



Subject Update from the Chief Executive
Purpose For Note
From Chief Executive

If you have any enquiries on this paper, please contact Hugh Simpson at HughS@arb.org.uk on 020 7580 5861

1. Summary

To provide an update from the Chief Executive on the operational activities of the Executive team.

2. Open Session

Open session. Any confidential matters will be discussed in a separate report in the confidential 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, and
- Support architects through Regulation

ARB's Operational Activities Report keeps the Board informed of activities which ensure that ARB meets its purpose and objectives, its statement of priorities and delivers against the Business Plan.

4. Update on Core Projects

Competence Review

We are currently preparing a policy discussion paper setting out our proposed approach to the outcomes expected at the end of the initial period of education and training as well as the Board's high-level position on routes to registration. This paper will take into account the research carried out by SQW, the feedback from the Board development day, the input from the two listening sessions carried out with the ARB Engagement Group and the advice of the Competency Working Group.

We will be inviting views on our proposed approach before the process of developing the proposed outcomes for trainee architects and standards for institutions which will require further engagement and formal consultation later in the year.

EU Exit

We are continuing to operate the interim arrangements for the recognition of European qualifications which were put in place further to the end of the UK/EU Implementation Period, including a memorandum of understanding with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland. As well as publishing information on our website, we have participated in regular meetings with stakeholder across the UK and the EU to ensure that information regarding the interim arrangements has been widely disseminated.

We are awaiting the outcomes of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) consultation in relation to the future ways in which international qualifications could be recognised. Guidance may then be developed and published by the Department setting out the way forward in this area. We are continuing to work closely with MHCLG, providing advice and support as needed.

In the meantime, we have met regularly with our counterparts in Australia and New Zealand, and in the USA to continue discussions regarding the development of potential mutual recognition agreements. We have also in dialogue with the Architects Council of Europe with a view to developing a new mutual recognition agreement with our European partners under the framework of the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

Prescription

We continue to operate the existing procedures, as agreed at the Board Development Day in March. With the Chair of the Prescription Committee, we have structured the meetings so we have time to clearly summarise the Committee's advice to the Executive, and this now features in the introductory section of the Board paper, along with any other significant considerations for the Board.

To manage the high volumes of annual monitoring and covid responses, we have piloted an approach of grouping the papers by risk and significance of changes or compliance. A separate paper is still produced for each institution, but the Executive introduce the detail of exceptions (good practice, or concerns) only, and the Chair focuses the Committee on those in the meeting. This is working well after two meetings, but we continue to evaluate.

We have commenced the review of the advice to institutions, and will develop this through May and June. We have a new Qualifications Executive who has started, and so additional capacity in the team to help deliver and test this.

Professional Conduct Review

We have prepared the first draft of the new Investigations & Professional Conduct Committee Rules, which will be ready for Board consideration in the summer, and publication by the end of the year after a period of consultation.

The remaining recommendations within the review, including the establishment of an investigatory review group/committee, and modernisation of existing guidance, remains on course for delivery by the end of the year, as set out in the 2021 Business Plan.

Strategic Statements

Guidelines for architects on Fire & Life Safety and Climate Change have been published.

The consultation on statutory guidance for institutions on Fire and Life Safety Design and Climate Change has closed and we are currently reviewing responses to the consultation. We intend to bring updated guidance for approval to the Board in July 2021.

IT Update

We recognise the need for significant IT transformation and work continues in relation to the projects under way such as a move from windows 7 to windows 10 and improvements to cyber security.

The Chief Executive and Registrar with the Director of Finance and Resources have commissioned an IT audit to build a better assessment of risks and ensure our IT investment and application system development projects are appropriately designed and resourced. The audit will look at the underlying infrastructure to ensure the current IT projects will delivery against original scope and requirements. This work will enable us to make far better informed decision about whether to progress with, for example, the AMS project or refocus on long term systems development and cross-organisation IT development.

Return to the office

Our staff team continue to work from home in accordance with Government advice. Occasional days working from the office are permitted where there is a business reason, but no formal return plan has yet been implemented. It is likely that more regular working from the office will be considered once the guidelines on step three of the Government's road map out of lockdown have been confirmed, expected to be around the 21 June 2021. While the office remains Covid secure, we continue to explore where improvements might be made to ensure the health and safety of our staff team and future visitors, while achieving a maximum allowable occupancy. The staff team continue to be consulted with on the longer-term future for office working and homeworking and the Senior Leadership Group continue to explore the most efficient use of office space and IT infrastructure.

We recognise that there are two key questions: how can we manage an effective return to office working in a way which is consistent with government guidelines and public health requirements; and, what are the longer term implications from Covid-19 of office working and what does this mean for ARB? We have already begun consultation and engagement with staff and will continue to keep the Board updated.

