



EASA

The Ecclesiastical Architects & Surveyors Association

Competence Criteria:

To support an application for **Full Membership**

This document outlines the professional competence criteria to be demonstrated by Architects and Surveyors working with ecclesiastical buildings and seeking **Full Membership of EASA**. It serves as a framework for assessing skills, knowledge, and experience across twelve key areas of practice, from technical expertise to communication and stakeholder management. The criteria are structured into three progressive levels of proficiency: Awareness, Competent, and Expert.

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear benchmark for professional development, training, and recruitment within the heritage sector. By defining the expected standards at each level, it aims to ensure a high quality of work, promote a shared understanding of best practice, and safeguard the unique heritage of these irreplaceable structures.

Levels of Competence

- **Awareness:** This level signifies a foundational understanding. The individual knows the basic concepts and vocabulary of a given area. They can identify key issues and understand the limits of their own knowledge, recognising when to seek expert guidance.
- **Competent:** This level indicates a practical, working knowledge. The individual can apply principles to real-world situations, solve problems independently, and manage tasks within their area of competence. They are skilled at executing projects and communicating effectively.
- **Expert:** This level represents an expert, authoritative knowledge. The individual is a recognised authority in their field, capable of leading, innovating, and influencing best practice. They can handle the most complex challenges and often contribute to the wider body of knowledge or policy.

Demonstrating Competence

- Successful applications will be able to demonstrate **competence across four categories** and **awareness across all criteria**.
- We don't necessarily expect candidates to be able to demonstrate competence across all categories, but through their membership of EASA, we hope that you will develop those skills and competencies through participation of EASA events and following our ongoing educational syllabus.

Criteria	Awareness	Competent	Expert
Building Pathology	<p>Can recognise common building defects and their symptoms in historic structures. Understands that these are often symptoms of a deeper problem and knows when to seek expert help for diagnosis.</p> <p>Has undertaken quinquennial inspections (or equivalent).</p>	<p>Can accurately diagnose complex building and fabric defects and their root causes by conducting a detailed, evidence-based survey.</p> <p>Is skilled in analysing interconnected issues and specifying appropriate, heritage-sensitive remediation strategies.</p> <p>Regularly undertakes quinquennial inspections (or equivalent) and produces high-quality reports.</p>	<p>Possesses authoritative knowledge to resolve rare or multi-faceted building pathology issues that have defied previous attempts at repair.</p> <p>Is able to act as an expert consultant, developing bespoke solutions and advising on best practices for building health and longevity.</p>
Building Conservation	<p>Understands basic conservation principles, such as “minimum intervention” and “reversibility”.</p> <p>Knows the fundamental difference between conservation, restoration, and repair, and respects the historic fabric of a building.</p>	<p>Can apply conservation principles to make informed, balanced judgments on a range of projects and conservation strategies.</p> <p>Is skilled at preparing detailed conservation plans that respect the integrity of the historic fabric while meeting modern needs.</p>	<p>Leads the field in conservation philosophy and practice, setting professional standards and influencing policy.</p> <p>Is capable of leading complex, high-profile projects and mediating between different conservation philosophies and project priorities.</p>
Legislation & Policy	<p>Has a basic knowledge of listed building consent and Faculty permission and the role of key heritage bodies like Historic England.</p> <p>Understands that planning permission is required for certain works.</p>	<p>Can navigate the listed building consent/Faculty process and prepare comprehensive applications, including Heritage Statements.</p> <p>Understands the duties incumbent upon churches and their appointed professionals, by statutory regulation such as CDM Regulations, The Equality Act, Building Safety Act, etc. and can navigate the possible conflict with heritage conservation, meeting the requirements of those regulations, and how to make reasonable adjustment where possible.</p> <p>Holds a position of importance within the ecclesiastical legal framework, such as DAC Member or consultee.</p>	<p>Is an expert on influencing policy (local or national) and can secure major funding for challenging heritage projects.</p> <p>Has an expert, working knowledge of heritage law and case law, and is capable of advising on complex legal matters.</p>

Criteria	Awareness	Competent	Expert
History & Significance	<p>Can identify basic architectural styles and periods common in the UK, such as Romanesque, Victorian, Gothic, or Georgian.</p> <p>Has a general appreciation for the history of a building.</p>	<p>Can research and articulate a building's history and heritage significance in detail.</p> <p>Is skilled in archival research and building analysis to produce a comprehensive Statement of Significance/ Heritage Statement that informs all project decisions.</p> <p>Can coordinate further assessments or investigations to inform a better understanding of a building's significance.</p>	<p>Is a recognised specialist who can assess and advise on a building's national or international significance.</p> <p>Has an expert knowledge of specific architectural periods, typologies, building methodologies and materiality and contributes to the body of academic knowledge through research or publication.</p>
Liturgy & Theology	<p>Knows the basic function of different parts of a church building (e.g., Nave, Chancel, Vestry) and has a general awareness of Christian liturgy.</p>	<p>Can balance liturgical needs with conservation requirements for a range of Christian denominations and faiths.</p> <p>Is skilled at facilitating discussions with clergy and congregations to ensure a project serves the spiritual and pastoral needs of the community.</p>	<p>Acts as a trusted advisor, translating complex theological and spiritual needs into practical, sensitive design solutions.</p> <p>Has an expert understanding of liturgical history and can guide significant projects of alteration with authority and empathy.</p>
Design	<p>Understands the importance of sympathetic design for repairs and alterations in a historic context.</p> <p>Appreciates that new work should complement, not detract from, the historic character.</p>	<p>Can create and detail technically sound and aesthetically appropriate designs for complex repairs, new insertions, and conservation work.</p> <p>Is skilled in choosing materials, proportions, and details that harmonise with the existing building.</p>	<p>Has a demonstrable track record of creating elegant, innovative, and highly regarded conservation designs.</p> <p>Possesses an exceptional eye for detail and the ability to establish a clear design philosophy for a project, inspiring the entire team.</p>
Materials	<p>Can identify common traditional building materials like limestone, timber, or lime mortars.</p> <p>Understands that these materials have different properties and require specific handling compared to modern materials.</p>	<p>Can specify and source appropriate traditional materials for a range of conservation repairs.</p> <p>Is skilled at understanding the properties of materials and how they interact, ensuring that new materials are compatible with the old.</p>	<p>Is a master of materials analysis, providing expert advice on the composition and decay of historic fabric.</p> <p>Has a specialist knowledge of specific materials (e.g., stained glass, lead, specific types of stone) and an expert understanding of traditional craft skills.</p>

