



ARB
Business Plan
2010

ARB Business Plan 2010

Introduction

The Architects Registration Board (ARB) has identified three strategic aims to deliver its work: protecting the consumer, supporting architects through regulation, and delivering the Architects Act. In developing the Business Plan for its operations in 2010, the Board is targeting work which falls under each of these three mutually supportive aims.

The Board's Business Plan affirms ARB's activities during 2010, and identifies how each individual action against the Plan will be reported during the year.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Maintaining the quality of the Register – core work		
Register all those who meet the eligibility requirements within three months of receiving a valid application.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have access to an accurate and reliable Register of architects. • Architects will receive an efficient and cost-effective registration service. • Sections 4 and 5 of the Act require ARB to register architects. 	Six-monthly reports to the Board on statistics, trends, quality reviews and delivery against performance indicator. Average cost of applications reported into budgeting process.
The Register will be easily accessible via the website and freephone telephone number.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have easy access to a Register which contains reliable and up to date information. • Architects' details are prominently displayed, underlining their registered status. • The Register is properly maintained under Section 3 of the Act. 	Key statistics and trends reported to the Board every six months.
Facilitate movements on the Register (personal details updates, resignations, removals, readmissions and reinstatements).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have access to an accurate Register of architects. • Architects' requests for amendments are dealt with in a timely and efficient way. • The Register is properly maintained in accordance with Sections 3, 8 and 9 of the Act. 	Key statistics and trends reported to the Board every six months or annually, according to the category of information.
Manage the prescribed examination process for applicants who wish to gain equivalence to Parts 1 and 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects on the Register whose qualifications are prescribed by ARB have undertaken an equivalence test to ensure they meet ARB's standards. • Applications from those wishing to sit the examination are dealt with efficiently in accordance with Section 4 of the Act. The guidance provided is helpful and informative, resulting in a successful outcome, which allows the applicant to progress their career as an architect. 	Statistics and trends reported to the Board on a six-monthly basis.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Maintaining the quality of the Register - developmental work		
Implement and promote online registration procedures which comply with the Services Directive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have access to a reliable and accurate Register, listing the names of qualified architects. • Applications for registration are dealt with more quickly; applicants can access the status of their application online. • In addition to delivering Sections 4 and 5 of the Act concerning registration, ARB ensures that applicants' rights under the European Treaty and the Services Directive are respected in compliance with the legislation. 	Six-monthly report to the Board on the success of the online system.
Develop and implement methods that assess standards of equivalence for those seeking registration with European rights, but who do not meet the terms of the Act for automatic registration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have access to a reliable Register, consisting only of those who are entitled to be registered. • Architects from other member states receive an efficient and cost-effective registration service; also, efficient internal systems ensure the overall level of the retention fee is kept as low as possible. • In addition to Sections 4 and 5 of the Act, ARB ensures that applicants' rights under the European Treaty and the Qualifications Directive are respected, in accordance with the legislation. 	Recommendations will be made to the Board with regard to any significant changes in routes to registration. Implementation will be reported via the annual report against the Business Plan
In conjunction with the above, review the current method of assessing equivalence to ARB's criteria through the prescribed examination route and implement any agreed changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have access to a reliable Register, consisting only of those who are entitled to use the title "architect". • Architects receive an efficient and cost-effective registration service. • Sections 4 and 5 of the Act require ARB to register architects. 	Recommendations will be made to the Board (via the Prescription Committee) with regard to any proposed changes to delivering the prescribed examination. Implementation will be reported via the annual report against the Business Plan.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Maintaining the qualifications of architects – core work		
<p>To prescribe, renew prescription of, or annually monitor the relevant qualifications so that ARB is confident that individuals gaining such qualifications meet ARB's requirements, including the criteria, within the timescales set down in the Prescription Procedures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects have received a consistent standard of qualifications. • Students can be confident that their qualifications meet ARB's criteria, and architects can be confident that standards are being maintained. • Section 4 (1) (a) of the Act is met as ARB prescribes qualifications. 	<p>Annual report to the Board on trends in prescription and performance against the Prescription Procedures.</p>
<p>To engage with institutions, students and other stakeholders regarding the prescription process and criteria to inform, obtain feedback and promote understanding of ARB's role, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning meetings; • feedback sessions; • university liaison sessions; • newsletters; • regular liaison meetings with stakeholders; • the online student manual; and • attendance at relevant conferences/forums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects have received a consistent standard of education leading to the award of qualifications. • Institutions will have clear guidance in applying for and maintaining prescription, which will assist in maintaining the integrity of qualifications on a cost-effective basis. • Section 4 (1) (a) of the Act is met as ARB prescribes qualifications. 	<p>Annual report to the Board on feedback received and outcome of satisfaction surveys, as well as updates planned/delivered to manuals etc.</p>
<p>Ensure ARB fulfils its responsibilities as a Competent Authority in relation to maintaining the qualifications of architects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects' qualifications meet standards that are recognised at European level. • Architects will have confidence in the standards maintained by ARB and will have appropriate support in seeking mobility across Europe. • Section 1A of the Act designates ARB as the UK Competent Authority and requires ARB to carry out mutual recognition functions for architects. 	<p>Annual report to the Board on the listing of qualifications in the Qualifications Directive.</p>

