

Version

- Internal Draft for Approval
- Chair's Draft for Approval
- Chair's Approved Draft
- Confirmed

Minutes of Board Meeting held on Thursday, 19 March 2026

Location: In Person at ARB Office,

Present

Alan Kershaw (Chair)
Grace Choi
Will Freeman
Cindy Leslie
Professor Elena Marco
Dr Teri Okoro
Tom McDermott
Caroline Turnbull-Hall
Eduardo Petrilli
Jon Prichard

Apologies

Liz Male

In attendance

Hugh Simpson (CEO & Registrar)
Emma Matthews (Director of Governance & International)
Brian James (Director of Registration & Accreditation)
Simon Howard (Director of Standards)
Charlotte Gellatly (Director of Performance & Planning)
Helen Ransome (Interim Director of Professional Standards)
Eleri Jones (Head of People)
Alice Pun (Governance Manager)
Mandy Kaur (Governance Officer), Minutes
Gail Fleming (Chair of Accreditation Committee), Item 12
Martin Winter (Chair of Professional Conduct Committee), Item 13

Private Meeting of the Board

The meeting started with a confidential meeting of the Board members.
No staff members were present for this item.

ARB staff members joined the meeting.

Open Session

1. Apologies for absence

Liz Male had provided her apologies for the meeting. The quorum was not impacted.

Gail Fleming, Accreditation Committee Chair attended the open session of the meeting to present the Accreditation Committee Annual Report under item 12.
Martin Winter, Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) Chair joined the meeting online to present the PCC Annual Report under Item 13.

Additional members of staff and a representative of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government observed the Open Session of the meeting.

2. Members' Interests

All Board members had been asked to declare any interests in any of the agenda items prior to the meeting. The Register of Interests was additionally noted.

Teri Okoro declared an interest in *Item 9: Consultation Outcome*. The interest was not deemed to be a significant conflict. As a result, no further action was needed.

All Architect Board Members declared an interest in *Item 10: Guidance to support the Code of Conduct and Practice* on the basis that members were impacted by the guidance. The Board agreed that the relevant Board members should remain in the room as they needed to make the decision and so that the Board remained quorate.

Professor Elena Marco and Grace Choi declared an interest in *Item 12: Accreditation Committee Annual Report and Updates* on the basis that they were employed by one or more of the education providers offering accredited qualifications. It was agreed that both Professor Marco and Ms Choi should remain in the room, and should contribute to the

discussions but should speak last.

Additionally, Eduardo Petrilli declared an interest in *Item 12: Accreditation Committee Annual Report and Updates* in that he was employed by one of the education providers offering accredited qualifications and a member of the RIBA Validation Panel. It was agreed that Mr Petrilli should remain in the room and contribute but should speak last.

STANDING ITEMS

3. Update from the Chair

The Chair welcomed the new temporary Architect Board members, Ms Grace Choi and Mr Eduardo Petrilli. They had met with the Chair of the Board and most of the senior leadership team as part of their induction to ARB prior to the meeting.

The Chair reported on the meetings he had held with representatives of the RIBA to continue building relationships and mutual understanding. The RIBA President would attend the ARB Board meeting in May to address the Board.

The Chair had attended a meeting convened by the Institute of Regulation. This was an informal group of regulatory body chairs. These meetings would continue throughout the year and included the Chair of the Regulatory Policy Committee. The discussions had been valuable and provided a useful forum for maintaining engagement with key regulatory developments.

A meeting, attended by both the ARB Chair and CEO, had been held with the Chair and Executive Director of the Regulatory Board of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The discussion included a debate on the future of regulation following Grenfell. It was noted that ARB and RICS were broadly aligned in their objectives.

Exit interviews had been held with the two former Architect Board members who had recently stepped down.

4. Minutes

The Board **unanimously agreed** to approve the open session minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026.

5. Report on Actions following the Previous Meetings and Matters Arising

Board Members noted a report on actions resulting from the previous meeting.

The Board considered the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) for the accreditation process. It was noted that a broader set of qualitative and quantitative KPIs, including student feedback, was in development and would be presented to the Board later in the year.

The Board noted that some of the KPIs currently reported may be more appropriate for the Senior Leadership Group (SLG). These would be reviewed and refined to ensure relevance and effectiveness, and feedback from Board members was welcomed.

ITEMS FOR NOTING

6. Chief Executive's Report

The new 'Readiness for UK Practice' module would consist of online learning with multiple choice questions to provide assurance of successful course completion. Delivery remained in line with the project plan and was on target for rollout in March 2027. A supplier was currently being sourced to build and host the module.

The Board noted the remainder of the report.

7. Board's 2026 Briefing and Development Plans

The Board noted that actions outlined in the paper on the 2026 Board Briefing and Development plans would now be progressed.

8. Performance Monitoring End of Year Updates Q4, 2025

The Board queried the presentation of income figures in the management accounts, noting that the annual retention fees, new entrant fees and re-entry fees were currently combined. A more detailed breakdown would be included in future reports.

