

June 2013

Information for new architects

This paper lays out important information for newly-registered architects, including their obligations and entitlements.

Obligations

The purpose of registration is to ensure that architects are competent and reputable, so that the public can rely on them. To this end, in all your dealings as an architect you should comply with the **Code of Minimum Standards of Ethical Conduct for Registered Architects**, (attachment 1) which binds you to a standard of conduct that sets you apart.

The code is taken from the Registered Architects Rules 2006 and covers your relationships with:

- the public
- your clients
- the profession
- other Registered Architects.

Also, have a look at the New Zealand Registered Architects' Board's **Vision for Architecture in New Zealand**, expressed in the box below. Contributing to it is a great thing to do.

A Vision for Architecture in New Zealand

The task of architecture is to lead the way in terms of what the built environment can and should be. This goes beyond designing for function, essential though that is. Insofar as architecture articulates the national imagination, it contributes to nation building. If the built environment in New Zealand is the best that it can be, then it contributes to the realisation of this nation's potential.

The New Zealand Registered Architects Board is tasked with determining who can be Registered Architects. In doing this, the Board is mindful of the broader contribution that the profession makes to New Zealand.

To assist the public know who is an architect, your name is now available on the online New Zealand Architects Register, which you can view at www.nzrab.org.nz.

Entitlements

As a Registered Architect you are now entitled to call yourself a Registered Architect and to quote your registration number, which is on your Certificate of Registration. Under the current law, others can design buildings, but they can't call themselves architects as well. However, you can!

We suggest you should tell people about this.

For starters, you can now sign your letters this way:

Bill Brown
Registered Architect 984

or if you prefer:

Bill Brown, Reg Arch.

And, if you want, you can add a visual element to your letters, business cards and so on, like this:



If you want to download this special logo for Registered Architects, and see the rules for its use, go to <http://www.nzrab.org.nz> and look under the “For Architects” section.

Please don't put:

Bill Brown, NZRAB

That implies you are an NZRAB employee or Board member.

Getting connected

As a newly-registered architect, you need to access online information specifically available for you.

To do this, please follow these steps.

1. Firstly, you need a password. Go to www.nzrab.org.nz. Click on “Architect’s Login”. A page then opens entitled “Architect’s Login”. Click on “Generate a password”. A password will be emailed to you.
2. Once you have the password, go back to “Architect’s Login”. In the page that opens enter your registration number or email address and your new password. Click “login” and a page entitled “Welcome Architect” will open. You are now in a part of the NZRAB website that is exclusive to you individually.
3. On the “Welcome Architect” page there are four separate resources available for you. They are:
 - a. a link to your exclusive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) page which tells you about training opportunities (more on that later)
 - b. information about your CPD points target (more on that later)
 - c. a link is to your individual data, which you can amend
 - d. a facility where you can indicate to potential clients the regions in which you are available to do work.
4. To make sure the information on the Register about you up to date, once you have your password, log in and, if need be, make changes to your contact details.

5. You should change your first computer-generated password into something easier to remember. Do this by dropping its replacement into your personal details in the two fields above your date of birth.
6. You have a choice about whether or not your personal contact details are visible on the New Zealand Architects Register. To change this, click “yes” or “no” for “Consent to show contact details” under “Additional Information”. You can also choose to have your contact details visible but not your email address if you are worried about spam. If you link to a practice as your place of work the public can see that, regardless of whether or not you choose to make your contact details public.
7. Don’t forget to “Save” when you have finished.

Staying registered

Annual certificates

To be a Registered Architect you have to hold a current Certificate of Registration. Certificates of Registration are issued annually (July to June). Each year we provide a display certificate for your office and a plastic ID card for your wallet or purse.

In May each year, you will receive by post an invoice for your annual Certificate of Registration for the following financial year. The money that architects pay for their annual certificates makes up about 80 per cent of the NZRAB’s income and pays for most of its day-to-day activities.

Payments can be made by cheque, electronic funds transfer, or credit card at www.nzrab.org.nz.

‘Architects’ who don’t have a current certificate are recorded on the online Register as “expired”.

Competence Reviews

In addition, the law requires that every five years the NZRAB must reconfirm that you are still fit to practise. This is done through a procedure called a Competence Review.

