

Subject Update from the Chief Executive
Purpose For Note
From Chief Executive

If you have any enquiries on this paper, please contact Hugh Simpson at HughS@arb.org.uk on 020 7580 5861

1. Summary

To provide an update from the Chief Executive on the operational activities of the Executive team.

2. Open Session

Open session. Any confidential matters will be discussed in a separate report in the confidential session.

3. Contribution to the Board's Purpose and Objectives

In delivering the Act, ARB's objectives are:

- Protect the users and potential users of architects' services, and
- Support architects through Regulation

ARB's Operational Activities Report keeps the Board informed of activities which ensure that ARB meets its purpose and objectives, its statement of priorities and delivers against the Business Plan.

4. Update on Core Projects

Reform of Initial Education and Training

- 4.1 We have been collaborating with the ARB working group members to analyse the evidence gathered as to the effectiveness of the current system of training and educating architects.
- 4.2 With further input from the Board and key stakeholders, we will be publishing a paper at the beginning of October which sets out ARB's vision for reform, to be followed by a significant period of engagement with the sector and beyond.
- 4.3 The subsequent steps will quite properly depend on the responses to that engagement and the solutions we agree, but as a minimum will likely involve changes to the way in which ARB prescribes and monitors qualifications in architecture.

EU Exit/Development of International Routes to Registration

- 4.4 We are continuing to monitor developments as the Professional Qualifications Bill makes its way through the Parliamentary process and are still anticipating that the legislative process will be complete in the first part of 2022. We are working closely with MHCLG, providing advice and support as the legislation makes its way through the parliamentary processes.
- 4.5 We have developed principles and criteria upon which we will base the development of our new international routes to registration as well as our approach to mutual recognition agreements. These principles and criteria, amongst other things, will help us determine when and whether to take forward the development of an MRA in the future. This also includes the principles upon which we will base the development of the 'compensation measures' we are likely to apply to individuals seeking to register under a new international route. We will be undertaking some engagement work and seeking feedback on these principles and criteria in the coming weeks.
- 4.6 Discussions with our counterparts in Australia and New Zealand, and in the USA regarding the development of mutual recognition agreements are progressing positively. We are also in active dialogue with the Architects Council of Europe and are continuing work together to develop a new mutual recognition agreement with our European partners under the framework of the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

Prescription

- 4.7 We are continuing to develop the external facing guidance on the current prescription process, following the July Board workshop. This work will continue through later summer and be implemented in the last quarter of 2021.
- 4.8 We have provisionally scheduled external audit resource to review the Prescribed Examination, as part of our wider review of recognising the equivalence of qualifications. This is scheduled to start in mid-September, and we will report the findings, as well as use the recommendations in the development work that will take place in the last quarter of the year.

Board Recruitment

- 4.9 The Board is currently carrying a lay vacancy. We are supporting MHCLG as they prepare to launch a recruitment campaign during the Autumn 2021. We have offered to participate in an online information session in conjunction with the MHCLG team. This would provide interested parties with an opportunity to learn more about public appointments process, the ARB and its work and the role of an ARB Board member. Similarly, the MHCLG will be conducting a recruitment campaign so that a permanent Chair can be appointed to the Board. We will be supporting the MHCLG team as the work on this campaign gets underway.

4.10 **Professional Conduct Review**

A redraft of our investigatory rules and guidance has been carried out and will be considered by the Board before a period of consultation. A new Quality Assurance framework has also been introduced to cover all stages of the disciplinary process.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme

- 4.11 With the Building Safety Bill having been laid in Parliament on 5 July, ARB was able to launch a public engagement exercise to invite architects and other interested stakeholders to help shape our future CPD scheme. On 18 August we published four principles developed by the ARB Board to underpin the scheme. These are based on initial research commissioned in 2020, including a survey of over 4,400 architects, focus groups, stakeholder interviews and an open call for evidence. We published the full research findings alongside a discussion paper explaining the proposed principles.
- 4.12 A detailed update on this engagement exercise is included further down, in the Policy and Communications update. At the Board workshop, some of the themes from initial survey responses will be shared for information.
- 4.13 The survey will close on 29 November 2021. Following detailed analysis, a report on the engagement exercise will be shared with the Board in Q1 2022, and will be used to develop the detail of the CPD scheme for consultation later in 2022.

