

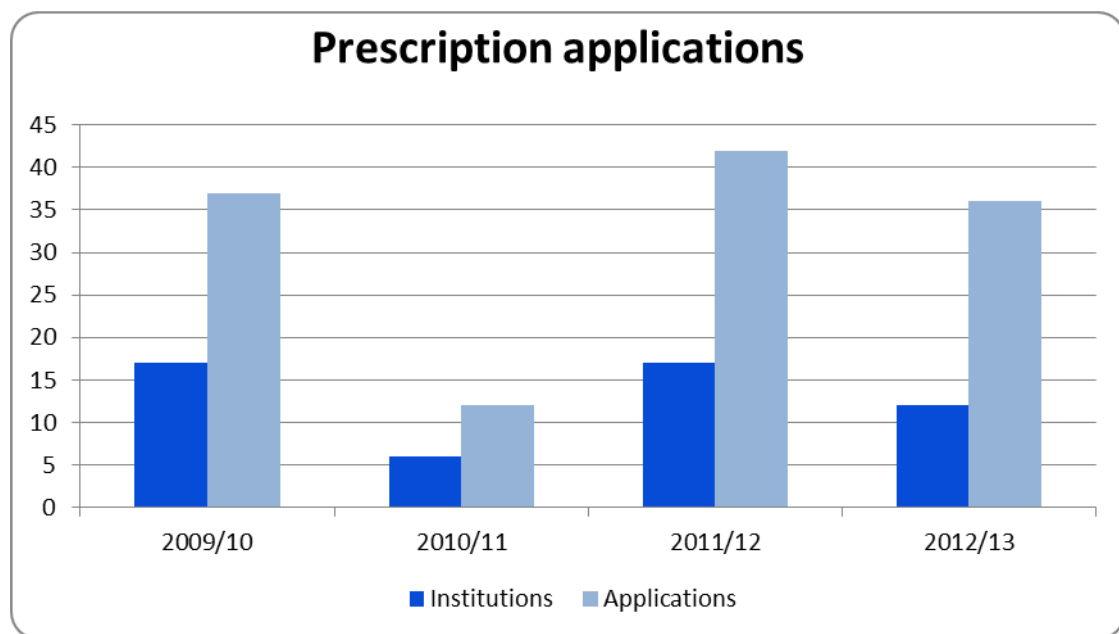
Qualifications Department Annual Report September 2012 – September 2013

Maintaining Qualifications of Architects

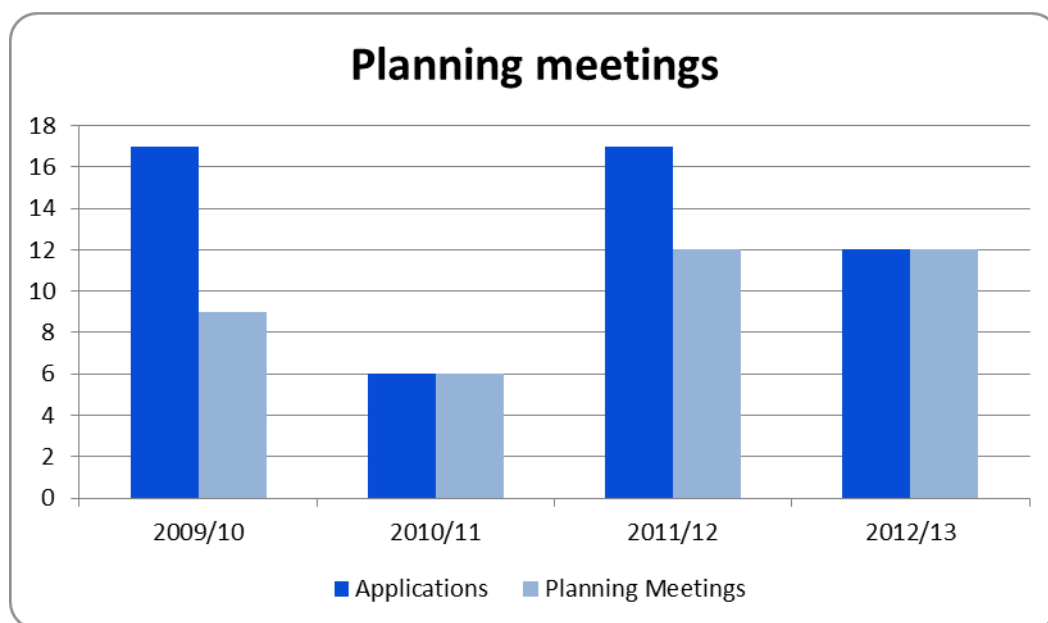
1. Prescription of Qualifications

Prescription Cycle

- 1.1 During the 2012/2013 cycle, the Board considered 36 qualifications from 12 institutions. These qualifications were all subject to the renewal of prescription. By comparison, the Board considered 42 qualifications from 17 institutions in 2011/2012.



