

Recommended Minimum Conditions of Employment – March 2006

Introduction

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 and October 2003. It is proposed that, as when the values were last updated, the suggested rates of pay are increased in line with the National Minimum Wage, which has risen from £4.50 p.h. in October 2003, to £5.05 p.h. from October 2005. This represents an increase of 10.8%. This percentage has been applied to the 2003 RIBA/archaos levels to produce the figures below.

The National Minimum Wage is set by the DTI and reviewed once a year. It is proposed that the RIBA/archaos Recommended Minimum Conditions of Employment are also reviewed and agreed annually by RIBA Education Committee.

Discussion

It has been further suggested that in future, a fairer 'index' against which to review the RIBA/archaos minimum wage guidelines might be an industry-specific salary scale. This would better represent the salary levels among relevant peers, rather than a non-specific government minimum linked to the cost of living. Archaos believes the RIBA conducts a Salary review among its members annually, the results of which are published annually in RIBAJournal. Would the Education Committee be able to put in place a system to link the results of this survey with the automatic annual update of the RIBA/archaos Part-1 recommended minimum wage?

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

- The RIBA/archaos recommends a minimum rate of pay of £7.54¹ per hour as of March 2006.
- 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 £9.05 per hour (+20%).

To give some indication of salary levels, assuming a standard employment document of 48 weeks/year and 37.5hours/week, the hourly figures would translate to £ 13,570.00 p.a nationwide, £ 16,290.00 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 Higher Education Statistics Agency (UK) reported a MEDIAN starting salary of £ 17,000 p.a for Graduates (of all disciplines) in 2005. see <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/press/pr80/pr80.htm>

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

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 2005) is £5.05 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 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.

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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.
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