education must operate has changed dramatically. As a consequence this document presents an adaptable forward thinking framework within which education at all levels may flourish.

As well as promoting architectural education across society from young to old, the RIAI Statement of Policy on Education addresses compliance with National Legislation and EU Directives, as well as other internationally relevant standards.

The purpose of the RIAI Statement of Policy on Education is to encourage and provide support to educators, practitioners, students and the public; to raise public understanding of, and confidence in, qualified professionals and to promote collaboration and cohesion between all participants in professional formation and development including CPD.

The policy is implemented through the RIAI accreditation process of educational programmes in architecture and architectural technology with the participation and collaboration of all stakeholders involved. It also aims to acknowledge and support the increasing educational and professional mobility of architects and architectural technologists at undergraduate and post-graduate level, and throughout their careers.

The RIAI has a responsibility towards the consumer and society at large. Commitment to students, graduates and the public takes a number of forms including:

- Acting as an external/independent accreditation authority of higher education programmes.
- Ensuring national and international recognition of architects and architectural technologists through maintenance of national and other appropriate standards.
- Promoting the importance of a professional architectural service to clients and the general public.
- Facilitating and supporting activities and initiatives which inform the public, at all stages of life, and policy makers, of the value of architecture in enhancing human life.

1.6 CONTEXT

Architectural education in Ireland takes place within an international context of:

2. The UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice
3. Policy initiatives by the Architects’ Council of Europe.
4. Co-operation initiatives by the European Network of Architects Competent Authorities (ENACA).
Recent years have seen a significant and growing interest in the field of architecture at third level. This has resulted in the establishment of a number of new schools of architecture and architectural technology that deliver both nationally and RIAI accredited educational programmes.

In addition, there has been an alignment with the EU through the general adoption of the Bologna Declaration for higher education – a two cycle award system of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Although significant progress has been made challenges remain, particularly around funding for institutions and students, who now are required to pay full fees for the second cycle M.Arch, which continues to be a mandatory component of their education.

Along with changes in higher education, the context for architectural practice has changed considerably over the last twenty five years. This is a reflection of the increasing complexity of building design and construction but also results from different construction procurement routes adopted by many clients. Traditional roles within the built environment continue to be contested. This presents many challenges for the architectural and architectural technology professions and, as a consequence, for architectural and architectural technology education. While the responses to this context will primarily be by the RIAI and by practices, it is important that both architects and architectural technologists in practice and education, share a common appreciation of these challenges, and that undergraduates are made aware, as part of their education, of the complexity of the context and the challenges they are likely to encounter in practice.

With this in mind, the RIAI encourages both cross-fertilisation between built environment programmes and collaboration between architectural and architectural technology undergraduates, as would occur in architectural practice. This policy recognises the success of this model of collaborative team working.

Additional key issues influencing this education policy include:

Directives and Legislation:
- National and European legislation and regulation including:
  - The Building Control Act 2007;
  - The Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC);
  - The Services Directive (2006/123/EC);

Undergraduate:
- Growing complexity of access to education;
- Growing complexity of education itself;
- QQI’s development and delivery of the Awards Standards - Architecture and the Awards Standards - Architectural Technology;

Practice:
- Increasing evidence of the impact of architecture on society’s economic, physical and psychological wellbeing;
- Architecture and architectural technology as a sustainable career;
- Growing complexity of architectural practice;
- Evolving risks of architectural practice;
- Importance of the Collaborative Team and the challenges of the various emerging forms of practice and team working;
• Climate change and its influences on the knowledge and skills which architects and architectural technologists will need in order to practice professionally and ethically;
• Building Information Modelling and Management;
• Procurement;
• Universal Design;
• Increasing demand for expertise in specialist areas;
• More open, inclusive and participative ways of working together and with the public;
• Research as an important facet of architectural education and practice as well as advancing the profession;
• Necessity of continuing career-based learning.

1.7 A DYNAMIC POLICY

Since the previous Policy Statement was adopted in 2001 there have been significant and far reaching changes to the context within which architectural education is delivered. These include new national and EU legislation, evolving educational environment, as well as the profession and practice which is adapting to new skills. This change has been generated against a background of a much altered societal context, including the increasing influences of climate change (sustainability), universal design (inclusiveness); heightened regulation; greater mobility; the ‘digital’ world; specialisation; and, career long education (CPD).