- 1.2 In addition to the above, the Board prescribed 4 new qualifications offered by 3 institutions which offer existing prescribed qualifications
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- 1.3 For the last two years, the Board has undertaken an exercise to make the prescription process more flexible for institutions. After undertaking a thorough review of the position, the Board took the decision to extend prescription of 6 qualifications offered by 4 institutions which were due to renew prescription during the 2013/2014 cycle in 2013. By comparison, in 2012, the Board decided to extend prescription of 17 qualifications offered by 6 institutions which were due to renew prescription during the 2012/2013 cycle.
- 1.4 The Board has taken decisions to revoke and suspend prescription of 2 qualifications respectively where the relevant institutions have chosen to withdraw and close their prescribed qualifications.



Planning Meetings

- 1.5 During the 2012/2013 cycle, 12 institutions seeking to renew prescription or seeking prescription for the first time requested planning meetings with ARB's Staff prior to submitting their applications. By comparison, 12 institutions seeking to renew prescription requested planning meetings in 2011/2012.

Processing of Applications

Timings

- 1.6 In accordance with the timescales outlined in the Board's Procedures for Prescription, applications should be reviewed by the Prescription Committee for the first time within 8 weeks. All of the 15 applications submitted in the 2012/2013 cycle were considered within 8 weeks.
- 1.7 On average, applications relating to the renewal of prescription took 23 weeks to process from the time of submission to the Board making its final decision to renew prescription. The fastest application was processed in 17 weeks. At the other end of the scale, 1 application took 35 weeks to process. It is important to note that the applications which take longer to process often involve the Prescription Committee seeking clarification of some complex issues, e.g., the mapping of learning outcomes to ARB's Criteria, regarding the qualifications it is reviewing. It is crucial that institutions are offered reasonable opportunities to respond and clarify complex matters where queries arise. Timings may also be affected by the scheduling of Committee and Board meetings as these do not remain static each year. Notwithstanding this, it should also be noted that the statistics in this area have improved from the 2011/2012 prescription

cycle, whereby the fast application was processed in 19 weeks, and the slowest in 44 weeks.

- 1.8 During 2012/2013 there were an additional 3 qualifications for which prescription was being sought for the first time. One of these applications was withdrawn by the institution, and the other two applications were not concluded by the time that the reporting year closed. New qualifications typically take longer to process than renewal qualifications, because the Board is duty bound to consult for a period of up to three months before prescription can be granted and the issues which require clarification are often more complex and difficult to resolve.

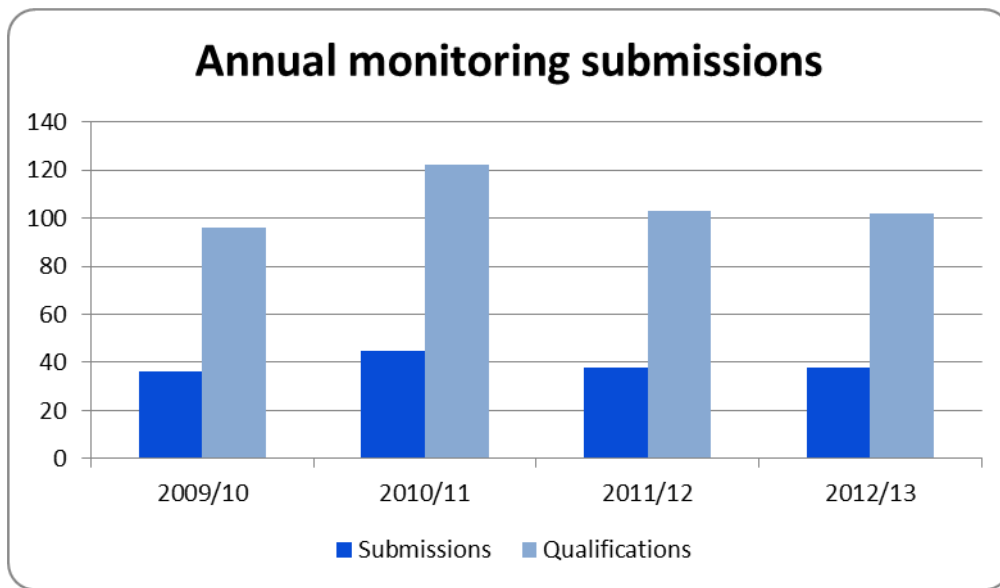
Annual Review of the Operation of the Prescription Process

