



Title Performance Monitoring Report
Status Public
Format To note
From Hugh Simpson (Chief Executive and Registrar)

If you have any enquiries on this paper, please contact Hugh Simpson at Hughs@arb.org.uk or 0207 5805861.

1. Purpose

To provide the Board with an overview of ARB operational performance.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note and comment on the operational performance of ARB as set out in this paper.

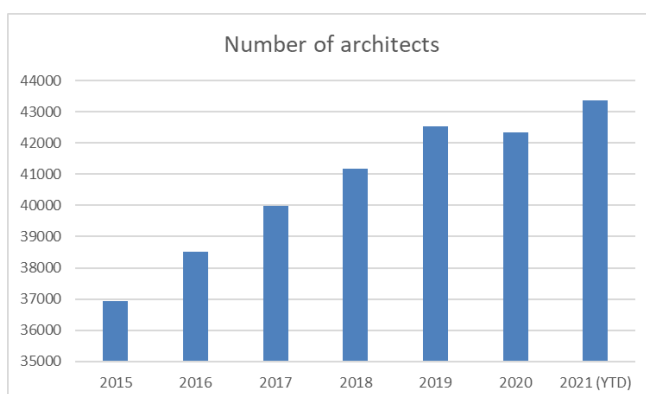
3. Background and overview

- 3.1** The Board's responsibilities cover, broadly, three main areas: Setting of strategy, approving regulatory policy and standards, and assurance of the operational performance of the ARB.
- 3.2** Additionally, as part of the Framework Agreement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, there is an expectation that we regularly report on performance across each of our statutory functions, as well as finance and human resources.
- 3.3** The Board has considered and discussed different ways in which performance can be reviewed including a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data as well as the presentation of performance data in accessible ways.
- 3.4** This format of this paper is an interim model with work underway to look at how we can develop reporting against the new Corporate Strategy for 2022-26. The report for Quarter 1 in 2022 will focus on how we are working towards continuous improvement and delivering against the four key priorities areas within the strategy.
- 3.5** Our focus in this report and for the end of 2021 is to ensure we are meeting our obligations to report on 2021 performance by updating the Board on the current operational performance across the following key areas (updates on finance are reported separately in the Board papers):
 - Registration and applications
 - Qualifications
 - Human Resources
 - Professional Standards

4. Registration: performance update

The Register

4.1



The register continues to increase in size, year on year, notwithstanding a minor downturn at the end of 2020. We will not know the end figure for 2021 until the conclusion of the retention fee campaign. In 2020, 679 architects resigned; year to date we have had 159, including those who have given notice of their intention not to renew in 2022. This compares favourably with last year, though the impact of the fee rise may change this profile. We review this weekly, but there is no new trend currently.

4.2

	Oct-21	Oct-20	Change
Under 30	3270	3377	-107
31 to 50	24510	23855	655
51 to 70	13032	12927	105
Over 70	2845	2812	33
	<u>43657</u>	<u>42971</u>	

The age profile of the register is trending towards older groups. In the last year, there has been a decrease in the number of architects under 30, and each age group above 30 is increasing. The proportion of architects over 70, and most likely not to be working, is around 7%.

