



Future Trends: Architect's Profession

CPD Providers Network Forum

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22 October 2025





Building Safety
Climate Change
Ethical Practice
Artificial Intelligence



Building Safety

Designer's Duties

“Any person carrying out any design work must take all reasonable steps to ensure the design work carried out by them (and by any workers under their control) is planned, managed and monitored so that the design is such that if the building work to which the design relates were built in accordance with that design the building work would be in compliance with all relevant requirements.”

Designer's Duties

- Some of these duties can be carried out by simple conversations and regular clear communications with other dutyholders, following standard project management processes.
- The rest are the core design function that architects, who work through all stages of domestic projects, should be doing anyway.
- These duties codify best practice design process into statutory requirements with an increased focus on compliance.
- Compliant specification information is critical.

Who is a Designer?

“designer” means any person (including a client, contractor or other person referred to in Part 2A of these Regulations) who in the course of a business —

(a) carries out any design work, or

(b) arranges for, or instructs, any person under their control to do so.

“design work” means design of any building work.

Does your advice change the compliance risk profile of the project?

Are Product Manufacturers Designers?

If you design any bespoke products or assemblies or provide advice about the applicability of one of your products in a specific project, you are likely to be a designer.

This does not change anything about your responsibility and could be a useful additional service – we know some of you are doing, or attempting to do this already

What about insurance?

Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities

Complete and compliant designs require thorough responsibility planning.

“There is ambiguity over where responsibility lies, exacerbated by a level of fragmentation within the industry, and precluding robust ownership of accountability.”

Dame Judith Hackitt

RIBA/NBS Design Responsibility Matrix

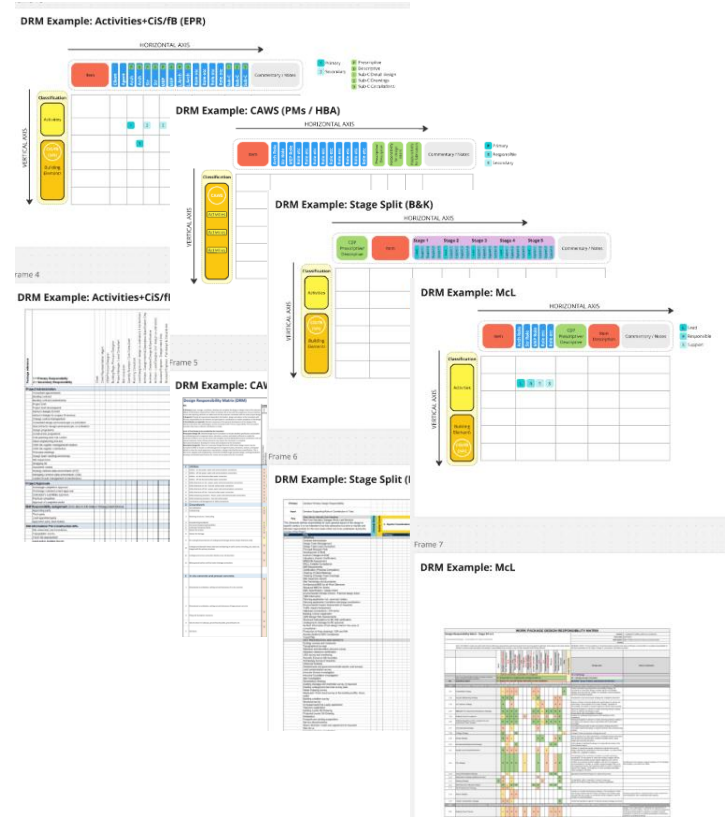
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Complete Design Responsibility Matrix

A design responsibility matrix (DRM) sets out responsibility for the design of each element then system at each stage of the Plan of Work and to what level of detail or specification level.

Legislative duties now make this clarity even more critical from the outset.

BSRIA, CIOB, IStructE, RICS and RIBA are developing a standard pre-filled DRM.



