

Recommended Minimum Conditions of Employment – October 2003

In October 2000 RIBA Council accepted archaos's paper for the introduction of RIBA/archaos recommended minimum conditions of employment and indicative rates of pay for year out, (post part 1) students. This guidance was prepared by archaos in conjunction with the RIBA, and was subsequently directed to employers, employees, students and academic staff.

The purpose of this guidance is to raise awareness amongst the architectural community of the RIBA/archaos benchmark conditions of employment and indicative rates of pay. This paper serves to update the sums from those initially agreed in February 2000 (see attached document for full history). It is proposed that the suggested rates of pay are increased in line with the National Minimum Wage, which has risen from £3.70 p.h. in Feb 2000, to £4.50 p.h. in 2003. The National Minimum Wage is set by the DTI and reviewed once a year.

Statutory responsibilities

An employer has a statutory responsibility to provide all employees with conditions of employment that conform to National minimum wage legislation and the EU working directive. If an architect employer, (registered with the RIBA/ARB) breaches their statutory responsibilities they may be subject to disciplinary action by the RIBA/ARB as a breach of the RIBA Code of Conduct/ ARB Code of Professional Conduct (and hence the Architects' Registration Act).

The employer's statutory responsibilities include the provision of a contract of employment. The national minimum wage, (as of 1st October 2003) is £4.50 per hour. The EU working directive limits an employee's working hours to an average of 48 hours per week. In order to exceed this, the employee must be asked to sign a voluntary waiver.

RIBA/archaos Indicative Rate of Pay for post Part 1 employees

- The RIBA/archaos recommends a minimum rate of pay of £6.80¹ per hour as of October 2003.
- This rate should be adjusted accordingly to accommodate higher living costs in some UK locations. The indicative rate of pay for those post part 1 employees working in London is £8.17 per hour (+20%).

To give some indication of salary levels, assuming a standard employment document of 48 weeks/year and 37.5 hours/week, the hourly figures would translate to £ 12,240.00 p.a nationwide, £ 14,706.00 p.a in London. MANY EMPLOYERS WILL HAVE DIFFERENT CONTRACT TERMS. THESE VALUES ARE INDICATIVE ONLY AND DO NOT FORM PART OF THE RIBA/archaos RECOMMENDATIONS.

As an additional indicative comparison, the Association of Graduate Recruiters reported an average starting salary of £20,150.00 p.a for Graduates (of all disciplines) in 2002.

- In addition, it is agreed to review the RIBA suggested minimum wage in September each year, to be approved by the Education Committee.

RIBA/archaos recommends...

...that the contract of employment between the employer and the employee will be signed prior to the start of work date and stipulate the start date of employment, probationary period (if applicable), period of employment, level of remuneration (see above) the number of working hours per week, method of payment, conditions for overtime payment/benefit, holiday and sick pay.

...that holiday and sick pay entitlement will be in accordance with that of all employees at the practice/company. As a minimum this must accord with EU working directive².

...that post Part 1 employees should not work beyond the number of hours outlined in their contract without both parties agreeing additional remuneration in accordance with the rate outlined above/time in lieu/appropriate bonus.

1. The hourly figures are based on the breakdown of figures proposed at May 2000 RIBA Council.

2. The EU Working Directive stipulates a minimum of 20 days paid leave per annum including statutory holidays and paid sickness leave is available for 4-20 days with a Doctor's note.