



Architects Registration Board

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

建築師註冊管理局

香港特別行政區

Guidelines on Qualifications for
Renewal of Registration of Registered Architects
with regard to
Different Categories of Qualifications under
the Architects Registration Ordinance (Cap 408)

Date: 8 May 2017

By Legal Affairs Committee

Contents:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Descriptions</u>	<u>Page</u>
A.	Background and Introduction	3 - 6
B.	Guidelines on Qualifications for Renewal of Registration of Registered Architects with regard to different Categories of Qualifications under the Architects Registration Ordinance (Cap 408)	7 - 12
C.	Appendix 1: Flow-Chart	13
D.	Appendix 2: Categories of Qualifications	14 - 16
E.	Appendix 3: Documents and Fees Required for Submission of Application	17 - 18
F.	Appendix 4: Reference for Relevant Professional Experience and CPD Engagements	19 - 20

A. Background and Introduction

1. Section 16 of the Architects Registration Ordinance (Cap 408) (the “**Ordinance**”) entitles “**Expiry of registration and renewal**”, which sets the time for the expiry of registration of a Registered Architect (“**RA**”) and lays down the provisions in relation to the renewal thereof. Section 16(5) provides that: “The Board [i.e. Architects Registration Board or the Board] may reject an application for renewal if it is satisfied that the applicant does not continue to comply with the requirements for registration set out in Section 13 [of the Ordinance]”. In addition to the requirements set out under sub-Sections 13(1)(b)-(f), Section 13(1)(a) of the Ordinance provides that the Board shall not register a person as a registered architect unless he/she (i) is a member of the Institute [i.e. **the Hong Kong Institute of Architects/HKIA**]; or (ii) is a member of an architectural body the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being **of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute** [emphasis added]; or (iii) has passed such examinations in architecture and other subjects and has received such training and experience as the Board may accept, either generally or in a particular case, as a qualification **of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute**. As provided under Sections 13(1)(a)(ii) and 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance respectively, for registration relying on either the membership of architectural body (other than the Institute) (Section 13(1)(a)(ii)) or the relevant examination, training and experience as a qualification (Section 13(1)(a)(iii)), the standard of such membership or qualification has to be accepted by the Board as being “**not less than that of a member of the Institute**”. In order to maintain the registration system under the Ordinance at a prominent professional standard, the Board has been adopting and will continue to adopt a meticulous and cautious approach in considering and scrutinizing the membership (per Section 13(1)(a)(ii) of the Ordinance) and the qualification by way of the relevant examination, training and experience (per Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance) before they are accepted by the Board as being of a standard “**not less than that of a member of the Institute**”. By virtue of the provision of Section 16(5) of the Ordinance, such approach has also been and is still being adopted by the Board in handling renewal of registration of RAs.

2. (a) On considering and scrutinizing the relevant membership of architectural body (other than the Institute) under Section 13(1)(a)(ii), the Board would consider whether the membership of such architectural body, as submitted by the applicant, possesses a standard not less than that of the membership of the Institute. The Board may consider, including but not limited to, the prerequisite subjects of examination, training and experience for becoming a member of such architectural body and compare them with the subjects of examination, training and experience required for becoming a member of the Institute at the time of renewal of registration.

(b) On considering and scrutinizing the relevant qualification under Section 13(1)(a)(iii), the Board would consider whether the qualification of having the relevant examination, training and experience, as submitted by the applicant, possesses a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute. The Board may consider, including but not limited to, the date, nature and subjects of the relevant examination passed and training and experience received by the applicant and compare them with the subjects of examination, training and experience required for becoming a member of the Institute at the time of renewal of registration.
3. To uphold the professional quality of all RAs, the Board generally recognizes the necessity and importance of **Continuing Professional Development** (“CPD”) for each RA to maintain himself/herself to be “**competent to practise as an architect**” (Section 13(1)(e) of the Ordinance refers) and “**a fit and proper person to be registered**” (Section 13(1)(f) of the Ordinance refers). Requirements under Sections 13(1)(e) and 13(1)(f) are both some of the prerequisite requirements for renewal of registration as RA under the Ordinance to the satisfaction of the Board.
4. On 9 March 2006, taking into account the “Mandatory Continuing Professional Development” for HKIA members that had been successfully implemented since 2005, the Board issued a letter to all RAs with a view to providing a set

of clear and succinct guidelines for the application for renewal of registration by non-HKIA members under Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance.

