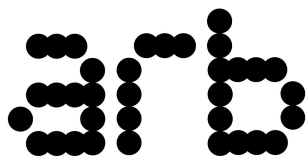


**Strategic Statement:**

# Fire and Life Safety Design



Architects  
Registration  
Board

## Background

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster the Government appointed Dame Judith Hackitt to review Building Regulations and Fire Safety. Dame Judith's report, published in May 2018, identified a number of shortcomings in the construction industry in respect of safety, and made a number of recommendations for change. One of those recommendations was that ARB, working with partners, should consider the future competence levels of those architects on the Register of Architects, and those joining the Register, in relation to fire safety design issues - particularly relating to those architects involved in designing Higher-Risk Residential Buildings (HRRBs).

## ARB's position

Fire and life-safety design issues are of central importance. Anyone engaging an architect is entitled to expect that the appointed individual will have the competence to provide them with a service that will keep them safe, regardless of the type or scale of the project. Fire and life-safety design is one of the key risks that architects must be competent to manage. The issue is a central one for architects involved in the design of HRRBs, as it is indeed for all architects in all parts of the profession.

ARB has already begun a fundamental review of the competencies architects should have, and how they should be acquired and maintained. This significant piece of work will proceed over three years but its outcomes will have an impact on the competence of the profession only over the longer term. For example, any changes to the criteria for the prescription of qualifications (the Criteria) will affect only those cohorts of students qualifying towards the end of the 2020s. The risks of fire and life-safety are too immediate to wait for those fundamental changes, which is why ARB is acting now.

## Objective

ARB is committed to ensuring that all architects engaged in the design and construction of a building, and responsible for carrying out work that impacts safety, have the competence to do so.

The skills, knowledge and understanding required of architects in relation to these areas will be acquired through the acquisition of qualifications and practical experience at Parts 1, 2 and 3, and must be maintained throughout an architect's professional life.

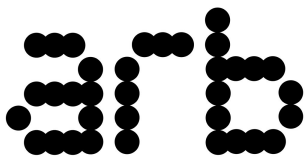
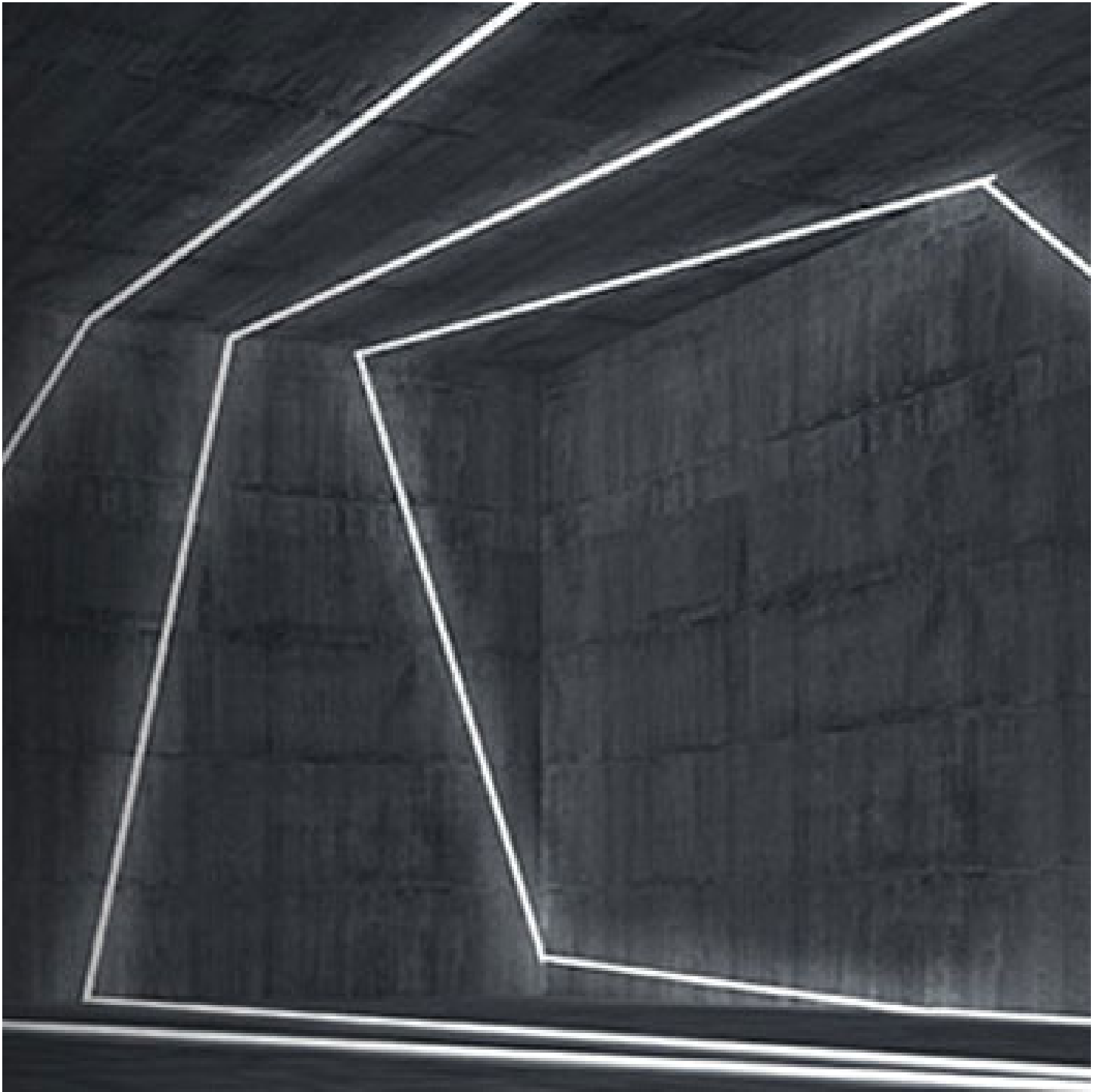
## Activities

ARB proposes to achieve this goal through four primary activities:

Activity	Description
A1	<p>Criteria Guidance</p> <p>For institutions offering ARB prescribed qualifications and/or seeking prescription of a new one, ARB will issue guidance which further clarifies our interpretation of the Criteria for the Prescription of Qualifications at Parts 1, 2 and 3 in relation to fire and life-safety. This guidance will then be used as part of the prescription process. Institutions will be asked to provide evidence as to how they are addressing the content of the documents as part of their applications for prescription and to renew prescription.</p>
A2	<p>Code of Conduct Guidelines</p> <p>Standard 2.4 of the Architects Code of Conduct and Practice provides that architects are expected to keep their knowledge and skills relevant to their professional work up to date and be aware of the content of any guidelines issued by ARB.</p> <p>ARB will issue guidelines setting out the competences expected of architects in relation to fire and life-safety design.</p>
A3	<p>Review of competence</p> <p>ARB's review of the competences required of architects is already under way. The work includes a widespread consultation and will consider in depth what behaviours, skills, knowledge and experience should be required of architects in relation to fire and life-safety design both before they join the Register and once they are on it.</p>
A4	<p>Monitoring competence</p> <p>Alongside the review of competences ARB will establish a new regulatory model for ensuring that the competences required of architects are maintained throughout their careers, and the consequences of not doing so</p>

## Outcomes

- Improved public confidence in architects' competence in designing buildings that are safe for future occupants
- Greater clarity for the profession, students and schools of architecture on the behaviours, skills, knowledge and abilities expected of architects in respect of fire and life-safety design



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