Design Responsibility Matrix - Development



Information Gathering

Q3 25 - Q1 26

Matrix development

Plan of Work
Guidance

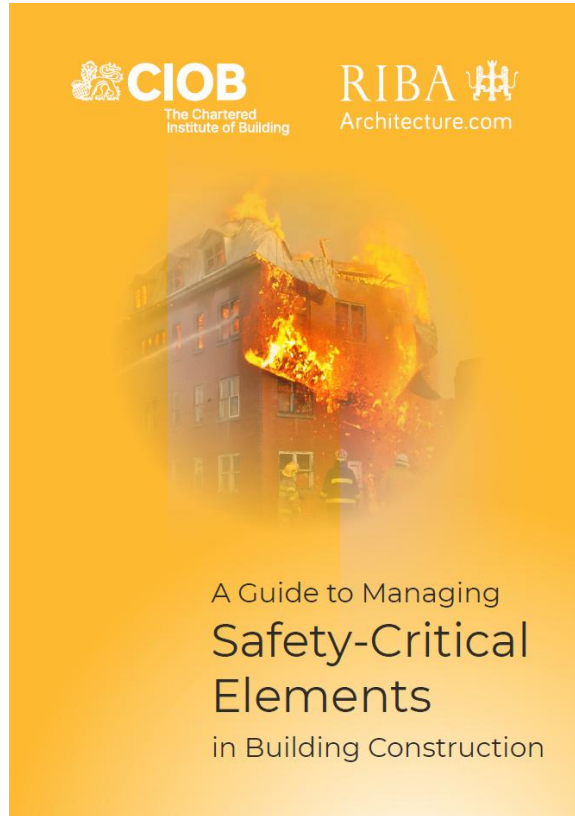
Q1 26

Launch pilot DRM

TBC

Pilot Test reviews, consultations, edits and
relaunch (with PoW Guidance)

Products Critical to Safe Construction

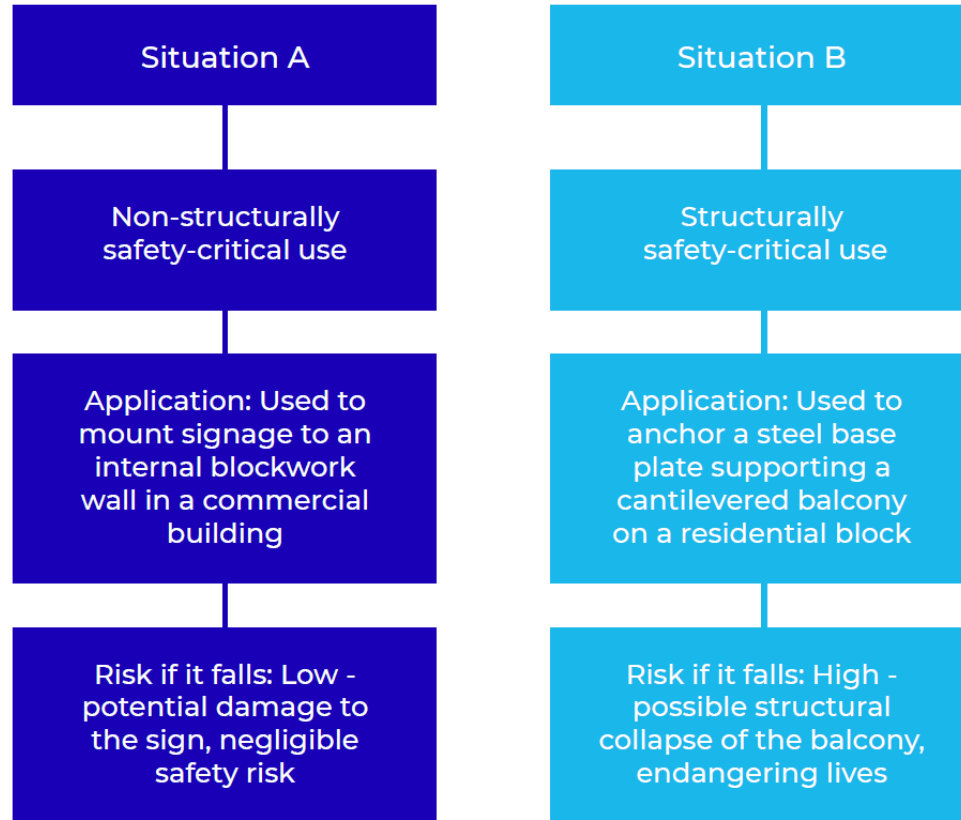


Products Critical to Safe Construction

This new guide takes the process to the next level of detail and concentrates on **structural** and **fire safety**:

- Identification of elements that are critical to safe construction
- Listing of the relevant systems and products forming those elements
- Evaluation of the risks (HAZID process)
- Assessment of supporting compliance and certifications
- Communication with the supply chain
- Verification of the installed system
- Maintenance of records and any signoffs

When are Products Critical to Safe Construction?