Return to the office

- 4.14 We have carried out a staff survey in relation to returning to the office, with a view to gaining an understanding of any concerns around COVID-19, as well as getting an understanding of people's views around future ways of working. The data is currently being analysed and we are in the process of assessing the social distancing measures around the office, with a view to relaxing them slightly in the near future.

5. Policy and Communications update

- 5.1 We have started to evaluate our activities against four key aims, in line with ARB's key messages and priorities in the business plan. These are below and highlighted in brackets against relevant activities.
- **ARB** - raising the profile of ARB and putting our brand identity into action so that people understand our purpose, role, responsibility, and have confidence in us.
 - **CPD** - engaging stakeholders to help us develop a Continuing Professional Development scheme that is that is proportionate, genuinely helpful to the profession, and tailored by architects to meet their own individual development needs.
 - **IET** - engaging stakeholders to help us develop an outcomes-based approach to initial education and training that will enable new routes into and thereby improve access to the profession.
 - **EDI** - promoting our aim for a profession that is diverse and representative of society, and gathering stakeholder support on the actions we'll take to get there.

5.2 Engagement with stakeholders

July	Meeting Details	SLG member/s in attendance	Board Members in Attendance
1-Jul	Meeting with Brian Martin, Head of Technical Policy, MHCLG	HS	
6-Jul	Meeting with Peter Baker, Chief Inspector, Building Safety Regulator	HS,SH	
6-Jul	Competence Review: Workstream 1A (Standards for Education & Training)	SH, RRH, HS, EM	
7-Jul	Round Table: Professional Practical Experience in Europe	EM & Rob Wilson	
8-Jul	EU Exit Task Force Meeting	EM	Will Freeman
12-Jul	Meeting with Department for International Trade and MHCLG	HS,EM	
16-Jul	Meeting with Architects Accreditation Council of Australia	EM & Rob Wilson	
16-Jul	Meeting with National Council of Architectural Registration Boards	EM & Rob Wilson	
26-Jul	Quarterly catch up meeting with Royal Society of Ulster Architects	HS, SH, RRH	Chair
27-Jul	Trade Technical Meeting with BEIS/DIT	EM	
28-Jul	RQI Work Group Meeting	EM	
28-Jul	Quarterly catch up meeting with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland	HS, SH, RRH	Chair
28-Jul	Meeting with National Council of Architectural Registration Boards	EM & Rob Wilson	
28 Jul	Meeting with Emma Bentley from Gateone Consulting regarding Digital Transformation	HS, BJ	
30-Jul	Meeting with researcher at Karakusevic Carson Architects	RRH	
30-Jul	Quarterly catch up meeting with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland	HS, SH, RRH	Chair
3-Aug	Coordination meetings with MHCLG Architects Team	RRH & James Farrah	
5-Aug	Introduction Meeting with Jenny Russell (RIBA)	EM	
10-Aug	Meeting with Jenny Russell- MRA Discussion	EM	
12-Aug	Coordination meetings with MHCLG Architects Team	RRH & James Farrah	
13- Aug	Presentation on architectural regulation to MHCLG Summer School	RRH & James Farrah	
16-Aug	Catch up meeting with RIBA Chief Executive- Alan Vallance	HS	

16-Aug	Policy & Communications coordination meeting with RIBA	RRH & James Farrah	
17-Aug	BEIS Workshop on Transparency and Information Sharing Clauses	EM & Rob Wilson	
31-Aug	Meeting with Architecture practice Hawkins Brown	HS	

