

## Open session

**Board meeting:** 17 May 2023

**Agenda item:** 7

**Subject:** Mutual Recognition Agreements and the UK Part 3 Qualification

**Action:** For Decision

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### Purpose

To note the position on registration requirements for fully qualified architects from countries with which ARB has signed Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) and to agree that individuals who comply with the full requirements of the MRAs and have additionally acquired an ARB-accredited Part 3 level qualification, are eligible for registration.

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### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- i. Notes the position on registration requirements for fully qualified architects from countries with which ARB has signed Mutual Recognition Agreements;
- ii. Agrees that individuals who comply with the full requirements of each MRA and have additionally acquired an ARB-accredited Part 3 level qualification, are eligible for registration, i.e., they do not need to additionally undertake the UK Adaptation Assessment; and
- iii. Notes that applicants whose ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification was issued more than 24 months prior to their application being made should also be required to demonstrate continued competence to practise before being admitted to the Register.

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### Annexes

Annexe A – the UK Part 3 Criteria

Annexe B – the UK Adaptation Assessment Criteria

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## 1. Open Session

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### 2. Background and Key points

- 2.1 ARB has, to date, signed mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) with the National Council of Architectural Registration Board (NCARB) in the USA and the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) and the New Zealand Registered Architects Board (NZRAB) in Australia and New Zealand respectively. The NCARB MRA began to operate on 25 April 2023, and the AACA/NZRAB MRA will come into operation on 25 May 2023.
- 2.2 The MRAs function in similar ways in that they accommodate the mutual recognition of qualifications held by full-qualified architects. Eligible applicants, who are fully registered/licensed, are however required to successfully pass ARB's UK Adaptation Assessment (UKAA) to demonstrate that they are competent to practice in a UK context before being able to apply to join the UK Register of Architects.
- 2.3 When approving the framework for the UKAA, the Board agreed that the Criteria against which applicants would be assessed should be drawn from the current ARB Part 3 level Criteria. Three of the Professional Criteria have therefore been extracted from the Part 3 level Criteria to form the UKAA Criteria. The UKAA Criteria cover the following areas: Clients, Users and Delivery of Services; Legal Framework and Processes and Building Procurement.
- 2.4 The Part 3 Criteria are attached at **Annex 1** and the UK Adaptation Assessment Criteria are attached at **Annex 2**.
- 2.5 The current Part 3 level Criteria are more extensive than the UKAA Criteria as they additionally cover the following areas: Professionalism and Practice and Management.
- 2.6 It therefore follows that applicants who have completed an ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification will have fully met the UK Adaptation Assessment Criteria.
- 2.7 After receiving feedback and queries from stakeholders, we understand that there may be a number of applicants in future who meet the requirements set out in our MRAs and have additionally completed, or may wish to complete, an ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification for their own development purposes.
- 2.8 Therefore, the Board is asked to agree that applicants who meet the full requirements of an MRA and who additionally hold an ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification, should be eligible for registration, having satisfied the relevant



requirements for entry onto the UK Register of Architects. Such individuals will not therefore need to additionally need to undertake the UK Adaptation Assessment.

- 2.9 The Board is also asked to note that applicants whose ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification was issued more than 24 months prior to their application being made should also be required to demonstrate continued competence to practise before being admitted to the Register. This will ensure that ARB is taking a consistent approach and mean that all those who have not registered within 24 months of completion of their Part 3 level qualification will need to progress through ARB's Competency Standards Group (CSG) before being eligible to join the Register.

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### **3 Resource Implications**

- 3.1 The cost of the UK Adaptation Assessment has been calculated on the basis of the costs of the assessment itself, as well as some of the development and maintenance costs associated with our MRAs. Individuals who fulfil MRA requirements and who have undertaken an ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification would not need to additionally undertake the UK Adaptation Assessment, which may therefore lead to a very small shortfall in income to cover the costs of the development and maintenance of our MRAs. We anticipate however that the number of individuals seeking to join the UK Register via this route will be very low.

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### **4 Resource Implications**

- 4.1 There is a risk that applicants may misinterpret the requirements that they must fulfil as set out in our MRAs. We are managing this risk, in tandem with our MRA partners, and are issuing careful and direct communications around the relevant eligibility requirements.
- 4.2 We will also need to ensure that applicants wishing to register with ARB through other routes, such as the typical UK route, understand that the UK Adaptation Assessment is not an alternative to an accredited Part 3 qualification. The UK Adaptation Assessment is only available where MRA requirements have been fulfilled. We are making this clear in our communications in relation to our MRAs.

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### **5 Communication**

- 5.1 Since signing our initial MRAs, we have been undertaking a series of promotional events with our international partners. We will ensure that we issue clear communications regarding this particular international route to registration. We will monitor feedback we receive on who is eligible to use the MRAs and any tailor follow up communications to address any common questions of misunderstandings.

