



THE
ROYAL INCORPORATION
OF ARCHITECTS
IN SCOTLAND

Why use a Chartered Architect?

A client centred service, value for money, freedom from worry and imagination are just some of the reasons why using a chartered architect makes sense.



A client centred service

Architects can provide a service that extends well beyond producing a set of drawings. Adept at identifying the needs and aspirations of their clients, architects will bring their special skills, knowledge and experience to a project.

Value for money

Not only can architects provide value for money, but professional attention to detail will achieve value through the most efficient use of space, and careful selection of materials and finishes. Environmental sensitivity, energy efficiency, low running and maintenance costs can bring extra benefits to your project.

Freedom from worry

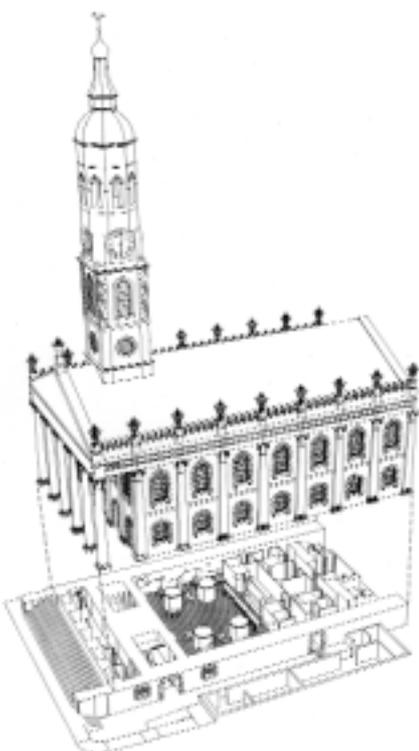
Architects can guide you through the complex procedures of planning permission and building regulations and monitor the builder's programme of works through to completion. RIAS members are obliged to carry professional indemnity insurance.

Imagination

Whether you are looking for tradition or innovation, boldness or understatement, an architect can lift your project out of the ordinary. Anyone can alter a building. It takes an architect to do it with flair, imagination and style.

Undertaking a building project, whatever its scale, can be a daunting experience, but the same basic criteria apply, be it a simple house extension or a large office development. When you use a chartered architect you are employing someone who has undertaken seven years' architectural training, the longest in the building industry. Anyone styling themselves 'building consultant', 'architectural designer', 'plan drawer' and so on is unlikely to be an architect, and does not have comparable skill or knowledge.

This leaflet aims to help potential clients understand the design process and to explain the different stages and costs involved. So before you begin, here is a guide to what lies ahead...



Working with an architect



DEFINITION OF AN ARCHITECT

Before a person can be called an architect he or she will have completed a seven-year course in the design, specification and erection of buildings and passed the professional practice examination which is the final stage of the training.

This permits entry to the list of UK Architects held by the Architects' Registration Board (ARB), and use of the title 'architect'.

Thereafter, application can be made to one or both of the chartered professional bodies listed below which entitle members to use the term 'chartered architect' and the following initials.

ARIAS / FRIAS: Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. **RIBA:** Royal Institute of British Architects. An architect may also be a member of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA) or the Royal Society of Architects in Wales (RSAW).

A chartered architect is obliged to uphold the reputation of the architectural profession and fellow professionals; to carry out work on behalf of clients honourably, independently and efficiently; and to declare any interest which might conflict with the status of an independent consultant architect. Please note that the use of the title 'architect' is protected actively under the Architects' Act 1997 by ARB. If you are in any doubt whether your advisor is a chartered architect member of the RIAS or RIBA, contact the RIAS membership department.

FINDING AN ARCHITECT

The RIAS Clients Advisory Service exists to help you find the right architect for your project. Search our online list of architects to find a practice with the skills you require and use the live links to individual practices websites to see the sort of work they undertake. Call the Clients' Advisory Service direct to request a free copy of our RIAS Directory of Architects' Services containing information on practices across Scotland.

Tel: 0131 229 7545.

Email: cas@rias.org.uk

Website: www.rias.org.uk

SELECT WITH CARE

You are recommended to select your chartered architect with care, perhaps interviewing more than one, to discuss the nature of the project with them in relation to their experience and capacity to take on the project. It will provide you with the opportunity to look at their buildings. Try to match the scale of the project with the staff resources available in the practice.

You must establish that you and your chartered architect are compatible and share a common approach to your project. Time spent at this stage is rarely wasted.

