



Architects Registration Board
eBulletin : December 2017

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Chair's Message

Welcome to the November ebulletin, the last one of the year.

We were delighted to welcome Ben Derbyshire, President of the RIBA, to our recent Board meeting. Ben told us about his plans for his presidency and we discussed the distinct yet complimentary roles of the regulator and the professional bodies. I hope to focus on the issues that are of interest to both our organisations, including setting and maintaining standards and raising awareness of the value of a registered architect and I look forward to working with Ben and his colleagues at the RIBA.

Demand for ARB's services continues to grow with the Register recently reaching over 40,000 for the first time, a milestone for the profession. 2017 has been a very full year for ARB, work is on-going on several substantial projects as we move forward with the recommendations of the government's Periodic Review and continue with the Criteria and Procedures Reviews.

2018 retention fee due date approaches

The retention fee for next year is due on 31 December 2017 and we are now in the fee collection period. You can [pay quickly and easily online](#) and we will be offering [extended opening hours](#) as we approach the due date to make it easier for architects to contact us during this time.

Our recent Board meeting had a very full agenda and we discussed a number of important issues.

Periodic Review update – We noted an update regarding the government's Periodic Review. We continue to work with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as it moves forward with the Periodic Review recommendations.

Two key changes currently being progressed include reducing the size of the Board, in line with principles of good governance, and moving the professional conduct process from a 'one size fits all' approach to a more flexible model. Both of these improvements will require legislative change but we continue to support DCLG with preparatory work so that we are ready to make changes when the law is revised.



DCLG have also advised that they are continuing discussions with the Parliamentary Ombudsman regarding whether ARB could fall within its jurisdiction to provide stakeholders with an external complaints process as to ARB's services.

Criteria and Procedures Reviews – We noted feedback gathered during the pre-consultation exercise for these reviews. We also discussed the outcomes and the feedback from both of the Task and Finish Groups established to oversee these reviews.

The Board agreed that, subject to DCLG approval, the reviews should continue alongside discussions with the RIBA regarding the possibility of continuing to hold the Criteria in common with one another.

There is a separate [ebulletin item](#) on this subject providing further information.

Board governance – We received an update on Board member appraisals and the [Board Effectiveness Review](#). These mechanisms support our commitment to good governance, providing us with an opportunity to reflect on the Board's performance and agree steps for self-improvement.

Financial matters – The [Management Accounts](#) show that we are forecast to underspend on our budget. There are various reasons for the underspend, which we expect to be carried over and utilised in the next financial year. We received a report from ARB's Investment Broker and discussed and agreed the principles underpinning ARB's investment strategy for the next 12 months.

If you would like further information about any of the matters covered in this ebulletin please contact us by email at info@arb.org.uk or you can phone us on +44 (0) 20 7580 5861. Please do remember that you can pay your [annual retention fee](#) quickly and securely online anytime up until midnight on 31 December 2017.

As we approach the end of 2017 I would like to

finish by sending you all my sincere good wishes for the festive season and for 2018.

Best wishes, Nabila Zulfiqar

Chair of the Architects Registration Board

Retention fee



Payment due date

Retention fee reminders

The 2018 retention fee is due on 31 December 2017. As the due date approaches, we will be sending out reminders to those architects for whom payments are outstanding. This is in response to feedback received from registrants who said they wanted to receive these alerts.

Key fact 1 – We only send out reminders to those registrants whose payments have not been received. If you receive a reminder message it is because your payment is outstanding so please don't ignore it and contact us if you have any questions.

Key fact 2 – Whilst many architects work in practices it is still the individual registrant's responsibility to ensure that their fee is paid on time. Unfortunately, every year some architects believe that their practice has paid only to discover, after the due date, that their name was missed off the practice's payment. If you are in any doubt please contact us prior to the deadline and we can check this for you.

Key fact 3 – Every year around 12,000 architects pay their retention fee by direct debit. This year payment will be taken on 1 December 2017. For various reasons, sometimes it is not possible to take payment meaning the retention fee will need paying by alternative means. We do try and contact the architect to notify them when a direct debit payment fails. If you think you have paid by direct debit but keep receiving reminder messages, please do get in touch with us.

You can [pay your fee online](#) quickly and securely. If you have provided us with an email address you will receive an immediate receipt as well as your certificate of registration to display. We will also be

operating [additional opening hours](#) in the run up to the 31 December 2017 so you can call us on +44 (0) 20 7580 5861 and make your payment over the phone.

CRITERIA & PROCEDURES REVIEW

Criteria and Procedures Review update

Background – In order to ensure that the qualifications and practical training experience UK graduates need for registration as an architect are appropriate, the Board has established Criteria and Procedures. The Board uses these documents to prescribe or recognise qualifications in architecture. These are reviewed regularly and are updated as necessary. In July, we reported that we would be undertaking one of these 'business as usual' Reviews of our Criteria and Procedures.

The Pre-Consultation – During the early part of the autumn we undertook a pre-consultation to seek views from our stakeholders before commencing our Reviews. We wanted to involve our audiences early on so that they could feed into the project. We established two Task and Finish Groups to analyse the information gathered through this process.