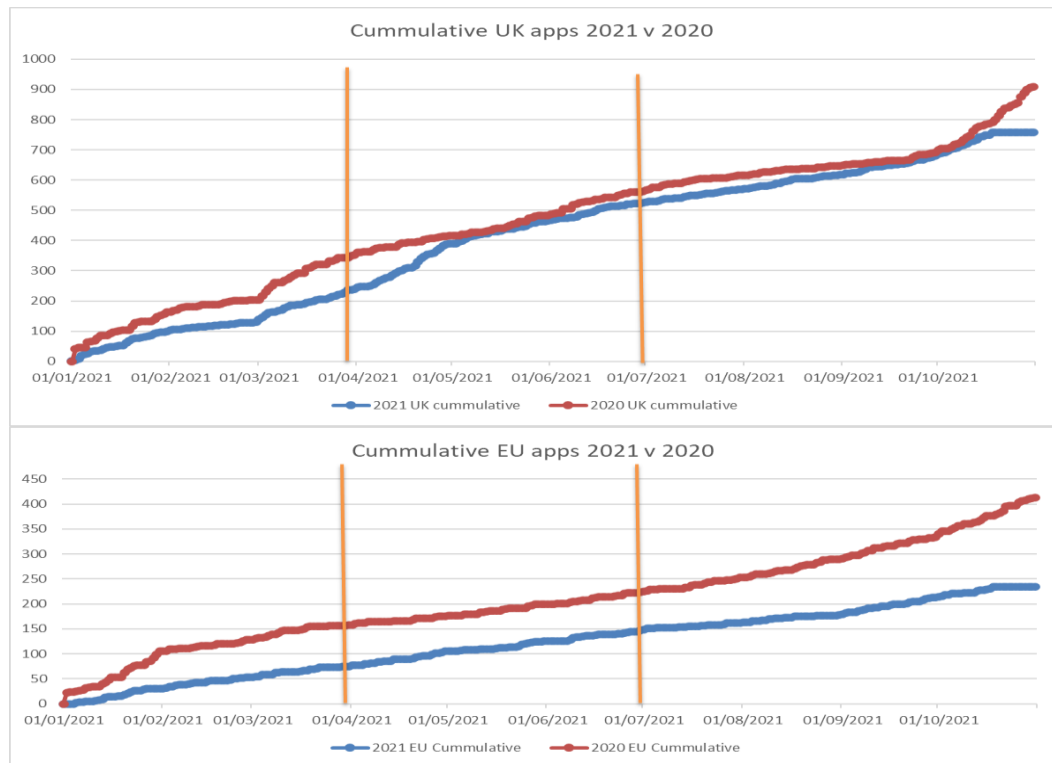
4.3

	Oct-21	Oct-20	Change
Male	30560	30358	202
Female	13097	12613	484
	<u>43657</u>	<u>42971</u>	

The increase in women architects is double that of the increase in men, when compared year on year. This continues the trend from the past year, and we continue to monitor this.

New Registration applications

4.4



These graphs show the cumulative numbers of new applications for UK applicants (top graph) and EU applicants (bottom graph). The orange lines signify the date (each quarter) where the retention fee steps down in cost on pro rata basis. The Blue line shows the 2021 values, and the red line shows 2020 equivalent. There are distinct changes in comparisons year on year:-

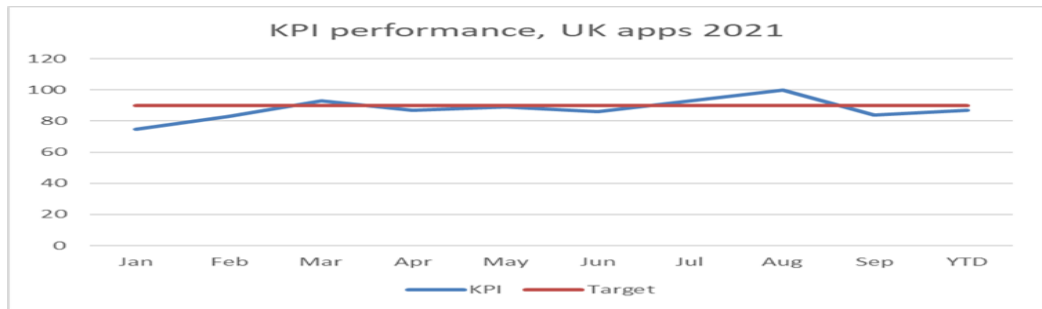
- For UK applications, the profile of receipt of the applications has changed. In Q1, the numbers received this year were lower than in 2020, but then increased in Q2, to reach parity. There has been some deviation in Q3, but the year to date figure is now 96% of 2020.
- There are two factors affecting this. UK applicants cannot apply until they have their award. Institutions have been delayed in issuing awards by around two months, due to Covid-19, so we are seeing the same amount of activity, but shifted two months later. The second factor is that some applicants have also waited to apply until the next quarter, and benefited from the lower retention fee level. We estimate the impact year to date has been of the order of £15,000 in fees. This was included in our budget assumptions.
- In EU applications, the picture is different. There has been a sustained and continued deviation, with 40% less EU applications than this time last year. There are no signs of this changing within the year. Our activity assumptions are based on this rate continuing into 2022 and beyond.
- Whilst lower in volume, EU applications have become more complex, with applicants not submitting the correct information, or EU country

competent authorities not responding in a timely manner to requests. This has impacted on KPI times.

