

Strategic Statement:

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



Architects
Registration
Board

Introduction

ARB embraces equality, diversity and inclusion in a meaningful way. We are committed to building an organisation that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives and skills. The more inclusive we are, the better our work will be.

We aim to provide leadership to the profession and maintain public confidence in the Architects Register by facilitating it to reflect the communities that architects serve.

As an organisation we are bound by legislation to avoid discrimination both as an employer and as a regulatory body, and have in place a published **ARB Equality Scheme** that sets out our responsibilities and commitments.

What is Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)?

We define EDI as follows:

Equality: is a concept backed by legislation that addresses unfair discrimination and advances equality of opportunity and good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Diversity: is creating a culture and practices in that recognise, respect and value the differences between us for everyone's benefit

Inclusion: refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and in society, and the extent to which they feel valued and included .

What will we do?

Work on improving EDI will never be 'done'. We recognise that we are on a journey of continued development and improvement; we know that the public and the professional will expect us to do more. We know that we are not experts in these matters, and the only way we are going to get it right is to have an open dialogue with the profession, diversity groups and campaigners, architects in minority groups and others with differing points of view on these issues.

Sitting underneath our Equality Scheme has been an **E&D Performance Plan**, which sets out the activities we committed to undertake over the last three years.

To build on these foundations we have identified three key objectives where we believe we can make a positive difference in the next three years.

¹ Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Objective A: Increase accessibility to the Register

We know from the information we hold on the Architects Register that there are certain groups that are under-represented. While this disparity may be as a result of societal factors beyond our control, we have a responsibility to ensure that requirements for entry to the Register as an architect are as fair as they can be. Where there are barriers to entry to the profession – as there must be to protect the integrity of the Register – those barriers should necessary, proportionate, and risk-assessed.

Activity	Description
A1 Review the routes to registration	Review the different routes available to individuals seeking to join the Register of Architects. We will consult widely, particularly with representatives of groups who are currently under-represented on the Register. We will consider whether there are barriers to entry within existing routes and whether alternative routes to become registered as an architect might increase diversity in the profession for future generations, without compromising the competence of those on the Register.
A2 Review the prescription process	Review the Board's prescription requirements as well as the process by which qualifications in architecture are prescribed, so we can ensure that Schools of Architecture are acting appropriately in respect of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
A3 Review of competence	Consider the competences required of architects who join and remain on the Architects Register, to ensure that the profession has appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours in order to promote diversity within the profession.

How will we have succeeded?

- We will be confident that our routes to the Register are as accessible to as many people as possible, within the limits of law and without improper sacrifice of standards
- We will be able to hold Schools of Architecture to account regarding their approach to EDI before prescription is granted or renewed
- Current and future architects will have the necessary competences to promote good EDI practice within the profession

Objective B: Reduce obstacles to our services

We will work harder to make ARB an inclusive organisation. We will improve accessibility to our services, whether they be online or in person, and mitigate any potentially negative impacts our regulatory activities have on people with protected characteristics who might be disproportionately affected.

Activity	Description
B1 Inclusive Leadership	We will provide coaching for the Board, non-exec committee chairs, senior leadership team and managers in the principles of inclusive leadership.
B2 Professional conduct review	We will review all of our investigations processes to better understand the impact that they have on architects, and particularly those with protected characteristics. We will take action to – where possible – adopt flexible regulatory approaches to minimise those impacts, particularly in relation to mental health.
B3 Accessibility review	We will carry out an accessibility review of all our online services, to ensure that they meet the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations.

How will we have succeeded?

- We will have investigations procedures sufficiently flexible to accommodate for architects and parties with diverse needs
- All of our online services will meet minimum legislative requirements, and our website will meet industry standards in best practice

Objective C: Robust Regulation

An ethical approach to architecture is as fundamental to good practice as the ability to design buildings. To maintain the collective reputation of the profession we must have in place an appropriate set of equality standards that architects should adhere to, and deal robustly with those who fail to meet them.

Activity	Description
C1 Code of Conduct Guidance	We will consult on and publish EDI guidelines for the profession under the Code of Conduct

How will we have succeeded?

- Architects will understand the standards expected of them in relation to EDI, and modify their practices accordingly
- Architects will understand expectations of competence in relation to inclusive design
- The collective reputation of the profession will be protected by any architect being found guilty of discrimination being robustly sanctioned



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