This is proposed to be a five year Policy but also a dynamic document that is open to ongoing review. To facilitate this, the following initiatives have been introduced:

• A regular (annual) forum between RIAI and the Heads of Schools and Programme Directors. These meetings would use the Policy as an Agenda and offer an opportunity to discuss live, emerging and future issues in a constructive way. This dialogue between the Profession (RIAI) and Education (the Schools) is a critical tool to test, monitor and amend/update the Policy.
• The RIAI supports a biennial forum for educators, and for graduates, to provide connectivity to current best practice and to the professional network within education and practice.
• RIAI in the Schools: Subject to resources, the RIAI should be present at some key stages in the education process. These include: ‘day one’ (first/second year), with an RIAI beginners pack; preliminary degree stage; final degree stage and at professional practice stage. Council’s decision to reintroduce a Student membership category will support this objective.
• Greater attention also must be paid to engaging the graduate architect/architectural technologist so that the RIAI is actively present during the ‘lacuna’ years which exist for many between graduation and registration/professional recognition.
• Regular review and updating of training and engagement with the Accreditation Visiting Boards: the Visiting Boards are the most direct connection between RIAI and the education institutions. These Visiting Boards have a very specific remit, however, they can also provide useful communication, engagement and feedback to the schools and the profession. Such opportunities could be more effectively harnessed by the RIAI.
• Any new Strategic Plan for RIAI to include set time-frames for key policy reviews, including the Education Policy.
• The RIAI Conference promotes and encourages undergraduates to become active within the RIAI.
• Wider forums should be held on architectural education with key policy makers/partners – e.g. Department of Education and Skills; Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government; Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; The Arts Council; The Heritage Council; primary and post-primary Teachers; City and County Architects.
• The continued development of a CPD programme which is clearly mapped to the RIAI Standards of Knowledge, Skill and Competence to enable and support members to maintain and develop their competence.
2.0 Architecture and Society

As active engaged citizens, architects and architectural technologists contribute to society through their ability to synthesise complex and at times competing requirements (e.g. technical, cost, regulatory, social, economic requirements and artistic ambition), in an ever changing world, and develop and provide accessible and high quality spaces. It is imperative that a high standard of education is a central component of the procurement of quality built environments.

2.1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH ARCHITECTURE

This policy also embraces the wider, non-practising, public at all stages of life and across society. The RIAI initiates programmes and projects which actively support and encourage public engagement with architecture.

The RIAI is enthusiastically involved in education at all stages from Primary School to Third-Level and beyond. Familiarity with the professions and their contribution and importance to society can be further developed and appreciated through early and continuing collaboration. This in turn has the potential to connect all participants and users of the Built Environment to recognise and value the impact and influence that good architecture and technical design has on a sustainable environment and societal well-being.

This policy acknowledges the possibilities for effective partnership between the RIAI and other bodies (e.g. Arts Council; IAF; Department of Education and Skills; Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government; other built environment professional bodies) at many levels to encourage greater public engagement with, and appreciation of, architecture. Equally, CPD modules can be further opened to a wider audience, including related professions and common interest groups.

3.0 Education and Training for Entry to the Profession of Architect

3.1 PURPOSE

The RIAI takes the view that the particular characteristic of the architect lies in the capacity for creative design and realisation of the built environment in the service of society. Thus, formal recognised qualifications in architecture must be based on specific qualitative and quantitative criteria as described in the RIAI Standards of Knowledge Skill and Competence for Practice as an Architect, 2009.
3.2 STANDARDS

Frameworks for the recognition of qualifications are enshrined in law and policy in the shape of the Building Control Act 2007 (which came into effect on 1 May 2008), the QQI Awards Standards - Architecture, the RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Practice as an Architect and Directive 2005/36/EC (the Professional Qualifications Directive). In these legal contexts, the RIAI is the designated Registration Body and the Competent Authority for architectural qualifications.

As the designated Registration Body and the Competent Authority for architectural qualifications the RIAI plays an important role in protecting the interests of consumers, building users, the public interest and the quality of the built environment. This demands that architects are equipped with the necessary skills to deliver the services they offer.

The RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Practice as an Architect describes the areas and levels of knowledge, skill and competence required of an architect at the professional level (capable of independent practice). To be an architect Member of the RIAI (MRIAI, MRIAI(IRL) or FRIAI) and/or be admitted to the Register for Architects, an individual must have demonstrated that he or she has achieved this Standard. The Standard is applied in all RIAI examinations and assessment mechanisms and is integrated into all of the RIAI’s Admission routes. The Standard also provides the framework for Continuing Professional Development.

3.2.1 QUALITY

Since its foundation in 1839 the RIAI has committed itself to supporting the education of architects and the evolution of the architectural profession in Ireland.

The accreditation of courses and qualifications in architecture is one of the RIAI’s most critical tasks.

The purpose of accreditation is to ensure, in the interests of students, the public and the architectural profession, that the range of skills and the standard of performance attained by students graduating from a programme are adequate with regard to the professional skills and ethical formation required for competent architectural practice.