5. External engagement update

The Board has signalled its desire to increase our external engagement activity so that we can more effectively involve stakeholders in our policy development work as well as promote the positive benefits of regulation in the sector. Set out below is a detailed update on engagement activities. It is our intention to review the format of this update and feedback from Board Members is welcome. A list of stakeholder meetings can be viewed in the **Annex A**.

Engagement with the profession

Listening sessions

On Thursday 29th April and Wednesday 5th May 2021 ARB ran two online listening events, exclusively for members of the Architects Engagement Group. Members of the ARB Board and Senior Leadership Group attended.

- 19 members of the Architects Engagement Group registered to attend the event on Thursday 29th April at 0900. Of these, 14 attended on the day.
- 30 (the maximum we allowed) registered to attend the event on Wednesday 5th May at 1600. Of these, approximately 20 attended on the day. There was also one additional attendee who had not registered.
- 60% of those who registered to attend were architects. 17% were academics (including architects and other types of academic). The remainder were students, architectural designers (i.e. not Part 3 qualified) and other built environment professionals (including, for example, an HR manager at an architectural practice and a fire safety expert).
- 26 attendees completed the online feedback poll; 100% said they found the event valuable and that ARB should run more events like it.

Consultations and publications

Consultation: Guidance for education institutions on Fire and Life Safety Design and Sustainability

On 25 February 2021 ARB launched a consultation on two new guidance documents that would in due course be issued to institutions teaching ARB-recognised qualifications. The guidance aims to help to ensure that architecture students are well trained to be able to design safe and sustainable buildings and environments. The consultation closed on 23 April 2021, after running for eight weeks.

To launch the consultation, ARB promoted it through:

- the eBulletin that went out to architects on the day of the launch;
- all ARB's social media channels;
- media coverage in the Architect's Journal online, as a dedicated story with an interview with Hugh Simpson and expert comments from organisations including SCHOSA and the Architects Climate Action Network;
- a news release sent out to other architectural and built environment press, and communications contacts in stakeholder organisations i.e. RIBA;

- direct emails to all schools of architecture, with follow up emails sent with one month to go before the consultation closed.

Publication: Guidelines for architects on Fire and Life Safety Design and Sustainability

On Thursday 25 March, ARB launched new guidelines for all architects to ensure they are fully competent in Fire and Life Safety Design and Sustainability.

On publishing the guidelines, ARB promoted them through:

- a dedicated mailshot that went out to all architects on the day of the launch;
- [original video content](#) featuring ARB Board members explaining the key points in the guidance, which was used on all ARB’s social media channels;
- a [joint news release](#) with RIBA, featuring supportive quotes from both organisations, which was covered by BD online and the Architects Journal online;
- further direct emails to stakeholder organisations.

As of Monday 10 May, engagement with the guidelines includes:

- 9,649 total views of the landing page for both documents;
- 3,126 downloads of the Fire and Life Safety Design guidelines;
- 2,368 downloads of the Sustainability guidelines;
- 40,847 architects received the dedicated email sent out on the day of the launch; of these, 17,197 opened it and there were 6,561 total clicks through to the guidelines landing page on arb.org.uk
- 16,339 impressions across all our social media channels (i.e. the number of times the posts were seen);
- 417 engagements (including likes, shares, retweets, mentions and comments).
- 8,983 views of the videos across all social media channels.

Twitter analytics shows the value of using original media content, and also of Board members promoting their work to their networks.

	Impressions (times people saw the Tweet on Twitter)	Total Engagements (times people interacted with the Tweet on Twitter i.e. clicked on the link, liked, retweeted)	Media views (autoplay and clicks to watch video)
Tweet with text and link	1,436	47	n/a
Tweet with sustainability video and link, further shared by Board member in the video	2,884	241	379

Digital communications

The statistics below cover the period since the last ARB Board meeting, from 5 February 2021 to 9 May 2021.

Social media:

- over 90,000 impressions across all our social media (i.e. the number of times our social media posts have been seen)
- 596 engagements across our social channels (i.e. likes, shares, retweets, mentions and comments)
- 1,561 visits to the website that originated from our social channels, with the most (714) coming from Facebook.

Website:

- 63,997 unique users of the website
- 214,554 total pageviews of the website. After the homepage, the most viewed page was [I hold overseas/ non-UK recognised qualifications](#) with 5,285 unique page views.

eBulletin:

- The latest ebulletin was sent out on 25 February 2021
- 43,035 architects were sent the email and it had an open rate of 32%, with a click through rate of 4%.

The top clicks (i.e. articles opened) were 'Update personal details', the Chair's Message and the 'Dear architect' section.

6. Resource Implications

Only as identified in the paper.

7. Risk Implications

ARB's CEO's Report provides the Board with an update on business activities, progress against the Business Plan, as well as highlighting any emerging risks which may impact on delivery.

Further detail of specific risks to the organisation and in relation to operations will be provided in the confidential CEO's report.