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Explore options for a possible scheme to monitor the competence of practising architects and if agreed, consult widely on ARB's approach to this activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects have demonstrated a consistent standard of competence. • Architects can be satisfied that the profession as a whole demonstrates a standard of competence which maintains the reputation of the profession and increases consumer confidence. • Section 9 of the Act requires the Board to be satisfied as to the competence of those applying to be retained on the Register if they do not have recent practical experience. The standards expected of architects in the Code of Conduct and Practice (issued under Section 13 of the Act) requires architects to be competent in the work they undertake. 	This area of work will be reported through Board papers on the project, and annually against the Business Plan.
Conclude the consultation on proposed amendments to the procedures for prescribing qualifications. Finalise, approve and disseminate the procedures, including updated supporting guidance, to key stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects' qualifications are maintained at a consistent level. • Institutions will have clear guidance in seeking and maintaining prescription, which will assist in maintaining the standards of their qualifications on a cost-effective basis. • Section 4 (1) (a) of the Act is met as ARB prescribes qualifications 	This area of work will be reported through the Board papers on the project, and annually against the Business Plan.
Conclude (if necessary) the second consultation on the criteria for prescribing qualifications. Finalise, approve and disseminate the criteria, including updated supporting guidance, to key stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects' qualifications are maintained at a consistent level. • Institutions will have clear guidance in seeking and maintaining prescription, which will assist in maintaining the standards of their qualifications on a cost-effective basis. Students can be confident that their qualifications meets ARB's criteria, and architects can be confident that standards are being maintained. • Section 4 (1) (a) of the Act is met as ARB prescribes qualifications. 	This area of work will be reported through Board papers on the project, and annually against the Business Plan.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
<p>Implement and embed the process both for notifying UK qualifications to the European Commission and reviewing other EU qualifications for the purposes of automatic recognition across Europe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident in the process which safeguards the criteria that architects must meet to gain their qualifications. • This work supports the smooth passage of UK architectural qualifications onto the European list, facilitating the mobility of UK architects within other member states. • Under Section 1A of the Act, ARB is the designated UK Competent Authority under the Qualifications Directive, and is specifically required to carry out mutual recognition functions. 	<p>This area of work will be reported through Board papers on the project and annually against the Business Plan. Operational activities will be reported annually.</p>
<p>Review and update the database used to house and monitor UK applications for prescription and annual monitoring submissions; build upon the existing database to monitor the notification of UK qualifications to the European Commission and to monitor consideration of other EU qualifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident in the process which safeguards the criteria that architects must meet to gain their qualifications. • This work supports the smooth passage of UK architectural qualifications onto the European list, facilitating the mobility of UK architects within other member states. • Under Section 1A of the Act, ARB is the designated UK Competent Authority under the Qualifications Directive, and is specifically required to carry out mutual recognition functions. 	<p>Annual report against the Business Plan.</p>
<p>Maintaining the standards of conduct and practice of architects – core work</p>		
<p>Manage the process of investigating complaints about the conduct or competence of architects from enquiry to consideration and conclusion of the case by the Investigations Committee (IC), in accordance with specified performance targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that complaints about architects will be dealt with fairly and impartially. • Architects can be confident that any complaint against them will be handled both fairly and impartially, and that the reputation of architects will be maintained by taking appropriate action in cases of unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence. • Under Section 14 of the Act, ARB must investigate allegations of unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence. 	<p>Six-monthly reports to the Board on statistics, trends, types of complaint and performance against indicators.</p>

