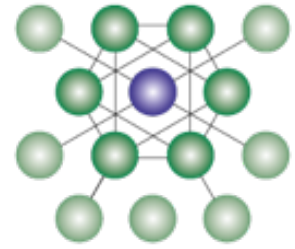


Practice Specification Template

GBE



Green Building Encyclopaedia

Subject: Features Benefits Disadvantages Opportunities of NBS Based Practice Specification Template

Legend: F = Feature, B = Benefit, D = Disadvantage, O = Opportunity

Specification writing is generally not enjoyed by the majority of Architects for a number of reasons:

- Graphically minded designers are not at their best when reading and writing
- We get bored after a paragraph without a Hellman cartoon, drawing, diagram, picture, chart or table.
- Specifications are an interruption to designers normal tasks of designing and drawings
- Specifications happen infrequently and at long intervals so familiarity rarely establishes itself
- Requires a logical and meticulous mind to assemble and edit specifications
- Most want readymade specification libraries to get started
- Most want a software application to manage the process

National Building Specification (NBS) Specification Library:

- F Specification library is maintained by others at National Master Document level
 - B Can be relied upon to be substantially up to date with current requirements (with 3 updates per annum)
 - B Up to date with current UK and EU legislation, regulation and contract practices
 - B Up to date with EU rules and will evolve as Brexit takes effect
- F It aims to be competent and enables being green
 - F Some Green Clauses
 - B Enables compliance with 'BRE Green'
 - D Needs more work to address Green Robustly
- F NBS has many readymade work sections made of many readymade clauses
 - F Detailed product Clauses and Assembly clauses
 - B Should avoid missing out vital information
 - D Not always detailed enough about important criteria or performance characteristics
 - O Can copy a clause and unlimited editing as required to add detail and then delete the original clause
 - F Tick or cross many readymade clauses, if they apply or not
 - B Editing process can be partly simple and partly fast
 - F 'insert-brackets' in other clauses allows completion of those clauses
 - F General or Clause guidance note are there for completing 'insert-brackets'
- F Broad range of materials and methods of construction
 - B Addresses many current methods of construction
 - D It is not comprehensive some popular trades and methods of construction are missing
 - O Other specifications are missing and need to be added, (examples from GBS):
 - O A38 Waste minimization
 - O A90 Performance Specification
 - O G22 Cross Laminated Timber Panel (CLTP) Systems
 - O G26 Structural Insulated Panel Systems (SIPS)
 - O P14 Air and Wind tightness systems
 - O Z34 Hot Dip Galvanizing

NBS Software: (features of Both NBS Building and NBS Create)

- F Is a database that looks like word processing
 - D Can be infuriating to use if used to work processing
 - D Not always detailed enough about important criteria or performance characteristics
 - O Can copy a clause and unlimited editing and then delete the original clause

NBS Building:

- F Based on Common Arrangement of Work Sections (CAWS) classification (Chapter or work section order)
 - F Predominantly Trade-based Specification with some element Specifications
 - B Industry standard since 1987 still current today
 - D NBS wish to stop supporting NBS Building during 2018
 - B NBS Subscribers will probably not migrate to NBS Create to allow NBS Building to be unsupported
 - D BIM is driving adoption of Uniclass 2015 classification
 - D BIM is driving adoption of Uniclass and NBS Create
 - O An Elemental approach can be implemented in NBS Building
 - O All missing work sections can be added to NBS Building easily
- F Starts with a complete work section that has to be edited down
 - There is a lot to turn off or delete
- F Generates 200-400 page whole building project specifications
 - B Quite efficient in terms of numbers of words and pages

NBS Create:

- F Based on Uniclass II classification (Chapter or work section order)
 - B BIM is driving adoption of Uniclass in CAD and NBS Create in Specification
 - B Industry standard since 1997 and of growing importance with BIM
 - B Predominantly Elemental, Sub-elemental and Component Specifications
 - B Complimentary with:
 - Elemental Performance requirements of the Building Regulation
 - Elemental BRE Green Guide to Specification
 - Elemental Pricing Guides
 - Elemental Approaches and readymade BIM models
 - Elemental Robust Details
 - Elemental Practice Standard Details or Standard Approaches
 - F Any missing work sections can be added to NBS Create
 - D Adding new work sections and supporting clauses needs a great deal more care and attention
 - D Uniclass splits the elements from their performances, assemblies and components each with their own Uniclass classification codes
- F Facilitates the gradual development of the specification without lots of unedited clauses
 - B Evolves through briefing, designing, detailing, specifying, tendering, post tender value engineering, contracting, supervising, facilities managing
 - B Starts small grows as the knowledge grows than shrinks to suit the purpose
- F Starts with an empty work section that needs to be built up
 - F Clauses can be assembled from readymade parts that need to be chosen and populated
 - D Can be intimidating and slow to create a work section
- F Generates 500-1200 page whole building project specifications
 - D Sounds quite inefficient in terms of numbers of words and pages