Performance Times and KPIs

4.5 The KPI for UK applications is 15 working days from receipt. Below is a month by month analysis of the time taken to process applications, and a year to date figure. The KPI is for 90% of applications to be processed within 15 days.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	YTD
Mean	11.6	8.1	6.1	9.8	10.9	9.8	6.1	5.7	7.9	9.3
median	11.0	4.0	4.0	7.0	8.0	5.0	4.0	3.5	5.0	7



The data shows that performance is variable within the year, depending on volume and on complexity. In January, performance was affected by the simultaneous completion of retention fee activity. Broadly, we have performed within the KPI target. The mean and median data show that we are performing well within the KPI, but we are seeing that there are outliers that have long delays, thus impacting on performance. Some of these are out of our control, others are not. We have started to include special conditions in institutions’ Annual Monitoring, where they do not provide accurate pass list or title information that prevents applicants joining the register. We will continue to liaise with schools to ensure this requirement of prescription is adhered to.

4.6 We anticipate the KPI for the full year to be met at 90% or higher, based on current processes and efficiencies.

Re-joining the Register

4.7 Architects can re-apply to join the register. Traditionally, the peak immediately follows the removal for non-payment of the retention fee. Below is a cumulative chart of rejoins for 2021. The greatest activity is within 3 weeks of the retention fee period ending. The rate then smooths out over the rest of the year, with few or no re-joins most days.

4.8 This chart demonstrates the impact of the changes we made to the retention fee period last year (a “grace period” for people paying in the first week in January, and greater, targeted campaigns during the retention fee period, using email and google analytics to target different groups).

- 4.9** The number of removed architects was the lowest for six years, along with around only 20% of the immediate re-joins, suggesting those who came off the register intended to. We will monitor this closely, for comparison purposes, and see if the additional changes we have made to the retention fee process this year, have the desired effect.



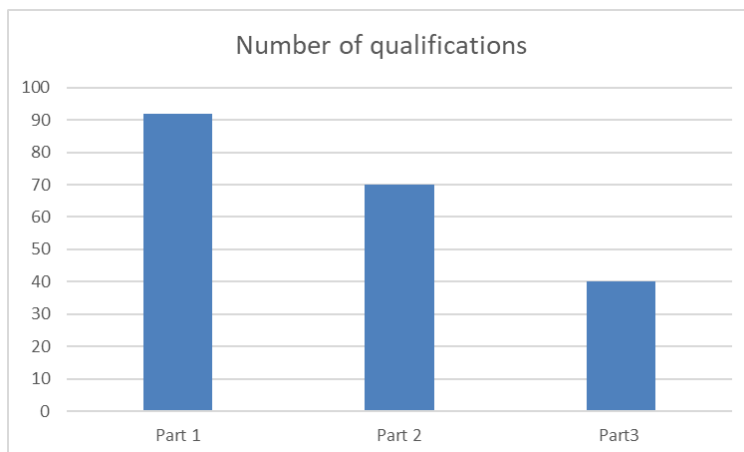
Prescribed Examination

- 4.10** We have booked 124 examinations this year, 10% higher than the previous year. The virtual examination process appears to be popular with candidates, as it does not require travel and accommodation costs, if they live overseas.
- 4.11** We have completed (year to date) 103 examinations. We are on target to complete them all by mid-November, and have a waiting list of 20 examinations for 2022 activity. There is higher interest in exams from South Africa, India, Brazil and Hong Kong.
- 4.12** The examination is composed of two elements: a review of the portfolio, and, if the Board's standards are met, an interview. It is therefore possible to fail the portfolio and not be interviewed, to pass the portfolio and fail the interview, or to be successful at interview.
- 4.13** 34% passed all stages, 31% failed the interview and are given assistance in submitting additional material, and 32% failed at the portfolio stage. 3% of the exams were cancelled for illness reasons. There were no significant changes in the pass rate when compared to the previous year.
- 4.14** There were 3 appeals of decisions; none were upheld by the Chair of ARB.
- 4.15** We have commenced a series of activities on improving the Prescribed Examination: these include commissioning our external auditors to review the process and make recommendations, using a business analyst to review the information flows and application process, to develop requirements for a new system as part of our wider transformation work, and reviewing the material on our website that describes the application process. We have also started engagement work with past exam candidates, to understand their experiences.