- 1.9 The Qualifications Team undertake an annual review of the operation of the prescription process. Disappointingly, none of the institutions which sought to renew prescription or sought prescription for the first time during the 2012/2013 cycle wished to provide any feedback regarding the process despite being given a number of ways to do so. Notwithstanding this Staff took the opportunity to review the tools used to analyse applications for prescription, the Good Practice Handbook and the application forms. Small adjustments have been made to these documents to ensure that they remain up to date and effective.

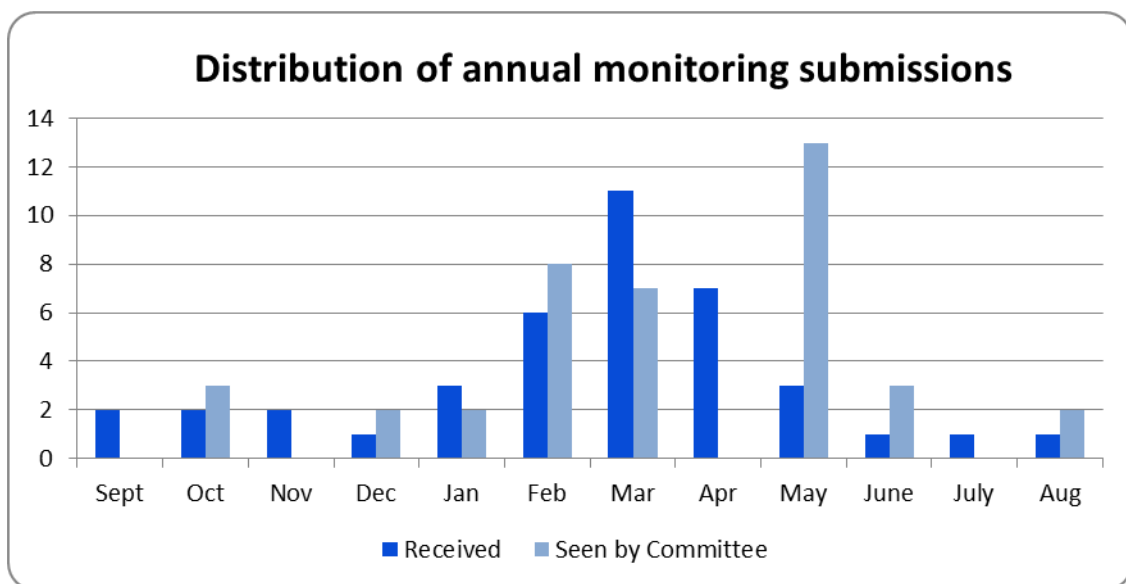
2. Annual Monitoring Submissions and Course/Title Changes

- 2.1 During the period September 2012 to August 2013, the Prescription Committee reviewed Annual Monitoring submissions from 38 institutions covering a total of 102 qualifications. Submissions are not normally expected from institutions which are seeking to renew prescription in a given year and where the submission date falls due at the time the application is being considered by the Prescription Committee.

By way of comparison, during the period September 2011 to August 2012 the department received submissions from 38 institutions covering 103 qualifications.



- 2.2 These variances occur because the number of institutions required to make annual monitoring submissions in any given year differs, based on the numbers of institutions seeking renewal of prescribed qualifications. Additionally, the number of prescribed qualifications offered by institutions can vary greatly with some offering 5 or more prescribed qualifications while others may offer only 1.
- 2.3 The chart below sets out how many Annual Monitoring submissions were reviewed by the Committee on a month by month basis during the reporting period. It should be noted that Prescription Committee meeting dates are not consistent year on year and may move by a week or so.