Practice Specification Templates:

- F Both NBS Building and NBS Create enable its users to set up Practice template Specifications
- B Templates can be pre-edited to part complete the specification before any projects are created from it
- F Practice Templates are linked to NBS Specification Library and can be made into a bespoke version of it
- F Project Specifications are linked to the Practice template, the pre-edited version of NBS Specification Library
- B Templates help create project specifications with less work to do and therefore be done more quickly
- F Can be used as repository of Corporate Knowledge, in the right place, at the right time
- F Practice Policy can be turned into Practice actions via the specification software
- B Clauses can be made Mandatory by choosing them at Practice template level, making them unable to be undone or turned off at project level
- F Practice guidance notes can include: practice guru notes, hyperlinks to office intranet, links to external internet, links to files on servers, images, cad files
- B All the right information is available, in the right place, at the right time, to inform competent decision
- F Work sections can be deleted and clauses can be crossed or turned off at Practice template level and not be available at project level
- F Bespoke work sections covering missing methods of construction can be added, with the guidance of Practice Gurus and manufacturers and they can have both practice general and clause guidance notes
- B Methods of construction used by the practice can be easily adopted when the specification is readily available too
- F Versions of clauses can be created and 'insert-brackets' populated with preferred products, materials, accessories or systems, manufacturers or suppliers
- B Once the specification clause is created at Template level it can be chosen at project level with very little effort, except perhaps choosing the colour or size

- B A level of consistency can be achieved by having ready made competent and consistent clauses
- B With a high level of non-english mother tongues in our practices today spelling errors or poor grammar can be avoided if more clauses are already written and populated
- F We are familiar with readymade standard details and objects in BIM
- B These details and objects can come with readymade standard clause
- F Versions of clauses can be left unedited and Practice Guidance notes can have optional text to use to complete the 'insert-brackets'
- B A specification clause with or without pre-edited 'insert-brackets' at Template level can be left un-ticked and then edited within the 'insert-bracket' at Project level
- F Versions of clauses can be created to suit the procurement method and practice clause guidance notes clarify which version to use, if it is not obvious
- B Time can be saved editing the same changes in every project specification.
- F There is room in work sections to add additional clauses to make the specification bespoke to the Practice
- F The ticking of clauses at Practice Template level enable faster editing of project specification
- D It is essential that great care is taken when ticking at Template level to ensure all possible scenarios are considered and the clause will not be a problem in any situation.
- O If there are lists of possible options within a clause, they should always be in a 'insert-bracket' and left unticked so they can be edited at project level and ticked at project level only.

Practice commitment to maintain the Template

- Having decided to develop a practice template specification within NBS Building or NBS Create it must then be maintained for as long as the subscription service is maintained.
- NBS updates its services 2-3 times a year
- Its library of clauses gets updated and selectively work sections get overhauled when the sector or its reference publications change
- Every time the NBS updates, the Practice Specification needs to be validated against the new NBS clauses
- Validation: A change in an NBS clause that has been modified in the Practice Template needs to be compared with the bespoke clause and the bespoke clause updated as necessary.
- This process is handled in a bespoke part of the software to make it as painless as possible.
- It remains a challenge for most users.
- If a project is created between NBS updates it is tempting to not validate it against any NBS updates, unless big changes have occurred that need to be engaged with.
- Validation of the practice template specification needs to occur before a new project is started.

Practice Template as a Practice Overhead

- Since the development of the practice template potentially improved the efficiency of all project specifications they its development could be considered as a Practice overhead and its costs shared between all projects
- Its maintenance could also be considered as a Practice overhead
- If a Project is about to start then the NBS update validation should be carried out first and this could be considered either as a practice overhead or a project cost.

Roll out of the Practice Template Specification

- If the Practice uses the template specification as a means to drive Practice Policy into Practice Action then the use of the template needs to be considered as a mandatory requirement.
- Training will need to be provided to ensure everybody knows how to use it, where to find the files and how to implement them.
- The Practice members need to be introduced to the Features and Benefits so they can see the benefits are real and relevant to them and their projects.