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## **6 Equality and Diversity implication**

- 6.1 As our principles and approach to the development of the new international route have evolved, we have increasingly taken equality, diversity and inclusion issues into account. We hope through our ongoing and constructive dialogue with partners in different countries we are taking proportionate and appropriate steps to uphold standards and quality.
- 6.2 We will need to monitor the impact of the introduction of the new UK Adaptation Assessment and ensure that our work in this area supports our ambitious goals around equality, diversity and inclusion. We plan to commence a review of the UK Adaptation Assessment process after the first six months of its operation, and will ensure that we look closely at this area as part of that review.

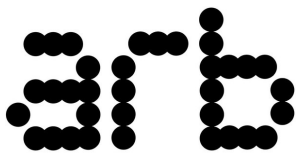
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## **7 Recommendations**

- 7.1 Notes the position on registration requirements for fully qualified architects from countries with which ARB has signed Mutual Recognition Agreements;
  - 7.2 Agrees that that individuals who comply with the full requirements of each MRA and have additionally acquired an ARB-accredited Part 3 level qualification, are eligible for registration, i.e., they do not need to additionally undertake the UK Adaptation Assessment; and
  - 7.3 Notes that applicants whose ARB-accredited Part 3 qualification was issued more than 24 months prior to their application being made should also be required to demonstrate continued competence to practise before being admitted to the Register.
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Prescription of qualifications

# ARB Criteria at Part 3



Architects  
Registration  
Board

## PC1 Professionalism

A successful candidate will demonstrate overall competence and the ability to behave with integrity, in the ethical and professional manner appropriate to the role of architect. The candidate will have the skills necessary to undertake effective communication and presentation, organisation, self-management and autonomous working.

The candidate will have a clear understanding of the architect's obligation to society and the profession, and a sufficient awareness of the limits of their competence and professional experience to ensure they are unlikely to bring the profession into disrepute.

## PC2 Clients, users and delivery of services

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of the range of services offered by architects and delivering those services in a manner prioritising the interests of the client and other stakeholders. The candidate will have the skills necessary to provide a competent service, both singly and as part of a team, including understanding of client needs, appropriate communication, programming, coordination and competent delivery. This will be supported by knowledge of the briefing process, forms and terms of appointment, the means of professional remuneration, relevant legislation, and the execution of appropriate programmed and coordinated project tasks.

## PC3 Legal framework and processes

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of the legal context within which an architect must operate, and the processes undertaken to ensure compliance with legal requirements or standards. The candidate will have the skills necessary to positively interact with statutory and private bodies or individuals, and competently deliver projects within diverse legislative frameworks. This will be supported by knowledge of the relevant law, legislation, guidance and controls relevant to architectural design and construction.

## PC4 Practice and management

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of the business priorities, required management processes and risks of running an architectural practice, and the relationship between the practice of architecture and the UK construction industry. The candidate will have the skills necessary to engage in business administration and ability to resource, plan, implement and record project tasks to achieve stated goals, either individually or within a team. This will be supported by knowledge of the nature of legal business entities, office systems, administration procedures and the relevant legislation.

## PC5 Building procurement

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of UK construction and contract law, construction procurement processes and the roles of built environment professionals. The candidate will have the skills necessary to plan project-related tasks, coordinate and engage in design team interaction, execute effective contract communication and resolve construction-related challenges and disputes. This will be supported by an understanding of contractual relationships, the obligations upon an architect acting as contract administrator, job-related administrative systems and the management of projects in the context of the candidate's professional experience.



# UK Adaptation Assessment Criteria



## **UK Adaptation Assessment Criteria**

The UK Adaptation Assessment Criteria are as follows:

### **Clients, Users and delivery of services**

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of the range of services offered by architects and delivering those services in a manner prioritising the interests of the client and other stakeholders. The candidate will have the skills necessary to provide a competent service, both singly and as part of a team, including understanding of client needs, appropriate communication, programming, coordination and competent delivery. This will be supported by knowledge of the briefing process, forms and terms of appointment, the means of professional remuneration, relevant legislation, and the execution of appropriate programmed and coordinated project tasks.

### **Legal Framework and processes**

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of the legal context within which an architect must operate, and the processes undertaken to ensure compliance with legal requirements or standards. The candidate will have the skills necessary to positively interact with statutory and private bodies or individuals, and competently deliver projects within diverse legislative frameworks. This will be supported by knowledge of the relevant law, legislation, guidance and controls relevant to architectural design and construction.

### **Building Procurement**

A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate understanding of UK construction and contract law, construction procurement processes and the roles of built environment professionals. The candidate will have the skills necessary to plan project-related tasks, coordinate and engage in design team interaction, execute effective contract communication and resolve construction-related challenges and disputes. This will be supported by an understanding of contractual relationships, the obligations upon an architect acting as contract administrator, job-related administrative systems and the management of projects in the context of the candidate's professional experience.