5. Qualifications: performance update

Breakdown of qualifications by part

5.1

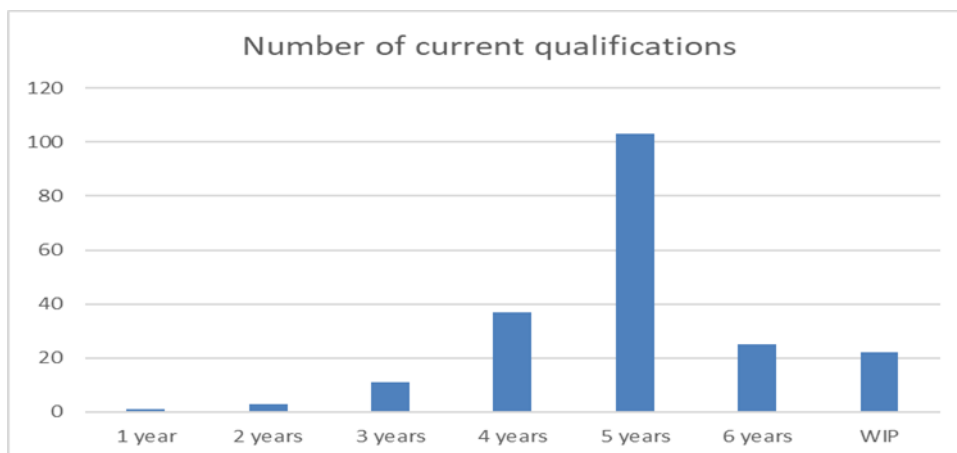


The number of qualifications continues to increase, up 13 since June 2021, including most recently notified intentions from institutions. Part 1 qualifications constitute half of the overall prescribed qualifications, with many larger institutions having several distinct qualifications at part 1, as part of their specialised offer. Part 1 qualifications take the largest proportion of annual monitoring, and we are phasing these so annual monitoring is done at institution level, rather than qualification, making efficiencies for ARB and the institution themselves, as information sharing and interpretation is easier.

- 5.2 The number of institutions will shortly reach 72, up from 65 in June 2021. This reflects the market in higher education, and has impact on ARB time in explaining and dealing with newer organisations, explaining prescription process, information requirements and outcomes. We may need to devote more time to planning meetings if this trend continues.
- 5.3 We do not have Board approved KPIs for progression of applications, since the change in procedures. We are monitoring throughout and will be suggesting KPIs for Board approval shortly.

Duration of current Prescribed Qualifications

5.4

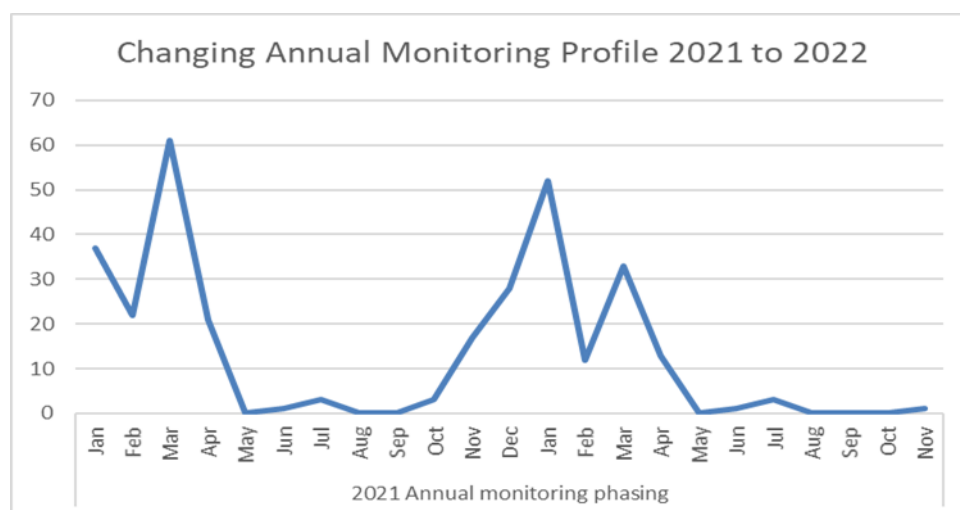


There is variation in the duration of prescribed courses, with most being for 5 years. Longer courses are extensions (either requested, or part of our re-phasing). Shorter courses are a result of special conditions or re-phasing activity to link to other courses in the system. There are 20 work in progress (WIP) that have not yet been approved by the Board, so the duration is unknown.