The Reviews – At its recent meeting, the Board looked at the outcomes of the pre-consultation exercise and considered the recommendations made by the Task Groups. Subject to a discussion with the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Board has decided to progress its Reviews in accordance with the groups' suggested objectives and recommendations.

The Task Groups will now focus on revising the Criteria and Procedures in line with the Board's objectives and the Task Groups' recommendations.

They will aim to bring back revisions to the Board for consideration in the spring. The Board will then consult on the suggested changes.

Discussion with the RIBA – In relation to the Criteria Review and in parallel, the Board has also decided that we should hold further discussions with the RIBA. We want to determine whether our respective positions can be aligned and whether the Criteria can continue to be held in common by both organisations. To do so remains an objective of the Board as we believe it provides clarity for stakeholders.

We have created a [webpage](#) where we are posting updates on this project, additionally please follow us on social media where we regularly post related messages.



Houzz update

Houzz is the world's largest online home design community and is accessible via a website or mobile app. Houzz allows users to browse for inspiration, seek advice and find and hire architects.

We have been working with the team at Houzz to enable architects who use the portal, to identify that they are registered with ARB and to display the logo within their profiles. Houzz cross-check details against the statutory Register in order to ensure that only architects are allowed to make use of this feature. We have also created an ARB page on Houzz, containing information about the Register and the regulator's role as well as linking to ARB's own website, so that visitors who are unfamiliar with our work can read more.

As a regulator, working in the public interest, we are keen to encourage architects to highlight their

registered status and thus help consumers to make informed decisions. This initiative is a great example of how, by working with consumer-facing organisations with substantial reach, we can raise awareness of the Register to achieve this objective.

You can view the Houzz website at the following link Houzz.co.uk, and to download the logo and read more about what else you can do to raise awareness of your registered status please click [here](#).



Prescription of Qualifications

At the last Board meeting on 23 November 2017, the Board considered an application from an institution seeking prescription of its qualification under the Architects Act 1997 for the first time. In line with its Procedures for the Prescription of Qualifications, the Board considered the responses to the consultations it had undertaken.

The Board decided that the following qualification should be prescribed from November 2017 until August 2021:

University of Wolverhampton BSc (Hons) Architecture

For further details, please see the '[Schools and Institutions of Architecture](#)' section of ARB's website.



Dear Architect

Contact details

As a registered architect, it is important that you ensure that your practice address and contact details on the Register remain up to date. We understand that in a fast paced working environment architects can and do regularly move jobs, but aside from the legal obligations to keep your information accurate, we will from time to time need to correspond with you on important matters.

It is also important to remember that the Register, available at www.architects-register.org.uk, is a public resource. It is often the first port of call for clients who are looking to engage an architect. By way of example, over a hundred local authority planning sites have a link to the Register, so if your details are not correct, you may lose out on potential business.

What the Architect's Code says about contact details

All architects should familiarise themselves with the regulatory requirements expected of them. Under Standard 11.2 – (Co-operation with regulatory requirements and investigations) it states that 'You should notify ARB promptly and in writing of any changes in the details held about you on the Register, including your address.' Please be aware that Standard 11.2 also states that 'Architects who do not tell ARB of a change of address may be removed from the Register'.

How we can help

ARB offers a range of different ways to update your contact details (although because the Register is a

legal entity we do require some written evidence of requested changes). The various update methods are set out below:

- You can make the changes yourself via the [registrant services website](#) using your unique identification code (which can be found on your invoice or given on request via telephone).
- You can provide us with the correct information in writing in the form of either an email or a letter.
- If writing is difficult for you, please contact a member of the Registration team who can make arrangements to ensure that your records are amended. You can reach the team on +44 (0) 20 7580 5861.

We will also endeavour to send you helpful reminders and correspondence by email from time to time. Please always check your junk and spam email folders in case our emails have gone astray. You can also amend the settings with your email service to ensure that ARB emails reach your inbox.



Local Authority Project update

Local authority planning websites are a key source of information for consumers considering home improvement or self build projects. Consequently, we are working on an initiative to ask councils to include links to the Register or ARB website. We can report that 106 local authorities currently include these web links.

We have established a good relationship with the Planning Officers Society (POS) and we were recently invited to present at the South East branch's

regional meeting in Oxford. If you are interested in our project or have useful contacts in planning, please do contact us for further information, you can email us at info@arb.org.uk or phone us on +44 (0) 20 7580 5861.



Brexit update

We continue to comply with all relevant EU legislation and deliver on our remit as set out in the Architects Act 1997.

We remain in close contact with our sponsoring government department for guidance in relation to Brexit matters.

Initial conversations have taken place with the US National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) as well as the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACAA) and the New Zealand Registered Architects Board (NZRAB) to discuss and explore the development of potential mutual recognition agreements. You can read more about this in our [Operational Activities Board report](#).

We have also produced a set of Brexit FAQs which are updated periodically. You can view these [here](#).