

Version

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

Minutes of Board Meeting held on Tuesday, 12 May 2026

Location: In Person at ARB Office,

Present

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

In attendance

Hugh Simpson (CEO & Registrar)
Emma Matthews (Director of Governance & International)
Brian James (Director of Registration & Accreditation)
Simon Howard (Director of Strategy)
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

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

Professor Marco would need to leave the meeting at 1:30pm. The quorum would not be impacted.

A newly appointed member of staff and a representative of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government observed the meeting.

2. Members' Interests

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

All Board Members declared an interest in Item 8 – Board Members Complaints Policy - on the basis that it applied to each of them. It was agreed they should all remain in the room.

STANDING ITEMS

3. Update from the Chair

The Chair had held a recent and constructive meeting with Chris Williamson, President of RIBA, during which the positive work of the ARB had been acknowledged. The President had also outlined his agenda for lifelong learning. The meeting reaffirmed the importance of maintaining open communication and ongoing collaboration between both organisations.

4. Minutes

The Board **unanimously agreed** to approve the open session minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2026.

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

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

Item 12 – Performance Monitoring Review Process

It was reported that the timetable for CRM Phase 3 for Q4, 2026, took into consideration internal decisions on the sequencing of outstanding CRM work, including updates for registration and accreditation processes. Background development work would continue during 2026, with the intention of going live in Q1 2027. It was confirmed that implementation would not take place during the annual retention fee period.

ARB intended to retain control over the implementation timetable internally, and it was expected that any delays would be more likely to arise from internal staff capacity and resourcing rather than from the software developer.

ITEMS FOR NOTING

6. Chief Executive's Report

People Update

The Board congratulated the Executive on the excellent staff survey response rate and the outstanding results. It was explained that the 92% engagement score resulted from 13 standard survey questions and statements covering a range of areas. The responses were benchmarked against organisations across different sectors.

The survey findings would be discussed further at an all-staff development day on 1 June 2026.

Governance Update

In response to a query received from the Board about appointments, it was confirmed that the MHCLG had specific requirements when drafting recruitment selection criteria. As a result, it was not possible to incorporate detailed requirements. Communication skills had, however, been flagged to MHCLG as important area for consideration when the recruitment

process for the five new permanent Board members was under way later in the year.

Routes to Registration and Readiness for Practice UK Online Modules

Work was underway to align the completion of the reviews of some of the existing Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs), the development of a new agreement, and the roll out of the new Readiness-for Practice UK module, so that implementation could take place simultaneously in spring 2027.

The remainder of the report was noted.

7. Policy Log Annual Update

The Board noted the updated Policy Log.

It was requested that the policy framework remained proportionate and relevant through ongoing review processes. While the Governance function retained overall responsibility for the policy log, responsibility for individual policies sat with the relevant teams. The policies often fell within scope of internal audits and benchmarking was undertaken as part of any policy review process.

It was noted that risk considerations were taken into account during policy reviews, however policies had not historically been mapped back to the Risk Register. This could be considered in the future.

There was an error in the Policy Log, as the review of the Associates Performance & Development Policy had not taken place in the last year. The review had been rolled forward to 2026. This would be corrected within the Log following the meeting.

Typically staff related policies were considered internal policies and were reviewed by the Executive team. They were not included within the Board and Committee level Policy Log. The Policy Log covered only those policies that the Board and Committee approved. An updated internal policy log was in the process of being created.

The FRAC had recently reviewed the Cash Management Policy, which would also be added to the log subject to the Board's approval.

It was suggested that some additional policies could be delegated to the FRAC once it became more embedded, to enable the Board to devote more time to other strategic matters.

ACTION: The Governance team to review the Terms of Reference later in the

year, to consider whether responsibility for reviewing the Customer Service Complaints Policy, Procurement Policy and Investment policies should be recommended to the Board for delegation to FRAC.

ACTION: The Governance Team to amend the Policy Log to reflect the error in relation to the Associates Performance & Development Policy and the Cash Management Policy to be added to the Log.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

8. Board Members Complaints Policy

The Board Members' Complaints Policy had not been reviewed for a significant period of time and had been due for a comprehensive update to ensure it remained current and was reflective of good practice.

The revised policy had been reviewed by ARB's legal advisers to ensure that the proposed processes were legally robust and compliant with legislation requirements.

It was confirmed that there were no conflicts between the Board Members' Complaints Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.

