

BECOMING A RECOGNISED PRACTITIONER IN URBAN DESIGN

**URBAN
DESIGN
GROUP** | **RECOGNISED
PRACTITIONER**

RECOGNISED PRACTITIONER IN URBAN DESIGN

Professionals with a suitable balance of education and experience can apply to become a Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design. The distinction provides a wide range of professionals with a valued affiliation (in many cases an additional one), proclaiming their commitment to - and experience of - urban design. Being a Recognised Practitioner can give those working in urban design a stronger sense of identity; greater influence on professional practice and public policy; and a feeling of common purpose.

Recognised Practitioners are professionals with a wide range of skills and experience of designing in an urban context. Many of the new generation of professionals have more than one professional affiliation; more over they expect - and are required - to develop new skills and areas of expertise throughout their career.

Recognised Practitioners come from a diverse range of professional backgrounds including:

- Urban Design
- Highway and Civil Engineering
- Building Conservation
- Development Control
- Landscape Architecture
- Lighting
- Architecture
- Regeneration and Development
- Transport Planning
- and other professions

The core of the Recognised Practitioner assessment is the *Capacitycheck* system, which enables people from a wide range of different backgrounds and roles to be considered, including practitioners involved in policy formulation, research or academia.

IMPORTANT:

The award of Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design is made by the Executive Committee of the Urban Design Group, on the basis of information submitted in the application form and declarations made by the candidate, in addition to the recommendation of two independent sponsors.

At the time the award is made, each candidate is able to demonstrate, by their declared experience and qualifications, that they had striven to contribute to the practice of urban design and should, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, be capable of making a valued contribution to urban design in future years.

CAPACITYCHECK: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Foundations of Urban Design

- | | |
|---|---|
| A1 The objectives of urban design and the qualities of successful places | A5 The other systems and agencies that shape the built environment |
| A2 Collaborative and participative processes | A6 How to use, read and interpret urban design documents and plans |
| A3 How design relates to different spatial scales | A7 Implementing urban design |
| A4 The role of urban design in local government | A8 Caring for the place |

Urban Design Topics

Form and context

- B1** Natural setting
- B2** Legislative and policy context
- B3** Historical, cultural, social and economic context
- B4** Land ownership
- B5** Urban form
- B5** Types of building
- B7** Materials
- B8** Greenspace and landscape
- B9** Movement and inclusive access

People

- B11** Emotional needs
- B12** Sensory experience
- B13** Factors contributing to health
- B14** Safety and security

Servicing

- B15** Water
- B16** Energy
- B17** Telecommunications
- B18** Waste
- B19** Utilities

Management

- B20** Management & maintenance

The skills needed include an understanding of the planning system, urbanism, sustainability, sustainable communities, development economics, context appraisal, movement analysis, infrastructure, regeneration strategy, conservation, landscape design, site planning, masterplanning, public and stakeholder collaboration, implementation, project funding, project management, graphic communication, negotiation, and how to formulate design policy and write guidance. A practitioner in urban design must be able to communicate orally, graphically and in writing, as well as a commitment to working across professional boundaries. A professional without such qualities is unlikely to be able to get to grips with the full complexities of the urban design and development process.

HOW TO APPLY

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO BE A RECOGNISED PRACTITIONER?

The distinction of Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design is open to anyone who meets three criteria:

1. Commitment
2. Experience and Qualifications
3. Two Sponsors

1. COMMITMENT

You will need to demonstrate a commitment to the principles of the UDG:

The principles of the Urban Design Group

- Context - Relating urban change to the best of what already exists.
- Diversity - Encouraging the variety that enlarges the interest or choices a place can offer.
- Equity - Making places (and their facilities and amenities) accessible to people beyond the owner and immediate users.
- Stewardship - Taking a broad and long-term view of the costs and benefits of any change and understanding what makes towns and cities sustainable.
- Empowerment - building the sense of identity of the people who live and work in a place, their involvement in caring for its fabric and character, and their capacity to influence the forces that shape the environment.

2. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

You will need to demonstrate a mix of relevant experience and qualifications. The duration of professional experience required will be dependent on level of formal qualification.

Qualifications	Professional Experience required
	<i>You must demonstrate that you have devoted the majority of your employment during this period to four or more of the seven activities listed in 'Roles in Urban Design' (see next page) or other activities that the UDG may be willing to accept as part of the work of an urban designer</i>
Diploma or Masters' Degree in Urban Design	at least three years
Post Graduate Certificate in Urban Design (60 credits)	at least four years
A related built environment qualification (e.g. Architecture, Sustainable Communities, Urban Regeneration, Urban Engineering)	at least three to five years depending on the relevance of the course. Please ensure that you have provided sufficient detail of course content in the box on the preceding page for this to be assessed.
No relevant formal built environment qualification	at least five years

In all cases, it is expected that the applicant will well exceed the minimum requirements.

3. TWO SPONSORS

The sponsors vouch for the quality of your work and the veracity of your application. You will need two sponsors

SPONSOR 1: PRACTITIONER OF STANDING

The first sponsor should be either: a UDG Recognised Practitioner; a practitioner of similar standing within the profession; a member of the UDG Executive Committee

SPONSOR 2: CURRENT OR RECENT EMPLOYER OF STANDING

The second sponsor should be: a current or recent employer (or a senior colleague in the case of practitioners who are also employers); an academic sponsor

Sponsor 2 should not be employed by the same organisation as sponsor 1

CAPACITYCHECK: ROLES IN URBAN DESIGN

The Recognised Practitioner designation is a mark of experience and achievement, not just knowledge and skills. Assessment is based upon the applicant's experience in carrying out roles in urban design.