The importance of aligning KPI development with staff performance objectives and career

progression opportunities was highlighted. An online performance management module had been developed, linking individual performance to organisational health. There had been progress made towards incorporating more qualitative measures.

ARB collected equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data about the register, including data relating to resignations. The data indicated that women and ethnic minority groups were not leaving the profession disproportionately.

ARB's website provided information on exam pass rates for the prescribed examination process. Candidates who were referred were directed back to the Lead Examiner for feedback on the criteria not met. Referred candidates were given the opportunity to resubmit work addressing the specified criteria to meet the standard requirements.

A discussion was had about the availability and use of data relating to Prescribed Examinations and the UK Adaptation Assessment. It was noted that significant improvements had been made to guidance for candidates which could have influenced the improved pass rates for the Prescribed Examination.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

9. Consultation outcome: Routes to Registration (Route R, P and C)

Following an introduction to the paper, the Board acknowledged the positive development of new routes to access the profession. However, the Board also noted that clear communications would also be needed to avoid confusion for applicants.

The impact of Route R on those who were undertaking maternity/paternity leave, or experiencing long-term illness, was raised. The executive provided reassurance that the new routes will provide increased options for those returning to the register. Flexibility and/or a specific reason for exceptional circumstances would need to be built in. Under the new approach, candidates would be able to submit a self-statement to present their case. The Board suggested that clearer wording be included to acknowledge individual circumstances, ensuring that competency requirements were balanced without unfairly penalising registrants.

The Board **unanimously agreed** to:

1. Note the consultation report at Annexe A;

2. Approve the introduction of a new Registration Assurance Process comprising:
 - Route R for qualified architects wanting to re-register after being off for more than two years, or who delayed registering for more than two years after qualifying
 - Route P for partially qualified professionals with accredited Part 2 and 3 qualifications but no Part 1;
 - Route C for architects removed from the Register for CPD non-compliance;
3. Approve the revised Registration Rules at Annexe B to implement these routes; and
4. Adopt the evidence requirements consulted on, including a Personal Development Plan requirement for Route C.

10. Guidance to support the Code of Conduct and Practice

Engagement with subject matter experts had been undertaken, including multiple draft iterations, prior to draft guidance notes being presented to the Board. There would be further, targeted engagement to ensure meaningful, qualitative feedback from appropriate stakeholders rather than a purely quantitative response.

Feedback from the Board on the sustainability guidance suggested the inclusion of examples and references. The Board noted a need to address the issue of intra-generational justice and the needs of current populations. Concerns were also raised regarding aspects of social housing design, including insufficient access to play areas and green spaces in some developments. It was acknowledged that architects had a role in influencing such outcomes, although the guidance should focus on the behaviours and standards of conduct expected of architects.

Concerns were raised regarding the inclusion of extensive references within the guidance, including considerable material on sustainability and climate standards. This information may be better placed in a separate resource hub to ensure accessibility and ease of updates.

The consultation process should be used to explore the inclusion of practical examples to better engage and support the audience.

Board members were invited to submit any drafting suggestions to the Executive, and these would be reviewed and approved by the Chair prior to being issued for consultation. Subject to this, the Board **unanimously agreed** to consult on five new guidance notes in support of the Code of Conduct:

- i. Building safety
- ii. Sustainability
- iii. Leadership
- iv. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- v. Mentoring.

11. Consultation on new Investigations model

The Board **unanimously agreed** that ARB issue the draft Investigation Rules at Annexe A for public consultation.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

12. Accreditation Committee Annual Report and Updates

The report focused on navigating a transitional phase as ARB's new standards and competencies were introduced.

Updates were provided on new qualifications, including the first accredited programme. There were plans to undertake a sampling exercise at the end of the year to ensure comprehensive oversight. The Chair expressed confidence in the effectiveness of this approach.

A discussion was held around how the Board could gain assurance regarding the status and performance of institutions and how concerns relating to institutions were escalated to the Board. Detailed committee minutes were already provided to the Board, offering visibility of decisions and approvals. Work was under way to develop a consistent dataset, identifying emerging qualitative themes; however it was clarified that performance reporting would sit outside the Committee's remit.

In terms of the use of artificial intelligence (AI) within examinations, the Committee required providers to clearly set out their approach and rationale, which was then assessed through evidence gathered by visit panels. These findings were presented to the Committee, where recommendations were scrutinised and challenged.

13. Professional Conduct Committee Annual Report 2025

The overall work of the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) was stable. A performance management framework was under development, and this would apply to all members of the PCC including the Chair. PCC hearings operated under a hybrid model, with approximately 20% of hearings held in person and 80% online. Registrants were given the choice of attending either remotely or in person. This approach was considered fair, with no adverse impact on the fairness of proceedings.

14. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

15. Dates of Future Board Meetings

The next Board meeting would take place on Tuesday, 12 May 2026. This meeting would be held in person at the ARB offices.