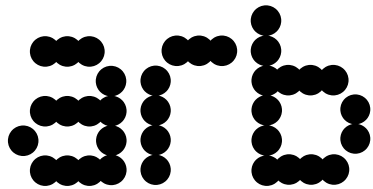


**ARB Pre-consultation  
Response Form**

# Prescribed Examination Review



Architects Registration Board

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

### Your details

Your name:

Your status:

Architect

Member of the public

Regulatory or professional body employee

School of Architecture employee

Architecture Student

Other [please provide details]

If you are an architect, please indicate the size of the practice/number of registered architects:

Size:

Location:

England

Northern Ireland

Scotland

Wales

Other [please provide details]

*This information will not impact the treatment of your responses. It may be used for analysis, for instance to identify trends or differences in comments from individuals working in education and those in practice.*

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

The following questions relate to the **Examination Procedures 2012 Edition** and its associated requirements.

We have provided a set of questions which we believe will capture useful feedback for the review, however, if you have comments on the Procedures or Procedure document in general, please feel free to use the final section of the questionnaire or contact us separately via our **Talk To Us** page.

### 1. The comparative matrix and submissions

**1. a** Candidates are required to submit a comparative matrix which references the supporting materials that demonstrate how each of the criteria are met. Supporting materials typically include design projects, technical essays and dissertations. Candidates who qualify for interview are required to provide oral evidence to support their submissions at the interview stage.

Do you have any suggestions on how we could improve this evidence-based approach to assist a candidate in demonstrating how they meet the criteria?

**1. b** The comparative matrix currently in use can be seen **here**.

Is the document clear? Can you think of any amendments which would make it easier to use for candidates and examiners?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**1. c** The supporting material must be the candidate's own work but, currently, collaborative work can be considered where evidence is provided outlining the extent of the candidate's contribution.

Should collaborative work be permitted and what would you consider to be a proportionate method of verifying the candidate's contribution?

**1. d** We take plagiarism very seriously and any candidate whose work is found to be plagiarised are not be permitted to continue with their examination. To identify plagiarism examiners and staff may make use of any standard anti-plagiarism software or other online tools or resources.

In addition, candidates found to have submitted a comparative matrix or supporting material that is not their own work, or submitted documentation that is not genuine will not be re-examined.

Can you suggest any additional or different actions that may help identify plagiarism? Do you have any comments or observations on this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**1. e** ARB cannot give guidance or advice on the nature of the supporting material because examiners attend only for the purpose of conducting the examinations and not to provide more general feedback which could lead to conflicts of interest. However, we have published guidance on acceptable presentation formats. This guidance can be viewed [here](#).

Is the guidance provided clear? Is there information missing that you would find useful? Can you provide us with any questions that you consider to be unanswered by our current guidance?

**1. f** Currently, we do not limit the amount of material that can be submitted, but provide guidance on what may be appropriate bearing in mind the time constraints examiners face when assessing work. Examiners have one hour to consider supporting material without the candidate being present, followed by fifteen minutes to record their findings.

Should the amount of information/material a candidate can submit be subject to a limit?

**1. g** As it stands, the comparative matrix is submitted with an application form in advance of the examination. Supporting materials are provided the day before the examination, or before 9am on the morning of the examination.

Do you have any comments or observations about this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**1. h** Candidates are required to clearly identify in their comparative matrix which supporting material is to be examined. To ensure consistency in the process, material that is not referenced will not be examined.

Do you consider this to be the right approach?

### 2. The examination

**2. a** We appoint a pool of examiners who are registered architects and from either practice or academia. Three examiners from the pool are chosen by the Registrar to form the examination team for each candidate.

Do you agree with the selection process/team structure? Do you have any further comments or observations relating to this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**2. b** The examiners are required to consider each candidate’s application, including forming and recording their judgment within a period of no more than 60 minutes. This judgment will set out whether or not a candidate’s application – comprising the comparative matrix and supporting material – demonstrates that either:

- (a) all the criteria are met; or
- (b) half or more of the criteria have been met

Do you have any comments or observations relating to this approach?

**2. c** One examiner will lead the team and be responsible for ensuring that time limits are adhered to, and appropriate examiner administrative work is completed. They will also act as the main point of contact between the examiners and ARB’s staff.

Do you have any comments or observations relating to this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**2. d** If the comparative matrix and supporting material is considered by the examiners to meet at least half of the criteria, they will prepare a series of questions to ask the candidate to test whether the remainder of the criteria are met and whether the supporting material is derived from a sufficient understanding of all relevant matters. This interview can last for a period of up to 45 minutes and takes place on the same day as the portfolio assessment.

Do you have any comments or observations on this approach?

**2. e** If the examination team consider the candidate’s comparative matrix and supporting material does not meet at least half of the criteria, they will recommend the candidate fail the examination. The candidate will not be required to provide oral evidence however the examination team may make use of this time to offer feedback.

