



Architects Registration Board

Guidance
and Information

What is the Architects Registration Board?

We are the body set up by Parliament as the independent UK regulator of architects. Anyone who is involved in designing and constructing buildings, and describes themselves as an architect, must be registered with us.

We can take action if someone wrongly calls themselves an architect.

8 Weymouth Street London W1W 5BU
Telephone 020 7580 5861 Facsimile 020 7436 5269
email info@arb.org.uk www.arb.org.uk

Crystal
Mark
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Clarity approved by
Plain English Campaign

What is the Architects Registration Board?

We have a Board of 15 members. Seven members are architects who are elected to the Board by their fellow professionals. The other eight members, who are not architects, represent the public interest and are appointed to the Board by the Privy Council.

The Board is supported by a small staff team and by the Registrar (who also acts as Chief Executive).

What we do

Our duties and responsibilities for regulating architects are set out in the 1997 Architects Act. We must:

- keep an up-to-date register of architects;
- decide what qualifications are needed to become an architect;
- set standards for education and professional practice;
- investigate complaints about an architect's conduct or competence; and
- make sure that only people on our register use the name 'architect'.

What is the Architects Registration Board?

Keeping an up to date register of architects

Only people who have qualified as architects can register with us. It is against the law for someone who is not on our register to offer their services as an architect. We can take action if this happens.

Our website (www.arb.org.uk) has a 'Search the Register' service, where you can search by name, post code or country either to find an architect or to check that an architect is registered.

Recognising qualifications

We have to make sure that architecture students have the knowledge, skills and ability to qualify as architects. This is an important area of our work because we are the only organisation in the UK that can say what qualifications are needed to become an architect. There are around 40 institutions that run courses for our qualifications. You can find their contact details in the 'Qualifications' section of our website.

Standards of practice

We expect all registered architects to meet our standards of practice. We have set out the standards we expect in the Architects Code: Standards of Conduct and Practice. We send every architect a copy of the code when they first register with us, and there is a copy on our website as well.

Sometimes, an architect doesn't meet these standards. We look at the performance and conduct of an architect who is charged either with unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence, or in some cases, both. These are the two 'offences' that we have the power to investigate.

Dealing with complaints

We receive very few complaints about architects. Most building projects meet the client's expectations, but there might occasionally be something that they aren't happy about.

If this happens to you, you should always tell your architect because this gives them the opportunity to put it right. Dealing direct with your architect is often the quickest way to sort problems out. But if you and your architect can't find a solution, they should tell you that you can send your complaint to us if it is about their conduct or competence. While we can't help you to settle your complaint, we can look to see whether your architect has fallen below the standards we expect.

Choosing an architect

If you are thinking of using an architect, check with us first to make sure they're registered. You can do this by visiting our website at www.arb.org.uk, or by calling us free on 0800 389 6221.

If you find that someone is offering their services as an architect but they're not registered with us, please let us know. This is a criminal offence in the UK, and we can prosecute people who do this.

What is the Architects Registration Board?

ARB and RIBA

We are often asked what the difference is between us, the Architects Registration Board, and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Both organisations are connected with architects, but we have different roles.

Among other things, the RIBA promotes architecture through prize schemes and campaigning, and maintains a leading library of architecture books and papers. It is one of several professional organisations for architects. Architects may choose to become members of RIBA or any of the other professional organisations for architects. Not all architects choose to become members.

We are the regulator of architects in the UK. We keep the UK Register of Architects, and anyone who wants to offer their services as an architect must register with us.

We're here to help

There is more information about our work on our website at www.arb.org.uk, or you can email one of the following departments.

Our regulation department deals with:

- use of the title 'architect';
- complaints about an architect;
- Professional Conduct Committee hearings;
- the Architects Code of Conduct and professional standards; and
- registering as a company.

Email: regulationdepartment@arb.org.uk

Our registration department deals with:

- the UK Register of Architects;
- all registration enquiries;
- ARB's examination procedure for qualifications that we don't recognise;
- retention and other fees; and
- finance.

Email: registrationdepartment@arb.org.uk

Our qualifications department deals with:

- schools of architecture and institutions;
- recognising qualifications in the UK;
- reviewing European qualifications; and
- talking to architecture students about us and our role.

Email: qualificationsdepartment@arb.org.uk

Our corporate department deals with:

- general information;
- information leaflets; and
- publications.

Email: corporatedepartment@arb.org.uk

We are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, and are closed on all public and bank holidays.



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