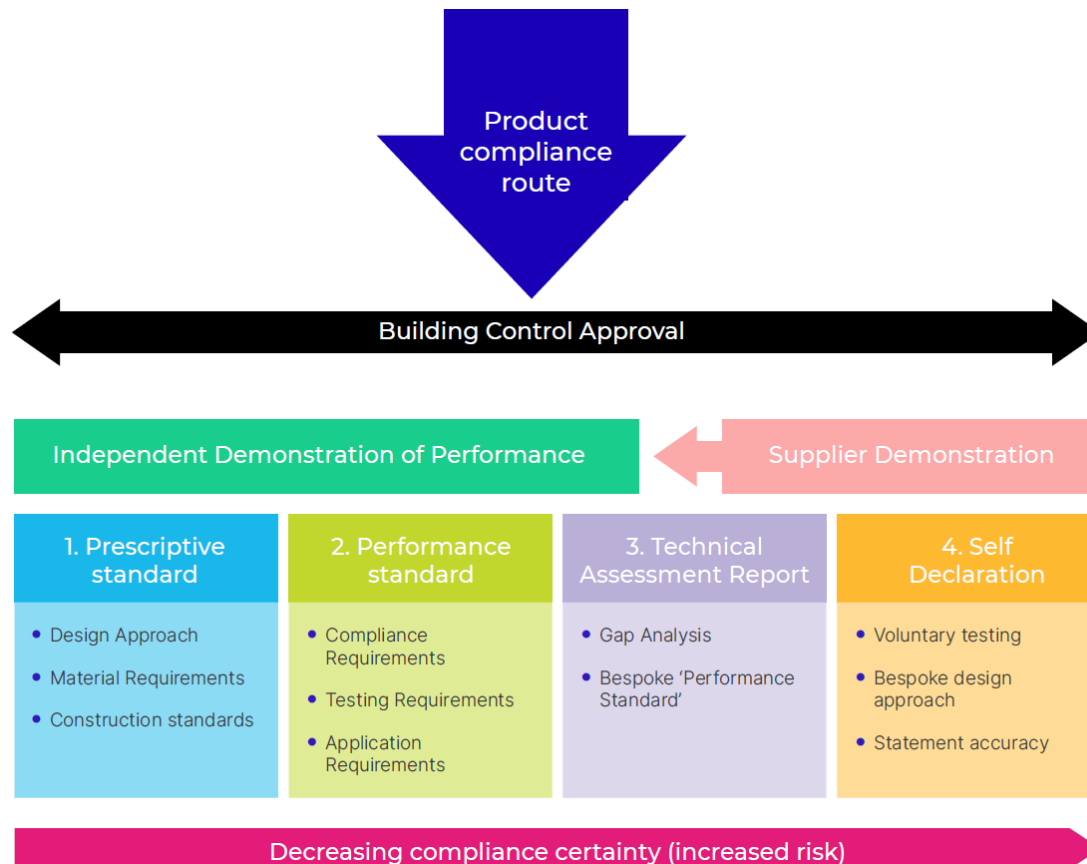


Product compliance

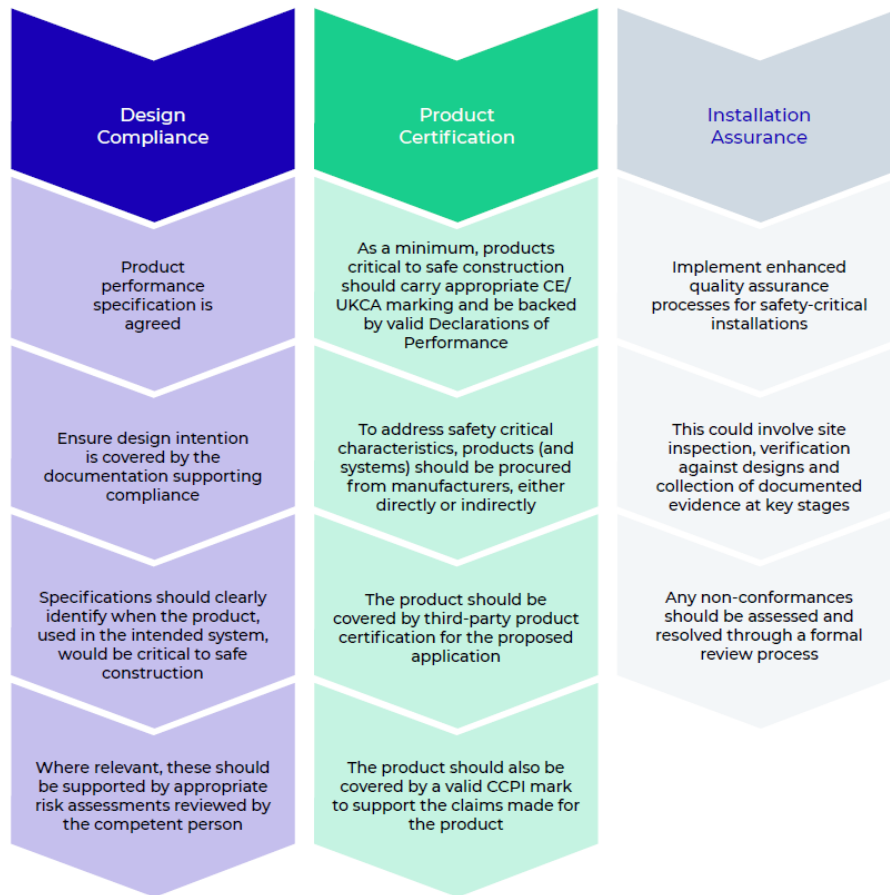
Possible means of demonstrating compliance with UK Building Regulations would be:

- Third-party product certification
- Test report
- Technical assessment (assessment in lieu of testing)
- Declaration of Performance or Declaration of Conformity
- Calculations by qualified, competent professional
- Data published by trade associations
- Manufacturer's published information

Product compliance hierarchy



Fire Safety Product Assessment



Typical compliance questions

- Is the product covered by a valid CE and/or UKCA mark?
- Is the respective Declaration of Conformity and/or Declaration of Performance available publicly?
- Is the product covered by third-party product certification?
- Is that certification publicly available?
- Is the certification a UKAS Accredited scheme?
- Does the scope of the certification cover the intended application? -
- Does the certification scope meet the intended design needs? -
If not, how do you intend to show compliance with the specific needs of the project?



Climate Change

Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard

The UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard will enable our industry to verify built assets as Net Zero Carbon in line with the UK's climate targets.



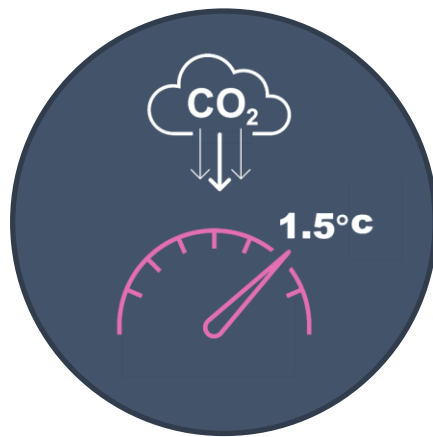
Rule book



Sectoral



Carbon and Energy



Science-led

NZCBS Technical Requirements

Limits are set for:



Upfront Carbon



Operational Energy



Fossil Fuel Free



District Heating and Cooling Networks



Refrigerants



Heating Delivered

Targets are set for:



On-site
Renewable
Electricity
Generation

There is an
optional reporting



Offsetting

There are reporting
requirements for:



Life Cycle
Embodied Carbon



Operational Water
Use



Electricity Demand

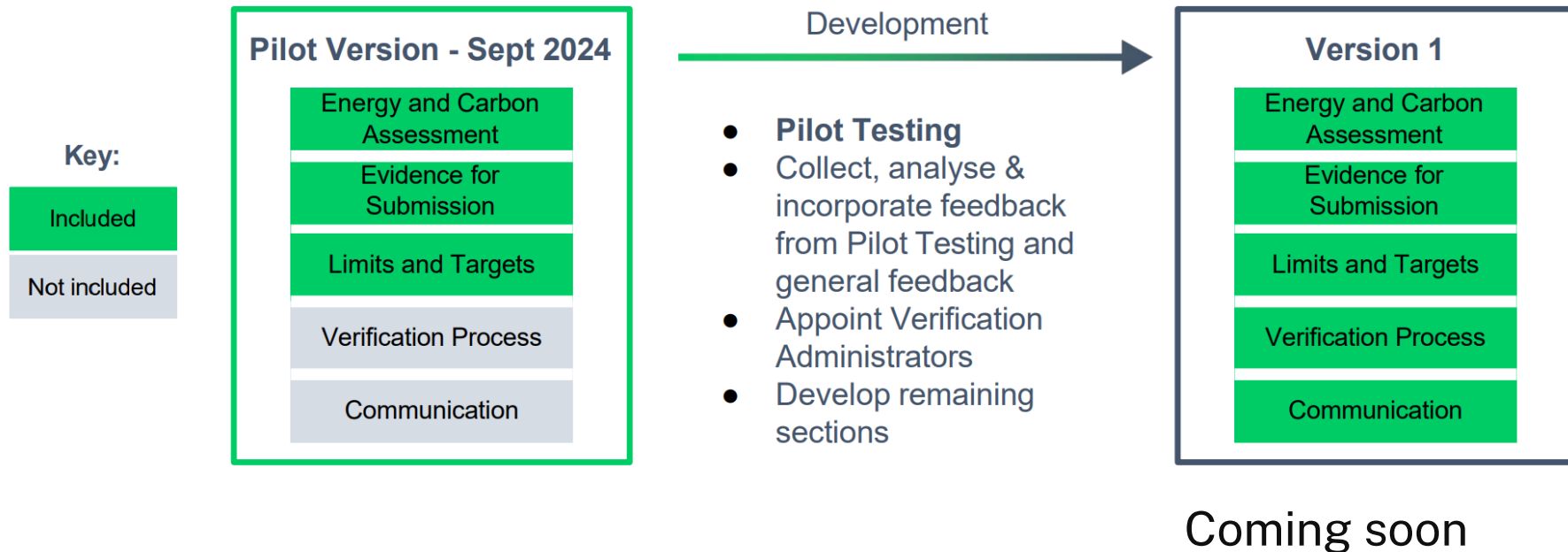


Heating and
Cooling delivered
to the building

NZCBS Sectors

Homes	Sport and Leisure	Hotels
Offices	Retail	Commercial Residential
Schools	Culture and Entertainment	Storage and Distribution
Healthcare	Science and Technology	Datacentres
	Higher Education	

NZCBS – Standard and Verification Scheme



RIBA Climate Challenge

Simple targets for:

- Operational energy
- Embodied carbon
- Water use

Updated in line with the NZCBS in 2026

Easy to describe and understand, difficult to achieve.

RIBA Climate Literacy Test – end 2025

Human Factors: Covers health, wellbeing, biophilic design, and community aspects.

Circular Economy: Focuses on resource efficiency, designing for change, waste management, and responsible sourcing.

Energy and Carbon: Addresses reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions in the built environment.

Water: Discusses water cycles, management, pollution, and climate impacts like flooding.

Ecology and Biodiversity: Explores nature-based solutions, urban biodiversity, and land use planning.

Connectivity and Transport: Covers site selection, walkability, low-carbon transport, and regional infrastructure.

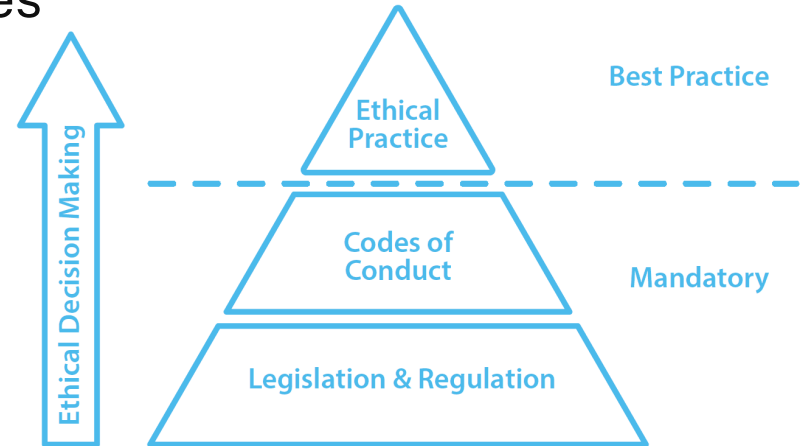


Ethical Practice

RIBA Ethical Practice Duties

The RIBA Ethical Practice mandatory competence covers the following duties:

1. Duty to the wider world
2. Duty to society and the end user
3. Duty to those commissioning services
4. Duty to those in the workplace
5. Duty to the profession
6. Duty to oneself