Engagement with the profession

5.3 Architects Engagement Group

- There are currently 269 members of the group; 257 of these joined the group directly and an additional 12 joined when they completed the consultation on guidance for institutions. The demographic details below cover only the 257 who joined the group directly.
- 66% of members are White but all ethnic groups are represented;
- 46% are based in London or the South East but all nations and regions are represented. The proportion in London or the South East is slightly lower than the previous update.
- 56% are male and 40% are female;
- 68% are registered architects; the group also includes students, academics, architectural consultants and Part 3 candidates, and other built environment professionals

Our consultations and publications

5.4 Guidance on Fire and life safety design and Environmental sustainability [ARB, CPD]

We published new safety and sustainability guidance for schools of architecture on 3 August 2021. The guidance aims to ensure that future architects have the knowledge, skill, behaviour and experience to be able to design safe and sustainable buildings.

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5.6 We wrote to all schools of architecture and a positive story was published in the Architects' Journal. We shared a news release on our website and a landing page which hosted the guidance and the consultation report. This was promoted via email in our eBulletin sent out that the same day; interestingly the PCC decisions in the eBulletin received the most clicks, the guidance story was #4 - the most clicked from the remaining content. We saw positive engagement on social in line with our ongoing social activity.

5.7 Continuing professional development [ARB, CPD]

On 18 August 2021 we launched our major public engagement exercise to invite architects to help shape our CPD scheme. As part of this work we:

- published a short policy paper outlining four principles to underpin the scheme

- published the evidence that informed the principles, a major piece of research undertaken by SQW last year
 - launched a survey on our brand new engagement platform, inviting views on the principles and on how to make CPD useful
 - issued a news release to the trade press, including a supportive quote from Dame Judith Hackitt
 - secured coverage in the Architects' Journal, which included an informative Q&A with Alan and was shared in the Journal's daily newsletter
 - emailed all registered architects
 - promoted it across all our social channels.
- 5.8 When the engagement was launched we also directly contacted RIBA, RIAS, RSAW, RSUA, Future Architects Front and FAME. We'll now incorporate the work into our future engagement with other organisations.
- 5.9 We're planning to hold workshops with architects later in the year, which we'll use as a further opportunity to explain the principles we're proposing for the CPD scheme and hold an open discussion to hear architects' views first-hand. The CPD website page was the most viewed page of the site on launch day, and top three in launch week (behind overseas qualifications page and the register). The email to registered architects had an open rate of 46% (in line with our eBulletin) and a strong click through rate of 9% (almost double the August eBulletin rate of 4.8%).
- 5.10 At the upcoming Board workshop, Rebecca will be presenting an update on initial responses to the survey.

Public affairs

- 5.11 Parliament has been in recess and this has reduced the level of external political activity. However, an update on significant developments is below.
- 5.12 **Legislation**
Both the Building Safety Bill and Professional Qualifications Bill continue to progress through Parliament:
- The Building Safety Bill is due to have its Committee stage between early September and the end of October. We shared our position on the Bill with MPs who had previously shown an interest in building safety issues and intend to do the same with those on the Bill committee. *[ARB, CPD]*
 - A date has not yet been published for the next stage of the Professional Qualifications Bill (Report in the House of Lords).
- 5.13 **MHCLG Departmental Review** *[ARB, CPD]*
MHCLG has published its review into architects regulation. These sorts of reviews are routine for bodies like ARB. MHCLG last reviewed ARB in 2014 and published the report in 2017.
This review aims to understand what is working well, what could be improved and what could be reformed. The review includes the following:
- Value of the Qualification – including questions about why architects pursue the profession, what they value about being part of it, how their education prepared them for practising and their views on greater specialisation

- Early career architects – the supply of architects and the competence new architects have
- Functions of an architect – how these are linked to other non-architect professionals and the role of architects in projects
- Access to the profession – barriers to the profession, its inclusivity and experiences during education
- Architectural practice – building safety, sustainability and the ways in which architecture could become more innovative

