

23rd May 2012

Dear Employment Mentor

CHANGES TO THE APEAS PART 3 EXAMINATION

I am writing to you to let you know about some important changes to the APEAS Part 3 Examination process. These changes are as follows:

- The introduction of new ARB/RIBA criteria at Part 3
- Broadening of the eligibility criteria for professional experience
- Revisions to the Case Study component of the APEAS Part 3 Examination

The first two changes have been instigated by ARB/RIBA whereas the third change has been brought about by APEAS to make the Examination more effective.'

Further details of the changes are provided below:

The new ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria

From the 2012/13 Examination diet APEAS will be using the new jointly held ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria which come under the following five main headings:

- Professionalism
- Clients, users and delivery of services
- Legal Framework and processes
- Practice and management
- Building procurement

A link to the new ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria, together with advice on how you should interpret them, can be found in the Employment Mentor's Section of the APEAS website (www.apeas.org.uk).

Changes to the Professional Experience Eligibility Criteria

ARB and RIBA have jointly agreed significant changes to the eligibility criteria for candidate professional experience to reflect the increasing globalisation of the architectural profession. These changes are reflected in revisions to ARB's Rule 13 (b) which now reads as follows:

the candidate has recently completed a minimum of 24 months' practical experience under the direct supervision of a professional working in the construction industry which should include at least 12 months working in the EEA, Channel Islands or the Isle of Man, under the direct supervision of an architect.'

The introduction of these changes to Rule 13 (b) now means that the following apply:-

- (1) While there continues to be a need for candidates to have 24-months of logged, signed professional experience there is no longer any distinction between post-Part 1 and post-Part 2 professional experience. However, a candidate must have gained 12-months of his/her professional experience within 2-years of submitting his/her documentary submissions to APEAS.
- (2) Twelve months of professional experience may be gathered under the mentorship of a non-architectural professional working in the construction industry.
- (3) Twelve months of experience may be gathered in countries outside the European Economic Area, Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.
- (4) Twelve months of experience must be gathered, under the direct supervision of an architect, in any country in the European Economic Area, Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

As you can see these changes to the professional experience eligibility criteria have far reaching implications for APEAS as an examining body and for employers in the United Kingdom employing architects in the future. If you would like to read about these changes in more details please can I refer you to Chapter 3 of the Guide for Candidates in the Employment Mentor's section of the APEAS website or to the RIBA PEDR website (www.pedr.co.uk).

Changes to the Case Study component of the APEAS Part 3 Examination

For a number of years APEAS practice examiners have indicated that some Case Studies are no more than 'diaries of the job' with little, or no, critical analysis. Candidates presenting such Case Studies rarely, if ever, pass the Part 3 Examination. In order to address the issue of the diary style Case Study the APEAS Examination Committee has re-titled the Case Study component of the Part 3 Examination Experience Based Analysis (EBA). This change in title is more than simply a re-branding of the Case Study. It is designed to convey to candidates and employment mentors the principal features that practice examiners are looking for from an EBA: namely, that the EBA subject, whether based on a building project or topic from architectural practice, should be grounded in the candidates own experience, and secondly, that the EBA report should contain a significant level of critical analysis.

In undertaking the Experience Based Analysis component a candidate will normally have to do the following:

- identify a suitable topic
- gather as extensive a range of information on the topic as possible
- undertake critical analysis relating to the topic
- and on the basis of this critical analysis draw up meaningful conclusions and recommendations

In conducting critical analysis it is important to emphasise that a candidate will have to develop arguments based as far as possible on sound evidence. These arguments, in turn, should allow meaningful conclusions and recommendations to be made in the Experience Based Analysis report. At oral interview examiners will be keen to explore these arguments, conclusions and recommendations with the candidate with a view to determining if the candidate possesses the professional competence to act as a registered architect.

If you would like more information on the Experience Based Analysis component please see Chapter 4 of the Guide for Candidate which you will find in the Employment Mentor's Section of the APEAS website.

I have attached with this letter a Guidance Note for Employment Mentors which provides information on the APEAS Part 3 Examination, the responsibilities of the employment mentor, the role of the employment mentor in a candidate's professional development and information relating to candidates with special circumstances.

I am sure you will appreciate that some, if not all, of the above changes may have consequences for your candidate, or candidates, sitting the 2012/13 Part 3 Examination. If you would like to discuss these changes in more detail please contact me and I will be happy to speak to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P A Kahan', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

P A Kahan (Dr)
CEO, APEAS

Guidance Note for Employment Mentors

1. Introduction

This Guidance Note has been prepared to provide information and advice to Employment Mentors involved in the APEAS Part 3 Examination in Professional Practice and Management.