Follow up to Annual Monitoring Submissions

- 2.4 Of the 38 submissions received during the reporting period 14 required the Committee to seek additional information from the relevant institution. Requests for further information were sought for a variety of reasons. Some changes had been made to prescribed qualifications by institutions including title changes, awarding body changes, and evolutionary changes to modules/units within qualifications, and further explanation was required in respect of these changes. Additional information was also sought in respect of the appropriateness of some institutions' resourcing provisions, as well as clarification as to whether appropriate action had been taken in response to recommendations from both internal and external peer reviews.

Deadlines for the Processing of Submissions

- 2.5 Timescales, which set out the maximum period that should be taken by ARB's staff and the Prescription Committee to consider annual monitoring submissions for the first time, are incorporated in the departmental key performance indicators.

The maximum period is set at 8 weeks. This is the same period by which applications for prescription must be considered by the Prescription Committee for the first time.

- 2.6 For the 2012/2013 reporting period, the average time taken for each submission to receive initial scrutiny by the Committee was approximately 3.5 weeks, and 100% of submissions were considered within the 8 week deadline. During the 2011/12 reporting period 97% of submissions were considered within the deadline, taking an average of 4.2 weeks.

Variances in processing time can be attributed to the varying dates by which institutions make their annual monitoring submissions and changes to Prescription Committee meeting dates year on year, but also in part to the improvements which staff have made to the tools used to process the submissions.

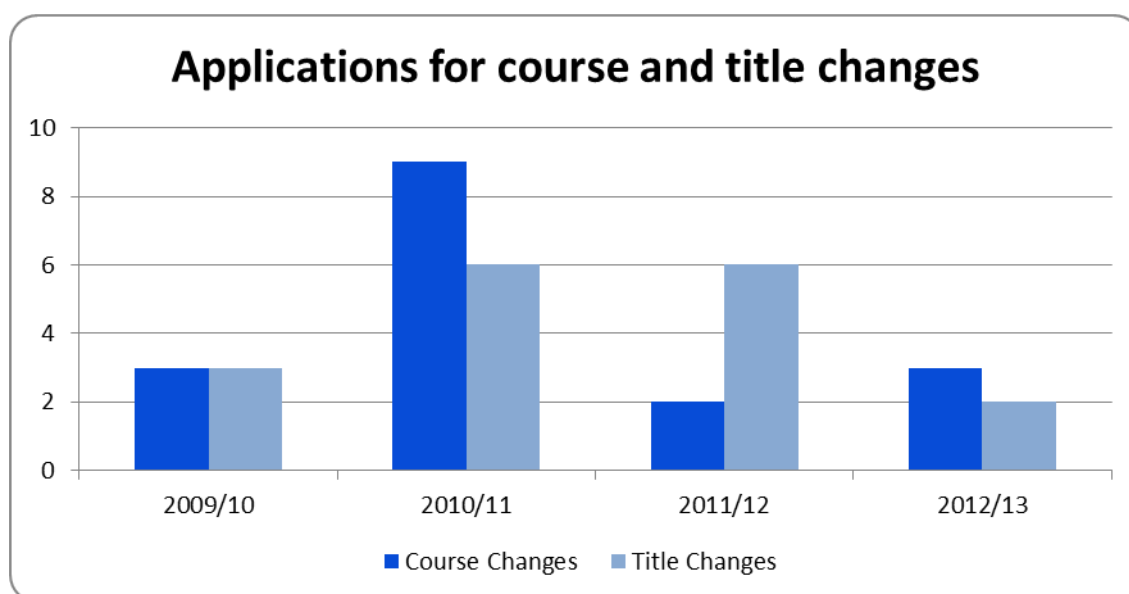
Late Submissions from Institutions

- 2.7 During the period September 2012 to September 2013, 13 institutions did not meet the deadline by which their Annual Monitoring submissions should have been made. For the period 2011/2012 8 institutions failed to make submissions on time.

The 2011/2012 reporting period had seen a fall in the numbers of late submissions compared to previous years. As a result less emphasis had been placed on the importance of making timely submissions during liaison meetings with SCHOSA and other stakeholders. However, in light of the recent increase in late submissions ARB staff will need to again re-emphasise the importance of making submissions on time, and the impact that late submissions have on the Board's confidence that qualifications are continuing to meet its objectives.

