



**RIAS-regs**

**Membership Criteria  
And  
Routes to Membership**

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**RIAS**  
The Royal Incorporation  
of Architects in Scotland

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## 1. GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

RIAS-regs provide a number of Schemes open to those who wish to certify the compliance of a building(s) design with one or more of those Sections of the Technical Standards covered by RIAS-regs, subject to approval. Certification of design may be, (but not exclusively) undertaken as part of a wider design service where the Approved Certifier of Design also acts as lead designer and/or agent.

Those applicants to the Schemes pre-qualify if they are already a Certifier of Design for a Section of the Technical Standards, or are registered with the Architects Registration Board, or are a Chartered Architectural Technologist (MCIAT), or a professionally qualified Architectural Technician (TCIAT), or a Corporate Member of or approved as a Low Carbon Consultant by the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE).

In addition, those applicants who were, or are members, of an equivalent Scheme who are already Approved Certifiers of Design (and neither disbarred nor disqualified) prequalify through mutual recognition to apply to RIAS-regs but must still demonstrate competency as with any other candidate.

All other applicants have to demonstrate that they have:

- a minimum of a NVQ or SVQ Level IV or equivalent qualification in a construction related discipline – see table 1 below
- a minimum of 5 year's experience in preparing building warrant submissions, including drawings, specifications and supporting information etc
- specific training related to the energy design & performance of buildings or can demonstrate that 2 recent warrants have been granted by a Scottish local authority based on a DER / TER compliance calculation that they have prepared.

**Table 1: Levels and associated qualifications of higher education institutions and the main qualifications of other awarding bodies within the SCQF<sup>1</sup>**

SCQF Level (SHE = Scottish Higher Education Level)	National qualifications (units, courses and group awards)	Higher National qualifications	Qualifications awarded by higher education institutions in Scotland	SVQs**
12 (SHE D*)			Doctorates	
11 (SHE M*)			Masters/Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate	SVQ 5
10 (SHE H*)			Honours degree	SVQ 5
9 (SHE 3)			Degree	SVQ 5
8 (SHE 2)		Higher National Diploma	Diploma of Higher Education	SVQ 4
7 (SHE 1)	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate	Certificate of Higher Education	SVQ 4
6	Higher			SVQ 3
5	Intermediate 2/Credit			SVQ 2

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/SCQF/2001/default.asp>

	Standard Grade			
4	Intermediate 1/General Standard Grade			SVQ 1
3	Access 3/Foundation Standard Grade			SVQ 1
2	Access 2			SVQ 1
1	Access 1			SVQ 1

\* Labels H, M and D refer to Honours, Masters, and Doctoral and are used consistently across the UK.

\*\* Provisional: work is continuing to refine the placing of SVQs within the SCQF.

It is anticipated that the majority of those applicants who do not prequalify, and that are successful in applying, will be members of other construction related professional bodies and can demonstrate that they meet the membership requirements of these organisations.

All applicants will have to confirm that they have read and are prepared to abide by the Schemes Code of Conduct.

### **1.1 Building Control Officers**

Building Control Officers (BCOs) employed by a Scottish local authority are entitled to join the Schemes as non-certifying members at no cost. Such Members are able to undertake the on-line tests and practical calculation tests as Continuous Professional Development (CPD). On completion of these tests a BCO will not be entitled to produce Certificates of Design unless they subscribe to a Scheme associated with an appropriate Approved Body.

## **2. APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **2.1 Prequalifying Applicants**

All applicants start by registering interest on-line, including which Sections of the Technical Standards they wish to certify compliance with. If they pre-qualify, they are asked for their relevant registration or membership number. The Schemes' Administrator checks this either directly with the on-line ARB register or with CIAT or CIBSE as appropriate.

At this point the pre-qualification applicants are advised to log in to [www.RIAS-regs.co.uk](http://www.RIAS-regs.co.uk) and pay their joining fee and first year's subscription.

### **2.2 Building Control Officers**

Building Control Officers start by registering interest on-line, including which Sections of the Technical Standards they have an interest in and by ticking the BCO application button. The Schemes' Administrator will then contact the applicant requesting proof of employment by a Scottish local authority.