The accreditation process involves an objective assessment of the programme, including the curriculum, assessment and actual learning outcomes achieved by graduates.

The RIAI Visiting Boards play a role in ensuring that programmes evolve and continue to be relevant. A Forum for Educators would ensure also that there is communication, support and structure for the staff involved in the various programmes.

3.2.2 PRESCRIPTION UNDER THE BUILDING CONTROL ACT 2007

Under the terms of the Building Control Act 2007, the RIAI is designated as the Registration Body for architects in Ireland and also the Competent Authority for architects under Directive 2005/36/EC.

The Building Control Act 2007 requires that qualifications in architecture be ‘prescribed’. Part 3 of the Building Control Act 2007 makes provision for the prescription by the Minister of Qualifications and of Register Admission Examinations. Qualifications and Examinations submitted for prescription will be evaluated in accordance with the RIAI Qualifications in Architecture - Procedures for Prescription under the Building Control Act.
Qualifications and Examinations which meet the criteria are notified to the Minister and prescribed for a defined period and will be subject thereafter to re-evaluation at intervals set out in the procedures. The process set out in the RIAI Qualifications in Architecture - Procedures for Prescription under the Building Control Act 2007 involves an objective evaluation of the Qualification or Examination. In particular, evaluation addresses compliance with the requirements of:

1. *The Building Control Act, 2007*
2. The QQI Awards Standards - Architecture
3. The RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Practice as an Architect

### 3.2.3 NOTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS TO EUROPE

*Directive 2005/36/EC* allows for an automatic recognition of professional qualifications for architects throughout Europe. This automatic recognition is based on a minimum threshold standard for architects and collective review by Member States of all qualifications notified for inclusion in the automatic system.

### 3.3 DURATION OF STUDIES AND EXIT POINTS

The RIAI takes the view that the basic training and education of the architect is best achieved through full-time programme of study in architecture conducted at university or equivalent institution level, and extending over a minimum of five years full time study, followed by at least two years of post-graduate 'practical professional experience' which is formally assessed.

### 3.4 DELIVERY

The RIAI takes the view that it is essential that architectural education is taught within a studio environment and that the design studio accounts for a minimum of 50% of the academic programme credits.

### 3.5 PROGRAMME EVOLUTION & FITNESS FOR PURPOSE

The RIAI supports and recognises the importance of the delivery of the fundamentals of architectural education (e.g. studio-based education with practitioner and specialist involvement) while also advocating for architectural graduates to be knowledgeable of: design; information management and modelling technologies; management (of the design process); opportunities for cross-disciplinary cooperation and collaborative team practices; increasing technical design complexity; increasing regulatory complexity, etc.

To reinforce the leadership role of the architect in society and in the development of the built environment the RIAI encourages training, support and mentoring of architects in best practice for leadership.

### 3.6 STUDENT EXPERIENCE & WELFARE

The RIAI recognises the critical role of accredited programmes in architecture in developing a culture which values the time of the architect from the outset of their third-level education and throughout their careers. Students, graduates and architects should be aware that although it is important to offer a service to your client it is equally important to value your health and career longevity.
3.7 PROGRAMME DIVERSITY

It is the policy of the RIAI to promote a diversity of approach to the education and training of architects. It is the policy of the RIAI that there be maintained within the state at least two schools of architecture. There are now five accredited/prescribed programmes in architecture in this state which have the scope to offer a variety of approaches to education while meeting all the required components of an architectural education. Thus this policy recognises that there is scope to expand on delivery of core architectural competencies through modules, electives, etc.

3.8 PROGRAMME FUNDING

The RIAI supports funding of educational programmes for all five years to avoid exclusion from the profession according to income or socio economic status.

3.9 PROGRAMME RESOURCES

The delivery of appropriate programmes is intense in the broad subject base and material content. Architectural design, regulation/legislation, and the technologies of design and procurement are evolving constantly. In order to support the role of the architect as the design team leader, the RIAI expects that architecture programmes be adequately resourced to deliver graduates who have been rigorously educated, based on qualitative and quantitative criteria.

3.10 PRACTICAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Academic study of architecture ends with a qualification which enable graduates to start work in the discipline. Additional experience is essential to develop the graduate from the holder of a qualification into an independent professional able to fully represent/protect the interests of clients, building users and the public at large.

The development of an architect occurs through acquiring knowledge, skill and competence in the many and varied fields of practice. The academic qualification is only the first step.

Practical professional experience leads to the ability to put educational achievement into practice. Only after acquiring such experience is it responsible to declare competence to consumers, by use of a license or other right to practice as an individual.