The policy had been considered by the People Committee at its meeting on 28 April 2026. Further to a query by the Committee, it was confirmed that management liability insurance policies were in place and that there were no issues or conflicts arising from the changes made to the Complaints policy.

ACTION: The Governance Team to amend the policy to state that any complainant under the policy must be a Board or Committee member, and to clarify that Board and Committee members were not considered "staff" for the purposes of the Staff Grievance Policy.

ACTION: The Governance Team to amend the policy to ensure consistent terminology by using "Assessing Officer" throughout the policy instead of "Assessor" and to remove the asterisk in paragraph 3.3.

ACTION: The Governance Team to amend paragraph 4.5 of the policy to reference the Chair of the People Committee, and to clearly state that the involvement of the Chair related to decision making.

ACTION: The Governance Team to review the policy and ensure the correct use of the terms 'policy' and 'procedure'.

The Board **unanimously agreed** to approve the revised Board and Committee Members' Complaints Policy, subject to the above adjustments.

9. Recruitment of a new Independent Member of the People Committee

The Board noted that the new online Talos recruitment portal, which would be used to support the recruitment campaign, was being tested. A diverse range of job boards would be used to advertise the role through the Talos portal, and additional job boards would be incorporated into the system where necessary.

Feedback from the People Committee had been taken into account when reviewing the role profile for the Independent Member of the People Committee.

ACTION: The HR/Governance Teams to share the Talos recruitment link with the Board once the recruitment campaign had gone live, to enable Board members to share this amongst their own networks.

The Board **unanimously agreed** to approve the proposed recruitment plans and approach as set out within the paper.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

10. Performance Monitoring Updates, Q1, 2026

The Board noted that the current report represented a high level summary of data. Further work was under way to strengthen the linkage between regular performance reporting and the organisation's strategic framework. Trend analysis had not yet been fully developed but would be incorporated into future iterations of the performance report. Operational performance updates would be provided by the relevant Directors.

It was clarified that the low income reported for the Accreditation Committee was due to the timing and phasing of income recognition. Universities set their budgets in June/July and invoices were issued at the end of July for payment, covering the period from 1 April. It

was confirmed that income from new qualifications aligned with budget expectations.

A discussion was held around the format and content of the management accounts and their alignment with the financial statements. A range of questions were posed by the Board relating to the presentation of the operational deficit, and explanations about how the investment income was presented.

The Board suggested that it would be helpful to monitor information on cost recovery through accreditation fees.

There was a discussion about any possible correlation between CPD compliance and complaints and how this issue presents in regulation.

The importance of tracking both external stakeholder engagement and internal staff engagement and introducing a KPI around this was noted.

ACTION: The Executive to report back to the Board how external engagement can be measured and reported to the Board.

11. People Committee Annual Report 2025

The Chair of the People Committee expressed appreciation to the Committee members for their work over the past year and welcomed the new members who had joined the Committee.

The Board noted the work of the Committee across the year, as detailed within the report, including the development of a strong and coherent People Strategy which remained a work in progress. The review process for Board members had become more established and would help inform the development of a similar process for Associates. It was reported that the managers' development programme was progressing well. Line managers of the managers were due to meet to review and assess feedback across the group, although the training programme remained at an early stage.

The People Committee meeting in November 2026 would be held in person to allow focused consideration of key challenges relating to pay and strategy.

A discussion was held around the staff survey. The Board noted that the high response rates to the staff survey were a result of ARB's positive culture. Staff engagement sessions were held to validate findings, assess conclusions, and develop action plans.

12. Finance, Risk and Audit Committee Annual Report 2025

The Chair of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) expressed appreciation to the Committee members for their contributions. The FRAC was now well established. Particular appreciation was given to the two external members, whose input had been valuable and constructive.

It was noted that the Committee's work remained ongoing, with members continuing to challenge and support ARB's financial reporting processes. A strong working relationship had also been developed with the Director of Performance & Planning.

The Risk Register was reviewed regularly and scrutinised at Committee meetings to ensure that risks were appropriately identified.

The Committee would be giving consideration to how internal audit support was utilised in order to achieve greater value for money and more effective input, amongst other areas, over the remainder of the year as set out in the Committee's work plan.

13. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

14. Dates of Future Board Meetings

The next meeting of the Board, as well as a Board workshop, would take place online on Wednesday, 22 July 2026.

Arrangements for the annual two-day Board Workshop, and related events, in Leeds were ongoing. Details would be circulated to the Board in due course.