This means every five years you will be sent a form asking you to outline the work you’ve been doing, any study and other professional development activities you’ve done and any other information that you think is relevant. For this reason, it is a good idea to keep good quality records of what you are doing architecturally, both at work and outside it.

The information that you provide will be evaluated and, assuming the evidence is sufficient, a determination made that you are entitled to be registered annually for another five years, after which another Competence Review will be required, and so on.

If, in the end, it is clear that an architect is not coping or is putting clients or the public at risk, then ultimately the NZRAB will decide that the architect’s registration must be cancelled. This is rare.

CPD

For continuing registration architects have to meet two requirements, these being that:

- you are still competent
- you have taken reasonable steps to keep your knowledge and skills up to date.

To assist you keep your knowledge and skills current, the NZRAB operates a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) framework. Architects can use this to undertake professional development activities and have them recognised and recorded.

Then, come your five-yearly Competence Review, you will be able to present a read-out of the CPD you have done.

The CPD programme involves:

- scheduled CPD events, seminars and the like which you can attend
- individual professional development activities that you arrange and undertake on your own initiative, such as study that you've done, technical reading and so on, which you then submit to the CPD administrators for recognition.

As indicated earlier, for each architect a secure individual website is provided which:

- advises you of upcoming scheduled CPD events
- allows you to record the CPD you've done
- shows you how much CPD you've done so far.

You access your secure CPD website through the same "Architect's Login" mentioned before. Then click on "Your CPD".

As part of this, architects are assigned a CPD points target, 1000 points in most cases depending on when they were first registered. The target is NOT compulsory, but it gives you something to aim for. Architects who meet their CPD points targets over five years are deemed to have "taken reasonable steps to stay current". Architects who do not reach their CPD points targets are assessed in terms of whether the CPD and any other professional development they have done was consistent with the kind of work they do as an architect.

Your CPD points target has built into it a spread of CPD activities to match the nature of the architectural process – thus included in the 1000 points target are at least 100 CPD points for each of the subjects of Design, Documentation, Project Management and Practice Management, and what we call "Core" CPD which is CPD relating to things of relevance to all architects.

In addition, many architects join architects' support groups, known as Practice Support Groups or In-Office Training Groups. These are forums for sharing information, experiences and ideas. Participants find them very useful.

Generally people starting out in their architectural careers especially appreciate the CPD programme. Doing CPD validates an architect's professionalism.

The NZRAB has contracted the administration of the CPD programme to the New Zealand Institute of Architects Inc.

Voluntary suspension

At any time you are entitled, if you wish, to put your registration on hold for up to five years. This facility is often used by people raising families or working overseas. We recommend you take the full five-year period, as circumstances often change and you can reactivate your registration at any time.

To do this, there is a form to fill out. Being in voluntary suspension means you cannot practice as an architect and you do not have to pay for annual Certificates of Registration. However, while in voluntary suspension you can still do and record CPD and we recommend this where it's practical.

Your registration can be reactivated at any time. The one exception to this is if a Competence Review is due during the period of voluntary suspension. If that's the case, when you want to reactivate your registration you have to undertake a Competence Review first, as you would have done earlier if you hadn't been in voluntary suspension. Also, in that situation the Competence Review has to involve a meeting with two registration assessors and a fee has to be paid.

Discipline procedures

The NZRAB is tasked with investigating complaints against architects and the NZRAB has statutory powers to discipline architects, if need be. Primarily this is to protect the public, but it protects the profession's reputation as well.

The Registered Architects Act 2005 stipulates what complaints can be about. The main reasons are that an architect has been negligent or incompetent, or has breached the Code of Minimum Standards of Ethical Conduct for Registered Architects (attachment 1). Complaints about technical competence or the quality of the work done are rare. Mostly the problems are about inadequate control of a project's budget and reflect misunderstandings or poor communications.

How does the complaints procedure work?

Complaints must be in writing. When a complaint is received the architect is advised. The complaint is initially assessed in terms of whether the issue is substantive. Assuming it is, then it is investigated to determine whether a formal disciplinary hearing is required.

The NZRAB can apply a number of penalties where an architect is found wanting. As a last resort, the NZRAB Board can cancel an architect's registration.

