



2015 Year End report on delivery

The assessment uses the traffic light system to record the extent to which ARB has delivered on its objectives.



ARB has successfully delivered the item of work to a satisfactory standard



ARB delivered the majority of the item, or delivered only with partial success



ARB has not delivered the item, or performance has been unsatisfactory




No outcome due to Periodic Review, so item of work undeliverable


Typically the management team monitors performance at monthly management meetings and provide a report against the business plan to the Board at the mid-year and year-end points. This report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015.

Section A - Maintaining the Quality of and Access to the Register


Under the Architects Act 1997, ARB maintains the UK Register of architects. The Register identifies those who are entitled to use the title “architect” in business and practice as they have met the requirements for qualifications and competence. The Register is the tool through which potential users of architects’ services can find an architect and check that an architect is registered. It is also important to architects that they are identified as qualified professionals. The Register must therefore be accurate and accessible. The work which underpins the maintenance of the Register is wide ranging.

	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
1.	Improve the accuracy of the Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further increase the use of online tools for updating details. ▪ Undertake an accuracy and quality assurance review. ▪ Explain to architects the benefits of providing accurate details through our communications with them. ▪ Seek opportunities to encourage architects to ensure their details are up to date. ▪ Develop an integrated system for Part 2 of the Register (Temporary Register). 	<p>85% of Change of Details requests received through online tool (80% in 2014)</p> <p>COA requests relate substantially to revised details instead of corrections.</p> <p>95% of Change of Details requests received online processed within three days</p> <p>20% increase in the percentage of contact details, telephone/ email addresses in the public domain, making the Register search facility a more valuable tool.</p> <p>Administrative processes for Part 2 of the Register are automated to an equivalent extent as those of Part 1 of the Register.</p>	<p>87% of changes of details have been received via the online portal.</p> <p>The Accuracy project is on-going, with staff amending records when accessing the database as well as the use of dedicated time through cross-team working. In excess of 31,000 amendments have been made.</p> <p>80% of online changes of details requests have been processed within three days. On average change of details requests took 2.1 working days.</p> <p>E-bulletin has been redesigned with a successful new feature to encourage architects to update their details. Accurate information on the Register is of assistance to the public and also cuts down on the additional staff resources needed when correspondence is returned, or individuals are removed for non-payment.</p> <p>The automated processes for Part 2 of the Register were developed and due to go live in Feb 2016.</p> 


Section A – Maintaining the Quality of and Access to the Register

	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
2.	<p>Further promote and develop the use of online registration system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote further the benefits of the system. ▪ Provide clear guidance on the process at the point of enquiry. ▪ Respond to feedback on improvements to the system, and enhance systems where appropriate. ▪ Gather feedback on performance and delivery of our registration services. 	<p>95% of registration applications are received via the online registration system.</p> <p>A further reduction in the days to process applications is achieved.</p> <p>Improved feedback ratings on functionality and service levels of the online registration system.</p> <p>Suggestions for improvements published along with the response to the feedback/suggested improvements.</p>	<p>93% of registration applications have been received via the online system.</p> <p>Time taken to process applications has reduced by three days for UK applications and two days for EU applications.</p> <p>Enhancements have been made to online applications system. Further amendments have been made following feedback, including the importance of identifying any criminal convictions more effectively when internally reviewing applications.</p> <p>99% of surveyed registrants have indicated they were satisfied (96% in 2014) with the functionality of the online registration system, of which 55% were extremely satisfied.</p> <p>We published feedback in the Annual Report. A full report on feedback was provided to the Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Route Finder was launched in October 2014. This tool has continued to perform well in 2015 clocking up 5217 visits. Feedback from those surveyed showed that 96% that were satisfied with this tool, of which 50% were extremely satisfied.</p> <p>Other feedback is being collated and analysed and will be used to inform development of our online tools.</p> 
3.	<p>Provide an efficient and effective service to all enquirers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure our online resources are readily available and are easy to understand and use. ▪ Act upon feedback to improve our service. 	<p>Demonstrable proof of increased satisfaction levels amongst enquirers.</p>	<p>A group of staff have initiated a project to review feedback relating to the retention fee collection process. Suggestions were evaluated and presented to OMG.</p> <p>As a result a number of improvements were made to the</p>

