

Approval process for an ARB / NCARB MRA

Following the UK's exit from the European Union, the Professional Qualifications Bill, which was introduced to Parliament on 12 May 2021, will give ARB the ability to pursue opportunities for UK architects to work internationally.

ARB will be able to recognise certain qualifications from other countries so that architects with those qualifications can join the UK Register, which will help the UK remain an attractive destination for international architects.

We have been exploring the development of mutual recognition agreements and memoranda of understanding with other countries and their counterpart regulators. You can see more information about the development of international routes to registration online (<https://arb.org.uk/eu-exit/update-on-the-development-of-arbs-international-routes-to-registration/>).

The USA is one of the countries with which we have begun discussions. In this case, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) is the counterpart representing the US regulatory boards.

Whilst we are not able to share detail and ongoing updates on discussions, we want to provide a transparent overview of the process that would be followed in reaching an agreement.

This is set out below with the aim of providing clarity to those who are interested. It explains the key stages in the approval process. We are working directly with NCARB, and the diagram below demonstrates the role of NCARB in working with the regulatory board of architects in different states.

We will share further information more widely when our discussions and the necessary legislation are at a more mature stage.

In the meantime, please contact ARB directly with any questions at communications@arb.org.uk.

In September 2021 the ARB Board discussed and noted the key features and content of the MRA, had the opportunity to raise queries and agreed to support the continued development of the agreement.

NCARB Board of Directors (1)

Once text of the MRA has been provisionally agreed and is ready to move forward, the NCARB Board of Directors would review the final wording and decide whether to approve its sharing with individual Member Boards for consideration.

NCARB Regional Summit

At this stage, the NCARB Board of Directors would present the MRA to the Member Boards formally at a Regional Summit. NCARB's Member Boards would have the opportunity to discuss the resolution, express views and propose any edits to text of the MRA. They would also continue to be able to express views in advance of the NCARB Board of Directors meeting.

NCARB Board of Directors (2)

At this point, NCARB's Board of Directors would consider any comments or proposed changes. They would then determine if any changes are necessary and vote on whether to progress the MRA to the membership for a vote at the NCARB Annual Business Meeting.

After this stage, the text of the MRA would be finalised as a Resolution and provided to the ARB's Board for review.

ARB Board

ARB's Board would need to approve and authorise the signing of the MRA. This will require ARB having the powers to do so following the Professional Qualifications Bill and subsequent secondary legislation.

Formal signing of the MRA

NCARB Annual Business Meeting

This is the point at which individual NCARB Member Boards would vote on the Resolution. Once approved the individual jurisdictions (licensing boards) will notify NCARB if they cannot accept the MRA.

ARB will have continued to consider any amendments throughout these stages.