
Guidance Note 5

Attribution in Advertising

Section 13(1) of the Architectural Practice Act 2009 (‘the Act’) prescribes functions of the Architectural Practice Board of South Australia (‘the Board’), and includes:

- (a) *to oversee the practice of architecture by registered architects and registered architectural businesses in the public interest; and*
- (b) *to prepare or endorse, subject to the approval of the Minister, codes of conduct or professional standards for registered architects or codes of conduct for registered architectural businesses;*

The Board has developed the Architects’ Code of Conduct that was endorsed by the Minister in 2012. The Code of Conduct includes: *Standard 1 – Be honest and act with integrity, and*

Standard 3 – Promote their services honestly and responsibly.

A failure to comply with the Code of Conduct is unprofessional conduct under the Act.

Standard 3.1 – Honest promotion of services – includes:

3.1 Architects are expected to promote professional services in a truthful and responsible manner that is not misleading and complies with the codes and principles of the Advertising Standards Bureau. Architects must avoid making misleading or false comparisons with services provided by competitors, and should include their registration number in any advertising material and other correspondence and documentation.

Advertising and Attribution

Websites and other advertising media are increasingly relevant to the architecture profession. Including images of the architects’ portfolio of completed projects on websites is common. Referring to the architects’ portfolio of past projects in presentations, submissions, competitions, and other documentation also happens frequently.

It is important that architects clearly define their role in projects when presenting images of projects on websites and any other documentation, and attribute other participants in the project. An architect must not overstate, actually or implicitly, his or her involvement in a project.

Principle

It is important that the public is not misled by the way that architects display work in their publicity material or other media. Using images from projects worked on, for example, with members of a team, in collaboration with another firm, or in a previous firm, without proper attribution may mislead a member of the public about the nature and extent of that architect’s experience, resources and capabilities. Architects should build their professional reputation on the merits of their own service and performance, and should recognize and give credit to others for professional work performed.

Who and when to attribute

It is not necessary to present a complete or exhaustive list of all the team participants on a project.

However, acknowledging the firm of architects engaged for the project is important – particularly if the project was undertaken by the architect in a previous role.

How to attribute

The attribution should be obvious, plainly visible, and legible (particularly if being viewed from a distance). Wording such as

“when working at XYZ Architects Pty Ltd”

should be attached to images on websites and other documentation if the project was undertaken by another architectural business.

The wording of the attribution must be specific enough to make clear the services rendered on the project by the person claiming the involvement with it; and should be no less obvious than the text used to describe the project.

Misleading the public

Less than full attribution could fall into the category of misleading the public. This is a breach of the Architects’ Code of Conduct, and hence there is the potential for disciplinary procedures.