



THE INSTITUTE OF HISTORIC BUILDING CONSERVATION

**IHBC:  
APPLYING FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP**

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Applicants for Full Membership of the IHBC are encouraged to contact branch or national officers to identify an IHBC member to act as mentor in their application.

While the Institute encourages applicants to have experience of all aspects building conservation, dedicated professional skills in one area compensate for a lack of dedicated experience in another.

A successful application will demonstrate

- professional experience in one or more areas of conservation
- informed understanding of the values and principles of building conservation, and
- an understanding of how these shape conservation advice and decisions.

## **PART 1: INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY**

### **1 Introduction: The Historic Environment and Conservation Professionals**

Anyone seeking Full Membership of The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) should read this document before making their application. The IHBC welcomes applications from professionals, trainees and individuals specialising in all areas of the conservation of historic buildings or places, the **Historic Environment**. Full Membership is open only to those with a direct professional involvement with conservation of then historic environment, or **conservation professionals**. Membership as **Affiliate** and **Associate** is open to professionals and non-professionals who recognise or support the conservation and professional terms to which the IHBC subscribes, as described below and in the institute's other papers.

#### **1.1 Demonstrating your professionalism in building conservation**

Applicants for full membership of the IHBC must use the institute's membership application form to convey a capacity to operate at a professional level in one or more areas of building conservation. The application should report your **skills, knowledge, experience** and **understanding** in conservation, whether gained through academic education, vocational training, voluntary experience OR professional service.

As an applicant, your understanding of **conservation principles** should be demonstrated through their application in your work. Your submission must reflect an awareness of **the holistic framework** within which conservation operates, as discussed further below, balanced by direct professional experience of one or more areas shaping the conservation of the historic environment.

You must also report on how you have played a **responsible professional role** in one or more aspects of building conservation, delivering support for building conservation informed by continuing engagement with the challenges of the discipline. This should extend over a period of at least two years, if you have completed a recognised conservation course, or five years if not.

#### **1.1.2 How is professionalism in conservation assessed**

The decisions of a conservation professional are shaped by their personal strengths or skills as a individual, but these must be balanced by an ability to understand, evaluate and respect all the issues shaping conservation of historic buildings or places. Relevant advice must be sourced, properly evaluated, and effectively integrated into their own decision-making process. This ensures that their own advice and actions are properly informed. The process is discussed below in the context of the **Conservation Cycle**. Our testing of conservation professionalism reflects a fundamental principle of conservation, but the starting point is the IHBC's Areas of competence.

## **PART 2: ASSESSING COMPETENCES**

### **2.1 The Areas of Competence**

An applicant's proficiency in an area of building conservation is tested through the **IHBC's Areas of Competence**. The Areas of Competence cover specific sets of skills that shape effective building conservation, what we call the **practical competences**. Practical competences include **History** and **Analysis**, skills essential to the proper **investigation** of buildings, **Policy**, **Finance** and **Economics**, reflecting the development and **management** of projects, and **Design** and **Technology**, relating to the **implementation** of conservation projects. These practical competences must be supported by general standards required of any conservation professional – the **professional competences** of **Philosophy**, or why we conserve, and **Practice**, or how we manage the business of conservation.

<b>Professional Competences</b>	<b>Practical Competences 1: Investigation</b>	<b>Practical Competences 2: Management</b>	<b>Practical Competences 3: Implementation</b>
PHILOSOPHY(1)	HISTORY (3)	LEGISLATION & POLICY (5)	DESIGN & PRESENTATION (7)
PRACTICE (2)	RESEARCH, RECORDING & ANALYSIS (4)	FINANCE & ECONOMICS (6)	TECHNOLOGY(8)

The Areas of Competence have evolved out of, and can be shown to equate to, national and international standards in conservation. They encompass all the disciplines that are needed to ensure that is both successful and professional. Any applicant for full membership should have detailed professional experience in one or more areas balanced by an understanding or awareness of all other areas.