- 5.5 We use this data to plan activity, including Committee and Board meetings, but also to project the status of courses during the Modernisation of Initial Education and Training development. We will use this to develop plans for any transition of existing courses, or our approach to prioritising applications as we draw nearer to any transition to the new system.

Annual Monitoring Profile

5.6

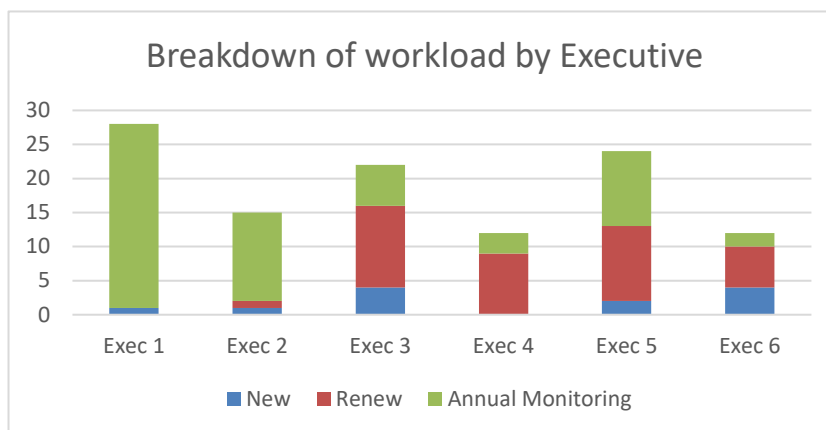


The annual monitoring cycle is affected by the academic year, and also where the qualification is in its lifecycle. The peaks in March and November impact on Committee and Board activity. We have started to “smooth out” the peaks, reducing the March peak in 2020 by almost 50%. We will continue to do this through 2021 and into 2022, by asking organisations to nominate a preferred date for their monitoring, and include all qualifications in the review. We expect to smooth the activity further, and have a lower peak in November 2021.

Workload

- 5.7 We have inducted 3 new Qualifications Executives this year, and promoted an existing team member into the Qualifications Manager role. We have targeted annual monitoring to the new team members, with support from the experienced staff. This has allowed experienced team members to tackle more complex applications. We have developed a “complexity score” that we apply to applications, to manage workload, but also to re-test our assumptions about the levels of work in progress.

We are monitoring workloads, to equalise volume and complexity.



6. Human Resources: performance update

- 6.1** This summary report focusses on the following key HR data areas at ARB: Turnover; Absences and Equality, Inclusion and Diversity statistics for Recruitment. This is for the rolling 12-month period from October 2020.
- 6.2** This report is at a high level and as we have a relatively low number of staff it is important that data provided to the Board cannot identify individual members of staff. A more detailed report is provided to the Remuneration and Appointments Committee twice per year.

Staff Turnover

- 6.3** Between the period of 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2021, 9 employees left ARB representing a staff turnover of 20.45%.
- 6.4** All staff turnover within this period has come from those who are within the first three years of employment. The majority (65.90%) of ARB's workforce sit within this bracket in their career which indicates a potential risk to skills being lost and increased recruitment costs if this trend continues.
- 6.5** Understanding what is causing this turnover so early in people's careers at ARB is a priority and we are currently reviewing our new starter induction programme, exploring an internal 'buddying' programme, and also reviewing our job adverts to ensure that they reflect the role and 'reality' of the work.
- 6.6** We also seek to gain further insight by reviewing our exit interview process, in an effort to help understand areas of focus such as reward or career progression and identify whether this is influenced by newer generational job market trends such as 'job hopping'.

Length of Service	All staff	Total leavers	Turnover	Retention
up to 3 years	29	9	31.03%	68.97%
3+ years	8	0	0.00%	100%
6+ years	0	0	0.00%	100%
10+ years	3	0	0.00%	100%
15+ years	4	0	0.00%	100%
Total	44	9	20.45%	79.55%

Absence

- 6.8** Whilst the last 12 months has seen periods of lockdown there have been increasing periods of relaxed restrictions too. Additionally, we were able to reopen ARB's office in July 2021, providing colleagues with a greater flexibility in where they can work which, based on anecdotal feedback, we believe to be positively influencing people's wellbeing. We can see that absence levels are reducing compared to a previous report on rolling absence data from April 2021 which is positive, although absence related to mental health remains to be most common. We continue to promote the support we have available for staff as well as exploring mental health first aiders.
- 6.9** In the last 12 months, there were 197.50 days of sickness absence. Based on an average head count of 33, sickness days equate to an average of 5.98 days per person; this demonstrates a reduction from the 7.12 days cited in the last reporting period ending in April 2021.
- 6.10** Sickness days related to mental health are 4.21 per person, reducing from 5.64 per person in the previous cycle. A total of 139 days related to mental health and wellbeing which accounts for 70.37% of the total sickness absence days.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: recruitment