Section A – Maintaining the Quality of and Access to the Register

	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish feedback and follow up actions on the website. 		<p>2016 retention fee collection process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a text reminder service for registrants. Over 300 payments received in the 60 minutes after the message was sent out; • a diary reminder tool for registrants. This was well received with 800 people clicking on this link; • a designated retention fee email sender account to reduce issues registrants identified in relation to messages ending up in spam folders; • an email including 10 top tips to help registrants remember to pay in time; • telephone training for all staff in dealing with challenging calls in relation to the fee. <p>Feedback was collected and will be reviewed to identify any areas for improvement in 2016.</p> 
4.	<p>Undertake a fundamental review of the routes to registration.</p>	<p>A Undertaking a review to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore whether current arrangements remain fit for purpose and reflect current best practice. ▪ Explore whether registration should continue to be qualifications-based and any implications for change at an EU and international level. ▪ Consider whether alternative routes to registration would be viable and would widen access to the Register whilst 	<p>ARB will have:</p> <p>Tested the basis for ARB's requirements for registration and explored whether changes can be made in order to widen access to the Register, whilst continuing to provide public confidence in the competence of those on the Register.</p> <p>Considered whether alternative routes to registration are viable and continue to meet ARB's purpose and objectives and if so, have prepared a plan for the implementation of any alternative routes.</p>	<p>Due to the on-going Periodic Review this area of work continues to remain on hold.</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback continues to be collected and will feed into the review of routes once ARB is able to proceed.</p> <p>Stakeholders have been kept up to date through regular liaison meetings and through attendance at various forums, e.g., SCHOSA, APSAA. Staff continue to manage individual inquiries by email and telephone.</p>



Section A – Maintaining the Quality of and Access to the Register


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
		maintaining standards of competence.	Engaged with all stakeholders and kept them informed of progress as the review develops.	We continue to monitor the press for research and analysis which may help to inform thinking on this project when it commences. 

Section B – Maintaining the Qualifications of Architects

Under the Architects Act 1997, ARB prescribes (or recognises) the qualifications required to become an architect for those who gain their qualifications within the UK. We also contribute to the scrutiny and review of those qualifications which are obtained in other European Economic Areas, and which seek to be listed at a European level. We therefore maintain systems for assessing qualifications against set criteria. These criteria are held in common with the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Quality Assurance Agency benchmark for architectural qualifications. The UK criteria also reflect the minimum requirements across the EEA. We work closely with many other organisations and Member States to ensure that our systems are robust, fair and efficient and provide support to Schools and Institutions of Architecture, whilst ensuring that as a regulatory body, we have confidence that prescribed qualifications meet the Board’s objectives and criteria.


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
1.	To have engaged with institutions, students and other stakeholders regarding the prescription process and Criteria to inform, to obtain feedback and to promote an understanding of ARB’s role with regard to qualifications, and to maintain a high quality service for institutions, students and EU Member states.	<p>To promote the availability of the following services and to meet all reasonable requests for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ feedback sessions; ▪ planning meetings; ▪ university liaison sessions; ▪ regular liaison meetings with stakeholders; ▪ speaking at relevant conferences/ forums; ▪ providing support for those seeking to list qualifications in Europe. <p>To keep the Student Handbook and other areas of ARB’s website relating to prescribed qualifications up to date.</p>	<p>Good relationships are maintained with key stakeholders, as exhibited by individual and collective feedback.</p> <p>Stakeholders believe ARB adds value over and above performance on the prescription function, as evidenced by collective and individual feedback.</p> <p>ARB is kept well informed of possible future developments in order to plan its work and respond to developments.</p>	<p>There has been a focus on maintaining a regular and constructive dialogue with all relevant external stakeholders in order to keep them up to date regarding ARB’s work and possible future developments.</p> <p>Staff have attended and spoken at various forums including SCHOSA’s Spring and Autumn Meetings; and APSAA’s Spring and Autumn Forums.</p> <p>Eight UK planning meetings took place in 2015.</p> <p>The demand for University liaison sessions continues to be high with 54 sessions taking place during the year. Positive feedback from Professional Studies Advisers/Course Leaders has been received regarding the quality and content of the sessions.</p> <p>A review of the Student Handbook was undertaken during the latter part of the year.</p> <p>We have gathered feedback from institutions who sought prescription/to renew prescription during the 2014/2015 cycle; the feedback has been considered by the Prescription Committee and action points to improve the internal operation of the prescription process are being taken forward, e.g., a review of the standard letters/communications used following each stage of the process. The feedback also provided an</p>