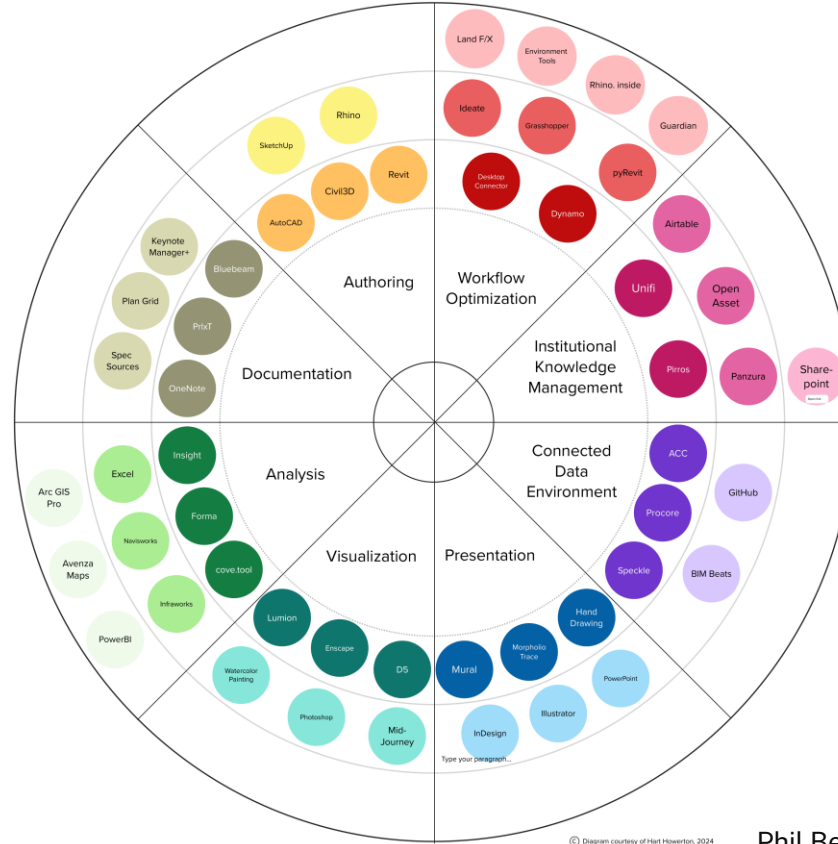
RIBA Ethical Practice Test - 2026

Honesty	Being truthful, developing integrity, having strong and clear values
Trustworthiness	Being reliable and transparent
Independence	Being an independent professional, free from the control or undue influence of others and remaining impartial, being objective and not prejudiced towards any particular stakeholder or party
Responsibility	Honouring obligations, accepting appropriate care for stakeholders and being able to explain and justify your actions and accepting accountability where appropriate
Empathy	Demonstrating an ability to understand and share the feelings of others, and take them into account
Relationality	Taking responsibility which arises from interactions, relationships and networks of relations
Inclusivity	Actively including all people, things, or ideas and treating them each fairly and equitably, cooperating with others
Balance	Weighing up competing interests and possible consequences
Curiosity	Taking an active interest, being inquisitive, pursuing information and making evidence-informed decisions
Advocacy	Speaking up, speaking out, sharing information and ideas and challenging positions, advancing better options and outcomes
Resistance	Actively refusing to engage and calling out inequity or ill treatment, leveraging boycott, saying 'no' and walking away where necessary and appropriate



Artificial Intelligence

AI Tools in Architecture



AI Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work

- Proposing Categories for AI roles in architectural services
- Illustrating stages of use
- Not focusing on any specific tools
- Articles, conferences, training and research



AI Practice Note

- RIBA policy and guidance on acceptable and ethical use (limitations and managing risks)
- Leadership, control and team competence
- Security, privacy and ownership
- Innovation, procurement and testing
- Managing bias
- Professional oversight – attribution and explainability of advice and outputs
- See new [RICS AI Use Standard](#)

RICS AI Use Standard

- **Governance & Risk Management:** Firms must implement clear policies around data use, AI system governance, and risk documentation - including the creation of risk registers and due diligence procedures.
- **Professional Judgment & Oversight:** Surveyors must assess the reliability of AI outputs and remain accountable for all work, applying professional scepticism and expertise throughout.
- **Transparency & Client Communication:** Clients must be informed, in writing, of when and how AI will be used in service delivery, including options for redress or opting out.
- **Ethical Development of AI:** For firms developing their own AI systems, the standard mandates assessments of data quality, stakeholder involvement, sustainability impact, and legal compliance.

AI Research Partnerships



AI generated image of a drawing for an alternative RIBA HQ at 66 Portland Place



Thank you

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