- 6.11** To ensure anonymity in the equality, diversity and inclusion data gathered we will focus on the applicant profile to demonstrate the most commonly held characteristics for each EDI data point from staff roles for this period.
- 6.12** Greater analysis is being undertaken of the changing profile at all stages of the recruitment process to understand how and where diversity is lost to inform our interventions, however this will not be shared widely to ensure anonymity.
- 6.13** This represents data gathered from one of ARB's external HR partners and we are working with our other partners to create consistency and access to data for all advertised roles.
- 6.14** There were 352 applicants across the 7 campaigns. For each stage of the recruitment process a 'typical' profile has been formulated to demonstrate the most commonly held characteristics for each EDI data point from staff roles for this period.
- 6.15** Applicant Profile
- 61.36% of applicants were aged between 18-35
 - 81.25% of applicants were heterosexual/straight
 - 34.38% of applicants were Christian
 - 84.50% of applicants didn't have a disability
 - 44.89% of applicants answered 'yes' to the question: *by the time you were 14 years old, had one or more of your parent(s) or guardian(s) completed a university degree course or equivalent (e.g. ba, bsc, or higher)?*
 - 50.85% of applicants were female
 - 53.12% of applicants were from a collective BAME background
- 6.17** By collecting this data we will be able to make better assessments in future about potential bias within our recruitment processes and retention profile.

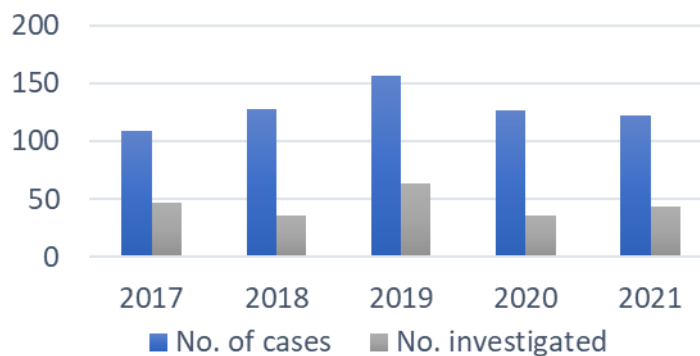
7. Professional standards: performance update

7.1 The following data and tables are intended to: provide a high level overview of year on year trends; and, to update the Board on performance against KPIs for quarter 3 of 2021.

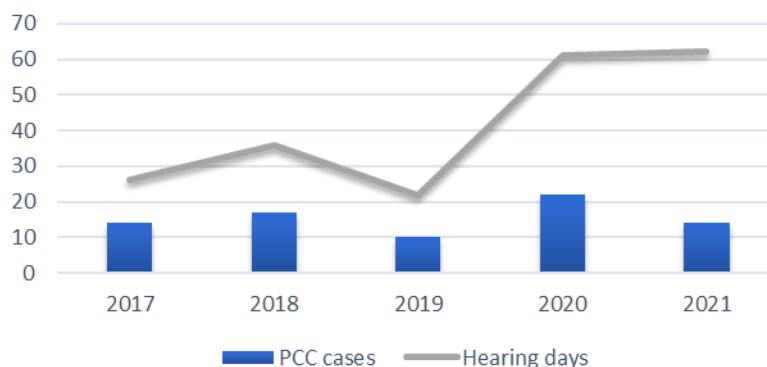
Year on Year

7.2 When looking at key data about numbers of complaints received and accepted for investigation we see a pretty steady picture over the last five years. This trend is interesting in comparison to other sectors where complaints have risen as a proportion of the Register, year on year. We have also seen a steady number of PCC cases over the previous five years. However, as the table shows below, the number of hearing days has increased significantly. This is in part this year due to one particularly long running case which lasted 23 days, but because we have seen cases conducted virtually over zoom have required more breaks and generally take longer than in person meetings. We are continuing to analyse this data, as we consider the balance between virtual and in-person hearings in future.