5. With regards to the differences between cases of renewal of registration encountered by the Board during the past ten years, the Board, on the advice of its **Legal Affairs Committee** (“**LAC**”), sets up guidelines (the “**Guidelines**”) to provide general guidance for RAs to apply for renewal of registration regarding Section 13(1)(a) of the Ordinance. The **Registration Committee** (“**RC**”) of the Board should refer to the Guidelines when considering the applications from RAs with respect to different Categories of Qualifications (please refer to Appendix 2) held by the RAs when they apply for renewal of registration.
6. An integrated flow-chart for RAs to apply for renewal of registration and for the RC to process the application for renewal of registration under the Ordinance is attached as Appendix 1 for general information.
7. The Guidelines are intended to be practical and user-friendly for the RC to consider each application for renewal of registration from RAs, and for each RA to apply for his/her renewal of registration, with reference to different Categories of Qualifications. For the avoidance of doubt, the Board is provided with statutory powers to approve or reject any application for renewal of registration for RAs at its discretion and nothing herein shall prejudice the said statutory powers of the Board.

8. The Guidelines are set out as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Step 1: | Submission of Application
(by RA) |
| Step 2: | Checking Documents and Segregation of Categories
(by the secretariat of the Board (the “ARB Secretariat”)) |
| Step 3A, 3B & 3C: | Review of Application
(by the ARB Secretariat and the RC) |
| Step 4: | Recommendation of RA’s Application to the Board |

(by the RC)

Step 5:

**Consideration and Decision of Acceptance or Refusal of RA's
Application
(by the Board)**

B. Guidelines on Qualifications for Renewal of Registration of Registered Architects (RAs) under the Ordinance

To ensure that the Guidelines are practical and user-friendly, the renewal process will be set out in various steps, which are systematically integrated, for RA to apply for his/her renewal of registration and for the RC to consider and review the different Categories of Qualifications as appropriate. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the “**Flow-Chart**” showing the working of various steps diagrammatically.

Step 1 - Submission of Application (by RA)

Procedures to be taken by RA for application for renewal of registration under the Ordinance (**Section 16(1) - (3)** of the Ordinance referred to)

Action:

- The RA should identify the Category of Qualification for which his/her application will fall under, with reference to the “**Categories of Qualifications**” as stated in **Appendix 2**.
- The RA should complete, sign and submit the application form prescribed by the Board together with payment of fee(s) and the required supporting documents as stated in Appendix 3 according to the corresponding Category of Qualification to the Board for processing before the deadline for renewal of registration.

Step 2 - Checking Documents and Segregation of Categories (by the ARB Secretariat)

Procedures to be taken by the ARB Secretariat on application for renewal of registration by RA under the Ordinance (**Section 16(1) - (3) and Section 16(5)** of the Ordinance referred to)

Action:

- The ARB Secretariat would check all the documents submitted by the RA to make sure that all the required information, documents and fee(s) for processing the renewal of registration have been submitted with the application. The ARB Secretariat may request the RA to provide supplementary information and/or supplementary documents, if necessary.
- Based on the documents and information submitted by the RAs and preliminarily scrutinized by the ARB Secretariat, the ARB Secretariat would segregate the applications into different categories according to the Categories of Qualifications as stated in Appendix 2. The ARB Secretariat would then report and submit all the applications to the RC for review, consideration and processing.