### **2.1 The Areas of Competences and the Conservation Professional**

A conservation professional must have a practical understanding of the principles of conservation, its **philosophy** and how this shapes their understanding of their work. In addition they must adopt the proper standards of service, ethics and propriety within which any professional must operate, that is professional **practice**. Together these two professional competences encompass the core standards required of all conservation professionals.

An informed knowledge of the **History** and archaeology of architecture and buildings of all periods provides an essential framework for understanding cultural context, meaning and significance. This in turn helps identify why conservation is appropriate, what should be conserved and how this might be done. A conservation professional must also understand and subscribe to the processes and standards of investigation that help interpret or capture some of that meaning and significance: **Research, Recording and Analysis**. Together these support **Investigation** in the conservation cycle.

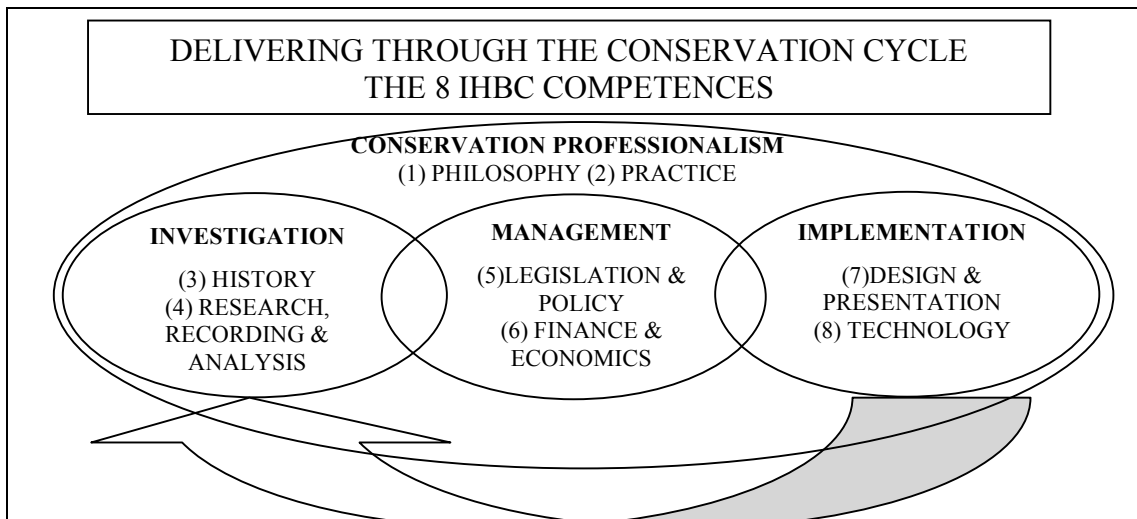
Transforming the outcomes and conclusions of Investigation into practical, realistic, viable and sustainable conservation strategies requires a particular understanding and

experience of the operation of any **Legislation and Policy** shaping the conservation cycle. Similarly, conservation strategies must be developed around an awareness of the limits and opportunities in the **Finance and Economics** of conservation. Strategies developed from consideration of these areas reflect the central role that **Management** plays in conservation.

Bringing conservation strategies into operation reflects the part of conservation referred to here as **Implementation**. Understanding **Technology**, historic and modern, is central to any implementation of a conservation strategy, whether or not intervention is required. Here detailed understanding of the physical nature of the historic environment is essential, in particular its technical character and qualities. Yet these considerations do not exist in isolation. A conservation professional must understand how modern interventions can secure the future of historic buildings and places, whether through enhancing their viability and contributing to their sustainability, or securing their fabric through appropriate repair and maintenance. However even the most sophisticated strategies will not deliver sustainable solutions without clear and accessible communication of conservation values and strategies. Communication and delivery through **Design and presentation** ensures that conservation strategies are translated into conservation successes.

## 2.2 The Areas of Competence and the Conservation Cycle

The value of the competences as a test of the IHBC membership may be best understood in the context of the **Conservation Cycle**, the process by which conservation is delivered.