### **2.3 Other Construction Professionals**

All other applicants tick a box stating, "Construction Professional". They will be contacted by the Schemes' Administrator and are asked to:

1. provide a short CV detailing experience and educational details
2. provide proof of qualifications / and or membership of relevant professional body
3. provide proof of membership of relevant industry schemes and / or training (such as NHER, Elmhurst etc) and / or provide copies of 2 separate Building Warrants (where information has been prepared by the applicant) for new dwelling(s) and/or non-domestic buildings and the DER / TER and/or BER / TER calculations submitted with the warrant
4. confirm that they have not been disbarred, suspended or removed from any other Certification of Design Scheme
5. provide evidence that they have appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance in place

It is expected that all applicants will have previously attended some form of SAP or SBEM energy training or had at least 2 Building Warrants approved by a Scottish local authority based on DER / TER and/or BER / TER calculations prepared by the applicant.

If this is not the case it is recommended that applicants undertake a SAP and/or SBEM training course. It is recommended that applicants check with RIAS-regs what training courses may be available, or if a specific course will be accepted by the Scheme as meeting these criteria.

## **2.4 Existing Approved Certifiers of Design**

Those applicants who are an Approved Certifier of Design, approved by another Scheme Provider should also tick the "Construction Professional" box. When contacted by the Schemes' Administrator they should provide details of their Scheme membership and;

1. confirm that they have not been disbarred, suspended or removed from any other Certification of Design Scheme, and
2. provide evidence that they have appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance in place.

## **3. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS**

Non-prequalifying applications are assessed by the Schemes' Review Panel. On receipt of the applicants' package of information it is circulated to the members of the Review Panel, who make recommendations to the Head of Certification.

The Review Panel can form one of three judgements:

1. The applicant has demonstrated that they meet the minimum criteria (based on experience and qualification etc), although this does not guarantee that an applicant will be able to pass the competency tests, or
2. Insufficient information has been provided and further information will be requested, or
3. The applicant has not demonstrated that they meet the minimum criteria.

In the case of 3 above the Head of Certification will provide a summary of the reasoning behind the Review Panels decision. It is not a requirement that the Review Panel physically meet, as discussions can be undertaken by email / phone call, however they must be recorded by the Schemes' Administrator or the Head of Certification.

Applicants wishing to become approved for more than one Section of the Technical Standards simultaneously must provide sufficient information to cover each of these sections. For example, an applicant who meets the requirements of the Section 6 - Energy (Domestic) Buildings may not meet those for Section 6 - Energy (Non-domestic) Buildings.

### **3.1 Criteria Met**

The Schemes' Administrator verifies the applicant's details on the Management Console of the IT system. The IT system automatically notifies the applicant that they can now progress to subscribing and taking the on-line tests etc.

The Schemes' Administrator gives the applicants file verified status.

### **3.2 Criteria Not Met**

The Schemes' Administrator informs the applicant, outlining the Review Panels reasoning and inviting them to apply again, once they meet the criteria.

The applicants file is archived.

The applicant's note of interest will remain on the data system, so that should they reapply in the future there will be a record of the previous note of interest and the archived file retrieved.

### **3.3 Insufficient Information**

The Schemes' Administrator informs the applicant, outlining the additional information required and advised that if such information is not provided within 6 months, then the application will be deemed as "Criteria Not Met" and archived as above.

## **4. Routes to Membership**

Figure 1 illustrates the various routes to approval as an Approved Certifier of Design (Section 6 - Energy) Domestic, Non-domestic and Advanced Buildings Non-domestic or "AB Non-dom".

The processes underlying certification are common across each strand and it is important, regardless of the previous experience and particular skill set of the Approved Certifier of Design, that they have met a common threshold with regard to understanding these processes.

There is much that is common within the Technical Standards between Section 6 Domestic and Non-domestic; many of the referred standards, such as conventions for calculating U-values or the requirement to insulate pipe work are the same. The basic principles of demonstrating compliance for alterations, extension, conversions and new builds are the same. The difference lies in the detail of fabric and services performance and the use of calculation methodologies to set and demonstrate compliance with a target.