The role of the Employment Mentor in the APEAS Part 3 Examination process is very important and certainly not one that should be taken lightly. As a Mentor you will have a number of important duties and responsibilities to perform as outlined in Section 3. However, perhaps the most important of all your responsibilities is the professional and moral one you have towards your candidate to ensure that he/she has access to a wide range of high quality professional experience opportunities. For an Employment Mentor there can be little more worthwhile than to see his/her candidate grow and develop in architectural practice to the point where the candidate is ready and confident to sit the Part 3 Examination and, if successful, to register as an architect.

Before reviewing the role of the Employment Mentor in more detail, it is helpful to provide a brief explanation of the way in which the APEAS Part 3 Examination process operates.

2. The APEAS Part 3 Examination

From the 2012/13 Examination diet APEAS will be using the new ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria. A copy of these new criteria can be found in the Employment Mentor's section of the APEAS website (www.apeas.org.uk). You are strongly advised to study these criteria at your earliest opportunity as these are the criteria your candidate will be assessed against in the Part 3 Examination.

The APEAS Part 3 Examination consists of the following three components:

- Experience
- Experience Based Analysis
- Practice Paper

The written material submitted by candidates for all three components is commonly called the documentary submission. Candidates **must** pass all three components in order to be awarded the Part 3 Examination in Professional Practice and Management

The Experience component comprises of the following two parts:

Record of Experience

Candidates must complete a signed, log of a minimum of 24 months of professional experience in a PEDR - Professional Experience and Development Record (for further information see www.pedr.co.uk). A minimum of 12 months of this professional experience must have been obtained in the two years immediately prior to the candidate submitting his/her documentary submission to APEAS for the Part 3 Examination.

Evaluation of Experience

Candidates must complete a written Evaluation of Experience offering a critical evaluation of all periods of professional experience. This Evaluation should be written in terms of the five headings in the ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria and should be no more than 2000 words in length. The Evaluation should be prefaced by a brief "Professional CV" (one A4 side only).

The Record of Experience and Evaluation of Experience are assessed together and a single grade is awarded for the Experience component. Combining the Record of Experience and Evaluation of Experience in this way provides examiners with greater scope to assess if a candidate's overall professional experience is sufficient in terms of breadth, depth and quality to allow him/her to practice as a registered architect.

Important Note

The ARB and RIBA have jointly agreed a number of significant changes to the eligibility criteria for professional experience. For more information on these changes please see Chapter 3 of the Guide for Candidates which you will find in the Employment Mentor's section of the APEAS website (www.apeas.org.uk).

Candidates are required to undertake an investigation of an appropriate building project or of a suitable aspect of architectural practice and prepare a report of no more than 6000 words. The investigation should be based on the candidate's architectural practice experience and should contain substantial critical analysis leading to meaningful conclusions and recommendations.

Practice Paper (Written Examination)

Candidates undertake a two-day, in-office examination covering many aspects of the ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria. The paper comprises of a series of situation-based questions relating to a written scenario.

Oral Examination

In addition to submitting their documentary submissions to APEAS candidates also undertake an Oral Examination. The Oral Examination is conducted by the two practice examiners who initially assessed and graded the candidate's documentary submission. The Oral Examination allows examiners to:

- check if the work contained in the candidate's documentary submission is genuinely his/her own work and not simply the result of collusion with others or plagiarism
- cover areas of the ARB/RIBA Part 3 criteria that are not directly covered in the candidate's documentary submission but may arise as a result of further discussions relating to the candidate's documentary submission
- explore the candidate's judgement in different professional situations
- confirm, or otherwise, their view that the candidate is ready and safe to practice as a registered architect

As a result of the Oral Examination examiners can moderate the grades they initially awarded to candidates either upwards or downwards. Thus, it is possible for a candidate, who on initial assessment is deemed to have failed the Part 3 Examination to pass it as a result of Oral Examination or vice versa.

3. **The Responsibilities of the Employment Mentor**

The responsibilities of Employment Mentors are set out clearly on the PEDR website (see PEDR website – Duties and Responsibilities of the Employer). Some of these responsibilities are summarised as follows:

- (1) Establish and maintain an organisational framework within the office which ensures that the candidate has access to high quality professional experience.
- (2) Oversee the educational and professional development of the candidate, supervising his/her daily work, and reviewing the candidate's performance at 3-monthly intervals using a Record of Experience such as the PEDR.
- (3) Ensure that a candidate is not given as a matter of routine tasks that are of little or no educational or developmental value to him/her.
- (4) Ensure that the candidate is not unduly challenged by a task inappropriate to his/her current level of experience.
- (5) Provide opportunities for organised professional training which covers both general procedures and tasks and some aspects of architect which are of a specialist nature.

