

## Professional Development Diploma in Historic Building Conservation and Repair (PDD Building Cons.)

Awarded by West Dean College of Arts and Conservation

### Programme Structure

The Professional Development Diploma can be achieved through the successful completion of 10 Building Conservation Masterclasses (BCMs) and the submission of a final 3,000-word portfolio. The portfolio consists of a statement that demonstrates the link between the candidate's overall experience gained from the BCMs and their past, current, or intended professional practice as a conservator of historic buildings.

The 10 BCMs can be taken in any order but should be completed **within a maximum period of five years** prior to the submission of the portfolio. The five year period starts from the date of attendance on the first BCM course.

The courses are mainly delivered as fully residential courses at the College with a mix of demonstrations, practical and lecture sessions. Following on the successful completion of a pilot e-learning project (with the support of [Historic England's Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund](#)) selected core courses (e.g. Stone Masonry and Mortars) will be delivered in this new e-blended format, which comprises an online introductory module ahead of practical workshop and tutorial sessions at the College.

### Prior Experiential Learning

In terms of the entry requirements for the programme, generally students will ideally have training/experience in the field and/or a minimum of two years' practical experience. The diploma is ideal for (though not limited to) conservators, conservation officers, archaeologists, architects, surveyors, engineers, craftspeople and specialist contractors.

West Dean College recognises that in certain cases, and considering individual student experience, it might be beneficial for students to agree a revised course structure with the programme leader. In such cases, consideration will be given to proven/evidenced prior experiential learning to allow for a compulsory BCM to be replaced with a BCM from the optional list below. Any change in course structure would need to be agreed by the programme leader prior to the start of the course.

### The Building Conservation Masterclasses

Of the 10 BCMs required to qualify for the diploma, seven of the courses are compulsory and a further three can be selected from any of those remaining (see list).

#### The seven compulsory BCMs are:

- Conservation and Repair of Architectural and Structural Metalwork
- Conservation and Repair of Brick and Flint Masonry
- Conservation and Repair of Plasters and Renders
- Conservation and Repair of Slate and Stone Masonry
- Conservation and Repair of Timber
- Mortars for Repair and Conservation
- The Structural Repair of Historic Buildings

### A further three optional BCMs to be selected from:

Building Surveys and Recording  
Coatings and Consolidants for Masonry  
Conservation and Repair of Slate and Stone Roofing  
Conservation and Repair of Tile Roofing  
Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins  
Conservation of Historic Concrete  
Managing Wildlife in the Historic Environment (Alternate years)  
Masonry Cleaning  
Specifying Conservation Works

### The final portfolio

Following the successful completion of the 10 BCMs a final portfolio of evidence demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of the programme content must be submitted for assessment. The portfolio is intended to give you an opportunity to demonstrate the link between the overall experience gained from the BCMs and your past, current and intended professional practice in historic building conservation and repair.

It consists of three separate sections:

1. A reflective review of the ten BCMs you have completed
2. Case studies indicating the relation of these BCMs to your past, current or future professional practice
3. A critical reflection on the ethical, philosophical and practical considerations encountered in the conservation of historic buildings, interiors and sites.

The portfolio should include a combination of written text, photographs, diagrams and drawings.

The submission date is **30 April**, unless your last Building Conservation Masterclass is after that date **but before the beginning of June**, in which case it will be the beginning of the week after that course.

The portfolio will be marked, and if there is any further work to be done, we will contact you. If we do not contact you, this means that no further work is required. Following assessment and approval of the portfolio, a recommendation will be presented to the College Assessment Board that you should be awarded the Professional Development Diploma in Historic Building Conservation and Repair. The College Assessment Board meets in June/July. Following this, the Award will be presented to you, in person or in absentia, at the Graduation Ceremony on a Saturday in July. Holders of the Diploma may use the acronym **PDD (Building Cons)**.

### Fees

Once accepted onto the Diploma students pay for each of the 10 courses on booking. The current minimum cost for completing the Diploma would be approximately £7000 for the 10 courses. Fees are listed on each [course webpage](#). Accommodation costs are additional. Each course lasts between 2–3 days. There will also be an administration fee payable on submission of the final portfolio.

### Funding

Details of financial support which may be available to students can be found on the West Dean College PDD course [website page](#) under 'Fees and Funding'.