5.14 **Other activity**

Separately, we also wrote to the Minister for Housing to provide an update on our work and to offer further discussion. [ARB, CPD, IET, EDI]

Digital communications

5.15 **Website**

- We published ARB’s proposed CPD scheme principles on Wednesday 18 August. The landing page was the #1 viewed page on the site on the day of launch, and #3 in the first week. [ARB/ CPD/ IET/ EDI]
- In this period, website engagement remains below the 2021 monthly average, likely due to high levels of engagement in the early part of the year (due to UK exit and launch of ARB’s sustainability and fire and life safety guidelines and consultation) and the summer being a quieter time of year.
- Most viewed webpages for second half of July and August remain the same as previous period:
 - #1 /architect-information/applying-for-registration-for-the-first-time/i-hold-over-foreign-qualifications/
 - #2 /public-information/before-hiring-an-architect/architects-register/
 - #3 /architect-information/applying-for-registration-for-the-first-time/

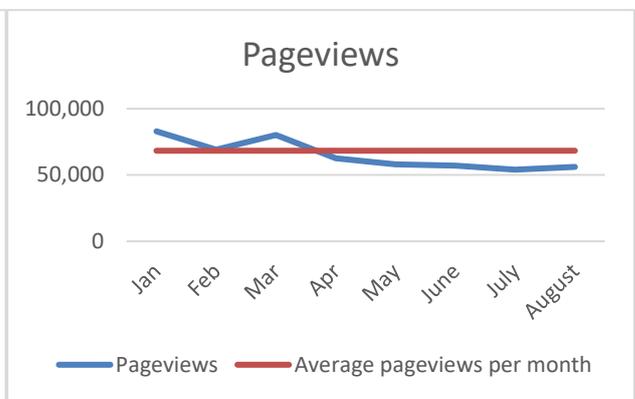
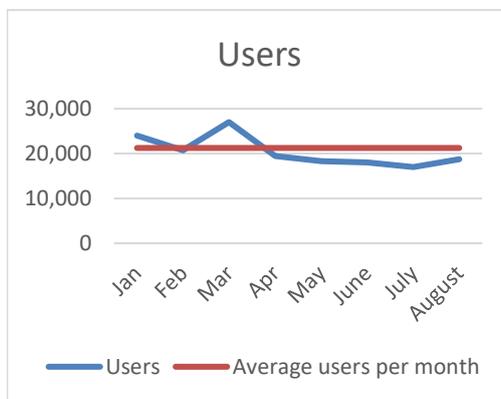
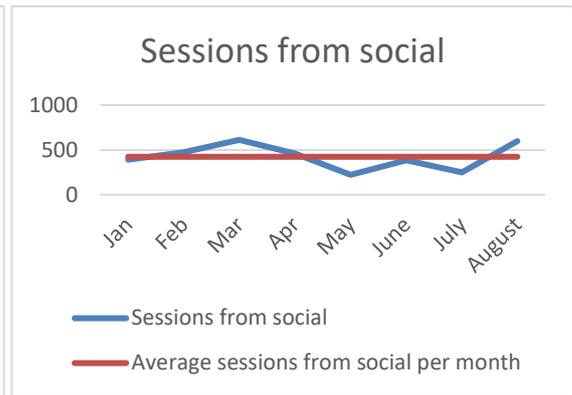
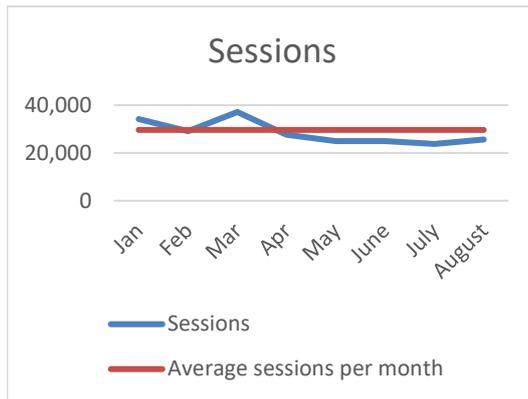
	July	August	Monthly av.
Sessions	23,753	25,658	28,391
Sessions from social	248	598	423
Users	16,994	18,719	20,402
Pageviews	54,029	56,213	66,268