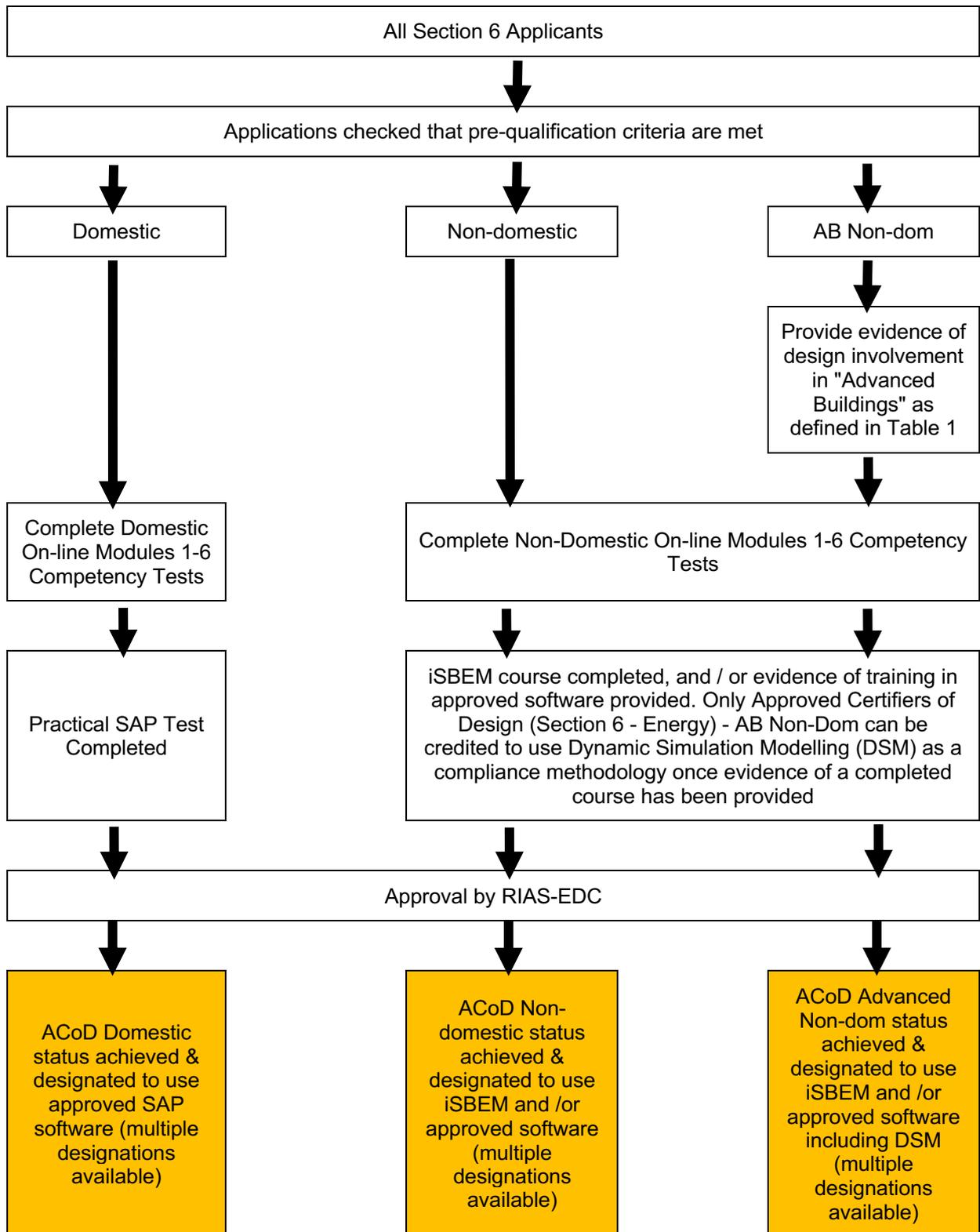
RIAS-regs recognises that:

1. there is a pre-existing pool of Approved Certifiers of Design (Section 6 - Energy) Domestic who will be encouraged to undertake the further training to be an Approved Certifiers of Design (Section 6 - Energy) Non-domestic or possibly AB Non-dom
2. those with a non-domestic interest applying for the first time have the opportunity to subsequently be approved to certify domestic projects by subscribing to the Section 6 Energy (Domestic) Scheme
3. it must not be assumed that those Corporate Members and Low Carbon Consultants accredited with CIBSE and who are highly skilled in the design of complex services also have a thorough knowledge of fabric performance nor of the impact of one area of design on another, for example the relationship between fabric specification, ventilation and condensation risk

In certifying a design an Approved Certifier of Design starts by stating categorically that the project is within their area of competency. Any given project can range from relatively simple and straightforward to complex. This is particularly true with Non-domestic buildings.

