

## **Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)**

A designer is an organisation or individual whose business involves preparing or modifying designs for construction projects, or arranging for, or instructing, others to do this. Designs include drawings, design details, specifications, bills of quantity and design calculations.

Designers can be architects, consulting engineers, quantity surveyors and interior designers, or anyone who specifies and alters designs as part of their work. They can also be **principal contractors**, specialist contractors, tradespeople or even **commercial clients**, if they get actively involved in design work for their project.

A designer's decisions can affect the health and safety of all those involved in constructing a building and those who use, maintain, refurbish and eventually demolish it.

Designers must:

- make sure the client is aware of the client duties under CDM 2015 before starting any design work
- when preparing or modifying designs:
  - take account of any pre-construction information provided by the client (and principal designer, if one is involved)
  - eliminate foreseeable health and safety risks to anyone affected by the project (if possible)
  - take steps to reduce or control any risks that cannot be eliminated
- provide design information to:
  - the **principal designer** (if involved), for inclusion in the pre-construction information and the health and safety file
  - the client and principal contractor (or the **contractor** for single contractor projects) to help them comply with their duties, such as ensuring a **construction phase plan (PDF)** is prepared
- communicate, cooperate and coordinate with:
  - any other designers (including the principal designer) so that all designs are compatible and ensure health and safety, both during the project and beyond
  - all contractors (including the principal contractor), to take account of their knowledge and experience of building designs

Working as a designer for a **domestic client** is no different to working for a commercial client. However, the domestic client's legal duties are normally taken on by the contractor (or the principal contractor on projects involving more than one contractor) and the designer must work to them as 'client' under CDM 2015. Alternatively, the domestic client can ask the principal designer to take on the client duties, although this must be confirmed in a written agreement. Where the project involves more than one contractor and the domestic client does not appoint a principal designer, the role of the principal designer must be carried out by the designer in control of the pre-construction phase.

Further guidance on who a designer is; why they have a strong influence on health and safety on a project, particularly during the very early planning and design stages; when their duties apply and when they start and finish; and what skills, knowledge and experience they need to carry out their duties in a way that ensures health and safety is available at [Are you a designer?](#)