



Business Plan 2022

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1. Introduction

We want a world in which the built environment inspires those who live and work in it, reflects the needs of society so that people are safe and can live well, and helps to tackle the fundamental challenges our planet faces. The contribution that regulation can make to this overarching purpose may be small, but we recognise that architects and other professionals in the built environment can achieve their own goals, potential and outcomes only if we are delivering effective regulation.

This document sets out our Business Plan for the first year of our new five-year strategy. The two documents are complementary.

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

Our vision

We have an ambitious vision for ARB. Our goal is to deliver improvements and tangible outcomes in each of our core statutory functions and deliver meaningful and positive change in our strategic priorities.

In our Corporate Strategy we also set out our key pillars, so that we place front and centre our commitment to playing part in addressing the existential crisis of climate change, as well as our commitment to addressing fundamental and long-standing structural issues around equality and diversity in architecture. In summary, our vision and commitment is to:

- Demonstrate leadership for the sector in responding to key challenges including safety and climate change;
- Foster a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in our own organisation and take action to ensure change occurs in architecture;
- Work with the profession (including employers, educators, students and others) to modernise initial education and training;

- Build on the professionalism of architects, implementing a new model of continuing professional development which supports and encourages good practice and lifelong learning;
- Embed a culture of continuous improvement within ARB so that our regulatory services are accessible, designed around the needs of architects and consumers are effective.

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 2023-25, recognising that plans will develop over time as we receive feedback from stakeholders on proposals.

2. 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;
- significantly improve our registration website to simplify information about existing routes to registration;
- work with schools of architecture and institutions to simplify the submission of pass list information, improving 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 under way to deliver improvements to our accreditation ('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 as and when relevant legislation comes into force;
- following consultation in 2021 we will roll out our new principles-based approach to develop and deliver mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) with international partners, publishing these once they have been signed and 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 for this annually.

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 and professional bodies 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: regulation will work only if it is designed with an evidence base and input from the profession and other stakeholders, with a focus on consumers;

- improve our communications so we are increasingly 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 and Professional Qualifications Bills, as well as any changes emerging from the Departmental review.

3. 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;
- work with schools of architecture in all parts of the UK, and other key interest groups, to 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 including SCOSA and others at an early stage 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.

4. 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 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, so that we're learning from what works well and exploring innovation;
- 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.

5. 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 reducing the steps needed to be taken to process applications and similar processes by those who use our services;
- develop clear specifications and requirements for operating systems so we can deliver future policy changes, such as CPD, effectively and efficiently;
- work with external suppliers to scope and plan the development of our new IT applications and CRM system so that we can improve operational efficiencies, reduce risk and build better data;
- adopting appropriate tendering and procurement processes, work with external delivery partners to make necessary IT infrastructure changes;
- improve our use of project management methodology throughout ARB so that we deliver our key milestones, particularly on changes to IT infrastructure and software applications;
- implement improvements to our current infrastructure that will enhance the protection of the data we process.

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

6. Investing in our people and building 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 and an inclusive and positive internal culture;
- 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 promote a positive and inclusive culture, to attract and retain a highly motivated, customer-focused and expert staff in a modern working environment;
- enhance 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.

If you need information on this document in a different format such as an audio recording or braille, you can:

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We'll consider your request and get back to you within 14 days.



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