

# Information for Consultees

## ARB Decisions to Prescribe New Qualifications



Architects Registration Board

The Architects Registration Board (“ARB”) is the body responsible for prescribing (i.e. recognising) the qualifications in architecture that a person must possess if they wish to be placed on the UK Register of Architects under section 4 of the Architects Act 1997.



Architects Registration Board

The ARB publishes Criteria which describe the requirements for the prescription of Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 qualifications in architecture by ARB. The criteria incorporate the relevant requirements of the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and EU Directive and are considered under five thematic headings: Design, Technology and Environment, Cultural Context, Management Practice and Law, and Communication. No weightings are given to the separate themes with the exception of Design, which is to constitute at least half of assessed work at Part 1 and Part 2. Students must also be given the opportunity to pursue related, specialized, or optional studies. The form and content of related, specialized and optional studies are a matter for each institution, and institutions may develop programmes that, for example, link architecture with other subjects, emphasise research, develop specialisms and promote advanced degrees. However, such initiatives must not compromise the key requirement that all students receiving a qualification must meet all the criteria.

Higher Education Institutions wishing to have their qualifications prescribed for the first time by ARB are required, under the 'ARB Procedures for the Prescription of Qualifications', to present documentary material to show that the following key objectives have been or will be achieved:

- That the course proposal, including the educational aims, the intended learning outcomes, the assessment criteria etc, have been designed with the clear aim of ensuring that all those who receive the qualification meet all of ARB's Criteria.
- That systems are in place to ensure that all criteria will be met by students/candidates for the period of prescription
- That the institution has adequate resources to maintain, and where appropriate, increase the achievements of students in meeting the criteria.

Under its Procedures, the ARB will normally prescribe a qualification for a period of 4 years. Thereafter, an institution is entitled to apply to renew its prescription for further periods, normally of 4 years.

#### **Why is ARB conducting a consultation?**

Before prescribing a new qualification (i.e. recognising a qualification for the first time) the ARB is required, under the Architects Act 1997, to consult bodies representative of architects which are incorporated by royal charter and such other professional and educational bodies as it thinks appropriate; (Section 4(3)).

#### **Who does ARB consult?**

As stated under the Architects Act 1997, the ARB is required to consult with bodies representative of architects which are incorporated by royal charter. Therefore, the ARB commonly consults with bodies such as the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS), the Royal Society of Architects in Wales (RSAW) and the Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA).

The ARB also frequently consults other professional and educational bodies. These typically include the Association of Consultant Architects (ACA), the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE), Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), etc. Additionally, depending on the nature of the qualification, the ARB may decide to consult with other related professional bodies. For example, with respect to an MEng in Architecture and Environmental Design, the ARB may agree to consult with bodies such as the Engineering Council (EC), the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE), the Institute of Lighting Engineers (ILE), the Institute of Mechanical Engineers (IMECHE), the Institute of Acoustics (IOA), the Institute of Structural Engineers (ISTRUCTE), the Society of Environmental Engineers and the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE).

### **What information will ARB send to a consultee?**

The ARB will provide consultees with the details of its proposed decision in relation to the prescription of a qualification and the reasons for that proposed decision. It is important to remember that when being consulted, the ARB has not actually made a formal decision in relation to prescription. The ARB will provide details of the decision it is 'minded' to make, pending the consultation responses and any final representations made by the institution that it receives.

The ARB will also provide consultees with a copy of its Procedures for the Prescription of Qualifications, the Criteria for Prescription and information provided by the University which describes the course and the qualification.

### **What type of information can most usefully assist ARB?**

The ARB welcomes any candid and relevant information that can assist it in coming to a decision vis-à-vis the prescription of a qualification. Any comments or observations that a consultee can offer in relation to the key objectives as outlined above will be of particular use to the ARB. The ARB particularly welcomes comments and observations on any connections a body may have with an institution in terms of accreditation/education. Additionally, the ARB finds it valuable to receive information from a consultee which may be able to provide in relation to its own accreditation of the relevant qualification. In essence, any information that can provide the ARB with confidence, or otherwise, will be of value.

### **Will a consultation response be seen by anyone other than ARB?**

As part of its commitment to being open and transparent, a copy of any material that is submitted by a consultee is provided to the institution. This is so that the institution may have the opportunity of submitting any final comments or representations to the ARB in respect of the consultation responses before the ARB reaches its decision.

### **How long will a consultee have to respond to ARB's requests?**

In line with the Better Regulation Task Force's recommended benchmark, the ARB normally offers consultees the opportunity of responding to a consultation within 12 weeks.

However, in order that the institutions applying for prescription receive timely decisions, and more importantly, so that students undertaking the qualifications in question can be informed of the ARB's decisions, the ARB may ask consultees to respond within a shorter timeframe.

### **Where can more information about ARB's Prescription Process be found?**

The ARB's website houses a large amount of information about the prescription process and the schools of architecture which currently offer ARB prescribed qualifications. This can be found under the Qualifications Section of the website – <http://www.arb.org.uk/education/index.shtml>

The ARB also publishes a leaflet that sets out the most frequently asked questions about the prescription process – <http://www.arb.org.uk/education/faqs.shtml>

### **Who are the key contacts at ARB for further enquiries?**

Should you have any further or more details queries in relation to a consultation, please feel free to contact any of the following:

Emma Matthews – [emmam@arb.org.uk](mailto:emmam@arb.org.uk)

Ed Crowe – [edc@arb.org.uk](mailto:edc@arb.org.uk)

Grant Dyble – [grantd@arb.org.uk](mailto:grantd@arb.org.uk)

All of the above can also be contacted on ARB's main telephone number – 020-7580-5861.