



Subject ARB Business Plan 2022
Purpose For Approval
From Hugh Simpson, Chief Executive and Registrar

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1. Summary

This paper asks the Board to approve the Business Plan for 2022, as set out in the relevant annex.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board should agree:

- i. The draft Business Plan 2022
- ii. That the Board delegate responsibility to the Chair, for agreeing any drafting amendments to the Business Plan before publication.

3. Open Session

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

4. Key points

4.1 At its meeting on 9 September 2021, the Board approved a new and ambitious five year Corporate Strategy for 2022-26. This strategy set out ARB's purpose, our vision and five overarching priorities to:

- Modernise initial education and training of architects
- Develop and deliver a new model of CPD
- Transform our systems, processes and technology
- Invest in our people and build a high-performance culture
- Delivery continuous improvement in our regulatory services.

4.2 To enable the Board to make an informed decision about the corporate strategy and particularly the budget and fees strategy, a detailed draft business plan was shared with the Board for feedback.

- 4.3 We have taken that feedback and prepared a draft ARB Business Plan 2022 for publication which is set out in the **annex**.
- 4.4 In previous years, the ARB business plan set out a limited number of priority areas of work. In this year's draft Business Plan we have modelled it around the new Corporate Strategy ensuring that key areas of work across all areas of the business are included.
- 4.5 There is significantly more detail within operational business plans but what is presented in the annex is intended to provide clarity to the Board and in particular to external stakeholders about the key areas of work for 2022. In addition, to provide some visibility on future trajectory, a summary of expected areas for delivery in 203-26 are also included.

5. Resource Implications

Resource requirements for the delivery of the strategic plan priorities, including activities scheduled for 2022, were considered as part of the Board discussion and decision on the budget for 2022. No further resource implications have been identified.

6. Risk Implications

A key plank of the Board's risk management strategy is to consider those risks which may hinder our ability to delivery our corporate strategy and within that, our statutory functions. Although a number of key deliverables within the Business Plan are subject to change following external consultation, and also require legislative proposals to be approved by Parliament, no additional risks have been identified as part of the Business Plan development process.

7. Communication

Subject to the Board's approval, the ARB Business Plan 2022 will be published on our website as part of our commitment to openness and transparency.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications

None directly emerging as a result of this paper, although a commitment to action relating to EDI (both within ARB and as part of our policy and regulatory reform agenda) is set out in the Corporate Strategy and the draft Business Plan 2022.

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Business plan 2022

Our [Strategy](#) set out the five key areas of work:

- Continuous improvement in our regulatory services
- Modernising initial education and training of architects
- Delivering a new system of continuing professional development for architects
- Transforming our systems, processes and information technology
- Investing in our people and building a positive and inclusive culture based on shared values and behaviours

In this annual business plan we refer back to our strategic vision for 2026, and set out the activities we will carry out in 2022 towards this vision. We also show a summary of expected areas of activity in years 2023-25, recognising that plans will develop over time as we receive feedback from stakeholders on proposals.

Continuous improvement in our regulatory services

Our vision for 2026

Over the next five years we need to modernise and transform the way in which ARB operates if architects and the public are to benefit from regulation. We will deliver improvements which we want to be tangible and measurable across each of our statutory functions.

In 2022 we will:

Registration:

- overhaul our guidance on Prescribed Examinations, using feedback from stakeholders, including past examination candidates. We will bring demonstrable improvements to the process and experience of candidates;
- make significant improvement to our registration website to simplify information about existing routes to registration;
- to improve the experience of new applicants and the efficiency of our registration processes, we will work with Schools of Architecture and institutions to simplify the submission of pass list information, to improve the process for first time registration;
- redesign our processes and guidance using feedback from architects who have been through first time registration, and those who have re-joined.

Accreditation:

- continue work already underway to deliver improvements to our accreditation or 'prescription of qualifications' processes;
- engage schools of architecture and others as we develop a new model of accreditation to replace the paper-based criterion assessment model;
- update guidance for schools and institutions, to support more efficient ways of assessing and reassessing existing qualifications.

In 2023-26 we will continue to develop improvements in efficiency and customer service, and work to operationalise key elements in the corporate strategy as they are approved. These include any system developments for the new CPD framework and monitoring process as well as a new accreditation methodology following the development of new learning outcomes and standards for institutions as we modernise initial education and training of architects.

Assessment and international routes:

- implement new international routes to registration subject to relevant legislation coming into force;
- following consultation in 2021 we will roll-out our new principles-based approach to develop and deliver mutual recognition agreements with international partners, publishing these once they have been approved;
- develop, pilot and implement the additional requirements which internationally qualified architects will need to meet before registering in the UK;
- publish guidance for those joining the register under the new international routes.

In 2023-2026 , we will undertake a review of the additional requirements that we initially put in place, taking feedback into account, and will make adjustments where there is evidence to support doing so. We will continue to visit international counterparts as part of our MRA monitoring processes and to check on-going compliance with our standards. We will publish the programme of new and reviewed MRA/MOU on an annual basis.

Standards and good practice:

- publish new rules and guidance in support of a fair, efficient disciplinary system;
- begin our review of the Architects Code: Standards of Professional Conduct and Practice;
- review our guidance on professional indemnity insurance so that it continues to protect the public, but also recognises the reality of market conditions for architects.

Protection of title:

- work with consumer organisations to promote the importance of using a registered architect;
- investigate complaints made against those incorrectly using the title 'architect';
- carry out an audit of individuals who have been removed from the Register, to ensure they are no longer using the title 'architect' in the course of business or practice.