The RIAI's position aligns closely with those established by the Architects Council of Europe and the UNESCO-UIA Charter on Architectural Education which describes training requirements as follows:

“The balanced acquisition of knowledge and skills […] requires a long period of maturation; … studies in architecture should always be not less than 5 years of full-time studies in a university or an equivalent institution, plus 2 years’ experience in an architectural practice.”

UNESCO-UIA Charter on Architectural Education
Subsequent to the completion of an accredited five year programme of study, the RIAI requires a minimum period of at least two years of postgraduate practical professional experience, which must be completed under the supervision of a registered architect. This must be followed by the successful completion of an accredited examination in professional practice, before submitting to be included on the Register of Architects.

The RIAI takes the view that RIAI Members/employers of architectural graduates undergoing their period of ‘practical professional experience’ have a significant educational responsibility towards those employees. Employers should provide reasonable opportunities for trainees to gain adequate experience in each training area, so that the employees may develop the requisite knowledge, understanding and ability of an architect as they progress towards registration. The quality of a trainee’s ‘practical experience’ is the single most important factor contributing to success in the professional practice examination.

Employers should also review trainee progress regularly, through a mentoring programme, and encourage the trainees to participate in seminars and other supplementary educational experiences. A Mentor is a vital component in the maturation and development of trainees. The Mentor’s role is to provide advice and guidance to the candidate/s and help ensure that they have access to the experience they need.

RIAI CPD Policy allows for structured CPD points to be allocated to mentoring activities.

There is an ethical and legal obligation on employers to offer adequate remuneration to employees for work done.

3.11 SOCIAL INCLUSION

The RIAI supports the concept of social inclusion as a principle. It advocates equality of access to architectural education and supports initiatives to that end, providing always that the integrity of architectural education is maintained.

The RIAI notes the cessation of the NBA Foley scholarship for architecture which offered a young person the opportunity to study architecture in Ireland. This Policy recognises the support that this provided for a number of graduates who, otherwise, may have found it difficult/impossible to complete a degree. The Policy supports the provision of similar support initiatives.

It is the policy of the RIAI to promote a diversity of approach to the education and training of architects within Architecture programmes and to cater for students with diverse life experience and capacities; this approach can challenge and enrich the education of architects and encourage a broad outlook.
4.0 Education and Training for Entry to the Profession of Architectural Technologist

4.1 PURPOSE

The RIAI Statement of Policy on Education promotes standards of excellence in the education, training and practice of architectural technology in Ireland. The RIAI takes the view that formal accredited qualifications are based on qualitative and quantitative criteria, and that the architectural technologist has a specialised technical role within architecture.

4.2 STANDARDS

The RIAI, as the leading professional body in Ireland for architectural technologists and graduates, plays an important role in protecting the interests of clients, consumers, building users, the public interest and the quality of the built environment. This demands that architectural technologists are equipped to deliver the services they offer. The RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for practice as an Architectural Technologist was first developed and published in 2010. The RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Graduates of Level 8 Programmes in Architectural Technology was developed and published in 2012. This document clarifies and expands on the 13 points set out in the RIAI Statement of Policy on Architectural Education (2001): 3.5.1. Fundamental Requirements for Studies in Architectural Technology.

The RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for practice as an Architectural Technologist describes the key areas and levels of knowledge, skill and competence required of an architectural technologist at the professional level. The RIAI Standard defines the distinct training and the skill-set expected of an RIAI architectural technologist. The existing RIAI accredited 3-year Level 7, and 4-year Level 8 architectural technology programmes align with the RIAI Standards. The RIAI accredited Architectural Technology Programmes are guided by these Standards and other relevant requirements for practice.

Currently the RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for practice as an Architectural Technologist is applied in all RIAI examinations, assessment mechanisms and routes to Architectural Technologist membership and is the benchmark for admission as an Architectural Technologist member of the RIAI.

The RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Practice as an Architectural Technologist also provides the framework for Continuing Professional Development for Architectural Technologists to maintain competent and current practice in the key areas.

In February 2016 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) published their Awards Standards - Architectural Technology which describes the knowledge, skill and competence to be acquired before a QQI “Architectural Technology” award may be made. The Awards Standards are designed to be used by providers when designing new programmes and establishing minimum intended programme learning outcomes, by awarding bodies when validating new programmes and by the relevant professional bodies in the accreditation of programmes in architectural technology.
4.2.1 QUALITY

The RIAI accreditation process currently provides strong support to architectural technology programmes. RIAI Visiting Boards, and the reports that they produce, can help ensure that funding/resources are allocated to the programmes by the Institutes of Technology to maintain the appropriate RIAI accredited standard. The publication of the QQI Awards Standards - Architectural Technology will further this endeavour.