The cycle begins with **Investigation**, which helps to understand what should and could be conserved, why it should be conserved, and in what fashion. Investigation informs and shapes **Management**, which develops and promotes practical and sustainable strategies for conservation. Management strategies are realised through **Implementation**, the part of the cycle that secures conservation. Though inter-dependant and iterative, the phases do mark key areas specific to the conservation cycle and, by extension, the practical competences.

Clearly the professional competences of Philosophy and Practice cut across the whole

conservation cycle while the different parts of the conservation cycle itself are represented by the practical competences.

The distinctions between the phases of the conservation cycle are not precise, and each phase will inform the others. The parts of the cycle also are apparent in distinct processes such as archaeological investigations or architectural surveys which, though not in themselves conservation, are an essential part of the conservation cycle.

The phases of the cycle can also require quite distinct professional skills: those used in historical research, recording and archaeology shape **Investigation**; those central to planning are applied in **Management**, and those in design and project management are central to **Implementation**. Clearly each of the Areas of Competence can be seen to correspond to a class of professional activity shaping conservation within the cycle.

Applicants for Full Membership must demonstrate understanding and awareness across the full range of the areas of competence, though dedicated skills in one area of the conservation cycle can compensate for more limited professional experience in another.

### **2.3 What are the competences ?**

The **Competences** are defined and described as follows:

1. **PHILOSOPHY**: Appreciation of the social, cultural, political, aesthetic, economic and environmental values that underpin current conservation policy and practice.
2. **PRACTICE**: Awareness of the wider context of conservation, including knowledge of and ability to interact effectively with all bodies and individuals who have a significant role to play in the field.
3. **HISTORY**: Knowledge of the development of the historic environment including the remains of previous periods and cultures, historic buildings and settlements, works of engineering, parks, gardens and other elements of the historic landscape.
4. **RESEARCH/RECORDING/ANALYSIS**: Ability to carry out or commission research, analysis and recording of the historic environment and to maintain records accordingly.
5. **LEGISLATION/ POLICY**: Knowledge of the legislative and policy framework for the conservation of the historic environment, its formulation locally and nationally, and awareness of other relevant legislation and policies.
6. **FINANCE/ECONOMICS**: Understanding of the process for the procuring of buildings and facilitating development, including finance, valuation, cost planning and contracts, with specific reference to historic buildings and areas.
7. **DESIGN/PRESENTATION**: Ability to analyse and evaluate quality of design, existing and proposed, of buildings and areas and present the results of such analysis in a way understandable to both professional and lay audiences.
8. **TECHNOLOGY**: Knowledge of building construction of all periods, the characteristics of structures, the nature and properties of building materials and appropriate methods of repair and alteration of historic fabric.

## **PART 3: DEMONSTRATING COMPETENCES**

### **3.1 How do I apply for IHBC Membership? Identifying Skills Knowledge and Experience**

In **applying for Full Membership** of the IHBC you must present your abilities in the Membership Application Form. This should include your educational, training and professional experience. Your conservation **Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Understanding** should be interpreted in the framework of the competences, as discussed above, supplemented as appropriate by reference to activities, training, projects or other relevant experiences. These should demonstrate the extent of your engagement with the areas of competence. Independent support for your work is then presented through endorsement by your peers.

Application for full membership must convey a professional balance of skills, knowledge, experience and understanding across the areas of competence. With appropriate peer support such applications will be recommended to IHBC Council.

Applicants seeking Full Membership are encouraged to apply for Affiliate Membership first. They should then contact local or national officers with a view to identifying existing members to act as mentor in the application process.

Full Members who serve as mentors to applicants will engage in the re-interpretation of their skills in an informed but non-professional context. As such, hours dedicated to mentoring may be allocated towards fulfilling CPD requirements.

### **3.2 Demonstrating skills**

Professional standards endorsed by recognised external bodies (for example other professional institutes) are an important demonstration of strengths within the areas of competence. However some professional standards are less easily identified: as yet no formal standard is recognised for, for example, architectural historians or, outside IHBC membership, Conservation Officers. Regardless of recognition by other bodies, your application must specifically convey adequate professional and practical competences through reference to your personal professional engagement with conservation.

