



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

**RTPI
Professional
Standards**

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Supplementary Guidance on the Use of Designations and Post-Nominals

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1. Introduction

This guidance has been prepared to support RTPI Members on their professional responsibilities on the use of designations and post-nominals.

The RTPI Code of Professional Conduct www.rtpi.org.uk/professionalstandards/ sets out the required standards of professional conduct and practice expected of RTPI Members. Its purpose is to protect and guide practitioners, and to serve as a tool to maintain public trust in the profession. All members, irrespective of their class of membership, are required to adhere to its five Core Principles:

- Competence, honesty and integrity
- Independent professional judgment
- Due care and diligence
- Equality and respect
- Professional behaviour

Professional planners are held in high regard because they deal with important long term issues affecting the general public. They are expected to confirm their current membership status not least because they should be proud of being a planner and a member of the RTPI.

The use of a member's post-nominals – the letters that are used to indicate membership of the Institute – is one way to do this and is specifically governed within clause 13 of the Code which states:

13. Members must disclose their professional designation where appropriate to their employers, clients, colleagues or others and use their post-nominal letters, where held and where possible, in any professional correspondence as a mark of professional standing.

2. Designations and Post-nominals that members are entitled to use

Members of the Institute are entitled to use the following letters after their name:

1. A Fellow may use the designation Chartered Town Planner and the initials FRTPI;
2. An Member may use the designation Chartered Town Planner and the initials MRTPI;
3. A Legal Member may use the designation Legal Member of the RTPI and the initials LMRTPI (a closed class);
4. A Legal Associate may use the designation Legal Associate of the RTPI and the initials LARTPI;
5. An Associate may use the designation Associate of the RTPI and the initials AssocRTPI;
6. An Honorary Member may use the designation Honorary Member of the RTPI and the initials HonMRTPI;
7. A Retired Member may use the initials FRTPI(Rtd), MRTPI(Rtd), LMRTPI(Rtd), LARTPI(Rtd), AssocRTPI(Rtd) or TechRTPI(Rtd), as appropriate according to their class of membership immediately prior to transfer to Retired Membership.

Affiliate, Student and Licentiate members are not entitled to use post-nominals but may refer to themselves as an Affiliate, Student or Licentiate member of the RTPI (as appropriate).

3. Using Your Post-Nominals Correctly

You should ensure that you use the correct designation and post-nominals to indicate your class of professional membership. Employers, clients and members of the public value knowing that a planner has obtained professional status under the Royal Charter and that they will therefore act in a professional manner. It is a way of demonstrating your commitment to the attributes of being a professional including keeping up to date with your professional development.

The Code provides a positive obligation on members to use these post-nominals in all professional correspondence or documentation where possible – including professional submissions for example on applications for development consent, technical assessment, reports, appeal forms as well as official letters and emails. You should therefore take care to include them wherever possible.

Using the wrong designatory letters can mislead and could result in a complaint being submitted to the Institute. Detailed advice on promoting your RTPI status through the use of post-nominals and the appropriate RTPI logo can be found at: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/membership/about-rtpi-membership/benefits-and-services/promoting-your-rtpi-status/>

4. Conflicts with a Corporate Style or Instruction

Where you believe that using your post-nominals would conflict with a corporate instruction you should discuss this with your employer to seek clarification. An example might be where you are instructed to use a particular template for an email signature and where it appears that a professional designation may not be included, according to the corporate guidelines. If after further discussion it has been made clear that using your post nominals will conflict with the policy of your employer, you will need to comply with the wishes of your employer in this matter.

5. Possible Disciplinary Action

With the exception of the circumstances identified in Paragraph 4 above, failure to include a member's professional designation could be a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct, however the Institute will take into account whether it was possible to include it and the nature of the correspondence or document concerned, and whether any mistake was subsequently corrected. A breach of the Code may result in the Conduct and Discipline Panel giving a sanction, in line with the Institute's published Sanctions Guidance.

Non-members who use any RTPI post-nominals or who posit they are a member of the Institute in any way will be referred to Trading Standards and this may result in prosecution. Any queries on this should be forwarded to the Institute at contact@rtpi.org.uk.