



**RTPI**

mediation of space · making of place

## Supplementary Guidance on the APC Submission Some pointers from Assessors

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### 1. Introduction

This guidance does not replace the detailed guidance in the Guide to the APC, but rather should be read alongside it. In some cases it reiterates existing guidance which is sometimes overlooked; in others it provides comments from Assessors on how to interpret the guidance in order to produce a stronger APC submission.

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### 2. General Comments

- Assessors have generally been very positive about the high standard of submissions made.
  - Assessors have remarked upon and appreciated the honesty of the submissions received to date, which have generally included some very strong critical reflection.
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### 3. Administration and submitting the report – Do's and Don'ts

#### Please DO

- Complete the APC cover form (available at [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk))
- Make sure the submission is corroborated with at least one signature on each page.
- Ensure you send three copies each of your submission and log book (only one copy of each needs to have original signatures).

#### Please DON'T

- Include your name on the submission or, where possible, your log book. If you do so you waive your right to anonymity, and it may lead to delays in the results of your APC submission.
  - Send any supplementary material (portfolios of work, appraisal documentation etc.).
  - Forget to sign your application. This may seem trivial, but is confirmation that all information you have submitted is a true reflection of your experience.
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### 4. Assessment Criteria

- Do ensure that you address **all** of the Assessment Criteria, as it is possible to fail or be referred for the omission of just one criterion.
- However you should avoid structuring your report under the assessment criteria headings. APC Assessment Criteria have been designed to reflect a professional 'process', representing different stages of dealing with professional work. The criteria therefore flow on from one another, and are closely linked, which should help you when thinking about your own work and how you followed it through from start to finish.
- While making sure you address each criterion, the criteria that Assessors have found are least well addressed are:

#### ❖ *Criterion v: Competence in initiating action to implement strategies*

- This criterion is designed to show that, having identified the best way to proceed, Licentiates are also able to take action to make it happen. Successful examples of this

have included negotiating agreements; mediating and developing relationships between stakeholders; problem-solving; and conflict resolution. However there could be many more examples and you will need to identify the best way of demonstrating this criterion from your own work.

❖ *Criterion vi: Engagement in a process of monitoring & review*

- Candidates who demonstrate this criterion successfully are able to show how they have learned from previous work and how they have been able to apply this knowledge and experience to another task or project in the future.
- Alternatively candidates may be able to show how they had to change a planned course of action in light of new events – how they identified this (i.e. monitored how the course of action was progressing in order to identify the change), how they re-evaluated the situation, and how they decided upon a new course of action. Again, some mention could usefully be made of what they learned from this, and how it might affect their ability to act in the future.

❖ *Criterion vii: An awareness of the legal framework & ethical challenges of the work*

- Demonstrating an awareness of the ethical challenges of your work is more than showing that you have operated ‘ethically’: it is also about showing an understanding of the ethical dimensions of your work, and where you have had to make judgements based on ethical behaviour.
- It is particularly useful to try to identify examples of your work where you have come up against ethical challenges e.g. a decision at planning committee against officer recommendation.
- All members of the RTPI – employed Students and Licentiates, as much as Chartered Planners – must operate within the RTPI Code of Conduct, so reference to this document (in the context of how it applies to your own professional practice) is extremely useful for Assessors.

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## 5. Writing your submission

- You must make clear exactly what has been your contribution to, or involvement with, the area of work you are describing. Assessors are not necessarily looking for you to have led major projects, but phrases like ‘I was involved in...’ or ‘We worked on...’ can be overly vague and could lead to your application being referred pending further information.
- For this reason, Assessors strongly recommend that you write in the first person (‘I worked...’, ‘I wrote...’), even if this feels unusual for a professional report.
- In summary, Assessors cannot work from inference – if you do not clearly state it, they cannot be expected to know it or to give you credit for it.
- Do not spend too much of your time writing about your CPD activity. While this can be a useful (brief) addition to show how you have been involved in activities outside of your day-to-day work, and how this has helped you to develop your competence, ultimately this is a report on your professional competence in the workplace, and this should be the main focus.
- Do make sure you take care over presentation – this is an application for your professional qualification, and as such the presentation of your report sends a signal of your level of professionalism. There should be no reason to have poor spelling and grammar when you have access to spell check! It is also best practice to include page and paragraph numbers – this raises the professional standard of your submission and, on a practical level, makes it much easier for Assessors to discuss your work between them (Assessors will generally not meet face-to-face to discuss submissions).

- Do feel free to include one or two illustrations or diagrams if they serve to reflect and elaborate on the content of your submission. This does not contradict the advice not to include supplementary material – diagrams and illustrations will need to be incorporated into the body of the report, and should serve to further illustrate what you are describing or reflecting upon in your submission.
- Do try to limit the number of projects or areas of work you draw upon in your professional competence statement. While the practical experience statement should be a fairly 'broad brush' account of all of your experience, roles and responsibilities, your professional competence statement should go into much greater details focusing on a more limited number of examples. These would most likely be drawn from your most recent employment (as it will be in this post that you are most likely to be working at a higher professional level) but this need not always be the case – you will need to select for yourself the best examples from your experience to demonstrate the assessment criteria. While Licentiates are certainly not limited to writing about only one example in their professional competence statement, Assessors do tend to find that those submissions which limit the number of 'case studies' are able to go into much greater details and therefore better to demonstrate the assessment criteria.
- Do try to link your Professional Development Plan (PDP) with your SWOT analysis and, if possible, your log book. Assessors can be quite concerned where examples of 'weaknesses' or 'areas for development' are continually indicated in the log book or the SWOT analysis but not acknowledged or addressed in the professional development plan.

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