COMMUNICATION

It is important that you and your chartered architect communicate with one another throughout the duration of the appointment. You should keep your chartered architect informed about any matters affecting the brief, the budget and site acquisition. Similarly, your chartered architect should keep you informed on such matters as progress and costs and will usually do so by means of regular reports throughout the design and construction stages. Both you and your chartered architect should be careful to commit yourselves to do only what lies within your skill, power and authority. For example, a chartered architect cannot guarantee to obtain planning permission, but can, and normally does, make the appropriate application.

ARCHITECT/CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

The most successful projects are those which proceed in an atmosphere of understanding and mutual trust. Both you and your chartered architect must reach an understanding of one another's roles and responsibilities. The foundation of that understanding is contained in the RIAS and RIBA appointment documents which are available from the RIAS Bookshops along with the guidance and related documents.

The RIAS recommends that, when the client is an organisation or company, a single person should be appointed with authority to make decisions.

THE AGREEMENT

At the outset of an appointment all chartered architects must agree in writing the terms of their appointment, the services to be provided and their fees. The standard conditions and model documents are designed to assist in recording agreement.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Construction Design & Management (CDM) regulations came into effect on 31 March 1995 and require you, for all but very small projects, to appoint a planning supervisor to co-ordinate a health and safety plan for the project and to ensure that you are provided with a health and safety file at its conclusion. Chartered architects are some of the most able to take on this role, which should be subject to a distinct agreement. Your chartered architect can advise you further, if necessary.



BUDGET FOR THE PROJECT

Construction cost and overall budget for the project are not the same. The overall budget will include all professional and legal fees and expenses, the statutory charges for applications for planning consent and building warrants, a contingent sum for unforeseen events and other costs such as furniture, equipment, land acquisition, finance charges and VAT, in addition to the construction costs.

FEE OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Architects' fees are commonly calculated on a percentage or lump-sum basis, although some work may be time charged by agreement. Expenses may be included in the agreed fee or charged separately.

PERCENTAGE BASIS

In this method, an architect's fees are expressed as a percentage of the total construction cost, i.e. the cost as certified by the architect of the works, including site works, executed under a building contract. Before fees can be estimated, client and architect need to establish the services to be provided, the approximate construction budget and the nature of the work.

LUMP SUM BASIS

Lump sums are best used where the scope of the work can be clearly defined from the outset. It is necessary to define the parameters of services – i.e. time, project size and cost – where applicable, so that if these are varied more than a stated amount, the lump sum itself may be varied.

TIME-CHARGED BASIS

This basis is best used where the scope of work cannot be reasonably foreseen or where services cannot be related to the amount of construction. It may be wise to set an upper limit on fees to be incurred, perhaps on a staged basis. Records of time spent on services will be made available to clients on reasonable request.

COMPETITIVE FEE TENDERING

The Incorporation strongly recommends clients to select on quality issues such as demonstrable design skills, management expertise and track record. If fee price is an important factor, this must be weighed carefully against these qualitative aspects to ensure that best value overall will not be sacrificed. A client leaflet is available to assist.

The following notes refer to instances where the architect is the design team leader, working directly for the client, and where works are carried out by a third party contractor. For other forms of procurement, seek specialist advice.

THE BRIEF

At the beginning of each project, its purpose and intentions, together with its schedule of accommodation, site and budget are formed into what is known as a brief. If you do not have a pre-formed brief, the chartered architect will develop it with you.

It should be as thorough as possible to help avoid problems later. Initial decisions in the design stage will include formalising which rooms need to be adjacent, where stairs and fire escapes are needed, which floors need carpets, what the outlook will be from different rooms, how deliveries are to arrive ... the list can seem endless!

During the design process the chartered architect will keep coming back to you with plans for discussion, revision and approval. Use may be made of drawings, perspectives, models, written descriptions, computer drawings or simulations to explain the scheme.

Alterations become progressively more expensive as a project develops and once building work has begun, changes can be catastrophic and very expensive.

THE DESIGN TEAM

For complex projects the Design Team will include a number of professional disciplines – the architect, quantity surveyor, structural, electrical and mechanical engineers are the most usual contributors. All design team fees are normally paid for separately in addition to the architect's fee. If an architect's practice is appointed as Lead Consultant, it will co-ordinate all the information provided by the rest of the team and incorporate that into the design and production drawings.

THE COST PROCESS

At the end of the design process, a number of contractors usually receive a 'Bill of Quantities', together with a set of drawings with which to produce a cost for the project.

The Bill lists all the items and activities required to build the project as shown on the drawings (e.g. lay 100 bricks here, build in 50 windows there) and the number of items listed depends on the scale of project. Each contractor puts his price against each item on the Bill, which is based upon an estimate of how long it will take to carry out each item and the cost of materials required, together with added sums for overheads and a percentage for profit.

