



RIAS

The Royal Incorporation
of Architects in Scotland

**Accreditation
in
Conservation Architecture**

Pre-application Mentoring Scheme Guidance Notes

The RIAS Pre-application Mentoring Arrangement Guidance notes for Mentor and Mentee

Please read these notes in conjunction with the RIAS Accreditation in Conservation Architecture Guidance Notes and Application Forms.

Who is the RIAS Pre-application Mentoring Arrangement for?

The RIAS Pre-application Mentoring Arrangement was put in place to help individuals interested in obtaining conservation architecture accreditation, but who do not have an accredited colleague within their practice to help guide them, or who have set up as a sole practitioner. The individual must already possess skills in relation to conservation of the built environment.

The Pre-application Mentoring Arrangement does not equate to tutoring. The objective is to guide the mentee on case study presentation, what information is missing and needs to be built on, and once the mentor feels the competencies have been met, suggest to the candidate that in the mentor's opinion, they are ready to submit an application.

Candidates who wish to take part in the mentoring arrangement must be registered with the Architects Registration Board and be a RIAS member.

What level of conservation related experience do I require....

...before I can apply for RIAS Conservation Accreditation?

Applications are invited from practising architects with significant (five to ten years plus) detailed conservation experience. Those applying for RIAS Conservation Accreditation would generally be expected to have been involved in the full range of work on a project, from briefing, getting to know the building, understanding its significance, assessing the work required and materials to be used, whether any specialists need to be involved e.g. paint analysis, mortar analysis, preparing drawings and/or overseeing the production of drawings, preparing a specification, briefing other design team members and being involved on site, inspecting the work, ensuring the contractor and his labour carry out the work to the required specification, and dealing with any unforeseen items that arise on site. Applications for Conservation Accreditation are accepted from architects who feel they meet the above criteria and can demonstrate this via the required number of case studies, and who typically and generally have more than four years post Part 3 experience. There may be exceptions to this, dependent on circumstances, and the scheme administrator can be contacted for further information. Those applying for a mentor may lack some of the skills or experience listed above, but could expect to work towards having the full range in time for submitting a formal application.

...before I can request a RIAS Pre-application Mentor?

Those considering the RIAS Pre-application Mentoring Arrangement must have a genuine interest in architectural history, traditional building techniques and conservation theory. They should have built up knowledge of traditional materials and repair techniques, have experience working on relevant conservation projects at design stage and on site, and be able to demonstrate the use of conservation theory in relation to alterations and interventions. Their intention must be to work towards becoming a RIAS Conservation Accredited Architect.

It would generally be expected that a candidate for mentoring would fit one of the following set of

circumstances.

- The candidate believes they are close to meeting the criteria required to submit a conservation accreditation application but requires reassurance or clarification on some aspect of the competencies to be met.
- The candidate requires early advice to help determine if their interpretation of a suitable case study / evidence in relation to competencies, is indeed correct.

What is a 'relevant' conservation project?

Conservation architecture entails work to existing buildings or new work which has a significant impact on an existing building or its setting. There is a presumption that conservation architecture is primarily concerned with listed buildings, but it does include conservative works to unlisted structures. Its objectives are economic and environmental as well as purely cultural. Conservation architecture is concerned with making old buildings useful and sound as well as with the retention of their historical qualities for the benefit of future generations.

Case studies for conservation architecture projects should therefore be able to show how the mentee / applicant has considered the works to the existing building (or new works affecting an existing building) from a conservative perspective; investigating the historical narrative and setting, the approach to design, addressing the construction and materials whilst conveying the principles they have followed. They do not need to be large in scale and could be of a vernacular nature or involve a pre-1919 tenement or house of traditional construction or a modern movement building. They must demonstrate that the mentee / applicant has understood the construction and any problems which have arisen and how these are resolved in accordance with sound conservation practice.

How will I benefit from the Pre-application Mentoring arrangement?

The RIAS understand that the accreditation procedure can be daunting where an individual does not have the benefit of knowing a peer who has already been through the process. The Pre-application Mentoring arrangement gives individuals in this situation the opportunity to engage with a suitably qualified mentor to discuss their own circumstances, hear where they would be required to build on aspects of their knowledge / experience / understanding and gauge when they may be considered ready to submit an application.

Taking part in the Pre-application Mentoring arrangement does not guarantee that the application will be successful.

How do I request a Pre-application Mentor?

The first point of contact for the candidate who seeks to be mentored will be with the administrator of the RIAS Conservation Accreditation scheme. The candidate will be issued with the 'Guidance Notes & Application Form' for accreditation in conservation architecture at the accredited level. It is important that the candidate familiarises themselves with the formal application process. This will aid their understanding of what conservation accreditation is and help determine if this route is right for them. If the interested individual feels that they will progress down this route, but would benefit from the insight of a Pre-application Mentor on aspects of their knowledge / theory / experience / skills / personal commitment, then they can

make a request to the scheme administrator. This should be done by email.

Can a request be made at any time of year?

The Pre-application Mentoring scheme is a pilot which will be subject to review. At present there are no set dates for requests and submissions. A Pre-application Mentor will be allocated once a suitable individual has agreed to take part and is available to commence.

Is there a fee to enroll in the Pre-application Mentoring arrangement?

As stated above, the Pre-application Mentoring scheme is a pilot which will be subject to review. Currently there is no fee for taking part in the arrangement, but this will be monitored on a quarterly basis. If administration of the scheme so requires, a fee will be introduced.

How will I communicate with the Pre-application Mentor?

Once a suitable Pre-application Mentor has been secured for the candidate, the administrator will ask the mentee to prepare a body of information to be passed to the mentor for review. Once this has been passed on, the mentor will make contact to agree the preferred method of communication and a mentoring programme. Both parties must be willing to have their email contact details, whether business or personal, shared by the RIAS for the purpose of the mentoring arrangement.

What will I be required to prepare for the Pre-application Mentor?

The body of initial information should include the following -

- Contact email for purpose of mentoring arrangement.
- CV (This should include details of the individual's career, qualifications and further areas of study or professional development).
- Short description of conservation related projects (which may be suitable for expansion into a case study) including role within.
- One draft case study.
- CPD record.

The candidate should be informed that the case study need not be lengthy (maximum 3 pages), or too formal, but should give an indication of their knowledge and experience and how they have responded to the design and construction work of the case study project. The Pre-application Mentor can then guide the candidate on how to adapt this for the formal application process. The candidate will be informed of gaps in their knowledge and experience and guided on how to achieve this with anticipated timescales. The individual should be made aware that the information submitted will be akin to a 'dummy' accreditation case study, and what is provided could form part of the eventual application. The candidate may be in a position to expand on some of the projects listed in the 'short description' and develop these into case studies for an application.

The panel of Assessors and Pre-application Mentors

RIAS Pre-application Mentors will generally be drawn from the panel of RIAS Conservation Accreditation Assessors.

The Pre-application Mentor will advise the candidate when they are of the opinion that the case study(s) meets the criteria required of an application.

The Pre-application Mentor must make the candidate aware that taking part in the Pre-application Mentoring arrangement does not guarantee that any resulting application will be successful. The Pre-application Mentor will not be held liable if the Mentee's subsequent application is not successful.

The Pre-application Mentor cannot be an assessor of the eventual application. The assessors of the formal application will not be aware that the applicant took part in the mentoring arrangement.

The RIAS administrator should be informed by the Pre-application Mentor when the mentoring process has come to an end.

As previously stated, the Pre-application Mentoring scheme is a pilot which will be subject to review.