

## **Guidance on Experience Required for Registration**

*Guidance Notes for Applicants considering the NZRAB Registration Assessment*

The only prerequisite for experience in order to apply for registration is that you meet the time requirements as specified on the website.

However, graduates often ask for advice on what type of experience is likely to be the minimum required in order to give the best chance of gaining registration. It is difficult to generalise on what this might look like and we would encourage you to talk to your local convenor of assessors to discuss your personal situation, however the following seeks to give some general guidance as to the range of experience that would be more likely to set you up for success at the registration assessment. This is neither exhaustive nor comprehensive and is issued as guidance only.

Applicants come with a huge range of experiences and the quality of that experience rather than just the amount of experience will inevitably be relevant.

### **Experience Area A - Project Initiation & Predesign**

We recognise that this area of the commission is more than likely to be handled by the Principals of a firm, and that it is likely to be a very fortunate graduate who gets to have more than a fleeting involvement in the way in which commissions are established.

For this reason, we do not expect that graduates will have much personal experience in this area. We are happy to accept discussions of a more theoretical nature, but we do expect that graduates will understand how to establish an agreement for services and to have been actively engaged in the information gathering aspects of this phase of the commission.

### **Experience Area B - Concept, Preliminary & Developed Design Stages**

Again we accept that the early design stages are likely to be closely controlled by practice principals, so while we don't expect you to be able to claim design authorship, we do expect that you understand the design idea, its genesis and development and to be able to discuss this with some authority. You should have undertaken at least some of the concept, preliminary and developed design drawings, and understand with a good level of detail the basis for and rationale of the design, how and why it developed, and understand key decisions about materiality, building systems (including structures), sustainability and performance, consultant inputs and cost control.

We would also expect you to understand resource consents processes well. If your chosen project for the design stages did not require a resource consent, it is acceptable for you to introduce an example of a consent you have been involved in and can discuss with knowledge.

### **Experience Area C - Detailed Design and documentation**

Here you can reasonably be expected to have had good experience in the research for and documentation of a project. You'll have taken a significant role in preparing documentation for QS estimates, building consent, contract and construction stages and in coordinating and reviewing the various specialist inputs.

You'll understand the essentials of detailing for weatherproofing and be able to think through detailing from first principles.

You'll be aware of the lessons that have come out of the Christchurch earthquakes and how these will affect the practice of architecture in the future.

### **Experience Area D - Procurement**

Most graduates seem to gain good experience in this area and understand the processes and ethics of tendering well.

We are not concerned with which particular Conditions of Contract you are using, but you should understand the components of a contract for a building project. In practice there may be many schedule items that you infrequently use, but the assessors need to know that you understand how to custom write the schedules to suit the requirements of a specific project.

A broad range of tendering processes have been used by graduates to demonstrate that they understand this experience area, you do not have to use a project following a traditional process.

### **Experience Area E - Administration and observation of the contract works**

This is the area in which graduates most often struggle to gain good experience, especially as opportunities to gain experience reduce as traditional architect led contract processes become less and less common.

Again while this is a practical experience assessment we accept that it is not possible that any single project can cover the full extent of the architectural process. Our experience tells us that graduates who have had a responsible role in the administration and observation of at least

two construction contracts should be well prepared for the assessment. However we also recognize that this level of experience for some graduates is extremely difficult to access.

It is not however the participation that is important, but the experience and the knowledge gained from it.

We would anticipate for example that a graduate who has undertaken construction observation for a contract administered by a third party could equally well build the level of knowledge and experience required assuming they are involved in and inquisitive of the process.

Equally accessing the knowledge and stories of experienced architects and colleagues will be very valuable.

Remember that an applicant will not be declined registration because they haven't administered a contract, but will because they cannot demonstrate the knowledge and aptitude necessary to undertake that work as an architect.

#### **Experience Area F - Practice Conduct and Office Management**

Here we anticipate that you will simply reflect on the practices and processes followed by the offices in which you have worked with reference to both the Code of Minimum Standards of Ethical Conduct contained in the Architects Rules 2006 and the various other legislative requirements relating to the business of architecture.

You will find published practice notes invaluable as well.