Course and Title Changes

- 2.8 Over the reporting period the Department received 2 requests from institutions wishing to make changes to the titles prescribed qualifications. 1 further institution made a request to amend the title of its awarding body. The number of requests to amend titles is less than in previous years. This is largely because the majority of schools of architecture offering Part 2 qualifications have already moved from offering 'Postgraduate Diplomas/Diplomas in Architecture etc.,' to 'MArch' qualifications. There were a further 3 qualifications which involved the consideration of course changes.



3. European Qualifications

Updating the UK's entry under Annex V

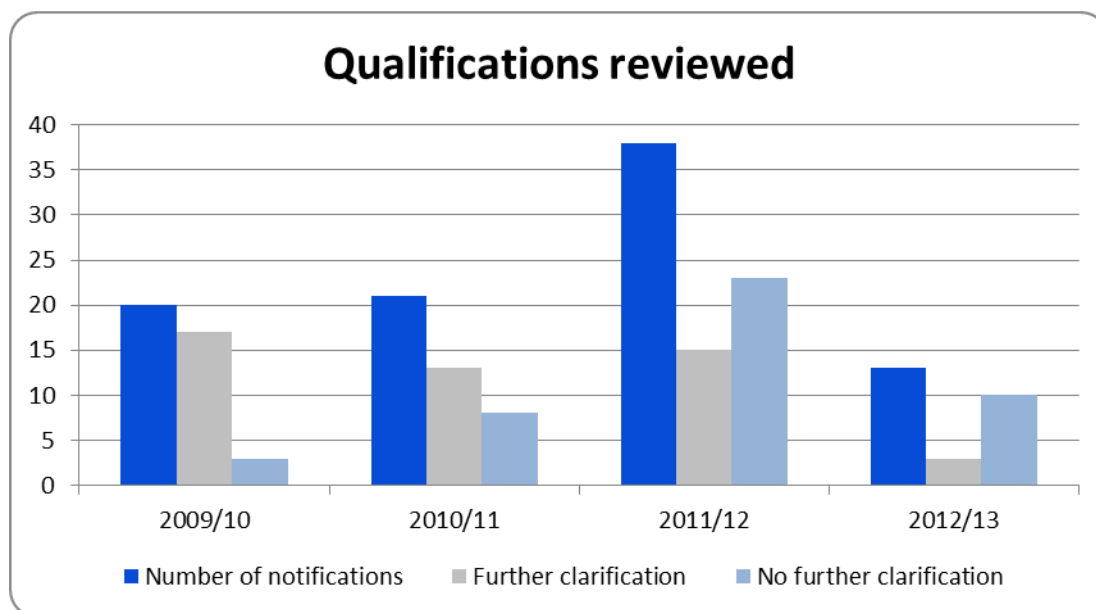
- 3.1 During 2012/2013, Staff played a key role in advising the UK Government regarding the revision of the UK's entry under Annex V of the Directive which lists each Member State's requirements for registration. The latest UK's revised entry under Annex V was published in the European Union Official Journal in June 2013.

Notification of UK Qualifications for Listing under the Directive

- 3.2 2 newly prescribed Part 2 qualification was notified to the European Commission during this period. The consultation period for other EU Member States opened in August 2013 and shall close in October 2013.
- 3.3 5 UK title changes were notified during 2012/2013, 3 of which were approved by the Commission and published in the Official Journal in the course of 2013. The process of publication of the 2 remaining title changes is still on-going.
- 3.4 1 European Notification Planning Meeting was held. It is anticipated that only institutions making significant changes to their Part 2 level qualifications or gaining prescription of their Part 2 level qualifications for the first time will require Planning Meetings.

Number of European Qualifications reviewed

- 3.5 13 EU qualifications were notified by 6 different Member States compared to 38 in the previous year. Further information was sought by the UK in relation to 3 qualifications.