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
				<p>indication as to where the prescription process was adding value.</p> <p>We continue to provide regular updates to the profession on the work of the Qualifications department via regular articles in the eBulletin. These are consistently popular with readers. In total, eBulletin stories about prescription received over 1690 page views in 2015.</p> 
2.	<p>On behalf of the UK and its capacity as the UK's Competent Authority for Architects, embed the revised notification process within ARB's procedures, and scrutinise and review European qualifications which are notified to the European Commission for listing under the PQD.</p>	<p>Embed the European Commission's revised process for the notification of qualifications within ARB's procedures.</p> <p>Ensure that the European Commission's deadlines for considering notifications are met on every occasion.</p>	<p>ARB will have reviewed 100% of European notifications within the European Commission's deadlines.</p>	<p>The European Commission's notification process has been revised and is now fully operational. ARB has successfully updated the UK's entry under Annex V of the Directive by notifying 12 award/institutional title changes and two newly prescribed qualifications.</p> <p>100% of the 69 notifications which were submitted for review by Member States have been reviewed by ARB within the Commission's guidelines.</p> <p>We have developed revised guidance for UK institutions, and updated our EU planning meeting material so that we can support the notification of newly prescribed qualifications to the European Commission appropriately.</p> 




	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
3.	If the review of the routes to registration requires adjustment to the ARB Criteria for the Prescription of Qualifications ahead of the current schedule, undertake a review of the Criteria.	<p>Gather feedback on the existing Criteria for the Prescription of Qualifications.</p> <p>Determine the structure and content of any revised Criteria for the Prescription of Qualifications.</p>	<p>A revised set of Criteria for the Prescription of Qualifications will have been developed, consulted upon and be ready for implementation at the appropriate time.</p>	<p>See A4 above.</p> 


Section C - Maintaining the Standards of Conduct and Practice of Architects

Users and potential users of architects' services need to have confidence in the standards set by us under the Architects Code of Conduct and Practice, and that we take appropriate action where architects fall below the standards expected. We will seek to raise awareness of the Code and how clients may use the Code to help them in their relationship with their architect, as well as raising awareness and understanding of the Code by architects themselves. We will investigate allegations of unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence but will also seek to mitigate the risk of such situations arising.

	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
1.	<p>Maintain awareness of the Code and steps that architects can take to mitigate complaints.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the website to provide advice to architects on preventing and handling complaints. ▪ Maintain the frequency of relevant articles in the eBulletin. ▪ Seek opportunities to work with others (RIBA/ACA etc) to provide written information or presentations to architects. ▪ Develop and publish online assistance to architects in relation to professional standards through online presentations. 	<p>Every eBulletin contains relevant guidance on matters of professional conduct, based on recent PCC decisions, issues within the profession or legislative changes.</p> <p>The website provides clear and targeted advice to both architects and clients on how to avoid disputes, and how they might be resolved.</p> <p>Demonstrable evidence of ARB working with stakeholders to promote the standards of the Code.</p>	<p>Each eBulletin has included an article on matters of professional standards.</p> <p>A new 'Dear Architect' information column has been added to the eBulletin.</p> <p>These articles are consistently popular with readers. In total, <i>Dear Architect</i> 'articles' received almost 1,270 page views in 2015.</p> <p>An article on how architects can avoid disputes arising was published in Future Constructor & Architect magazine, and reproduced on the ARB website.</p> <p>A YouTube presentation on 'How to avoid complaints' was uploaded onto the internet and ARB website – and has been further publicised in the eBulletin.</p> <p>Guidance has been published on the changes to the CDM Regulations.</p> <p>Liaised with the Royal Institute of Scotland on matters of professional conduct and practice.</p> 