Criteria	Awareness	Competent	Expert
Technology	<p>Has a basic understanding of unique church technologies, such as traditional church bells, clocks, and lightning conductors, heating and lighting, as complex, often interconnected, technological systems.</p> <p>Is familiar with modern technologies such as CCTV, A/V and broadband and the impact their integration might have on the historic setting.</p> <p>Knows that they are unique structures requiring specialist knowledge.</p>	<p>Can conduct detailed surveys and specify appropriate repairs for complex issues and seek specialist input where required.</p> <p>Has a well-developed understanding of modern-day technologies and their impact and benefits within church buildings. Is able to specify and design such installations to sensitively fit within the historic setting.</p> <p>Understands the forces at play in different technologies and can work with specialists to ensure the integrity of the building.</p>	<p>Is a specialist who designs and oversees major restoration or installation projects which impact on both historic and modern building services and integrated technologies.</p> <p>Has an expert knowledge of the mechanics, acoustics, and structural engineering of these elements, and is a recognised authority in the field.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Is aware of an historic building's inherent sustainability due to its embodied energy.</p> <p>Understands the risks of inappropriate interventions (e.g., non-breathable insulation) that can cause damage.</p>	<p>Can develop and implement financially and environmentally sustainable strategies for historic buildings.</p> <p>This includes sensitive energy efficiency upgrades and long-term maintenance plans that ensure the building's longevity and reduce its operational footprint.</p>	<p>Is authoritative in matters of sustainability for heritage, creating innovative solutions that set new industry standards.</p> <p>Can demonstrate how historic buildings are a crucial part of a sustainable future and is a vocal advocate for their unique role in society and in creating a sustainable future, particularly in the historic built environment.</p>
Environmental Issues	<p>Is aware of potential environmental issues in churchyards and churches, such as the presence of protected species (e.g., bats) or arboricultural matters, biodiversity and archaeological matters.</p> <p>Knows when to seek specialist advice.</p> <p>Is aware of issues surrounding the integration of environmental technologies into churches and their settings.</p>	<p>Can successfully manage projects involving protected species like bats or plants and trees and work effectively with ecologists and environmental specialists.</p> <p>Is skilled at implementing their recommendations into a project plan to ensure legal compliance and the preservation of natural and historical heritage.</p> <p>Understandings the nuances and implications of integrating modern sustainable technologies into church buildings and the impact on wider environmental issues.</p>	<p>Is an environmental steward who ensures projects contribute positively to the site's biodiversity and historic landscape.</p> <p>Has an in-depth understanding of environmental legislation and can lead complex investigations and mitigation strategies.</p>

Criteria	Awareness	Competent	Expert
Communication	<p>Knows who the main project stakeholders are (e.g., client, contractor, statutory bodies) and the importance of clear, respectful communication.</p>	<p>Is skilled in mediating and negotiating with a wide range of stakeholders, from clients and consultants to community groups and statutory bodies.</p> <p>Can articulate complex ideas clearly to a non-expert audience and resolve conflicts constructively.</p>	<p>Is a highly effective communicator who builds consensus and trust in politically or emotionally charged situations.</p> <p>Possesses exceptional interpersonal skills and is adept at managing stakeholder expectations and public relations for high-profile projects.</p>
Funding and Project Finance	<p>Has a basic understanding of how ecclesiastical funding supports ministry, mission, and community projects.</p> <p>Can recognise the main sources of funding, such as diocesan or heritage grants, and understand that compliance and ethical stewardship are essential.</p> <p>Can locate simple funding opportunities and assist with gathering information for applications.</p>	<p>Can demonstrate a solid working knowledge of key funding streams and how they relate to the wider mission and financial strategy of the Church.</p> <p>Understands eligibility criteria, budgeting principles, and reporting requirements.</p> <p>Can independently identify suitable funding opportunities, write clear and structured applications, and manage relationships with funders effectively.</p>	<p>Holds a deep and strategic understanding of the ecclesiastical funding landscape, including emerging trends and complex funding models.</p> <p>Can integrate financial, strategic, and theological perspectives to shape sustainable funding approaches at parish, diocesan, or national levels.</p> <p>Can lead major funding initiatives, mentor others, and measure and communicate the impact of funded work.</p>