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
<p>Manage the process of referring cases to the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) and provide administrative support to the PCC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that complaints about architects will be fairly and impartially dealt with, and that there are procedures in place to remove architects from the Register where it is in the public interest to do so. • Architects can be confident that any complaint against them will be handled both fairly and impartially, and that the reputation of architects will be maintained by taking appropriate action in cases of unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence. • Under Section 14 of the Act, ARB must investigate allegations of unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence. 	<p>Annual overview of cases and trends provided to the Board. Individual case outcome notified direct to the Board/available on the Board intranet.</p>
<p>Implement and publicise the revised Code of Conduct and Practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that architects are expected to follow a Code of Practice. • Architects will understand and support the standards of conduct and practice expected of them, thereby enhancing the reputation of architects in the eyes of the public and the profession. • Section 13 of the Act requires ARB to issue a Code of Conduct and Practice and to keep it under review. 	<p>Annual report against the Business Plan.</p>
<p>Manage the Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) monitoring regime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that their architect will be adequately insured. • Architects will be aware of the importance of having adequate insurance cover to protect themselves • Section 13 of the Act requires ARB to issue a Code of Conduct. Standard 8 of that Code expects architects to hold adequate and appropriate PII. 	<p>Six-monthly reports on activity and outcomes.</p>

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Maintaining the standards of conduct and practice of architects – developmental work		
Recruit and train new members to the PCC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that when a complaint reaches the PCC, the case will be dealt with fairly and impartially in accordance with the Rules. • Architects brought before the PCC, as well as the profession at large, can expect complaints to be dealt with impartially and adjudicated on by trained PCC members. • Schedule 1, Part II of the Act, provides for the constitution of the PCC Committee. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Review the PCC and IC procedures and implement improvements to enhance the efficiency and/or the fairness and transparency of the process for both architects and complainants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that the PCC will judge complaints about an architect's conduct or competence knowledgeably and fairly. • Architects brought before the PCC, as well as the profession at large, can expect a disciplinary committee that is fit for purpose. • Section 14(6) of the Act allows for Rules to be made as to the procedure followed by the PCC. This review would have an impact on those Rules. 	Annual report against the Business Plan. Proposed amendments to the Rules will be decided by the Board, after a wide consultation exercise.
Conduct a review of ARB's IC and PCC Rules to update them, and to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Explore and identify whether there are other, more appropriate ways for the IC to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers will have confidence in ARB's process for investigating an allegation about an architect's conduct and/or competence. • Architects will have confidence in ARB's process for investigating an allegation about an architect's conduct and/or competence. • Schedule 1, Part 1 of the Act provides that the Board may make Rules concerning those appointed to "investigate" allegations, as well as Rules on procedures to be followed by the PCC. 	Proposed amendments to the Rules will be decided by the Board after a wide consultation exercise. Annual report against the Business Plan.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Assist the public to make informed choices – core work		
<p>Investigate complaints from the public and the profession regarding misuse of the title “architect” from receipt to prosecution, in accordance with specified performance targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that when they engage an architect, they are engaging someone who can demonstrate that they are both registered and qualified, and that they meet the Board’s standards of competence. • The reputation of architects is protected and their status enhanced. • Section 20 of the Act makes it a criminal offence to use the title “architect” in business or practice when not registered with ARB. 	<p>Six-monthly reports on statistics, trends and outcomes, including prosecution trends.</p>
<p>Help consumers make informed choices when engaging someone to undertake their building project by raising the profile of the Register of Architects, in collaboration with others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the web presence of the key messages to consumers on the value of engaging an architect, as well as the importance of checking the Register to make sure that the “architect” chosen is a registered architect. • Promoting the message at targeted consumer events within the built environment. • Establish and build relationships with listing directories to stress the benefits to them of protecting the integrity of their data • Establishing a greater presence in forums where potential users of architects’ services might visit, such as planning portals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are educated to make an informed choice when they engage someone to undertake their building project. • The reputation and title of architects is protected, and their status enhanced. • Section 3 of the Act requires the Register to be published. This work supports that priority and mitigates against the title “architect” being used improperly. Section 20 of the Act makes it illegal for anyone to offer their services as an architect if they are not on our Register. 	<p>Six-monthly reports on activities to support this action, and the impact it has had. Annual report against the Business Plan.</p>
<p>Monitor the success of the audit of directories project to establish the degree of recurring mis-listings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers choosing a practice or individual under the ‘Architects’ listing in a directory can be confident they are using a fully qualified and registered individual. • The reputation of architects is protected and their status enhanced. • Section 20 of the Act prohibits anyone from practising under the name, style or title ‘architect’ if they are not 	<p>Annual report against the Business Plan.</p>