The intensity and complexity of the technical aspect of architecture and its construction, is addressed within these programmes and must be understood by those charged with management of the programmes, particularly in relation to the provision and support of good staff-to-student ratios with an acceptable contact hour allocation; this applies also to the quality of the programme’s facilities.

Architectural technology programmes are driven constantly by evolving legislation; new materials and construction systems; the various available software packages; building information modelling and management and the coordination of the Collaborative Team as they respond promptly to market demand.

The cross-discipline opportunities that are available within the Institutes of Technology should be utilised and facilitated in order to develop and foster team-working and skills that would provide better technical and inter-disciplinary understanding, engagement and collaboration in the future.

The RIAI Visiting Boards play a key role in ensuring that programmes evolve and continue to be relevant. An annual Forum for educators will ensure also that there is communication, support and structure for the staff involved in the various programmes.

4.2.2 ACCREDITATION OF QUALIFICATIONS IN ARCHITECTURAL TECHNOLOGY

Since 1976 the RIAI has committed itself to supporting the education of architectural technologists and the evolution of the architectural technologist profession in Ireland.

The RIAI accreditation of architectural technology programmes and qualifications is a critical task. The purpose of accreditation is to ensure that the interests of the students, the public and the profession are protected, and that the architectural technologist is equipped with the range of knowledge, skill and competence required for practice as an architectural technologist.

The accreditation process is carried out by an RIAI Visiting Board and involves an objective assessment of the programme, including the curriculum, assessment and actual learning outcomes achieved by graduates.

As part of the accreditation procedure, programmes in Architectural Technology are assessed against the following documents:

- RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for practice as an Architectural Technologist
- RIAI Standard of Knowledge, Skill and Competence for Graduates of Level 8 Programmes in Architectural Technology (Level 8 programmes)
- RIAI Statement of Policy on Education
- Qualifications in Architectural Technology, Board of Architectural Education Accreditation Procedures
- QQI Award Standards - Architectural Technology
4.3 DURATION OF STUDIES AND EXIT POINTS

The RIAI takes the view that the basic training and education of the architectural technologist is best achieved through full-time programmes of study in architectural technology conducted at third-level educational institutions. Currently, Architectural Technology programmes are delivered in both 3-year and 4-year formats. This policy recognises that the following contexts are best addressed in a four year BSc. (Hons) Architectural Technology, at Level 8:

- increased regulatory requirements;
- evolving building technologies;
- new procurement methods;
- Collaborative team-working.

Where the Institutes of Technology deliver these programmes there remains an exit at 3rd. Year, Level 7, BSc. (Ord) Architectural Technology. A move to phase out RIAI Level 7 accreditation and focus on the Level 8 BSc. (Hons) Architectural Technology programmes is proposed as an action of this policy.

A two-year period of supervised practical training within a registered RIAI architectural practice is required post-graduation; this must be monitored and documented. Commitment is expected from RIAI members employing architectural technologists to provide realistic and significant practical training.

The 4-year BSc. (Hons) Architectural Technology ensures, from the beginning, a technical design education in general best practice that introduces and cultivates an approach to research, time management and personal as well as professional value. Graduates of this programme may progress to Level 9 Masters programmes for further specialisation.

4.4 DELIVERY

The RIAI Statement of Policy on Architectural Education (2001) stated that architectural technology should be delivered through full time programmes, however, the requirement for flexible modes of education has evolved and developed in the meantime. It is the responsibility of each accredited provider to demonstrate a clear structure with learning outcomes, transparency of assessment and compliance with the RIAI requirements for accreditation within their flexible-mode programmes.

An assessed work placement or Practical Experience module could be considered at the beginning of 3rd year (of a 4-year Honours Programme) for the undergraduate to observe and experience the application of their technical design input and to prepare them for their technical and professional responsibilities in the future.
4.5  PROGRAMME EVOLUTION, FITNESS FOR PURPOSE AND RESOURCES

The delivery of appropriate programmes is intense in its material content. Technical design is evolving constantly together with regulation/legislation, new building systems and procurement. The architectural technologist has the specialist technical role within architecture. The RIAI encourages the training, support and mentoring of architectural technologists in leadership skills and best practice; this will reinforce the architectural technologist’s role in society and the development of the built environment. In order to support this, the RIAI requires that Architectural Technology programmes be adequately resourced to deliver graduates who have been rigorously educated, based on qualitative and quantitative criteria.

4.6  STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND WELFARE

Subject to resources the RIAI will engage with the student at the earliest opportunity and support the student throughout their education and professional career. Students, graduates and architectural technologists should be aware of the importance of valuing their health throughout their programme and in their preparation for a sustainable career.

4.7  PROGRAMME DIVERSITY

It is the policy of the RIAI to promote a diversity of approach to the education and training of architectural technologists.