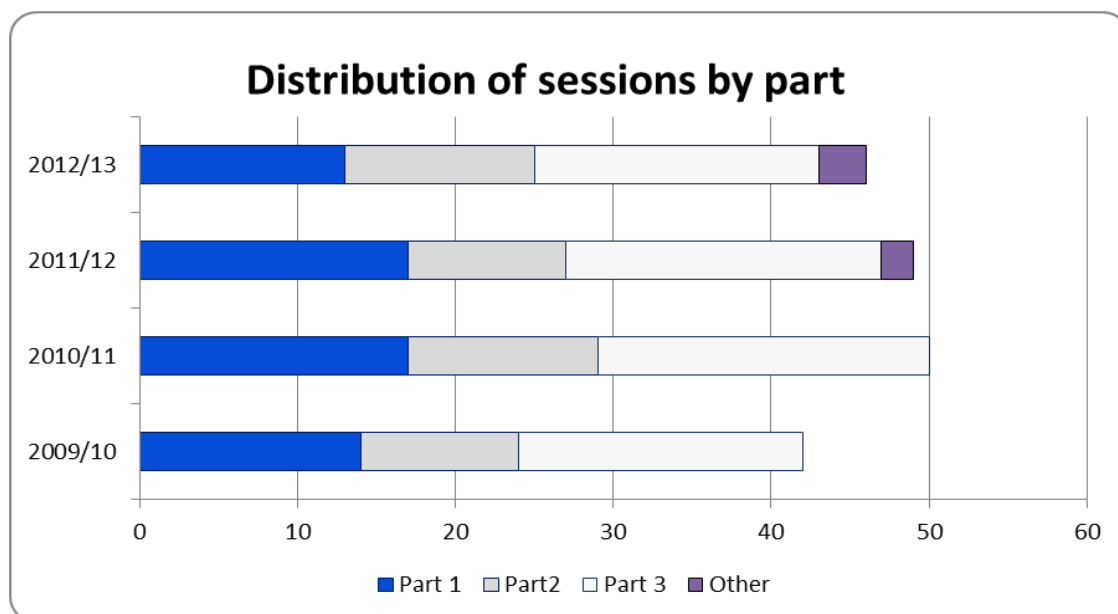


European Commission's Architecture Sub-Group

- 3.6 The UK has 2 nominees who regularly participate in the Commission's Architecture Sub-Group meetings. In 2012/2013 there was 1 Architecture Sub-Group meeting. The UK was fully represented at this meeting.

4. University Liaison Programme

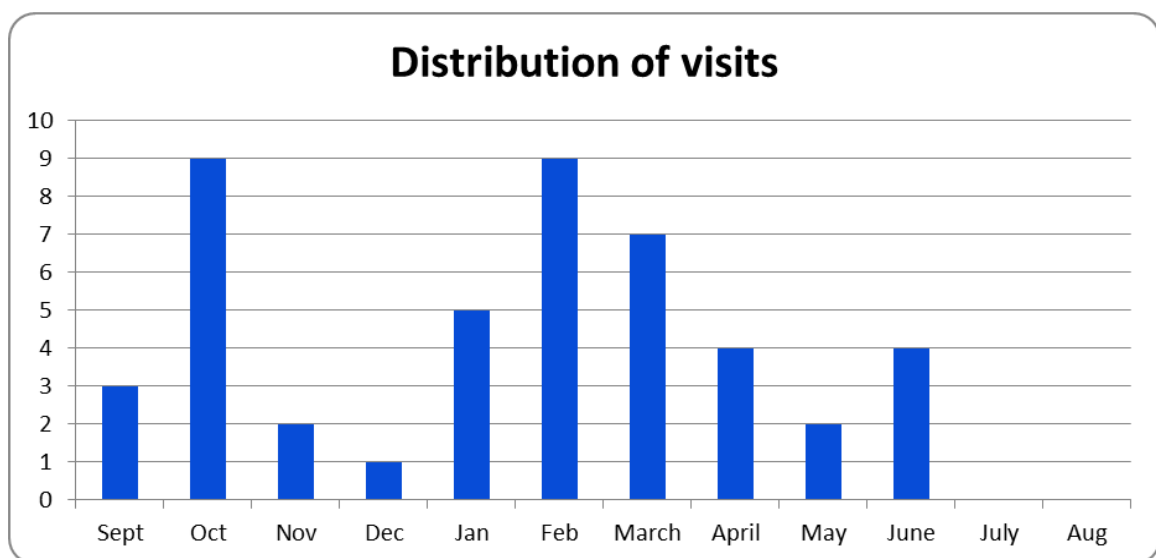
- 4.1 During the academic year 2012/2013, 46 presentations were delivered in 35 institutions reaching approximately 2500 students. This represents 3 fewer sessions than the previous year.
- 4.2 The small decrease in overall visits (there were 49 visits in 2011/2012) could be attributed to a number of factors:
- It is sometimes difficult to accommodate all requests because of an over-demand for visits on the same dates and pressure on university timetables makes finding an alternative date very difficult;
 - Some institutions request visits every 2 years rather than on an annual basis. Averaging visits over a 2-year period is likely to provide a more accurate indicator of demand.
- 4.3 In addition to the typical liaison sessions in institutions offering prescribed qualifications, a presentation on the Qualifications and Services Directives was delivered at Cardiff University; a presentation on ARB, Registration and the Prescribed Examination was delivered at Anglia Ruskin University (currently offering a non-prescribed qualification in architecture); and a contribution to the RIBA NW's Examiner Training day on ARB's practical training requirements was also made.
- 4.4 1 institution offering a recently prescribed qualification requested a visit for the first time.