8. Communication

There are not specific communications implications arising from this paper.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

None directly emerging as a result of updates in this paper.

10. Further Actions

These are referred to within the key points set out above.

February	Meeting Details	SLG member/s in attendance	Board Members in Attendance
10-Feb	Working Group 7 Meeting	SH	
18-Feb	Construction Leadership Council- Professional Indemnity Insurance Working Group	SH	
23-Feb	Meeting of the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Trade Technical Group (Provision of Business Services)	EM	
23-Feb	Lecture to Bartlett School of Architecture Part 3 Students	EM	Chair
25-Feb	Meeting of the Construction Industry Council's Education and Skills Task Force (Apprenticeships)	EM	
26-Feb	RIBA Liaison Meeting	HS, SH	Chair, Mark Bottomley
March	Meeting Details	SLG member/s in attendance	Board Members in Attendance
08-Mar	Event: The Future of Women in Architecture- The Big Debate 1	HS	
08-Mar	British Standards Institutions: Principal Designer Meeting	SH	
09-Mar	RIBA Working Group Meeting on regulation of function	SH	
16-Mar	Building and Fire Safety in Housing: Building Safety Conference	SH	
18-Mar	Introductory meeting with members of AHMM's EDI Working Group	RRH	
22-Mar	ARB Competence Review: Workstream 1A (Standards for Education & Training)	HS, SH, EM, RRH	
22-Mar	Introductory meeting with RIBA Chief Executive, Alan Vallance	HS	
23-Mar	MHCLG Architects Regulation Challenge Panel- Periodic Review	HS	
24-Mar	British Standards Institutions: Workshop	SH	
24-Mar	RIAS Quarterly Catch up meeting	HS, SH, EM, RRH	Chair
25-Mar	Presentation to RIBA Council	HS	Chair
25-Mar	Introductory meeting with Julian Morrow of Morrow Lorraine Architects	HS	
26-Mar	RIAI Quarterly Catch up meeting	HS, SH, EM, RRH	Chair
26-Mar	Introductory meeting with RICS Director of Regulation, Chris Alder	HS	
29-Mar	Introductory meeting with Bob Sheil, Director at Bartlett School of Architecture	HS	

30-Mar	RSUA Quarterly Catch up meeting	HS, SH, EM, RRH	Chair
April	Meeting Details	SLG Member/s in attendance	Board Members in Attendance
08-Apr	Bilateral with RIAI on CPD	HS, SH	
09-Apr	Introductory meeting with Alex Wright, Head of Architecture at University of Bath	HS	
12-Apr	RSWA Quarterly Catch up meeting	HS, EM, RRH	Chair
12-Apr	Bilateral with National Council of Architecture Registration Boards	EM & Rob Wilson	
13-Apr	BEIS Webinar: Updates on changes to the way services are regulated in the UK	EM & Rob Wilson	
14-Apr	Introductory meeting with the Architects Registration Board Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Institute of Architects	EM & Rob Wilson	
15-Apr	Construction Leadership Council: PII Sub Group	SH	
16-Apr	ARB meeting the Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture Council Members	EM, BJ with Luke Melia & Grant Dyble	
20-Apr	Meeting of the Construction Industry Council's Education and Skills Task Force (Apprenticeships)	EM	
21-Apr	RIBA Regulation of function working group	SH	
22-Apr	Presentation and Q&A with Association for Professional Studies (APSA)	EM	
23-Apr	MHCLG ALBs Data Protection Forum	SH	
23-Apr	Meeting of the Architects Council of Europe General Assembly	EM	
26-Apr	Introductory meeting with RIBA Director of Inclusion	RRH, SH	
27-Apr	Meeting of the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Trade Technical Group (Provision of Business Services)	EM	
28-Apr	RIBA Liaison Meeting	HS, SH, EM, RRH	Chair, Mark Bottomley
29-Apr	ARB Listening Event	HS, RRH, SH, EM	Chair, Tony Crook, Cindy Leslie, Elena Marco, Liz Male, Will Freeman, Stephen McCusker

May	Meeting Details	SLG Member/s in attendance	Board Members in attendance
04-May	Meeting with the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia and the New Zealand Registered Architects Board	EM & Rob Wilson	
04-May	Meeting of the European Network of Architects Competent Authorities	EM & Rob Wilson	
05-May	Construction Industry Council's Trends and Economic Update	EM	
05-May	Professional Qualifications Bill (Ministerial roundtable)	HS, EM	
05-May	ARB Listening Session	HS, RRH, SH, EM	Chair, Tony Crook, Will Freeman, Mark Bottomley, Elena Marco, Liz Male, Teri Okoro, Stephen McCusker,
07-May	Meeting with Caroline Sudworth, STEM Explored Ltd re: apprenticeships	EM, BJ, GD	
11-May	Professional Associations Research Network: Continuing Professional Development Forum	SH	