Communications

The main way the NZRAB communicates with architects is via email-based newsletters. These are prepared ad hoc as events occur. Some things, such as invoices, are sent by mail.

Also the NZRAB's website (www.nzrab.org.nz) is very important. On it, you can find:

- links to your CPD and registration data
- a mechanism for paying fees by credit card
- reports on past discipline cases and the lessons to be learnt

- information about how the complaints procedure works
- information about continuing registration requirements
- press statements and newsletters
- the New Zealand Architects Register
- profiles of NZRAB Board members and staff
- accountability documents, such as the Registered Architects Act 2005, Registered Architects Rules 2006, the NZRAB's strategic plan, annual reports and NZRAB Board minutes.

The New Zealand Registered Architects Board

The NZRAB is a statutory entity created by the Registered Architects Act 2005 and Registered Architects Rules 2006. The NZRAB is tasked with registering, monitoring and, if need be, disciplining architects. The NZRAB became fully operational on 1 July 2006, when it replaced the Architects Education and Registration Board.

The NZRAB Board itself has eight members, half being nominated to the Minister by the NZIA. The NZIA is the architects' professional association and is separate from the NZRAB.

The NZRAB's offices are in Wellington and the staff are available to help.

For further information contact:

New Zealand Registered Architects Board
PO Box 11106, Manners Street, Wellington

Office Address:

Level 5, 79 Boulcott St, Wellington

tel: +64 4 471 1336, email: info@nkrab.org.nz

Attachment 1

Code of Minimum Standards of Ethical Conduct for Registered Architects

(Taken from the Registered Architects Rules 2006)

Standards related to the public

46. *Not misrepresent himself or herself*

A Registered Architect must not represent or promote himself or herself, his or her business, or his or her professional services in a false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive manner.

47. *Uphold the law*

A Registered Architect must abide by the professional codes of ethics and conduct and laws in force in the countries or jurisdictions in which he or she provides professional services.

Standards related to the client

48. *Exercise unprejudiced and unbiased judgment*

A Registered Architect must exercise unprejudiced and unbiased judgment.

49. *Care and diligence*

A Registered Architect must perform his or her professional work with due care and diligence.

50. *Terms of appointment*

A Registered Architect must not undertake professional work unless the Registered Architect and the client have agreed the terms of the appointment, which may include but need not be limited to:

- (a) scope of work
- (b) allocation of responsibilities
- (c) any limitation of responsibilities
- (d) fee, or method of calculating it, and terms of trade
- (e) any provision for termination
- (f) provision for professional indemnity insurance.

51. *Remuneration and inducements*

A Registered Architect must:

- (a) be remunerated solely by the fees and benefits specified in the appointment or employment agreement; and
- (b) not offer any inducements to procure an appointment.

52. *Confidentiality of client's affairs*

- (1) A Registered Architect must observe the confidentiality of the client's affairs and must not disclose confidential information without the prior consent of the client.
- (2) Subclause (1) does not apply if the Registered Architect is required by law to disclose that information.

53. *Conflict of interest*

A Registered Architect must disclose to clients, owners, or contractors significant circumstances known to the Registered Architect that could be construed as creating

a conflict of interest. The Registered Architect must ensure that the conflict does not interfere with the Registered Architect's duty to render unprejudiced and unbiased judgment.

Standards related to profession

54. Act with honesty and fairness

A Registered Architect must pursue his or her professional activities with honesty and fairness.

Standards related to other Registered Architects

55. Acknowledge colleagues' contributions

A Registered Architect must:

- (a) build his or her professional reputation on the merits of his or her own performance; and
- (b) not claim as his or her own intellectual property and ideas of other Registered Architects.

56. Not maliciously or unfairly criticise

A Registered Architect must not maliciously or unfairly criticise or attempt to discredit another Registered Architect's work.

57. Conflicts of professional appointment

A Registered Architect must, on being approached to undertake professional work for which he or she knows, or by reasonable inquiry ascertains, that another Registered Architect has a current appointment with the same client, notify the other registered Architect.

58. Giving an opinion on the work of another Registered Architect

A Registered Architect must, when appointed to give an opinion on the work of another Registered Architect, notify the other Registered Architect unless the appointed Registered Architect is aware of any current or pending litigation concerning the work that is the subject of the opinion.