Step 3A – Review of Application (by the RC with assistance of the ARB Secretariat)

For RAs under Categories 1, 2 and 3, who are current members of the Institute when applying for renewal of registration (**Section 13(1)(a)(i)** of the Ordinance referred to)

Action:

- On the basis that the RA claims that he/she currently possesses the membership of the Institute, the ARB Secretariat would check and verify the validation of the RA's membership of the Institute and the CPD engagements completed by him/her as required by the Institute, and then report the findings to the RC.
- The RC would examine and review the documents and information submitted by each RA and the findings reported by the ARB Secretariat for each application so as to check whether, for the purpose of renewal of registration and pursuant to Section 16(5) of the Ordinance, the RA continues to comply with the requirements as stipulated under **Section 13** of the Ordinance.

Step 3B - Review of Application (by the RC with assistance of the ARB Secretariat)

For RAs under Categories 1A, 2A and 3A, who are current members of architectural bodies, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for the renewal of registration (**Section 13(1)(a)(ii)** of the Ordinance referred to)

Action:

- On the basis that the RA claims that he/she currently possesses the membership of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute and has submitted all necessary supporting documents to prove the same, the Board (or its RC or the ARB Secretariat) may demand and/or request the RA to authorize the Board (or its RC or the ARB Secretariat) in writing to verify his/her membership with the named architectural body. The Board (or its RC or the ARB Secretariat) would check and verify the supporting documents regarding the validation of the RA's membership with the architectural body, if necessary, and then report to the RC.
- The ARB Secretariat would also check and verify the record of CPD engagements of the RA in the last 12 months, including CPD engagements as accepted by the Institute or such architectural bodies recognized by the Board or such CPD engagements as accepted by the Board (please see Appendix 4) and request the RA to supplement any supporting documents and/or information in relation to his/her CPD engagements in the last 12 months, if necessary.
- The RC would examine and review the documents and information submitted by each RA and the findings reported by the ARB Secretariat for each application so as to check whether, for the purpose of renewal of registration and pursuant to Section 16(5) of the Ordinance, the RA continues to comply with the requirements as stipulated under **Section 13** of the Ordinance.

Step 3C - Review of Application (by RC with assistance of the ARB Secretariat)

For RAs under Categories 1B, 2B and 3B, who currently are neither a member of the Institute nor a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, but has passed such examination in architecture and other subjects and has received such training and experience as the Board may accept, either generally or in a particular case, as a qualification of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for renewal of registration (**Section 13(1)(a)(iii)** of the Ordinance referred to)

Action:

- On the basis that the RA claims that he/she does not possess either the membership of the Institute or any architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, but has passed such examination in architecture and other subjects and has received such training and experience as the Board may accept, either generally or in a particular case, as a qualification of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for renewal of registration, and has submitted all necessary supporting documents to prove the same, the ARB Secretariat would:
 - (i) identify the original approval record of the RA's first application registration as RA under **Section 13(1)(a)(i), 13(1)(a)(ii) or 13(1)(a)(iii)** for the RC's information;
 - (ii) check and verify the record of the relevant professional experience of the RA for at least one year prior to his/her first application for registration as RA;
 - (iii) check and verify the record of CPD engagements of the RA in the last 12 months, including CPD engagements as accepted by the Institute or such architectural bodies recognized by the Board or such CPD engagements as accepted by the Board (please see Appendix 4(2)); and
 - (iv) request the RA to supplement any supporting documents and/or information in relation to his/her relevant professional examination,

training and experience and/or CPD engagements of the RA in the last 12 months, if necessary;

The ARB Secretariat would then report the findings to the RC.

- The RC would examine and review the supporting documents and information submitted by each RA and the findings reported by the ARB Secretariat for each application so as to check whether, for the purpose of renewal of registration and pursuant to Section 16(5) of the Ordinance, the RA continues to comply with the requirements as stipulated under **Section 13** of the Ordinance. For this purpose, the RC can:
 - (i) Request the RA to supplement any supporting documents and/or information in relation to his/her relevant professional examination, training and experience and/or CPD engagements of the RA in the last 12 months, if necessary.
 - (ii) Request the RA to clarify any supporting documents and/or information in relation to his/her relevant professional examination, training and experience and/or CPD engagements of the RA in the last 12 months, if necessary.