	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
2.	<p>Ensure efficient processes which are fair to all in all aspects of complaints handling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and improve all literature and processes involved in complaints handling in light of feedback. ▪ Integrate online complaints tool with ARB's internal investigations portal. ▪ Develop and Increase the use of online feedback, and review and action where appropriate. 	<p>All external facing guidance and literature is reviewed and updated as appropriate.</p> <p>80% of third party reviews find no further action.</p> <p>Online feedback is developed, and the level of received feedback is increased from 2014.</p> <p>Feedback is reported in an appropriate way, and demonstrable action taken in light of it where appropriate.</p> <p>A fully operational online complaints system put in place.</p>	<p>A review of all guidance has been undertaken, resulting in updated literature.</p> <p>No Third Party Reviews have required further action by the Investigations Panels.</p> <p>A new online complaints system has been launched, allowing complainants to upload supporting evidence and allowing for the capture of relevant E&D data.</p> <p>An online feedback mechanism has been developed. The feedback received has been reported to the Audit Committee and is now in the process of being actioned.</p> 
3.	<p>Ensure the investigations process is running smoothly and offers a fair process to all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the Investigations Panel and Professional Conduct Committee are adequately resourced and trained in best practice. ▪ The Investigations Oversight Committee is provided with appropriate information and maintains strategic overview of ARB's investigation processes. ▪ Outdated Professional Standards database and IT system is replaced by a fit for purpose system 	<p>80% of Investigations Panel decisions are reached within 12 weeks.</p> <p>80% of Third Party Reviews find no further action to be taken.</p> <p>No findings of 'no case to answer' at the PCC or adverse findings by Judicial Review.</p> <p>No successful appeals against PCC decisions.</p>	<p>81% IP decisions have been reached within 12 weeks, up from 73% in 2014. The 80% target has never previously been reached.</p> <p>100% of Third Party Reviews have found no further action to be taken, although one resulted in a recommendation for future investigations.</p> <p>There have been two findings of 'no case to answer' at the PCC. Learning points have been discussed with the IP, PCC and IOC.</p> <p>There have been no judicial reviews or statutory appeals heard against PCC decisions.</p> <p>The Investigations Pool has received training throughout the year, and all members have been appraised.</p>



	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
				<p>The IOC met three times, and provided its annual report to the Board in July.</p> <p>Work on the Investigations Pool Portal, which will allow paperless investigations, continues.</p> <p>The updating of the Professional Standards IT system has been delayed pending the outcome of the Periodic Review.</p> 
4.	Review of Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider whether any legislative, regulatory or professional developments have taken place since 2010 that require an amendment to the Code ▪ Consult with stakeholders as to whether the Code needs updating ▪ Decide whether a new or amended Code is required 	An informed decision is taken by the Board as to whether the Code of Conduct requires updating in 2016.	<p>A consultation on the Code of Conduct was undertaken and a healthy response received.</p> <p>The Board decided that a review and publication (if required) of a new Code will take place in 2016.</p> 
5.	Review effectiveness of PCC Consent Orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review how effective the PCC Consent Order procedure has been in its inaugural 12 months ▪ Consider whether the scheme should be abolished or amended 	The Board can, on the basis of an informed recommendation from the IOC, decide whether changes to the PCC Consent Order procedure are necessary.	<p>The PCC Consent Order procedure has been implemented and twice used, both times successfully.</p> <p>A progress review has been reported to the Board in February 2016</p> 


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
6.	Review how ARB delivers its statutory obligations under section 14 to investigate allegations of unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek views from all stakeholders as to how ARB's disciplinary regime might be improved ▪ Draft new rules and acquire Board approval for changes where appropriate. ▪ Consider how ADR might fit within ARB's disciplinary framework ▪ Undertake 3 month formal consultation on proposed changes ▪ Publish new rules; provide training as necessary to those who deliver a service on behalf of ARB 	New Investigations & Professional Conduct Committee Rules are consulted on and published to come into effect by 1 January 2016.	Despite preparatory work being undertaken, the lack of outcome from the Periodic Review has delayed the commencement of this review 

Section D – Raising Public Awareness of the Register and Helping Users and Potential Users of Architects’ Services to Make Informed Choices


We recognise that it is not sufficient simply to hold an accurate Register. To be of value, the Register must be accessible, and users and potential users of architects’ services must understand the distinction of the title “architect” and the importance of the Register in confirming an architect’s registered status. We therefore work to increase awareness of the Register, to inform the public about the qualifications and competence of architects and to alert members of the public to the Architects Code of Conduct and Practice. We also work to prevent the misuse of the title “architect” which may only be used by those on the Register.