### **3.3 Demonstrating knowledge and understanding**

Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of competences entails reviewing and presenting dedicated training, education, voluntary activities and professional operations that confirm your intellectual engagement with the challenges arising in conservation. Different conservation professionals will bring different strengths and specialisations to conservation, and this will be reflected in their balance of the competences. But it is essential that you demonstrate knowledge and understanding across the competences. Recognising that direct professional experience to appropriate standards in all the competences is not realistic, the Institute's constitution acknowledges that strengths in any of the competences may compensate for more limited experience of another.

### **3.4 Demonstrating Experience**

Experience in any of the competences is demonstrated through identifying

educational, training, voluntary and professional activities that reflect your immediate and personal engagement with the competences. You must demonstrate significant direct understanding of the professional competences, of Philosophy and Practice.

Direct professional experience of all the practical competences is not required for full membership. In addition, and particularly where skills have been developed in the context of project teams, applicants are encouraged to refer to the forthcoming guidance framework provided in the 'Units' of the Edinburgh Group, still under development, as a means of interpreting their personal experience of the Historic Environment in the context of team operations.

### **3.5 What else should I know - 1: Regulating and Monitoring IHBC Members**

Full Membership of the IHBC confirms that an individual has attained a balance and level of skills, knowledge, experience and understanding to advise on and, where suitably skilled, to carry out professional operations in historic places.

The IHBC membership is regulated through the application of the Institute's Code of Conduct while members must adhere to such Standards and Guidance as the Institute issues or agrees. The Institute is working in partnership with others to agree inter-professional standards and guidance.

For Full Members standards are monitored through the review of the personal Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme required of each member, as detailed on our web site.

### **3.6 What else should I know - 2: Accreditation and National Occupational Standards**

As yet there is no recognised accreditation in Britain for conservation professionals operating across the IHBC's competences. There are important accreditation and certification schemes run by other professional institute's for particular professional skills, such as in architecture. The IHBC fully supports and endorses such programmes for raising standards and skills within their respective professions.

The IHBC is currently engaged in the process of defining a national occupational standards that will reflect the professional skills of many of its members. These are being developed through the Creative and Cultural Sector Skills Council and with the support of The Institute of Field Archaeology.

<p>IHBC membership testifies to a professional's support for and recognition of standards within and across the range of professional involvement in the Historic Environment. The IHBC regulates the activities of its members in these terms.</p>
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## **PART 4: COMPETENCES**

### **4. What might each competence entail?**

Listed below are examples of the skills, knowledge and/or experience which may be associated with each of the competences. Though they are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, these may be used as a guide to help understand the IHBC standards in completing the Application Form. It may be noted that these are currently under review.

#### **1. PHILOSOPHY**

**Appreciation of the social, cultural, political, aesthetic, economic and environmental values that underpin current conservation policy and practice.**

1.1 To be fully conversant with currently prevailing national and international principles and philosophies of conservation including guidelines adopted by ICOMOS, BSI and other recognised bodies.

#### **2. PRACTICE**

**Awareness of the wider context of conservation, including knowledge of and ability to interact effectively with all bodies and individuals who have a significant role to play in the field.**

2.1 To be familiar with the roles, responsibilities and potential of all bodies and individuals within public, private and voluntary sectors who have a significant heritage management role.

2.2 To be able to establish and maintain good contact with and seek specialist advice from other organisations and individuals both within and outside the conservation field and inform others of the availability of such advice.

2.3 To be able to interact and negotiate effectively with all groups and individuals with an interest in the historic environment including community and amenity groups, elected representatives, clients, applicants and officials.

#### **3 HISTORY**

**Knowledge of the development of the historic environment including the remains of previous periods and cultures, historic buildings and settlements, works of engineering, parks, gardens and other elements of the historic landscape.**

3.1 To be able to assess the significance of sites, structures, buildings and areas and carry out both visual and archival research and make recommendations based on such assessment.

3.2 To be able to advise on the special importance and the suitability for designation, listing, scheduling or other means of protection of the above features.

