QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY V 2.0 2023

RIBA believes that quality management is core to a business's success and integral in providing quality assurance to the RIBA Chartered Practice scheme. All RIBA Chartered Practices are required to have an appropriate Quality Management System (QMS).

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS

1.1 In recognising the critically important role Quality Assurance Procedures play in maintaining the highest possible standards, S+SA Architects have developed a Quality Policy Statement and accompanying Quality Assurance Framework.

2. QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 S+SA Architects have adopted and introduced a Quality Management System, based upon the ISO9001: 2015 series of standards and the associated process management models.

The management system has been developed so that it provides a series of measurable targets to ensure that the S+SA Architect's objectives are continually being met and maintained.

Our management system forms a framework within which we have established the capability of effectively identifying and developing opportunities for continual improvement and growth through ensuring that our clients remain fully satisfied with the services that they have requested, and that their needs and expectations have been fully met.

It is the policy of S+SA Architects to reliably supply services of high and consistent quality which meet the requirements, needs and expectations of our clients. We aim to understand and respond to the needs of our clients and the community they serve, where applicable, in a sustainable way. Our Quality Management Framework manual will be reviewed on a three-yearly cycle to align with the ISO 9001 renewal process to ensure that it is still up to date, relevant and fit for purpose.

The S+SA Architects Manual defines the management organisation responsible for quality, which, through periodic management reviews, ensures the suitability, achievement and maintenance of our Quality Objectives, and that continuous improvement is affected.
Quality Objectives have been established as part of the company's business plan, which are reviewed on a regular basis.

We are committed to the full and effective working of the quality system and everyone in S+SA Architects is responsible for applying the requirement in the performance of their duties.
All members of S+SA Architects personnel are responsible for promoting the aims of our ethos and for familiarising themselves with, and working within, the requirements of this Quality Policy Statement and the accompanying Quality Framework, which defines the Quality Management System. The Directors will ensure those associated with the delivery of our objectives are supported according to their individual needs for personal development, training and resources.
This statement represents our commitment, on behalf of S+SA Architects, to the Quality Policy Framework.

2.2 To support and ensure achievement of the identified goals, the Company has established a Quality Management Framework to manage all its projects.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

3.1 The Quality Assurance Framework has been developed to ensure each of the four quality areas are addressed on a continuing basis.

3.2 The Directors maintain the Framework and modify it to reflect emerging trends identified by continual review of procedures through:

- Continual Professional Development
- Relevant periodicals and publications
- Updated construction Regulations and Codes
- Experiences gained from completed projects
- CDM seminars

4. PRODUCING QUALITY WORK

4.1 The demand to produce quality work requires:

- Adequate support
- Up-to-date reference materials
- Adequate IT equipment
- Adequate administration procedures and equipment
- Continuing Education
- An ergonomically and psychologically safe work environment.

4.2 Supervision by qualified personnel is essential for successful quality assurance within the office.

5. MODEL GUIDELINES

5.1 The Company's Model Guidelines ensure:

- Appropriate work environment and adequate resources are provided and maintained.
- Appropriate education, training, and experience, as well as supervision and management are provided.
- Designated equipment is utilised skilfully and efficiently, with proper guidelines and demonstration for use.
- Current reference materials, regulations and codes of practice are made available and are used consistently.
- Adequate checking and approval of production details are performed.

- Alternative, more appropriate or economical proposals are continually reviewed and promoted.
- Risk management personnel are consulted regarding unusual circumstances and/or information with obvious potential risk factors.
- All programme requirements and deadlines are met.
- Client confidentiality and systems security are protected.
- Proper administrative procedures are adopted and followed.
- Document storage and retrieval guidelines are followed.
- A mechanism for feedback on technical, administrative and quality matters is promoted.

6. COMPANY STRUCTURE

6.1 Each Project is assigned a Company Director responsible for resourcing the Project. The Company Director appoints a Team Leader to take charge of the Project on a day-to-day basis.

6.2 Each Team Leader will have at their disposal a comprehensive and experienced Design Team.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 The Company Director in charge is ultimately responsible for Quality, with the day-to-day responsibility delegated to the Team Leader. It is the active policy of the company to encourage quality awareness and all employees have a mutual responsibility for the Quality Systems' application and conformity.

8. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

8.1 The Company makes extensive use of information technology in its many forms to ensure smooth delivery of services on time.

- Routine administrative functions utilise Microsoft Office for Word Processing and Spreadsheets.
- Desktop publishing is achieved with a combination of InDesign and Photoshop.
- Accounts, Salaries and Resource Planning are affected using specialist accounting and Project Management software, enabling close monitoring of progress and resources for each individual project.
- CAD workstations utilising AutoCad and Revit software are used extensively to ensure efficient working practices and compatible data exchange. Historical data utilises MicroStation.

9. DRAWING FILES

9.1 Drawing numbering conventions have been established utilising prefix letters to denote drawing types. All project drawings will be annotated in the approved manner as referenced in our CAD Procedures and Filing System document.

9.2 CAD data files are stored in the project data folders and named in accordance with the approved naming convention.

10. DRAWING APPROVAL

10.1 All drawings are to be checked and approved by the Team Leader prior to being issued.

11. CAD DISTRIBUTION

11.1 Most larger projects are now web based and require drawing distribution to be affected via a Project Website.

11.2 Whenever data is provided in different forms there is a risk of discrepancies. In the case of plot files, the risk is minimal, therefore distributing drawings in DWG and PDF format is considered preferable.

11.3 Where a team member requires source data, to save time, this may be supplied as complementary information with suitable conditions, particularly a hard copy which identifies the Technical Specification.

12. PROJECT COMPLETION

At the end of our project involvement / completion of services, a request should be made for a digital copy of the building O&M Manuals and should be saved within the Project File.

13. POST

13.1 All incoming post will be sorted into Projects by the post room, scanned and filed if appropriate, and delivered to the Company Director in charge of the respective Project.

13.2 Having sighted and commented on the post the Directors pass this to the Team Leader and it then becomes their responsibility.

13.3 Hard copies of all incoming and outgoing mail are filed in the Project Files. Records are archived at the completion of all Projects and stored for 12 years.

14. BACK-UP

14.1 All CAD and Administration data files are backed-up daily, on site. A weekly back-up goes to the removable hard drive which is taken off site by a nominated operative at the end of each working week. Copies of the server are saved to CD-ROM for archiving off site annually.

15. VALUE ENGINEERING

15.1 Our commitment to value engineering also ensures that our teams seek innovative solutions with benefits of Time, Cost and Quality. In this way we strive to maintain excellence in providing our clients with a comprehensive, effective, and creative service.

16. POSITION SUMMARY

16.1 A concern for quality need not override the goal of productivity. Inherent in these model guidelines are provisions that assure not only the prompt turnaround of information but also security, accuracy, and other quality concerns.

16.2 In addition to the Quality Assurance System, S+SA Architects operate:

Environmental & Sustainability Policy - To minimise the environmental impact of materials and products specified for use in Projects.

Health and Safety Management Policy - To provide a safe and healthy working environment for company employees and for customers using company facilities.

Customer and Staff Feedback Mechanisms - We actively encourage feedback from our clients and staff on all aspects of delivery and practice management. We believe that involving our clients and staff in the process will enable us to develop a quality assurance system that assists and enables our staff to service projects effectively.