

Response Form - Consultation



Architects Registration Board

Consultation on the proposed amendments to the Exam Procedures (December 2019)

Response from:

Respondent A

Please complete and return to Architects Registration Board, 8 Weymouth Street, London W1W 5BU, by 12pm (lunchtime) on Monday 13 January 2020.

This response form may also be submitted by email to robw@arb.org.uk



Architects Registration Board

Consultation Feedback

We would welcome your general views and comments on proposed amendments which can be viewed [here](#).

COMMENTS:

1. I am not a flag bearer for the RIBA, but the removal of all references to RIBA could be regarded as disingenuous. I appreciate that referring solely to RIBA as some kind of protected species is wrong, particularly as the current procedures refer to “(RIBA) and others”. In dismissing the RIBA, you have dismissed all other institutions and organisations that have a special interest in prescription. It would be more appropriate to broadly retain the text describing institutions and organisations that use ARB registration without specifically naming them and retain the ‘confidence’ clause at 2.10.2, inviting such interested parties to nominate persons for appointment.

2. Section 2.2.3 General Requirements (c) retains the requirement that
“Candidates whose first language is not English are required to submit a valid International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate of 6.5 or above with their application for examination.”
In view of the fact that:
 - a) A large number of respected UK Universities require non ‘English as a first language’ students studying for postgraduate courses to achieve IELTS 7.0 or above (Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, Manchester, Kings, LSE, Glasgow, Nottingham, St Andrews, Exeter and Reading) and
 - b) Effective communication is highlighted in required attributes in the ARB Criteria at Parts 1 and 3I would contend that IELTS 7.0 or above is a necessary requirement.

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Response from:

Respondent B

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COMMENTS:

I offer comments on two points –

1. The proposed amendment at Appendix 1, item A.1.2.2.A, could be framed in a more rigid manner so that multiple interpretations may be avoided. It is possible to argue that nearly all Criteria are “*related to design*”, I would suggest – cultural and urban theories / practices, the needs of users / communities, the application of technology, standards and law, and cost implications can all impact upon the way in which a candidate may formulate a design proposal. I can appreciate that there may be a wish to allow future modification to the *Referral to Lead* system to increase amount of criteria required to be met but would suggest that the wording is too loose as proposed at present.
2. The proposed advisory limit of portfolio pages is welcome. I hope it will serve to focus the minds of candidates in the preparation of their submissions.

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Response from:

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SCHOSA (Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture)
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COMMENTS:

SCHOSA comments are framed by the following extract from the position statement agreed by SCHOSA membership at the Summer Meeting (July 2017 – Salford University).

SCHOSA recommends that the ARB Review of Prescription results in:

a revision to the process concerning the assessment of the eligibility requirements for the prescribed examination which results in Part 2 students and Part 2 graduates being excluded from the ARB prescribed examination for Part 1.

SCHOSA accepts that the proposed changes have a relatively narrow focus on `procedural` changes to administration processes in the operation of the prescribed examination. It is however important to take this opportunity to underline issues that directly impact on administrative procedures adopted by the ARB.

SCHOSA continues to hold the view that the `standard of competence which is equivalent to that demonstrated by those that are awarded prescribed qualifications` (Architects Act 1997 Section 4 and Section 5 relating to EEA awards compliant with the EU PQD) appears to continue to require very explicit relationships between the documentation associated with non- prescribed programmes of study and ARB criteria at Part 1 level.

This can effectively inhibit or deny access to final registration (via prescribed Part 2 and 3 programmes of study) for suitably capable candidates part way (less than half way) through an education leading to the title architect.

The `equivalence` of competence demonstrated by a graduate seeking Part 1 recognition appears to substantially hinge on the language of programme documents for their undergraduate degree rather than their individual capacity to display competence through design projects and other assignments that could exceed the expectation of this programme documentation. Many students who seek recognition have extensive periods of experience in architectural practice (and also Part 2 awards) but are rendered ineligible due to the lack of correspondence between ARB criteria and the language used in their UG programme documentation.

The situation is more problematic for students holding undergraduate awards in architecture from EU institutions – their awards in architecture might already be EU PQD compliant but there remains a requirement that they take the `external` examination at ARB to gain Part 1 recognition.

There are a range of other students from international settings who are also challenged by the requirements for `external` recognition.

The cost of the prescribed examination and the retention fee for failed or incomplete applications continues to challenge potential applicants.

SCHOSA continues to hold the view that the challenges faced by many students seeking Part 1 recognition via the `external` examination at Part 1 are disproportionate in respect this particular stage in the UK education process and that negative impacts are bound to result in respect social inclusion. SCHOSA continues to believe that many students who became successful architects in the UK before the emphasis shifted towards the convergence of programme documentation and ARB criteria might now be precluded from being considered.

SCHOSA has consistently lobbied ARB in respect the rules and procedures relating to the prescribed examination at Part 1 and influenced a transition arrangement when `administrative` procedures were last revised (post 2012) for those applicants caught in what was described as the `eligibility trap`. The transition arrangements are largely expired but the fundamental problems from a SCHOSA perspective remain.

SCHOSA has suggested a number of ways to approach the `external recognition` of Part 1 equivalence that might reduce the workload associated with processing applications and would be happy to engage on further discussion on this issue since the ARB have cited this as a key point of reference.

SCHOSA is aware that many programmes of study that are not prescribed by ARB are being advised to adopt the language of ARB criteria within programme documentation to ensure that graduates might be able to better effect the potential for students to gain recognition and ultimately register as architects through further study on prescribed programmes. This might of course generate an increased number of external candidates for Part 1 recognition in the future.