The list below (taken from *Capacitycheck*) sets out roles that are carried out by urban designers (who may or may not call themselves by that title). No urban designer will have all of these as specialist skills. The bullet points are examples of the kind of activities which may be carried out in each role:

Role		Some Examples
C1	Carrying out urban design studies and appraisals	Carrying out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban morphology studies • Policy reviews • Site and context appraisals • Urban character assessments • Conservation area and building appraisals. • Transport impact assessments • Public space appraisals • Feasibility appraisal • Placechecks
C2	Preparing urban design policy, guidance and statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing urban design policies for a local development framework • Monitoring and reviewing design policy and guidance • Preparing vision statements • Preparing urban design codes • Preparing and illustrating urban design guidance • Preparing design guides • Preparing design and access statements • Preparing development briefs • Preparing urban design frameworks • Drawing up planning and design principles for specific areas or sites • Preparing design statements • Preparing public realm strategies • Facilitating local or village design statements
C3	Masterplanning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a strategic urban design plan for a town and its surrounds.
C4	Designing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a masterplan including blue and green infrastructure
C5	Communicating design in two dimensions (by hand or computer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing the movement network for an area or site • Designing development layouts or producing indicative layouts for specific sites
C6	Communicating design in three dimensions (by hand or computer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing public realm or street improvement schemes • Preparing masterplans • Preparing site drawings • Preparing presentations
C7	Providing urban design advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising prospective planning applicants on design aspects of development • Advising elected politicians and local government officers on design aspects of development • Supporting and advising a design champion • Giving design advice on planning applications as part of the development control function of a local authority • Advising other local government services on urban design

		<p>matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advising on the form and content of design statements as part of the submission requirements to accompany planning applications • Preparing statements of evidence and giving evidence on urban design matters on appeals into planning applications and development plan inquiries • Advising the public on urban design matters • Collaborating with a range of professionals across local authority service areas • Participating in community consultations.
C8	Managing urban design processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiating with planning applicants and their agents • Managing the process of public and stakeholder involvement • Setting briefs for and managing design consultants • Negotiating with public service professionals in submitting design statements • Managing public and stakeholder involvement in preparing public realm strategies, development briefs and urban design frameworks • Planning and organising urban design competitions • Setting briefs for and managing design consultants • Enabling and managing the development process • Formulating and setting urban design performance indicators • Collaborating with public service professionals on the management, design and maintenance of the public realm.
C9	Promoting placemaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up and administering a local design awards scheme • Setting up and administering a local design panel. • Acting as an advocate for placemaking

INTERVIEWS

The UDG Assessment Panel may call Recognised Practitioner applicants for interview but this will not usually be necessary.

DESIGNATORY LETTERS

At present, the UDG does not award designatory letters to be used after your name. However, it is permissible to employ the words 'Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design', or similar, on your CV.

MEMBERSHIP AND FEE

Recognition will be renewable on an annual basis for a fee of £85.00 (subject to yearly review), including membership of the UDG at no extra cost. Individuals who are already paid-up UDG members can upgrade to Recognised Practitioner status for an additional £30.00. Applicants applying to become Recognised Practitioners are kindly requested to complete the enclosed Direct Debit form for payment of their annual fee.

- **Unpaid subscriptions**

The status of a Recognised Practitioner will lapse if a due subscription is unpaid after three months. In order to reinstate a lapsed Recognised Practitioner membership after this point, an additional sum equivalent to one year's subscription will be payable together with the annual subscription fee and a written statement of recent professional activity, including CPD.

- **Hardship (unemployment or illness)**

In cases when a Recognised Practitioner is out of work for a significant period, they may apply for a reduced subscription given at the discretion of the UDG.

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

- **Continuing professional development**

Renewal will normally be automatic providing practitioners undertake to complete at least five days of appropriate CPD each year (for example, either whole or half days at conferences or the equivalent hours for attending seminars, talks etc.) and to maintain brief records. We would expect Recognised Practitioners to keep themselves informed and updated with current developments in urban design by attending seminars, conferences and presentations on a regular basis as well as reading relevant literature. The UDG has confidence that professionals will be able to judge for themselves what is and is not appropriate to their needs.

The UDG is seeking to promote an understanding of the skills and experience of its Recognised Practitioners. Practitioners should seek to update their Recognition annually with reference to the Urban Design Alliance's Capacitycheck and relevant urban design skills prior to renewal.

- **Commitment**

Recognised practitioners should consider themselves as leading players in urban design. They should be active members of the urban design community striving to raise awareness, promoting best practice through the example they set in their own work, and by their encouragement of others, including colleagues, members of the public and politicians.

When renewing their annual subscriptions, Recognised Practitioners will be invited to send in very brief details of recent projects, initiatives, and activities. This will be of great help in inspiring future events and initiatives, and obtaining ideas for forthcoming editions of *Urban Design* and other publications.

ADVICE TO EMPLOYERS

As the Recognised Practitioner assessment is based on a broad range of skills, prospective employers should make their own enquiries to ascertain that the candidate has the specific skills and experience required for a particular role.