4.8  PROGRAMME FUNDING

This policy calls for funding of programmes for all years to avoid exclusion from the profession according income.

The RIAI will consider appropriate mechanisms for Recognition of Prior Learning as developed and presented by the Programme providers.

4.9  SOCIAL INCLUSION

The RIAI supports the concept of social inclusion as a principle. It advocates equality of access to architectural education and supports initiatives to that end, providing always that the integrity of architectural technology education is maintained.

It is the policy of the RIAI to promote a diversity of approach to the education and training of architectural technologists within Architectural Technology programmes and to cater for students with diverse life experience and capacities; this approach can challenge and enrich the education of architectural technologists and encourage a broad outlook.
4.10 PRACTICAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Academic study of architectural technology ends with a qualification which enables graduates to start work in the discipline. Additional experience is essential to develop the graduate from the holder of a qualification into a professional architectural technologist.

The development of an architectural technologist occurs through acquiring knowledge, skill and competence in the many and varied fields of practice. The academic qualification is only the first step.

The RIAI requires a minimum period of at least two years of postgraduate supervised practical professional experience. The RIAI takes the view that RIAI Members/employers of architectural technology graduates undergoing their period of 'practical professional experience' have a significant educational responsibility towards those employees. Employers should provide reasonable opportunities for trainees to gain adequate experience in each training area.

Employers should also review trainee progress regularly, through a mentoring programme, and encourage trainees to participate in seminars and other supplementary educational experiences. A Mentor is a vital component in the maturation and development of trainees. The Mentor’s role is to provide advice and guidance to the candidates and help ensure that they have access to the experience they need.

RIAICPD Policy allows for structured CPD points to be allocated to mentoring activities.

There is an ethical and legal obligation on employers to offer adequate remuneration to employees for work done.

5.0 Professional Education and Development

One of the most profound changes in the professional sphere since the last issue of this policy is recognition of the role of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and life-long learning in the education of professionals.

It is becoming increasingly evident that professional competency will be upheld by a combination of qualifications; practice experience and focussed CPD. Indeed, to address the ever expanding breadth and detail of the architecture and architectural technology professions, CPD offers an essential means to ‘fill the gaps’ which the initial years of undergraduate education and postgraduate training will struggle to cover.

The RIAI has been at the forefront of CPD since the registration of Architects and before. However, the future will embrace a much wider range of CPD delivery and this affords opportunities for the education institutions (already apparent in some cases), and partnerships/initiatives with RIAI. This policy recognises that the RIAI role may be sufficiently augmented by identifying education/training needs and working with other bodies to ensure their effective delivery and access. The future may also offer opportunities for multi-disciplinary/trans-disciplinary learning (an effective way to ‘teach’ collaborative working methods) and to engage the professional sector, other stakeholders/interest groups within the broad field of construction and the built environment and the public (non-architect) in areas of joint interest.
5.1 PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND CONDUCT

The RIAI CPD Policy was first published in 1998 and applies to any person who is registered on the Register for Architects (registrants) and to RIAI members in all categories - Fellows, Members, Architectural Technologists and Graduates - except those who are no longer professionally active. With the introduction of Registration under the Building Control Act 2007 CPD became mandatory for registered architects and RIAI Members in the Architects’ Code of Conduct (2013).

In the European context the Qualifications Directive 2005 brought changes not only to the mechanisms for recognition, but also expectations with regard to CPD for the ‘Sectoral professions’ (architects, doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists, vets). The modernisation of the Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) through Directive 2013/55 states:

‘(b) Member States shall, in accordance with the procedures specific to each Member State, ensure, by encouraging continuous professional development, that professionals whose professional qualification is covered by Chapter III of this Title are able to update their knowledge, skills and competences in order to maintain a safe and effective practice and keep abreast of professional developments.’

Students of accredited programmes in architecture and architectural technology must be made aware of the professional requirement to maintain and record Continual Professional Development. The educational structure should indicate the need to maintain and develop professionally through life-long learning. The process and outcomes must be clear to all from the beginning of the programme. The result of this, within the programmes, will inculcate a culture where students develop an acquired and automatic approach to continuing professional education and personal development beyond that required of the programme, and the subsequent professional/regulatory CPD requirement.

5.2 PRACTICE AND SPECIALISATION

Increased complexity of practice will require specialisation. Specialisation allows for practice at many scales. It also often requires more effective collaboration both within the architecture and architectural technology professions and with allied professions. Education will develop to serve these emerging ways of practice more effectively. The RIAI continues to explore opportunities and feasibility for specialisation.

This Policy supports opportunities to run CPD programmes which serve the specialist fields of architectural and/or architectural technology practice, e.g. architectural conservation; sustainable design; Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP); urban design, etc.