The level of profit will be influenced by how each contractor expects his competitors to price and thus there is no 'proper price' for a building: only what a given contractor decides at one particular time.

To estimate how much a building will cost at an early stage in the design requires skill, experience and a knowledge of the market. Absolute precision is impossible – the less information on which a cost is based, the greater the degree of tolerance required.

SMALL PROJECTS

For small domestic projects and alterations, a Bill of Quantities may not be necessary, and tender pricing can be based on drawings and specification only. The architect will advise on the level of additional professional advice (if any) that may be appropriate. Structural alterations, however minor, may require a consulting engineer's certificate to be submitted with the Building Warrant, and you will be advised accordingly.

The design process



WORK STAGES

Chartered architects usually consider projects in terms of work stages. The investment of effort is often assessed as follows:

Stage C	20%
Stage D	20%
Stage E	15%
Stage F	20%
Stages G to L	25%
Total	100%

Appraisal (A/B)

The aim of these stages is to ascertain whether the scheme is feasible on the site suggested and to identify any fundamental objections to the scheme, e.g. planning restrictions. These stages will not be required for all projects and they should, therefore, be charged on a time basis.

Outline Proposals (C)

Sketch drawings will seek to interpret the brief and to identify a possible solution. A firm set of outline drawings, sometimes called final sketch plans, will be produced for your approval once initial consultations with statutory authorities have taken place and the brief has been fully clarified.

Detailed Proposals (D)

The outline design is developed to show the appearance of a building, how fixtures and fittings are incorporated and how important details of construction are intended to work. Your chartered architect will check that the design proposals are within the agreed budget and in harmony with your stated objectives as regards quality, long term maintenance and performance. Your chartered architect will provide the information for design and layout to accompany your application to the local authority planning department. Information of a legal nature required by a local authority, e.g. site boundary, rights of access etc., should be referred to your lawyer. Your approval of the design drawings marks the completion of the primary design stages.

Final Proposals (E)

The application to the local authority for a building warrant requires the chartered architect (and consulting engineer) to submit drawings (and calculations) which show how proposals

comply with the current Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations. Construction is not normally permitted to commence without statutory approval.

Production Information and Tender Documentation (F/G)

Once the building warrant is issued and the technical drawings are complete, the way is clear to prepare tender documents. They usually comprise the contract drawings, the specification of materials and components, the Bill of Materials and the Conditions of Contract. The latter two are normally in a standard format and define the obligations of the parties to the contract, namely yourself as the 'employer' and the contractor.

The Building Contract (H to L)

The contractor consents to organise and direct the building work in accordance with his contractual obligations, and to supervise the work so as to achieve satisfactory completion on time. In classic forms of procurement, the chartered architect's role as contract administrator is to make periodic site visits to inspect the general progress of the work, to issue instructions to the contractor and, if necessary, to reject obviously unsatisfactory work. If you wish closer inspection of the contractor's work then you can employ a clerk of works, or come to an agreement whereby the chartered architect makes more frequent visits to the site. Your chartered architect will report to you on matters of progress, on any unforeseen circumstances on site, any variations in budget or programme, and will issue periodic certificates for stage payments due to the contractor.

CARE OF THE BUILDING

Buildings need proper maintenance. If they are to remain in good condition, they require regular inspection, especially of all external elements. Your chartered architect can help you to plan a sequence of inspection and maintenance procedures especially for those parts of a building exposed to the rigours of our climate. If you so wish, such help can include the provision of a maintenance manual. Remember that minor problems can become major defects if not attended to.

FURTHER INFORMATION

When you use a chartered architect you are protected; skills have to be exercised to the standards established by the professional body, in professional conduct and in the procedures by which your appointment is executed.

A chartered architect is obliged to uphold the reputation of the profession and fellow professionals; to carry out work on behalf of clients honourably, independently and efficiently; and to declare any interest which might conflict with the status of an independent consultant architect.

The RIAS is willing to assist those with any difficulties that may arise concerning an architect's appointment. However, serious complaints regarding conduct should be addressed to the Architects' Registration Board (ARB)
8 Weymouth Street
London W1W 5BU
Tel: 020 7580 5861
Email: info@arb.org.uk
Web: www.arb.org.uk

We hope that this has proved helpful. For further advice and information contact:

RIAS Clients' Advisory Service
15 Rutland Square
Edinburgh EH1 2BE
Tel: 0131 229 7545
Email: cas@rias.org.uk
Website: www.rias.org.uk



The RIAS represents
the RIBA in Scotland

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