

Principal Designer Competence Checklist

The purpose of this checklist is to help architects and designers assess whether they are competent to act as a Building Regulations Principal Designer – particularly for domestic and smaller commercial projects.

The more 'ticks' you have the more likely you are to be competent. However, this is for you to evaluate and determine based on your own specific experience and situation. Unticked boxes might perhaps give you ideas on where you need to consider actions and improvements.

Project type / description: _____

Training and Qualifications

Tick the statements that apply to your current situation:

- I have a relevant formal qualification and am registered with a professional body – e.g. ARB, CIAT.
- I have attended relevant CPD on the Building Regulations procedures and dutyholder changes.

Ongoing Professional Development

Which of the following do you actively engage in?

- Attending structured CPD sessions on topics such as fire safety, energy efficiency or moisture risks.
- Keeping up to date with changes in the Building Regulations.
- Participating in relevant forums and discussions to share insights and learn from peers.
- Engaging in mentorships (either giving or receiving) to support reflective learning, to develop my skill set and / or to diversify in project types.
- Identifying my own knowledge gaps and seeking targeted CPD or advice to fill them.

Skills and Knowledge

Tick the statements that apply to your current level of knowledge:

- I understand the design process for this project type.
- I understand how the Building Regulations apply to a project of this type.
- I understand how to identify common design risks early, and how to eliminate or reduce them through design.
- I regularly coordinate with structural, M&E and / or other design consultants on this type of project.

Experience and Behaviour

Tick the statements that apply to your current level of experience:

- My Curriculum Vitae demonstrates that I have experience of this project type.
- I have experience leading the design of this project type with a similar scale and complexity.
- I have effectively managed and co-ordinated the design team on a project of this type.
- I have identified and addressed design compliance issues on a project of this type.
- I have supported the client and contractor through the construction phase of a project of this type, to resolve design issues.

- I am confident in my ability to push back on relevant design changes when required – with designers, contractors and the client.
- I know when I've made a mistake and make sure that I learn from them.

Working Practices

Tick the practices you currently follow to manage design risk and demonstrate compliance:

- I keep written records tracking decisions and hazards / potential challenges.
- I coordinate with all designers to ensure that their contribution aligns with the Building Regulations.
- I have a procedure in place to assess design changes during construction.
- I retain records of decisions in case they need to be reviewed later.
- I maintain a collaborative work ethic in communications with designers as well as the contractor and client.

Personal Competence Statement

You might like to use the RIBA template to create your own competence statement: [RIBA PD templates](#).

Reflection & Action Plan

Ongoing learning helps to maintain and demonstrate competence. Use the space below to set personal actions that will strengthen your competence as Principal Designer. Revisit this plan regularly and update it as your skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours evolve.

Area to Improve	Planned Action