For the avoidance of doubt, each case would be considered and assessed individually according to the principles/requirements set up in the Ordinance in a fair and reasonable manner.

Step 4 - Recommendation of RA's Application to the Board (by the RC)

Last step to be taken by the RC on application for renewal of registration by RA under the Ordinance (**Sections 13, 16(5) and 17** of the Ordinance referred to)

Action:

- As aforesaid, the RC would review and examine all necessary documents and/or supporting information submitted by each RA to check whether, for the purpose of renewal of registration and pursuant to Section 16(5) of the Ordinance, the RA continues to comply with the requirements as stipulated under **Section 13** of the Ordinance; and

- On the basis of the RA's submission, the RC would make recommendation to the Board on the acceptance or refusal of the applications for the Board's consideration.

Step 5 - Consideration and Decision of Acceptance or Refusal of RA's Application (by the Board)

Procedures to be taken by the Board on application for renewal of registration by RA under the Ordinance (**Sections 16(5) and 17** of the Ordinance referred to).

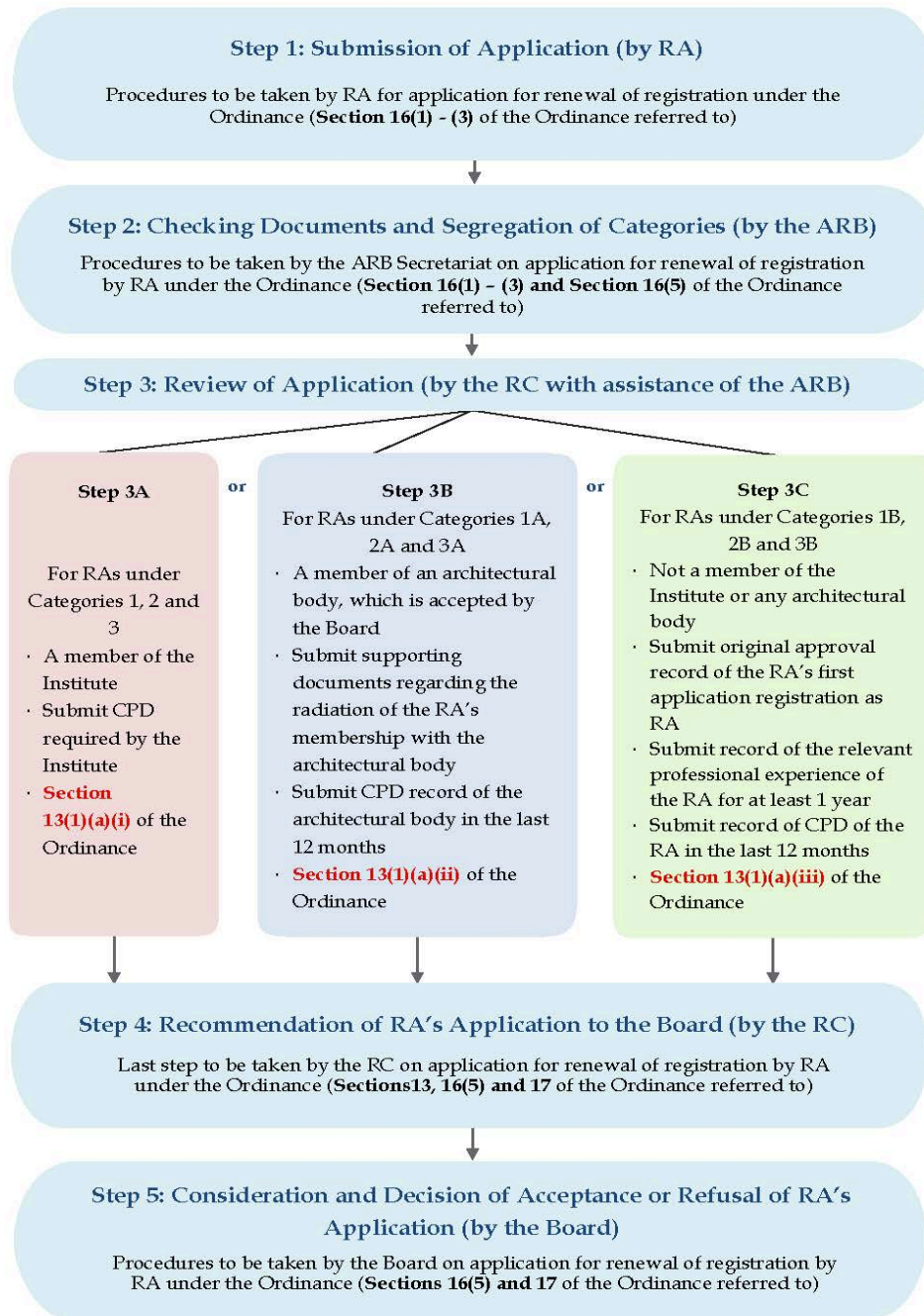
Action:

- The Board would review the recommendation made by the RC on the RA's application. The Board would make its decision to accept or refuse the RA's application. Accordingly, the Registrar would process the renewal registration or communicate the decision of refusal to the RA with reasons (as the case may be); and
- The Board is not bound by any recommendation made by the RC and may reject an application for renewal if it is satisfied that the RA does not continue to comply with the requirements set out in Section 13 of the Ordinance for the purpose of renewal of registration.

C. Appendix 1

Flow-Chart

Appendix 1



Notes: RA - Registered Architect
RC - Registered Committee

Updated on: 06/2017

D. Appendix 2: Categories of Qualifications

The Categories of Qualifications for renewal of registration as RA are listed out below:

Category 1: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification as a member of the Institute under **Section 13(1)(a)(i) of the Ordinance** and he/she currently continues to be a member of the Institute when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 1A: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification as a member of the Institute under **Section 13(1)(a)(i) of the Ordinance**. However, he/she currently is not a member of the Institute but is a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 1B: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification as a member of the Institute under **Section 13(1)(a)(i) of the Ordinance**. Yet, the RA currently is neither a member of the Institute nor a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for the renewal of registration. However, he/she has passed such examination in architecture and other subjects and has received such training and experience as the Board may accept under Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 2: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his /her qualification as a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board

as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, under **Section 13(1)(a)(ii) of the Ordinance** and the RA currently is a member of the Institute when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 2A: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification as a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, under **Section 13(1)(a)(ii) of the Ordinance** and the RA currently is not a member of the Institute but continues to be a member of such kind of architectural body when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 2B: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification as a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, under **Section 13(1)(a)(ii) of the Ordinance**. Yet the RA currently is neither a member of the Institute nor a member of such kind of architectural body when applying for the renewal of registration. However, he/she has passed such examination in architecture and other subjects and has received such training and experience as the Board may accept under Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 3: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification of passing such examinations in architecture and other subjects; and having received such training and experience as the Board may accept, either generally or in a particular case, as a qualification of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute under **Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance**

and the RA is currently a member of the Institute when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 3A: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification of passing such examinations in architecture and other subjects; and having received such training and experience as the Board may accept, either generally or in a particular case, as a qualification of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute under **Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance** and the RA currently is not a member of the Institute but is a member of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for the renewal of registration.