5.3 ROLE OF PRACTICES IN THE DELIVERY OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND CPD

The RIAI recognises the increasing phenomenon of advanced education (Diplomas; Masters; Doctorates, etc.) which may be undertaken separate to practice or within practice.

There is a role for Education establishments to provide appropriate courses in an accessible manner; for RIAI Members and Practices to provide for this aspect of professional/practice education and, for the RIAI to advocate and monitor the provision and delivery of such education in a manner which benefits the profession and the consumer. This type of advanced education/post-graduate education provides important opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning which can enable a more progressive approach to architectural practice.
5.4 ROLE OF EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS IN SUPPORTING STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION

Education establishments delivering RIAI accredited courses must acknowledge also, their responsibilities to their teaching staff. Education establishments must encourage and facilitate staff to develop and sustain current best practice in teaching methods and their professions, so that they can deliver the required learning outcomes of the courses and those of the QQI Award Standards and RIAI Standards for architecture and architectural technology. Financial support and time should be provided to enable staff to pursue necessary continuing professional development and maintain membership of their professional bodies/registers; this is in the best interests of the students they teach, and the quality and relevance of the courses they deliver.

6.0 Research

This RIAI recognises research as a fundamental part of architectural and architectural technology education from undergraduate through postgraduate study and into practice.

Architectural and architectural technology research contributes to the development of new knowledge in the discipline and results in substantial social, cultural and environmental impacts that are of significant benefit to all. The RIAI encourages and supports architectural and architectural technology research within the professions and within higher education. The RIAI promotes and supports collaborative research that links the professions, the construction industry, higher education and government. The RIAI also recognises the importance of Irish research understood within a global research context.

Educational programmes in architecture and architectural technology must develop a culture of research. Providers should encourage the appropriate depth of investigation as may be required of its students for their progression at each stage.

Architectural and technical design both rely on a process of critical inquiry, i.e. brief; research; application of research and a subsequent appropriate solution to the brief; the research stage should be recorded and assessed throughout educational programmes acknowledging how vital it is to developing the architect’s and architectural technologist’s specialist knowledge and skills. That breadth of knowledge of design, regulation, legislation and best practice could provide a research platform that is accessible and collaborative for each project, at each stage. The research skills acquired by students during their education can foster an approach to research that is valued and sustainable for both current and future practice.

Architecture and architectural technology and their practice are diverse endeavours. Between them the disciplines deal with a wide range of issues in the built and cultural environments. As a consequence the RIAI embraces a range of research methodologies and a variety of research approaches including creative works, critical reflection, technology and building science, business and management, history, theory, sociology and behavioural science. The RIAI also recognises the value of both professional and academic journals in the publication of research outputs.
In 2015, the Irish Government published *Innovation 2020*, which includes support for excellent research across all disciplines - an important policy development for the disciplines of architecture and architectural technology. The RIAI supports in this policy the definition of research outlined by the OECD.

> “The creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.”


Educators and practitioners in architecture and architectural technology must develop a culture of research. Together they should continually encourage the appropriate depth of investigation and critical reflection as may be required of themselves and their students or employees at each stage of their academic or professional development.

Research in architectural and technical design is the systematic inquiry for new knowledge about the creation and maintenance of the built environment. The process of identifying new knowledge involves making a clear statement of the research goals and intent of the research, implementing credible and systematic modes of inquiry, and documenting the findings in a form that is publicly verifiable and open to peer appraisal.

For architecture to be relevant for future needs, we need to advance our understanding of the intricate issues of urban growth and rural transformation, in the context of environmental and economic change, developing technologies, and emerging demands and expectations of society. For example, detailed analysis of building performance can help deliver essential feedback to all involved in building procurement and construction.

The RIAI supports and cultivates collaborative initiatives between disciplines as well as between education providers and practice, not only in the context of current funding models such as Horizon 2020, but also to ensure that research can be disseminated to the widest audience and be used to develop appropriate sustainable synthesised strategies for action.