Session: The period of time a user is actively engaged with arb.org.uk

Sessions from social: The period of time a user who first visited one of ARB’s social channels is actively engaged with arb.org.uk

Users: Visitors who have initiated a session on arb.org.uk

Pageviews: Total number of pages viewed on arb.org.uk

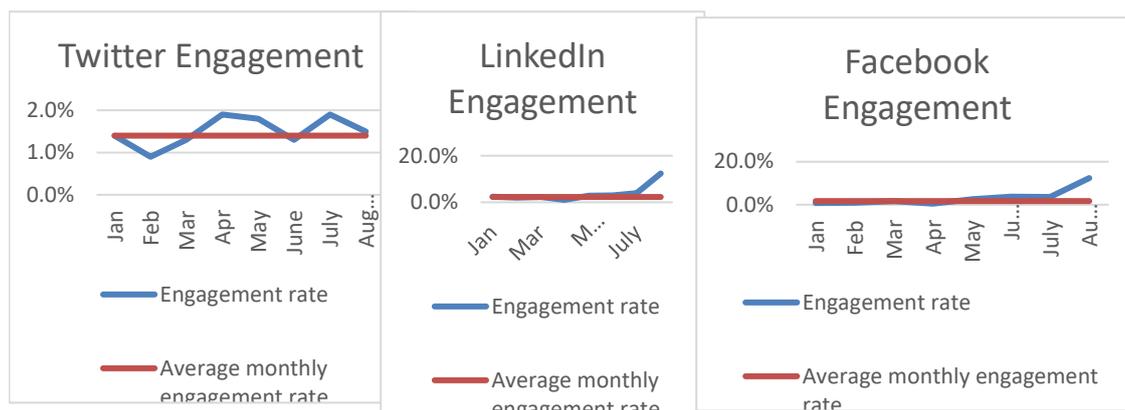


5.16 Ebulletin

- August's edition sent Tuesday 3 August to 43,941 architects, with an open rate of 28.34% and click through rate (% of openers who clicked) of 4.8%.
- Most read items:
 - #1 PCC decisions
 - #2 Dear Architect
 - #3 Update your personal details
- From August, PCC decisions are included in the eBulletin and dedicated press releases will no longer be issued. Whilst we have changed the manner in which we share this information, it's interesting to see that architects are clearly interested in the decisions.

5.17 Social

- Social engagement overall has remained above the monthly average for 2021, with high engagement in August driven by the launch of the CPD principles and some discussion in the comments on LinkedIn. Twitter has dipped below the monthly average. [ARB/ CPD/ IET/ EDI]



Media Coverage

5.18 Please find below a selection of coverage where ARB is mentioned:

July

- Architects' Journal: [Bullying Bartlett: abused ex-students are poised to take legal action](#)

August

- Architects' Journal: [Architects urged to contribute to government review of profession](#)
- Dezeen: [UK government calls for architects' views on professional reform](#)
- Architects' Journal: [New CPD regime can't be 'designed in ivory tower'](#)
- Building Design: [Arb asks architects to help shape new professional development system](#)
- UK construction online: [Architects Invited to Shape Future](#)

Looking ahead

5.19

Topic	Activity	Planned date
CPD	An online event for the CPD scheme	6 October
	Producing and publishing a chair's video to encourage responses to our CPD survey	Mid October
	CPD survey closes	29 November
IET	Planning our launch of our view of modernising initial education and training. This is due to take place in early October. The communications plan will focus on target audiences of architecture students; those who did not complete a full course of architecture qualifications; academic institutions; and any registered architects interested in shaping the future of the profession. Wider audiences we aim to hear from include employers, other	First week of October