3.3 To be able to assess the significance and impact of development proposals on the above features.

#### **4. RESEARCH/RECORDING/ANALYSIS**

**Ability to carry out or commission research, analysis and recording of the historic environment and to maintain records accordingly.**

4.1 To be able to advise on appropriate techniques and levels of recording required for historic buildings or sites affected by development proposals and identify the most appropriate bodies or individuals to undertake such work.

4.2 To be able to make rapid and emergency recording of buildings and groups of buildings affected by development proposals including archival research.

4.3 To be able to plan, prepare and execute a programme of detailed recording of structures and sites affected by development proposals, including photographic and graphic representation using conventional drawing techniques and/or CAD.

**5. LEGISLATION/ POLICY**

**Knowledge of the legislative and policy framework for the conservation of the historic environment, its formulation locally and nationally, and awareness of other relevant legislation and policies.**

5.1 To be able to provide advice and guidance on all current legislation and central government advice affecting the protection of the historic environment to employers, clients, public, other professionals and statutory and non statutory organisations.

5.2 To be able to advise and negotiate in connection with applications for listed building, scheduled monument and conservation area consent and planning permission and other statutory consents.

5.3 To have a working knowledge of other legislation insofar as it affects the historic environment including the Building Regulations, Town Planning and Highways legislation.

5.4 To be able to act as the employer's/client's expert witness as appropriate at appeals, public inquiries or court hearings.

5.5 To be able to appreciate the status and application of differing types of policy documents

5.6 To be able to draw up, implement and monitor conservation policies and strategies in the context of either local or national frameworks and to be able to advise on the conservation implications of other policies.

**6. FINANCE/ECONOMICS**

**Understanding of the process for the procuring of buildings and facilitating development, including finance, valuation, cost planning and contracts, with specific reference to historic buildings and areas.**

6.1 To understand the process by which decisions are made on investments in conservation projects and the factors affecting such decisions. Specifically, familiarity with the workings of the property market and methods of valuation.

6.2 To be familiar with the contractual aspects of conservation work including differing forms of contract, costing of conservation works and VAT.

6.3 To be familiar with the principles of regeneration, the bodies responsible for it and of sources of funding which can be used for the repair of historic buildings and the ability to seek and use resources effectively.

6.4 To be able to promote or generate investment in the historic environment from both public and private sources and to maximise grant opportunities.

6.5 To be able to advise on conservation grant availability and be fully conversant with the administration of grant schemes for the repair and enhancement of historic buildings and areas.

6.6 To be familiar with, and be able to advise on, the range of available funding schemes not specifically aimed at conservation including National Lottery, European Funding, Central Government Regeneration Budgets and other Partnership Schemes.

## **7. DESIGN/PRESENTATION**

**Ability to analyse and evaluate quality of design, existing and proposed, of buildings and areas and present the results of such analysis in a way understandable to both professional and lay audiences.**

7.1 To have a detailed appreciation of the principles of townscape and urban design and to be able to undertake analysis accordingly.

7.2 To be able to communicate design concepts in three dimensions by means of sketching, conventional drawing techniques and/or CAD.

7.3 To be able to promote high standards of design of individual buildings or areas by

- drawing up and implementing schemes
- preparing design guidance/briefs

7.4 To be able to prepare schemes of enhancement including streetworks and landscaping.

## **8. TECHNOLOGY**

**Knowledge of building construction of all periods, the characteristics of structures, the nature and properties of building materials and appropriate methods of repair and alteration of historic fabric.**

8.1 To be able to advise on appropriate methods for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings including advising on specialist repair techniques and the availability of materials and skills both locally and nationally.

8.2 To be able to advise on the physical and chemical characteristics of building materials and causes of decay.

8.3 To be able to assess and monitor the condition of buildings, diagnose defects and to specify and prioritise proposals for their repair, maintenance and enhancement.

8.4 To be able to undertake both rapid and more detailed assessments of building condition, including Buildings at Risk Surveys.

8.5 To be able to audit and monitor the general condition of fabric within whole areas with a view to formulating strategies for action.

8.6 To be able to advise on new and developing techniques in conservation and their practical implications.