



Subject Progress under ARB's Equality Action Plan
Purpose For Discussion
From Elaine Stowell – Qualifications Executive

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1. Summary

To note progress made under ARB's Equality Action Plan over the last year and to seek Board members' feedback on the proposed Equality and Diversity performance framework.

2. Open/Confidential Session

Open 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: consumers are protected from discrimination or barriers to accessing ARB's services.

Support architects through regulation: any potential barriers in ARB's policies and/or procedures either for architectural students or architects will be recognised and removed; ARB will fulfil its obligations as a public body under the equality legislation.

4. Key Points

- i. ARB's Equality Scheme was introduced in December 2011 to incorporate the public sector equality duty established under the Equality Act 2010 which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity when shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.
- ii. The scheme was updated in 2014 to reflect minor changes in the legislation, and is published on the ARB website at: <http://www.arb.org.uk/single-equalityscheme>. It is revised periodically for accuracy.
- iii. **Summary of Progress in 2017**
 - We continue to collect information from applicants to the Register and those re-joining. We currently hold E&D data for 52% of the Register and have made it available to assist others in their policy information gathering.
 - We have reviewed and revised the categories for collecting E&D information across the departments and for recruitment purposes, and will continue to do so.

- ARB has been working with a group of regulators led by the General Medical Council and including the Solicitors' Regulatory Authority, the Bar Standards Board, the General Osteopathic Council, the General Dental Council, the General Optical Council, the Nursing and Midwifery Council and the Police Complaints Commission, to agree a framework against which E&D performance can be measured. That framework, whilst generic across the organisations will also include performance targets which are specific to each. A draft copy of ARB's framework is attached at [Annex A](#), and comments are welcomed before it is brought back to the Board for agreement.
 - Bespoke training on E&D matters and in particular on the risks of unconscious bias in disciplinary proceedings will have been provided to the Investigations Pool members and the Professional Conduct Committee members by the end of the year.
Staff will also have undertaken further training by the end of 2017, ensuring that all have a base understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and E&D principles.
 - Equality impact assessments have been undertaken on the current ARB Criteria for Prescription of Qualifications and the Procedures for Prescription in preparation for reviews of both documents.
Further assessments will be undertaken as proposals are being drawn up and before they are presented to the Board.
 - The Section 14 review is also underway, which will look at whether ARB's procedures for investigating complaints about architects can be improved .
There will be an equality impact assessment on both the current procedures and on any proposed changes before they are agreed.
- iv. Any plans and proposals for actions in 2018 and beyond will be incorporated into the E&D Performance Framework document at [Annex A](#) once it has been approved by the Board. ARB is not listed under Schedule 19 of the Equality Act 2010 so there is no requirement to produce an action plan; however the Board may consider that a performance framework is a useful document in holding the Executive to account for actions taken. Board members' feedback on the draft Framework is welcomed.

5. Resource Implications

Any projects planned for 2018 are included in the 2017/2018 Business Plan and resource implications have therefore been taken into account. Any projects planned in the three year Framework outside of that already agreed will need to be factored into future budgets and business plans.

6. Risk Implications

No specific risks have been identified. The external audit of services and procedures and the impact assessments planned in relation to the reviews of the Criteria, the Procedures for Prescription and the Section 14 review may identify risks in due course.

7. Communication

ARB reviews progress against the delivery of its Equality Scheme on an annual basis to ensure it continues to meet requirements under the legislation and reflects best practice in ensuring equality of opportunity for all.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications

ARB's Equality Scheme continues to take account of its responsibilities for complying with the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

9. Further Actions

Board members' views on the proposed Framework at [Annex A](#) would be welcomed, either at or outside of the meeting. A proposal will then be brought to the February Board meeting for the Framework to be adopted.