Category 3B: RA who has originally been registered as a RA based on his/her qualification of passing such examinations in architecture and other subjects; and having received such training and experience as the Board may accept, either generally or in a particular case, as a qualification of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute under **Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance**. Yet the RA currently is neither a member of the Institute nor a member of any architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute, when applying for the renewal of registration. However, he/she has passed such examination in architecture and other subjects and has received such training and experience as the Board may accept under Section 13(1)(a)(iii) of the Ordinance when applying for the renewal of registration.

E. Appendix 3: Documents and Fees Required for Submission of Application

Documents required for the submission of application for renewal of registration as RA with regard to different categories include (not exhaustive):

Categories 1, 2 and 3:

- (a) the completed and signed prescribed form for application for renewal of registration; and
- (b) the cheque for prescribed fee for application of renewal of registration.

Categories 1A, 2A and 3A:

- (a) the completed and signed prescribed form for application for renewal of registration;
- (b) the documentary evidence to prove that the RA possesses the membership of an architectural body, the membership of which is accepted by the Board as being of a standard not less than that of a member of the Institute;
- (c) the documentary evidence to prove the CPD engagements completed by the RA under such architectural body or the CPD engagements completed under the Institute or such CPD engagements as accepted by the Board (please see Appendix 4(2)); and
- (d) the cheque for prescribed fee(s): (i) for application for renewal of registration and (ii) for ascertaining the items (b) and (c) as aforesaid.

Categories 1B, 2B and 3B:

- (a) the completed and signed prescribed form for application for renewal of registration;

- (b) all necessary supporting documents and/or supporting information to show conformity to requirement of Section 13 of the Ordinance;
- (c) the documentary evidence to prove the professional examination, training and experience of the RA, and the CPD engagements completed by the RA under such architectural bodies recognized by the Board or the CPD engagements completed under the Institute or such CPD engagements as accepted by the Board (please see Appendix 4); and
- (d) the cheque for prescribed fee(s): (i) for application for renewal of registration and (ii) for ascertaining the items (b) and (c) as aforesaid.

F. Appendix 4: Reference for Relevant Professional Examination, Training and Experience and CPD Engagements

(1) Relevant Professional Examination, Training and Experience

The RA should provide his/her record of relevant professional examination, training and experience in connection with (i) design; (ii) construction; **or** (iii) fitting out of buildings, during the past 12 months prior to his/her application for renewal of registration. Some relevant examples (not exhaustive) are listed below for reference:

- (i) Building Renovation or Interior Design;
- (ii) Architectural Design;
- (iii) Urban Design / Urban Planning;
- (iv) BIM or similar;
- (v) Environment / Greening / Landscape Design;
- (vi) Project Management;
- (vii) Contract Management;
- (viii) Dispute Prevention or Dispute Resolution;
- (ix) Conservation;
- (x) IT and Technologies (e.g. E-Commerce / Construction Technologies etc.)
- (xi) Business Management, Cost Control, Finance etc.;
- (xii) Advancement in Studies of Architecture or related fields;
- (xiii) Building Maintenance and Quality Controls;
- (xiv) Beam Plus Courses/Certification.

(2) CPD Engagements

The RA should provide his/her record of CPD engagements during the past 12 months prior to his/her application for renewal of registration. Some relevant examples (not exhaustive) are listed below for reference:

- (i) Attending Courses, seminars, conferences, and workshops etc. organized by the Institute, other tertiary institutes or professional institutes;
- (ii) Study tours or visits to buildings, construction sites or related exhibitions;
- (iii) Researching for and writing articles for publication;

- (iv) Giving presentations, speeches and seminars;
- (v) Voluntary works for the community;
- (vi) Conducting or attending in-house seminars, workshops or study tours;
- (vii) Job related specialized studies or researches;
- (viii) Staff training or supervision of candidates for the Board Professional Assessment;
- (ix) Self-guided study or researches through structured reading, use of audio, video or internet resources;
- (x) E-learning packages;
- (xi) Postgraduate diploma or degree courses;
- (xii) Any relevant activities contributing to personal skills or professional development;
- (xiii) Construction Industry Safety Training.