- 4.5 In line with previous years the majority of sessions (39%) involved Part 3 candidates, with 28% for Part 1 students and 26% for Part 2 students.






4.6 9 institutions (which offer ARB prescribed qualifications) did not participate in the programme this year. 1 of these was an institution offering a newly prescribed qualification; 4 of the institutions regularly fail to engage with ARB; the remaining 4 institutions had either had a change of personnel (professional studies adviser, head of school or course leader) which creates difficulties in maintaining contact with an institution or there had been some change in the qualifications offered.

4.7.1 Sessions take place throughout the academic year with a peak occurring during the spring term.



Annex A – key performance indicators

Performance Indicator	Target for 2012/2013	2012/2013 Outcome	Direction of Travel	Comments
Prescription applications				
Average no. of weeks to complete initial scrutiny of Prescription Applications	95% within 3 weeks	100% in 1.12 weeks (2.23 weeks in 2011/12)		The average number of weeks to complete an initial scrutiny of an application has been reduced by 1.11 weeks
Average no. of weeks taken between an application being received to it being considered by the Committee for the first time	95% within 8 weeks	100% in 6.65 weeks (7.14 weeks in 2011/12)		The average number of weeks taken to process an application internally and it being considered by the Prescription Committee for the first time has been reduced by 0.47 weeks
Average no. of weeks taken for an Independent Adviser to respond to Committee's request	95% within 3 weeks	No applications sent to independent Adviser (3.5 weeks in 2011/12)		
Annual Monitoring and course changes				
Average no. of weeks taken for an annual monitoring submission to be considered by the Committee for the first time	95% within 8 weeks	100% in 3.55 weeks (4.17 weeks in 2011/12)		The average number of weeks taken to process an annual monitoring submission to consideration by the Prescription Committee for the first time has been reduced by 0.62 weeks
Average no. of weeks taken for a significant change to be considered by the Committee for the first time	95% within 8 weeks	100% in 5.43 weeks (no data available 2011/12)		
Average number of weeks taken for a minor change to be considered by the Committee for the first time	95% within 8 weeks	100% in 3.24 weeks (3.38 weeks in 2011/12)		
Average number of weeks taken for evolutionary change/s to be considered by the Committee for the first time	95% within 8 weeks	100% in 5.29 weeks (9.43 weeks in 2011/12)		
Average no. of weeks taken for an extension-to-prescription request to be considered by the Committee for the first time	95% within 8 weeks	No extensions requested* (No extensions requested 2011/12)		No institutions approached ARB requesting an extension during 2012/2013; however, the Prescription Committee/ARB Board undertook an exercise to determine whether institutions could be offered the opportunity of extending prescription in 2012 and in 2013.

Average No. of Applications received in electronic format	90% during 2012/2013 cycle	100% (100% in 2011/12)		
European notifications				
To hold a planning meeting with each UK institution that has to notify its qualifications to the European Commission	90%	100% (100% in 2011/12)		
UK to respond to all queries received within the 2-month consultation period set out in the Commission's Notification Procedures	90%	100% (100% in 2011/12)		The team has continued to meet 100% of its targets in relation to the notification of UK qualifications to the European Commission
ARB to respond to all queries received regarding a notified qualification within 2 weeks from the day of receipt	90%	100% (100% in 2011/12)		
ARB to respond to the notifying Member States for each notified qualification with comments as appropriate within the 2-month consultation period set out in the Commission's Notification Procedures	90%	100% (100% in 2011/12)		The team has continued to meet 100% of its targets in relation to the consideration of other European notifications