The areas of focus:

**Government and Higher Education**
- provide discipline-specific measures of research including creative works in the assessment of Irish research
- support joint research initiatives between industry and academia through grants

**RIAI Members**
- undertake practice-based research
- participate in/support practice-based higher degree study as part of continuing professional development
- support research endeavours as participants in research projects provide material and information to researchers (recognising appropriate measures for the protection of commercially sensitive intellectual property rights)

This policy acknowledges the potential for recognition and promotion of architectural research through various means including research awards and research groups.
7.0 Bibliography

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RIAI. (2016). RIAI CPD Policy
8.0 Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>Architects Council of Europe;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAE</td>
<td>Board of Architectural Education: a ‘statutory’ Committee of the RIAI appointed by the RIAI’s Council;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent Authority</td>
<td>Any authority or body empowered by a Member State specifically to issue or receive training diplomas and other documents or information and to receive the applications, and take the decisions, referred to in this Directive;</td>
<td>Directive 2005.36.EC (Article 3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>The RIAI's Council which is the Institute's Governing Body elected by the Membership;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENACA</td>
<td>European Network of Architects Competent Authorities. The RIAI is a member of this network which meets regularly to progress Administrative Co-operation between Competent Authorities. See <a href="http://www.enaca.eu">www.enaca.eu</a>;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Institute</td>
<td>means the RIAI;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>As of 2016 this means the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, previously the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government</td>
<td>Building Control Act 2007 (Section 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed Qualification</td>
<td>A qualification prescribed in accordance with Subsection 14(5) of the Building Control Act 2007;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
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<td>TERM</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Profession</td>
<td>means the architectural profession in Ireland;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional qualifications</td>
<td>Qualifications attested by evidence of formal qualifications, an attestation of competence referred to in Article 11, point (a), subparagraph (i) and/or professional experience;</td>
<td>Directive 2005.36.EC (Article 3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>means a person appointed under section 19, 33 or 47, as the context requires; (Section 19 in the case of Architects);</td>
<td>Building Control Act 2007 (Section 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration body</td>
<td>means, with respect to—</td>
<td>Building Control Act (Section 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Part 3, the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) Parts 4 and 5, the Society of Chartered Surveyors,</td>
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<tr>
<td>(c) Parts 6 and 7, each of the bodies referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b), with respect to such body performing its functions for the purpose of the relevant Parts;</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Regulated profession</td>
<td>A professional activity or group of professional activities, access to which, the pursuit of which, or one of the modes of pursuit of which is subject, directly or indirectly, by virtue of legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to the possession of specific professional qualifications; in particular, the use of a professional title limited by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to holders of a given professional qualification shall constitute a mode of pursuit. Where the first sentence of this definition does not apply, a profession referred to in paragraph 2 shall be treated as a regulated profession;</td>
<td>Directive 2005.36.EC (Article 3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIAI</td>
<td>The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) is the Professional, Regulatory and Support body for Architects in Ireland; support services are also provided for Architectural Technologists. The RIAI is designated as the Registration Body and Competent Authority for architecture in Ireland per EU Directive 2005/36/EC and the Building Control Act 2007, the RIAI is committed to discharging its obligations for administration of the Register of Architects in Ireland;</td>
<td>RIAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UIA</td>
<td>The International Union of Architects (UIA), is a non-governmental organisation, a global federation of national associations of architects, that are its members.</td>
<td>UIA</td>
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APPENDIX 1: Review Process

In early 2015 RIAI Council and the RIAI Board of Architectural Education convened an expert group to review the RIAI Statement of Policy on Architectural Education comprising:

- Grainne Shaffrey (Chair)
- Martin Donnelly
- Michael Grace
- Eleanor Heylin-Kelly
- Stephen Best
- Margaret Hynds-O’Flanagan
- Sandra Campbell

The RIAI Statement of Policy on Architectural Education was last updated in 2001. Key legislative developments since that time include:

- Registration of Title under the Building Control Act 2007
- Directive 2005/36/EC
- EU wide recognition of academic qualifications
- RIAI as Registration Body and Competent Authority for architecture in Ireland

The Revised policy aims to address the legal and regulatory obligations associated with the RIAI’s new role.

The expert group convened a number of forums in mid-2015 with various stakeholder groups including:

- Students of architecture, graduates and young architects
- Students of architectural technology, graduates and young architectural technologists
- Educators and academics from the prescribed Schools of Architecture
- Educators and academics from the RIAI accredited Schools of Architectural Technology
- Heads of the Schools of Architecture
- Heads of the Schools of Architectural Technology

The purpose of these forums was to provide an opportunity for representatives of each stakeholder group to discuss the issues they believed the RIAI Statement of Policy on Education should address and to provide a forum for these groups to share their views on how the policy can support architectural education.

Based on these discussions, and a strategic review of other critical developments such as registration of title for architects and the publication by QQI of the Awards Standard - Architectural Technology, the review group prepared a draft policy which was presented to RIAI Council for review and comment in December 2015.

Following further revisions by the review group a draft version policy was circulated to representatives of all stakeholders groups for comment in May 2016 and in June 2016 a wider stakeholders’ forum was held with over fifty people in attendance including Heads of the Schools of Architecture and Architectural Technology, representatives of students, graduates and practice to inform the final draft of the policy.

It is intended that this policy will be a dynamic document in that it will be open to ongoing review.