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Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Corporate and Finance – core work		
Participate in relevant forums and engage with Government, other European member states, competent authorities, and other stakeholders to be informed of and contribute to developments, which may impact on consumers/architects/ the delivery of the Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping informed, adopting good practice, and contributing to current and future issues will help to increase consumer confidence in the architects' profession. • Architects can be confident in ARB both for maintaining standards and for reflecting good standards of practice, as well as keeping up to date with relevant issues. • Being informed and providing information will ensure that ARB is able to deliver the Act effectively, and be ready for change where necessary. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Deliver the smooth running of the Board and its Committees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound decision-making, strategic direction and oversight by a smooth-running Board will help to strengthen consumer confidence. • Sound decision-making, strategic direction and oversight by a smooth-running Board will help to enhance the reputation of architects in the eyes of the public and the profession. • A smooth-running Board will deliver the Act in its totality more effectively. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Conduct a web-based survey to assess whether the website is delivering adequately to all sectors of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers have access to relevant, up-to-date information. • Architects can use the website as an information resource and utilise the service to pay their fee online and update their personal details, as well as signing up for regular updates from ARB. • The website assists in delivering a number of statutory functions required by the Act and other legislation. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Deliver the 2010 communications plan and develop a plan for 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs consumers about the Register of Architects, enabling them to make informed choices. • Architects are kept up to date with developments at ARB. • Helps to ensure that ARB informs stakeholders about how it is delivering its statutory obligations under the Act. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Manage the production of ARB's Annual Report, and maximise the opportunities to deliver it electronically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Annual Report is a tool for alerting stakeholders to the value of using an architect and the need to check the Register. • Architects are informed about ARB's work and performance in the year under review in a cost effective way. • Producing an annual report assists in keeping stakeholders and partners informed as to how ARB is delivering the Act. 	Results of the feedback questionnaire contained in the Annual Report will be presented to the Board on an annual basis.
Ensure that staff are adequately rewarded, trained and motivated to undertake their duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers who contact ARB are dealt with knowledgeably and professionally. • Architects who contact ARB are dealt with knowledgeably and professionally. • Staff undertake their duties effectively and efficiently as directed by the Board under Schedule 1, Part I of the Act. 	Annual report to the Board from the Remuneration Committee.
Budget and fee setting process, delivery within budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concisely set budget ensures that appropriate resources are in place to support delivery of an effective service to consumers. • Architects are assured that the Board offers value for money in delivering a concise and prudent budget. • Management accounts will be presented at each open session of Board meetings to demonstrate progress against the budget. 	Management accounts presented to the Board at each meeting.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Insurance arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a public body, consumers can be confident that ARB has appropriate insurance policies in place. • Architects can be assured that the Board has secured appropriate insurance cover that allows it to deliver its functions should an insurable event arise. • Insurance arrangements support ARB in the delivery of a number of statutory functions. 	Annual report against the Business Plan. May be reported on by the Audit Committee.
Programme of contract review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In procuring the services of contractors, ARB will ensure that consumer interests are taken fully into account, in line with government guidelines. • Architects can be confident that through contract review the best contractor for the job is appointed, ensuring a high quality service and value for money. • Continuous reviews of quality and value for money offered by contractors underpins the effective delivery of the Act. 	Annual report against the Business Plan. May be reported on by the Audit Committee.
Review of the structure/constitution of the Board after the general election.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that an appropriate structure is in place which reflects the public interest. • Ensures that an appropriate structure is in place which takes into account the interests of the profession. • Ensures that an appropriate structure is in place to deliver the Act in accordance with good practice for regulation. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Manage risks to ARB by having an effective risk-management strategy in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer protection is assured through appropriate safeguards being established. • Architects can be confident that ARB has appropriate safeguards in place to enhance their reputation. • Appropriate risk management underpins effective delivery of the Act. 	Reported six-monthly to the Board.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Management of the Board's premises and assets, including health and safety compliance with relevant legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be assured that all services and provisions are delivered in compliance with the relevant legislation. • Architects can be assured that all services and provisions are delivered in compliance with the relevant legislation. • Legal requirement to adhere to UK legislation in addition to the Act. 	Annual report against the Business Plan. May be reported on by the Audit Committee.
Strategy and management of ARB's technology and communication tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are offered a streamlined, smooth experience when dealing with ARB. • Architects are provided with a service that is efficient and effective, which in turn helps to keep the annual retention fee at a low level. • Systems and structures in place that allow ARB to deliver its statutory responsibilities under the Act. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Corporate and Finance – developmental work		
Conduct a review of ARB's General Rules to ensure that they are fit for purpose, that they work effectively with the Act and that they reflect good practice. Consult on proposed changes in preparation for implementation in 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that the Rules support delivery of the Register of Architects and can be relied on. • Architects can be confident that ARB has in place the most cost-effective and efficient procedures both with regard to registration and to ARB's own internal decision-making/conduct. • Schedule 1 of the Act provides that ARB may make rules in relation to Committees and procedures, including the Board's General Rules. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Begin to implement the three-year equality and diversity action plan contained within ARB's single equality scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are protected from any form of discrimination or barriers to our services. • Any barriers in ARB's policies and procedures either for architectural students or architects on the Register will be recognised and removed. • ARB will fulfil its obligations as a public corporation under the equality legislation. 	Annual report to the Board.