The Section 6 – Energy (Non-domestic) Scheme recognises two categories of Non-domestic Certifier - "Approved" and Approved for "AB Non-dom" level in order to cover this extended range. Those approved at the "AB Non-dom" level will be able to Certify the Design of the full range of works to all Non-domestic projects.

**Figure 1: Routes to membership flow diagram**



It is imperative to give clear guidance as to what constitutes an AB Non-dom design and this has been outlined in table 1 below, this reconciles the fact that complexity in design may or may not related to the type of building or the scale or the cost of the works. For example, altering the fabric of a large

hospital to include new entrance doors, has a Section 6 implication but is very much less complex than the extension of an office, which requires an existing HVAC system to be extended to incorporate a new IT server suite.

**Table 1: Attributes of Advanced Design**

If any of the attributes in this table is reflected in the project, then it is considered an AB Non-dom project and can only be certified, within the –Section 6 – Energy (Non-domestic) Scheme, by an Approved Certifier of Design (Section 6 - Energy) AB Non-domestic.

Heating Systems	
Attribute	Any new or existing building requiring a new boiler or multiple linked boilers and heating devices with an input $\geq 70\text{kW}$ . to which BS6644: 2011 applies
Explanation	This covers any new or existing large building with a significant space and hot water heating demand, where boilers and other devices may be linked to meet the demand. An exception to this rule would be a large warehouse or retail shed heated by numerous separate heaters each of which is relatively small and heats only a local area, even where they are controlled together.
Attribute	Altering, extending or converting any existing building requiring a heating system with an output $\geq 70\text{kW}$ . Except where the alterations to the existing heating impact on a section or sections of the system with less than a 7kW output.
Explanation	This covers any existing building where a new large heating system is required or where an existing large heating system is significantly altered. The exception allows relatively minor alterations to an existing system, as part of other works, such as relocating or adding a few radiators.
Ventilation	
Attribute	Any new or existing building requiring one or more ducted ventilation systems, made up of multiple components. Except where none of those systems is capable of individually delivering $> 200\text{l/sec}$ supply or extract air and each system is provided with their own package controls.
Explanation	Any new or existing building requiring a complex HVAC system is advanced. The exception allows for small packaged systems such as extract from multiple rooms or domestic scale MVHR systems.
Cooling	
Attribute	Any new or existing building requiring one or more cooling systems, made up of multiple components. Except where none of those systems has an individually cooling capacity $> 12\text{kW}$ and each system is provided with their own package controls.
Explanation	Any new or existing building requiring a complex HVAC system is advanced. The exception allows for small packaged systems providing localised cooling.
Low or Zero Carbon Generating Technologies	
Attribute	Any works including individual biomass boilers with an output $> 45\text{kW}$
Attribute	Any works including individual ASHP or a GSHP's with an output $> 45\text{kW}$

Attribute	Any works including individual photovoltaic arrays with a peak generating capacity > 6kW
Attribute	Any works including individual solar thermal arrays with a peak generating capacity > 6kW
Attribute	Any works including a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems with a maximum electrical generating capacity > 6kWe
Attribute	Any works including individual wind turbines with a peak generating capacity > 6kW
Attribute	Any works including individual hydro turbines with a peak generating capacity > 6kW
Explanation	Any new or existing building requiring the installation of a large LZCGT system is advanced. The size limit allows for projects involving multiple units each with its own small LZCGT systems to avoid being classed as "Advanced".
Lighting	
Attribute	If the Approved Certifier of Design is relying on their own full lighting design for input figures to an Approved Software Program.
Explanation	<p>For new build non-domestic buildings lighting must be included in any compliance calculations, such as SBEM. The inputs required to the calculation process can be ascertained in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Default values used in BER/TER compliance calculations</li> <li>• Performance specified in BER/TER compliance calculations</li> <li>• Actual design performances used in BER/TER compliance calculations</li> </ul> <p>For any project where a performance is specified and relies on a future full lighting design to be compliant, the Approved Certifier of Design (Section 6 - Energy) Non-domestic or AB Non-dom should exercise judgement, with regard to setting a performance that can actually be achieved and issue a Schedule 1 to cover the requirement for a full lighting design.</p> <p>A full lighting design can only be completed by a competent designer and on completion the results entered into the compliance software to check that the overall design remains compliant.</p> <p>A competent lighting designer who wishes to be an Approved Certifier of Design (Section 6 - Energy) must apply to be an AB Non-dom in order to rely on their own full lighting design.</p>