

Open session

Board meeting: 19 October 2022

Agenda item: 13

Subject: Prescribed Examination Annual Report

Action: To note

Purpose

This paper describes the Prescribed Examination activity in the period 1 January to 30 September 2022, and compares to activity undertaken in 2021.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the contents of the paper.

Annexes

There are no annexes to this paper

Author/Key Contact

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1. Open Session

This paper will be considered in open session.

2. Background and Key points

- 2.1. Prescribed examinations are offered at Part 1 and Part 2, to those who do not have a UK prescribed qualification. The purpose of the examination is to demonstrate equivalence of the applicant's architectural qualification, with the UK standard.
- 2.2. Applicants must map their architectural work and experience against the Board's criteria and general attributes. This portfolio is assessed by the panel of examiners, who score the material, to decide if the applicant should advance to an interview, to further test their experience.
- 2.3. Those that do not meet this standard are classed as fails, though those attaining a near pass mark are offered the opportunity to review some criteria and resubmit to just the lead examiner for reassessment. If they meet the criteria, they are then deemed to pass.
- 2.4. All examinations are run online, with extensive guidance for applicants on our website to assist them with the submission process. We have amended this guidance during the year to help better reflect those who may be non-english native speakers, and to clarify some of the technical terminology used. We have presented to, and engaged with, the experiences of some non-UK architects (Nigerian architects group), and will continue to do this as part of our continuous improvement and feedback work, as part of the five year strategy.
- 2.5. We intend to continue to run the examination exclusively online, based on feedback from candidates and examiners. Examination results have not changed as a result of this provision. A detailed analysis of the results is included later in this paper.
- 2.6. We have implemented the results of an external audit of our examination process, commissioned as part of our audit programme, and have made improvements to advice and guidance, specifically in relation to administration and information sharing of exam portfolios, and also on security and plagiarism checks.

Analysis of exam activity

2.7. In the year to date (YTD) 1st January to 30 September 2022, we have conducted 83 Part 1 and 35 Part 2 examinations. A breakdown of the outcome and gender is included in the table below.

Exam breakdown 2022 YTD	Part 1			Part 2		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Pass	28	17	45	14	5	19
Fail	23	15	38	12	4	16
	51	32	83	26	9	35

2.8. There are an additional 32 examinations scheduled between now and the end of November. Total activity is therefore anticipated to be 150 individual examinations. This compares favourably with the volumes of examinations in 2021, which are set out below

Exam breakdown 2021	Part 1			Part 2		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Pass	38	21	59	13	12	25
Fail	34	23	57	8	9	17
	72	44	116	21	21	42

2.9. There have been 8 Part 1 retakes so far, of which 7 subsequently passed, and 6 Part 2 retakes, where 5 passed. There has been 1 appeal, which was not upheld.

2.10. This retake rate is lower than in 2021, where 15 Part 1 retakes resulted in 12 passes, and 9 Part 2 retakes resulted in 9 passes. In 2021, there were 3 appeals, none of which were upheld.


2.11. The pass rate at each stage (pass, Refer to Lead Examiner and Requiring retake) are set out in the table below:

Breakdown of fail results	2022 YTD				2021 (full year)			
	Part 1	Part 1 (%)	Part 2	Part 2 (%)	Part 1	Part 1 (%)	Part 2	Part 2 (%)
Passed	45	54%	19	54%	59	51%	25	60%
Refer to Lead	19	23%	9	26%	28	24%	10	24%
Rexamination	19	23%	7	20%	29	25%	7	17%
	83		35		116		42	

2.12. Statistically, the pass rates are comparable by year.

2022 exams (1 January to 30 September)	Part 1			Part 2		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
British	13	11	24	2	4	6
EU	9	3	12	4	0	4
Potential MRA (USA/Aus/NZ)	1	4	5	2	1	3
Other	28	14	42	18	1	19
	51	32	83	26	6	32

2021 exams (1 January to 31 December)	Part 1			Part 2		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
British	10	11	21	10	10	20
EU	16	7	23	1	1	2
Potential MRA (USA/Aus/NZ)	6	2	8	2	2	4
Other	41	23	64	8	8	16
	73	43	116	21	21	42

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- 2.13. We have analysed the nationality of those applying for examinations, as either British, from an EU 27 country, from a country that ARB are developing an MRA with, and from the rest of the world. There are no significant differences in the numbers from these countries when comparing 2021 with 2022 YTD.
- 2.14. The number of applicants applying for the examination is predominantly female (66% of all applicants in 2022, and 63% in 2021). This is different to the UK Register, which is 30% female.
- 2.15. We will continue to monitor changes in volumes, demographics and pass rates in 2023. Our planned changes to our IT systems will make better data analysis and tracking of those who go on to join the Register possible.
- 2.16. We are mirroring the examination process with the proposed process for MRA assessment route to entry, and will analyse whether there are changes in examination applications as a result of this new route.
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3. Resource Implications

- 3.1. There are no resource implications outside of those already included within the 2022 budget.
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4. Risk implications

- 4.1. There are no new risks associated with this, or risks that require additional mitigation.
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5. Communication (Delete as appropriate)

- 5.1. There are no communication matters arising from this analysis.
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6. Equality and Diversity implication

- 6.1. Equality and diversity issues relating to language and culture of those who may have either international qualifications, or those with non-British nationality are already accounted for in pre- and post-examination guidance and communication, and of the training and induction of Prescribed Examiners.
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7. Recommendations

- 7.1. The Board is asked to note the contents of the paper.
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