Do you have any comments or observations on this approach?



## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**2. f** Examination team decisions are made by a majority vote in the event of any disagreement.

Do you have any comments or observations on this approach?

### 3. English language requirements

**3. a** Candidates whose first language is not English are required to submit a valid International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate scoring 6.5 or above in listening, speaking, reading and writing with their application for examination. The test must be taken at the academic level.

Do you think the scoring is at an appropriate level?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**3. b** Exemptions are considered where comparable alternative evidence is submitted. The existing exemption form can be seen **here**.

Do you have any comments, observations or suggestions about the form or what other information we could consider in the absence of a valid IELTS certificate?

### 4. Independent examiners

**4. a** We appoint independent examiners who are registered architects with experience of examining within Schools of Architecture in the UK. Independent examiners report to the Registrar and Prescription Committee on the following matters:

- the consistency of examiners’ judgments
- the conduct of examiners
- the fairness of the examination process
- the quality of the feedback offered to candidates
- the performance of candidates

Given the function of the independent examiner outlined above, do you consider if necessary for independent examiners to be registered architects? Do you have further comments about this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

**4. b** At least one independent examiner will oversee each day of examinations. Independent examiners will sample comparative matrix and supporting material and will observe a selection of interviews. The extent of the sampling is at the independent examiner's discretion, but should be extensive enough to allow the independent examiner to have sufficient confidence to comment on whether all candidates passing the examination have met all the criteria.

Do you have any comments about this approach?

**4. c** The RIBA and others may nominate a person for appointment to the pool of examiners. This can assist in maintaining confidence in the examination process. Up to 50% of ARB's pool of examiners may be made up of those nominees by other organisations. Nominees will be considered through ARB's recruitment process at the time positions are advertised.

Do you have any observations or comments on this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

### 5. Re-examination

**5. a** If a candidate is notified that they have failed the examination, they may apply to be re-examined at any stage however a candidate cannot apply to be re-examined more than twice unless the Registrar is satisfied there is substantial evidence the candidate's level of competence has materially improved since the last examination.

Do you have any observations or comments on this approach?

**5. b** Currently, a candidate applying for re-examination will be considered to have met, by default, any criteria they met as part of their previous examination.

Do you have any observations or comments on this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

### 6. Referral to the lead examiner

**6. a** The Referral to lead examiner process allows candidates who have narrowly failed the examination after interview to submit further work to demonstrate they meet the criteria. In order to be considered for referral, a candidate must satisfy the four criteria within GC1 and 32 further criteria.

Are the thresholds for qualifying for a referral to the lead examiner appropriate?

**6. b** Candidates referred to the lead examiner have 12 months from the point of their examination to submit further work to demonstrate they meet the criteria. This would usually be an essay or illustrated submission on a topic or a question set by the lead examiner.

Do you have any observations or comments on this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

### 7. Appeals

**7. a** As things stand, candidates can lodge an appeal on the following grounds:

- Defects or irregularities in the conduct of the examination and/or examination process that had a materially adverse effect on the candidate’s performance.
- Special circumstances (for example illness or family bereavement) which were not known to the examiners at the time of examination and the candidate can show good reason why such circumstances could not have been made known to the examiners at the time of the examination.

Supporting material is not reconsidered at appeal and must not form part of a submission.

Do you have any observations or comments about this approach?

**7. b** As things stand, candidates may not lodge an appeal on the following grounds:

- Differing academic decisions made by examiners  
Such decisions reflect judgments on a number of factors at the time and are therefore not subject to appeal.
- Disagreement with the decision or feedback provided  
Any feedback or other comment represents the individual view of the person giving it in good faith and is not binding.

Do you have any observations or comments on this approach?

## ARB Pre-consultation Response Form – Prescribed Examination

### 8. Equality & diversity

Do you consider that the current Prescribed Examination Procedures have either a positive impact or an adverse impact on any groups with protected characteristics, either directly or indirectly? If you have identified any concerns, please let us know what you would recommend to assist us in addressing them.

--

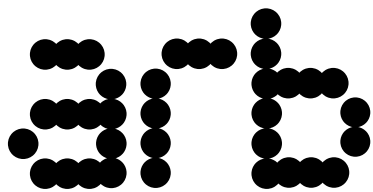
### 9. Any other comments

Bearing in mind that this is a business as usual review, do you have any other views or suggestions regarding the Examination Procedures? If so, please describe these and explain how they would improve the examination process.

--

Your views are important to us so thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

**The ARB Team**



**Architects Registration Board**

For more information please contact  
the Architects Registration Board

8 Weymouth Street  
London W1W 5BU  
Email: [info@arb.org.uk](mailto:info@arb.org.uk)  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7580 5861  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7436 5269