



FACT SHEET: Using the title “architect”

This fact sheet explains who are entitled to use the titles “Registered Architect” and “architect” in New Zealand.

Legally, who and what is an architect?

In New Zealand, only a person who is a Registered Architect is allowed to describe him or herself as a **Registered Architect**.

In addition, only a person who is a Registered Architect is allowed to describe him or herself as an **architect** in the context of offering or providing building design services.

A Registered Architect is a person who the New Zealand Registered Architects Board (NZRAB) has registered and who also holds a current Annual Certificate of Registration. The names of Registered Architects can be accessed on the New Zealand Architects Register at www.nzrab.nz.

Other building designers

A person who designs buildings for a living in New Zealand but is not registered as an architect cannot describe him or herself as an architect. For these people titles like “architectural designer”, “building designer”, “draftsman”, and so on are lawful, but NOT “architect”. Anyone who falsely claims to be an architect is committing an offence and can be prosecuted.

Architects from other countries

An architect from another country can use the title “architect” in New Zealand, so long as he or she makes clear where he or she is registered or licensed. So *John Brown: Architect (UK Registered)* is fine, so long as in fact John Brown is registered in the UK.

Retired architects

A retired architect can use the title “architect”, so long as he or she is NOT offering or providing building design services. The same applies to an architect whose registration is not current, ie is in voluntary suspension.

Other kinds of architects

If somebody is NOT offering or doing building design work then he or she can use the title “architect”, hence marine architects and software architects.

Firms

A firm or practice cannot be an architect – only a natural person who is registered can be an architect in the context of offering or providing building design services. So saying on a set of plans: “Architect: Straight Up Concepts Ltd” is a mistake. Better to say: “Design: Straight Up Concepts Ltd”, ie describe the role.

Restricted work

Architects and Licensed Building Practitioners – Design are different occupational classifications. However, under the restricted work provisions of the Building Act 2004, only they can be granted a building consent for the design of a house or a small-to-medium apartment building.

For more information go to www.nzrab.nz or contact the NZRAB at info@nzrab.org.nz or call 04 471 1336. For the statutory basis of this, see overleaf:

Registered Architects Act 2005

Section 7: Protection of titles registered architect and architect

- 1) No person, other than a registered architect, may use in connection with his or her business, trade, employment, calling, or profession —
 - a) the title “registered architect” ; or
 - b) any words, initials, or abbreviations of that title that are intended to cause, or that may reasonably cause, any person to believe that the person using those words, initials, or abbreviations is a registered architect.
- 2) No person who designs buildings, prepares plans and specifications for buildings, or supervises the construction of buildings may use the title “architect” unless he or she is a registered architect.
- 3) Despite subsections (1) and (2), a person may use the title “registered architect” or “architect” (or words, initials, or abbreviations of those titles), in accordance with the rules, in representing qualifications or titles awarded by overseas agencies.
- 4) A person who contravenes subsection (1) or subsection (2) commits an offence, and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.