Action	How this delivers ARB's three strategic aims Consumers – Architects – The Act	Reporting mechanism to the Board
Enhance methods of collaborative working with other bodies, particularly professional bodies, which will assist in the delivery of ARB's strategic aims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers benefit from ARB's growing knowledge and experience of good practice, which translates into delivering a higher level of service. • Architects benefit from a Board which has an understanding of the environment and climate in which the profession works. • Collaborative working will enhance ARB's delivery of all of its statutory functions. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Review ARB's electoral scheme for electing architects to the Board to ensure that it is a fair mechanism and is fit for purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident in the integrity of the election process. • Architects can be confident in the integrity of the election process. • Schedule 1, Part I of the Act provides that the Board shall make an electoral scheme with the approval of the Privy Council. and in consultation with bodies representative of architects. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
Consider and decide whether the Third Party review process should be extended to any other of ARB's procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers can be confident that ARB's procedures for decisions are open and transparent. • Architects can be confident that ARB's procedures for decisions affecting registration are open and transparent. • Providing review mechanisms for ARB's procedures will ensure the Act is delivered effectively. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.
To further develop the Board's website to ensure accessibility requirements are met and full use of this valuable resource is achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An accessible website removes some of the barriers that certain sectors of the community might otherwise encounter. • An accessible website means that a wider sector of the community are aware of the Register and that use of the title "architect" is regulated. • The website contains information relating to all of our statutory duties. By making it accessible, we are serving the interests of the profession and the users of architectural services. 	Annual report against the Business Plan.

Acronyms

PCC Professional Conduct Committee

IC Investigations Committee

PII Professional Indemnity Insurance