In addition, depending on how the office is structured the Employment Mentor may be responsible for ensuring the following:

- (1) That the candidate has a contract of employment and a detailed job description which sets out, among other matters, hours of work and the time allotted for study in connection with educational and professional development.

- (2) Appropriate levels of candidate supervision while in the office, out on site and in any other environment in which the candidate is working for the office.
- (3) Inducted into, and updated on, appropriate Health and Safety legislation, procedures and practices in the office, on-site and in any other environment where the candidate is working for the office.

4. **The Role of the Employment Mentor in a Candidate's Professional Development**

The challenge for all Employment Mentors is to find an appropriate balance of input into their candidates' professional development. An Employment Mentor should reasonably expect his/her candidate to be taking a constructive and proactive interest in their own professional experience. Mentors should not have to 'spoon feed' their candidate but rather should concentrate on creating an atmosphere in which the candidate is positively encouraged to explore, examine, question and reflect on a range of issues in architectural practice. Candidates should be allowed to challenge in sensitive but constructive ways current ideas, views and attitudes on, for example, office systems, procedures and practices. Candidates should also be encouraged to express opinions and make judgements about practice issues although such opinions and judgements should be supported by evidence and/or well developed arguments. For example, the candidate may be given a task to assess the benefits versus risks to the office of taking on a particular project and based on reasoned analysis, provide a judgement as to whether the office should undertake the project or not.

Employment Mentors should also actively encourage candidates to learn the importance of accepting constructive advice and criticism about their work, judgements and opinions as this will become part of their professional life when they are a registered architect.

5. **The Role of the Professional Studies Advisor**

It is important to note that your candidate can also obtain information, advice and support from his/her Professional Studies Advisor (PSA). The PSA is normally a member of staff in a school of architecture who has responsibilities for supporting and advising Part 3 candidates. Among their duties PSA have responsibility for commenting on and counter-signing candidates three monthly PEDR Records of Experience sheets once you have commented and signed them. Candidates can also seek their PSA advice on the appropriateness of their Experience Based Analysis title and synopsis.

6. **Candidates with Special Circumstances**

At every examination diet candidates register for the Part 3 Examination who have particular circumstances that may affect their performance in the Examination. Candidates may have one or more of the following special circumstances:

- English is not their first language (alternatively referred to as English being an additional language)

- Some form of physical disability/medical problem
- Some form of Specific Learning Difficulty such as dyslexia

In examining candidates with any special circumstances APEAS works on the principle that such candidates should be assessed on 'the same level playing field' as candidates without such circumstances. To this end APEAS is willing to put in place arrangements that ensure that this principle is abided by. For fuller details of the support APEAS provides to candidates with special circumstances please contact Dr. Peter Kahan, CEO on 01324-484652 or info@apeas.org.uk. APEAS is also happy to provide information and advice to Employment Mentors who are mentoring candidates with any special circumstances.

7. **Resources to Help to Fulfil your Role as an Employment Mentor**

There are a range of resources available to support you in your role as an Employment Mentor. These resources include the following:

Guide for Candidates

This Guide is designed to provide candidates with all the necessary information they require to undertake the Part 3 Examination in Professional Practice and Management. The Guide for Candidates is updated annually to reflect comments from candidates, examiners and external examiners on ways to improve the Guide. A copy of the Guide can also be found on the APEAS website in the Employment Mentor section.

APEAS Website (www.apeas.org.uk)

The APEAS website contains a range of information which may be useful to Employment Mentors including details of current APEAS fees, past Examination Papers, contact details of PSA and a Frequently Asked Question section.

RIBA Professional Education and Development Resource (PEDR) (www.pedr.co.uk)

This is a very helpful Internet based resource which contains a wide variety of information on how both employers and students can best arrange a broad range of high quality professional experience. The resource can be configured as one of the following 3 Guides:

- Guide for Students
- Guide for Employers
- Guide for PSA

Under the Guide for Employers you will find information on such subjects as:

- Employing students including the duties and responsibilities of the employer and model contracts for Stage 1 and Stage 2 students

- Education and Part 3 Courses
- Certificate of Professional Experience

Further Information

If you would like any further information on any aspect of the work of APEAS please do not hesitate to contact Dr Peter Kahan, CEO on 01324 484652 or info@apeas.org.uk.