

Edinburgh Group Terms of Reference

Intention

Representing a range of professional bodies, and related interests, it is mutually agreed that the established Edinburgh Group (the Group) will continue to develop the work and principles as initially ratified by the integrated suite of Accreditation documentation prepared in 2003. The Group's intention is to encourage a continuing common approach towards the development, monitoring, and promotion of historic environment conservation accreditation schemes for individual practitioners on a pan-professional basis. In doing so, the Group will acknowledge the wider conservation context and related initiatives likely to occur in the sector. The Council on Training in Architectural Conservation (COTAC) will enable and facilitate the Group.

Participation

The Group will be inclusive of all relevant professional institutes and bodies that administer conservation accreditation schemes across the British Isles. It will also accept future representation from other bodies that devise and promote a related accreditation scheme in accordance with the Group's principles and approach. As at November 2015, Edinburgh Group participation will include representation from:

- Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC)
- Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT)
- Conservation Accreditation Register for Engineers (CARE)
- Engineers Ireland (EI)
- Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)
- Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS)
- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
- Royal Society of Architects in Wales (RSAW)
- Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA)
- The Institute of Conservation (ICON)
- The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI)

Attached at Annex A is a list of Participating Key Client Interests, and Interested Parties previously represented at Group meetings. Those listed will be invited to participate in Group meetings. Individual Professional Observers, with a specific interest in accreditation developments, will also be encouraged to participate.

Group Principles

The underlying principle will be to help assure commissioning clients that accredited practitioners will have been determined “competent” to practice in conservation work and activities in their own discipline. This competence should be in accordance with the published ‘1993 ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines’ and the ‘2013 ICOMOS CIF Capacity Building’ intentions; and through the peer-review processes of their respective accreditation scheme. In appropriate official grant-aided circumstances the accredited practitioners’ assessment schemes and procedures should also be in accordance with the official UK Home Countries Protocol dated December 2016 [attached Annex B]

In pursuing the Group’s principles, it will operate with a pan-professional uniformity across the range of historic environment accreditation schemes to assist in:

- Enabling the various professional institutes and bodies address their disciplines’ accreditation needs
- Helping ensure a consistency in the approach, the standards used, and the defined outcomes of initial applications and subsequent re-accreditations
- Refining and monitoring the dependability of the various assessment processes
- Maintaining transparency and accountability in the processes
- Increasing the number of practitioners eligible for accreditation
- Maintaining a formal method of approach relative to deferral/refusal
- Monitoring the introduction and development of structured support CPD programmes
- Encouraging the creation of a pan-professional data-base of all accredited individuals
- Promoting the endorsed lists of accredited practitioners.

Complaints

Whilst the collective Group aims to promote a mutual influence and direction across the range of accreditation schemes on offer, each participating profession and body will maintain its own approach to ensure appropriate professional standards are upheld; that effective monitoring of their scheme is pursued; and that practitioners operate ethically in accordance with their profession or body's Code of Conduct. Each will also be responsible for dealing with any associated appeals and complaints involved in upholding the quality and relevance of their scheme.

COTAC CPD Support

In support of the Group, COTAC will maintain and deliver its on-line 5-Unit www.understandingconservation.org support website. This site will continue to provide a level of structured CPD support to assist in the personal development of practitioners to help them gain accredited status. This site will be supported by additional conservation knowledge, learning materials, and other initiatives delivered through the www.cotac.org.uk website. Both websites, and related COTAC programmes, will incorporate, and link across, the framework of the 14 1993 ICOMOS '*Education and Training Guidelines*': 5a) – 5n) [See: <http://www.icomos.org/en/support-us/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/187-guidelines-for-education-and-training-in-the-conservation-of-monuments-ensembles-and-sites>], and the 2013 ICOMOS CIF International Training Committee '*Principles for Capacity Building through Education and Training in Safeguarding and Integrated Conservation of Cultural Heritage*' intentions. [See: http://cif.icomos.org/pdf_docs/CIF%20Meetings/Guidelines/ICOMOS_CIF_PrinciplesCapacity_EN_20130930.pdf]

In an integrated approach, COTAC's CPD web-based activities and delivery programmes will fall into two categories: -

- Support for practitioners and others to become 'Aware of' historic environment conservation matters
- Support for more advanced practitioner 'Skilled in' CPD needs following accreditation.

Annex A: Related Body Interests in Edinburgh Group Activities

Participating Key Client Interest Bodies

Regular Participating Key Client Interests Bodies in the Group will continue to include representation from:

- Cadw
- Church of England (CoE)
- Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltach (DAHG)
- English Heritage (EH)
- Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)
- Historic England (HE)
- Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
- Historic Royal Palaces (HRP)
- National Trust (NT)
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (DOENIEA)
- Office of Public Works (OPW)

Previous Participating Bodies

Previously, participating bodies attending Edinburgh Group meetings have included:

- Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE)
- Building Research Establishment (BRE)
- Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
- Chartered Institution of Building Service Engineers (CIBSE)
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA)
- Conservation Course Directors Forum (CCDF)
- International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
- Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- University of East London (UCL)
- Centre for Conservation Studies University of York (CCS)

Annex B: Home Countries Accreditation Requirements Protocol: December 2016

Requirement by the UK Home Countries Heritage Bodies for the lead professional role on their repair grant schemes to have conservation accreditation

Department for Communities Northern Ireland, Historic Environment Service (Cadw), Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland support the requirement for an applicant for their repair grants to employ a lead professional advisor with relevant specialist conservation knowledge, ability and experience.

The lead professional advisor is required to deliver a range of services relating to repair grants which are described in the grant application information. These include analysis of condition, investigations, planning and specifying the work, and inspecting and certifying the work while it is in progress and after it is completed.

To be recognised as eligible to be the lead professional advisor on their repair grants an individual needs to satisfy the UK Home Countries Heritage Bodies that:

- i. Their professional training and competences will enable the delivery of the services required of the lead professional in their grant schemes. &
- ii. Their conservation accreditation scheme meets the following criteria:
 - Accreditation of individuals rather than companies or practices
 - Schemes should be open to all suitably qualified and experienced members of the relevant professional disciplines
 - Assessment of a verifiable record of work carried out demonstrating experience and competence
 - Assessment by suitably experienced, impartial assessors against agreed criteria together with reassessment on a regular basis
 - The use of the ICOMOS Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites
 - An ethical and linked disciplinary framework to ensure that standards are observed and maintained

Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland both operate this requirement on their repair grants. Cadw will introduce the requirement from January 2018. From April 2017, the Historic Environment Division of the Northern Ireland Department for Communities will have the same requirement for proposals seeking support of £10,000 or more from its Historic Environment Fund.

Background

Conservation accreditation schemes for professionals are developed and operated by professional bodies and independent organisations. Each scheme has its own application and assessment process. Becoming accredited involves submitting evidence of an individual's experience and competence, which is assessed by suitably experienced and impartial assessors. Most schemes use the International Council on Monuments and Sites' (ICOMOS) Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites as the basis for their assessment of candidates' experience. However, the schemes vary in their entry and re-accreditation requirements.

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