Complaints received and accepted for investigation

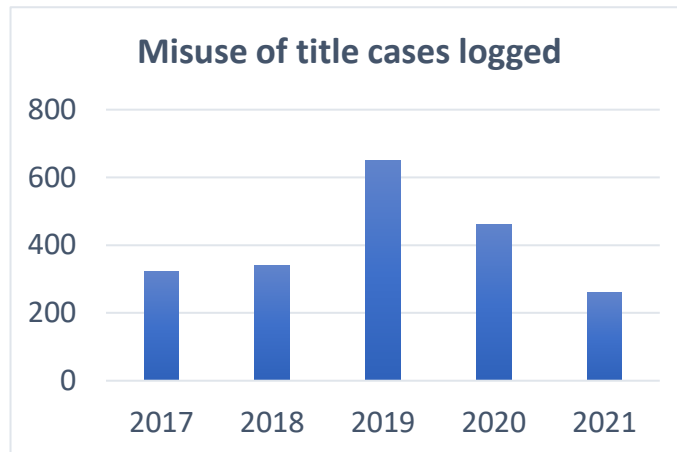


PCC cases and hearing days



Title Prosecutions

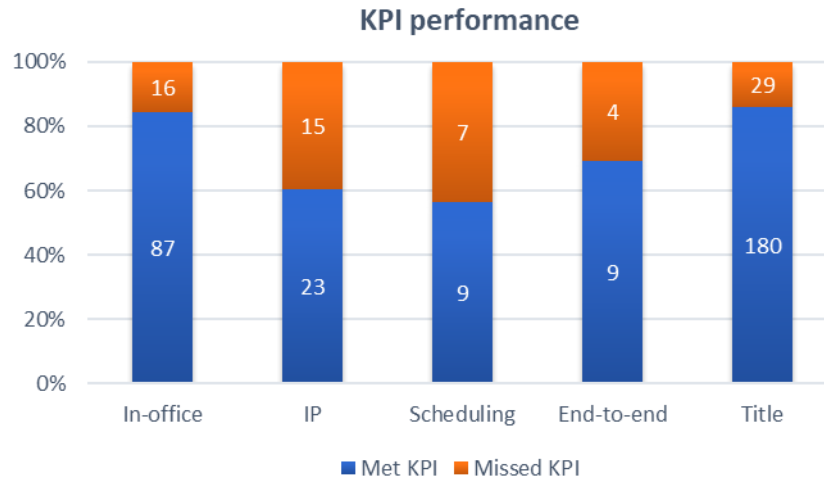
- 7.3** The number of misuse of title cases investigated has been relatively steady. 2019 was an exceptionally busy year because we carried out an audit of all individuals who had been removed from the Register for non-payment, to see whether any were continuing to use the title 'architect'. This audit is scheduled to be repeated in the first quarter of 2022.
- 7.4** When we look at the table for prosecutions you can see the impact of the backlog build up in the magistrates' court system, as a result of COVID. We have a number of cases being prepared, but are low down the priority list for available court time.



Performance against KPIs

7.5 Professional Standards operates give KPIs which are:

- Cases closed or investigated: 14 weeks
- IP decisions: 12 weeks
- PCC scheduling: 29 weeks
- End-to-end: 56 weeks
- Title: 14 weeks



7.6 KPI compliance with in-office investigations has been maintained during 2021. A recent deep-dive examination of the Investigations Panel stage KPI has led to additional training for staff; we expect this KPI to improve. The scheduling and end-to-end KPIs have routinely been affected by issues including witness engagement, expert evidence, and availability of parties. Some, though not all, of this has been impacted by Covid-19.

7.7 We have seen a high rate of referrals to the PCC over the first half of the year and hearing lengths increasing over the past 18 months. We are monitoring these trends closely. We believe factors affecting these trends may include recent recruitment to the IP and PCC, the impact of the pandemic, and the move to virtual hearings - along with the general nature and complexity of cases.

7.8 In September 2021 ARB successfully defended an appeal brought against a PCC decision in the Scottish Court of Sessions.

7.9 We continue to see a high number of complaints involving inadequate terms of engagement. Over recent years we have seen an increase in complaints relating to the use of digital and social media.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this performance monitoring report.

9. Communications

We continue to report regularly to our sponsor department on our operational performance and this paper is a public record of current performance

10. Resources

There are no specific resource implications arising from this paper.