Engagement

- build on our relationships with architects, stakeholders and government so that we engage at the early stages of policy development, because regulation will only work if it is designed with an evidence base and input from the profession;
- improve our communications so we are open and transparent, taking the time to tell people what we're doing and why, and listen to their ideas and views so that we can refine or change our position where required.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- analyse Registrant data and publish a report on the makeup of the profession, and develop changes we can make to gather better data to help to make the profession more reflective of society;
- review our appointment process for both staff and non-executives and consider recommended changes that will help us reach the widest and most diverse talent pool possible;
- establish a new staff equality and diversity forum to explore active steps we can take to address any structural or cultural risks at ARB;
- review our remuneration and expenses policy and consider recommended changes that will help us ensure that they are not a barrier to non-executives working for ARB.

Governance

- consult on and publish updates to our General Rules;
- develop associated procedures to achieve the social and political objectives of new legislation, including the Professional Qualifications Bill, the Building Safety Bill and the supplementary statutory instruments.

In 2023-26 we will deliver improvements in our standards and guidance work. We will take feedback, learning and insight from our consultation activities to identify practical changes we can make, both within ARB and within key policy areas so that we make a difference on equality and diversity. In governance we will need to ensure our rules and procedures are updated to reflect the outcomes from legislative reform, including the Building Safety Bill, the Professional Qualifications Bill as well as any changes emerging from the Departmental review.

Modernising initial education and training of architects

Our vision for 2026

Initial education and training of architects will better reflect the knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours they need in areas such as climate change, safety and emerging technologies. The structure of education and training will be reviewed to improve diversity and access to the profession, consider how and when specialism is needed and deliver effective and attractive pre-registration work experience.

In 2022 we will

- analyse the engagement exercises and survey that will have closed in January 2022, and publish a report on the responses we received;
- draft new outcomes for initial education and training of architects and develop the standards for schools of architecture to underpin them;
- continue to engage with architects and their employers, and those who are working in the built environment but chose not to complete their architect qualification, as we develop the outcomes;
- publish the competencies and standards for public consultation;
- engage with schools of architecture and others as we develop a new model of accreditation.

In 2023-26 we will continue to engage with the sector as we publish new educational outcomes for initial education and training of architecture, new standards for schools of architecture and roll-out a new proportionate and effective accreditation model. We will take feedback through engagement with the sector to implement any changes to the structure of initial education and training. We will ensure the pre-registration education system for architects addresses the lack of diversity in the profession and the need to enhance leadership in climate change and building safety.

Delivering a new system of continuing professional development for architects

Our vision for 2026

Architects will be utilising a continuing professional development (CPD) model they see as a positive contribution to their practice and professional development. There will be evidence that the model has made an impact on the competence of architects with learning shared across the profession.

In 2022 we will

- analyse the engagement exercises and survey that will have closed in November 2021, and publish a report on the responses we received;
- build our engagement with the sector so that proposals are shaped by the profession across the UK;
- engage with the professional leadership bodies across the UK who are developing their CPD provision and support for members;
- draft our detailed proposals for a new scheme for monitoring CPD, and publish them for public consultation.

In 2023-26 we will develop, test and implement our internal processes for selecting, sampling, assessing and deciding on CPD submissions. In 2024, we anticipate the system to go live, with architects submitting information relating to CPD undertaken. We will develop and test the quality assurance system to ensure consistency for the assessors. Evaluation of the model will be undertaken in 2025.

Transforming our systems, processes and information technology

Our vision for 2026

ARB's systems and processes will enable architects to manage their own data and information, saving both time and money. The public will have increased transparency about qualified and registered architects. The IT infrastructure will not only ensure secure data but will generate insight into the profession, including areas where regulatory attention is needed such as equality and diversity, new guidance or changes to education and training.

In 2022 we will

- carry out detailed analysis of our operational processes to identify improvements, including the journey of those who use our services;
- prepare a blueprint for our target operating requirements for future systems that are accessible to everyone;
- work with external suppliers to scope and plan the development of our new, modular system so that we can improve operational efficiencies, reduce risk and build better data;
- tender, procure and work with external delivery partners to make the underpinning infrastructure changes;
- introduce a Programme Office approach to management of the project, input from the Board and staff, and demonstrate delivery;
- implement improvements to our current infrastructure that will enhance the protection of data that we process.

In 2023-26 we will roll-out a new holistic software applications system across ARB enabling us to deliver enhanced registrant services and 'self-serve' access. We will develop enhanced data analytics so that we are providing insight to the profession and wider built environment on key trends within the profession.

Investing in our people and build a positive and inclusive culture based on shared values and behaviours

Our vision for 2026

ARB is an organisation where all our staff and our associates understand and are highly motivated to deliver our purpose and vision, where staff are well led and well managed, have the right skills and competencies, and are working to a shared set of values and behaviours. If we achieve this, we will deliver high quality regulation.

In 2022 we will

- review our organisational structure to support the delivery of our strategic objectives;
- monitor salary, career progression and other HR data to ensure we are promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in ARB;
- review our property and facilities requirements to ensure we operate in the most efficient manner and allow an agile and collaborative approach to delivery of our strategic objectives;
- design and implement new people policies that attract and retain a highly motivated, customer focused and expert staff in a modern working environment;
- establish procedures and services that support the health and wellbeing of staff.

In 2023-26 we will embed improvements to our performance management systems, we will regularly review staff feedback through a mix of qualitative and quantitative analysis and we will continue to promote opportunities for development, particularly aimed at promoting diversity.