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
1.	Support consumer confidence through raising awareness of the Code with users and potential users of architects’ services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the Code is embedded within all of the key communication documents published by ARB. ▪ Publish articles throughout the year highlighting the benefits of using a registered professional. 	<p>Difficult to measure success of the general effect of actions, but an increase in the mention of the Code in publications.</p> <p>Increase in the hits on the relevant sections of the ARB website by 10%.</p>	<p>National press - the Evening Standard, The Sunday Telegraph and House Beautiful Magazine all contained articles which mentioned ARB and the Register of Architects.</p> <p>Exhibitions – At Homebuilding and Renovating and Grand Designs we informed visitors to our stand about the Code of Conduct, and the regulatory regime.</p> <p>Speaking opportunities – We spoke at both Homebuilding and Renovating and London Build. On both occasions our presentations covered the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Hits on the ARB website for 2015 were up by 10% to 277,387, and on the online Register of Architects by 15% to 274,806.</p> <p>Directories – Our work to build relationships with directories continues. We encourage these stakeholders to use a unique categorisation for ‘architects’ and, where possible, display the logo. Discussions continue.</p> <p>Our ‘Meeting Your Architect’ form continued to prove popular in 2015, with over 1,900 copies distributed.</p>



	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
				<p>Local Authorities – We continue our on-going project to contact Local Authorities and ask them to add a link to the Register to the planning section of their website. Some have already done so.</p> 
2.	<p>Increase use of the online Register which will mitigate the risk of consumers being misled by those misusing the title “architect”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to increase awareness of the Register through social media. ▪ Develop a strategic communications plan to keep the Register topical and in the public arena. ▪ Develop relationships/partnerships with relevant organisations/groups to raise awareness of the Register through advocacy. 	<p>Increase social referrals to the Register by 5%.</p> <p>The number of visits to the Register increases by 10% during 2015.</p> <p>Increase searches to the Register by 5%.</p>	<p>The number of visits to the online Register were up by 15%</p> <p>The number of searches on the online Register were up by 12%</p> <p>Our social media audiences grew steadily in 2015, although we continued to adopt a conservative approach to messaging, using it to signpost audiences to our website which led to a decrease in referrals to our website. We are considering how best to adapt our approach to increase engagement.</p> <p>At exhibitions including Grand Designs and Home Building and Renovating we provided access to the online Register to enable us to demonstrate the online Register to consumers.</p> 
3.	<p>Encourage architects to promote their registered status to increase awareness and value of the Register.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain to registrants the value of referring to their registered status. ▪ Expand the secure area in which architects can have 	<p>Demonstrable evidence that the online Register has greater prominence on internet search engines.</p>	<p>Google referrals to the online Register were up by 12%, and to the main ARB website by 14%</p> <p>We continue to encourage architects to demonstrate their registered status to clients, by providing information about this in the eBulletin and on social media. There were over</p>


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	End of Year Assessment
		<p>access to their details and embedded logo information.</p> <p>Increase links to the ARB Register via websites.</p>		<p>2,700 visits to the logo download webpage in 2015, down moderately on 2014.</p> <p>A significant proportion of complaints about misuse of title come from registrants and we believe it is important to inform them about our work in this area. Since the beginning of 2015 we have included a regular article in each eBulletin about misuse of title cases and our approach. These articles have proved to be the most popular item we cover in the eBulletins and have received a total over 2800 page views in 2015.</p> 


Section E – Corporate Functions


	Area of Work	Actions	Measures of Success	Mid-Year Assessment
1.	Consider the implications, both legal and practical, of amendments to the Professional Qualifications Directive (PQD).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the outcome of the PQD legislative changes and determine where changes may need to be made to appropriate ARB policies, requirements and documents. ▪ Take legal advice and advice from DCLG and BIS where necessary. ▪ Analyse and cost any necessary system changes for 2016 budget. ▪ Engage in discussions with stakeholders and ensure understanding of the changes. ▪ Ensure information is readily available. 	<p>ARB systems are ready to meet the UK deadline for compliance with the PQD and amended Architects Act.</p> <p>Stakeholders are aware of the implications of the changes.</p> <p>ARB revises its policies, requirements and documents so that they are compliant with the revised Directive when implemented in the UK.</p>	<p>Meetings and discussions with BIS/DCLG and ARB's legal advisers have been undertaken in order to learn more vis-à-vis the interpretation of the revised Directive and we have been keeping stakeholders fully informed as more information is made available.</p> <p>More information will be available in early 2016, which will be disseminated to stakeholders.</p> <p>ARB responded to BIS' consultation regarding the draft Guidelines for Competent Authorities and transposition regulations concerning the transposition of the revised Qualifications Directive into UK legislation.</p> <p>A review of the guidance made available to European applicants for registration was undertaken to ensure it aligned with the revised Directive.</p> 
2.	Managing risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audit Committee regularly reports to Board. ▪ Internal audit function appropriately resourced and monitored. ▪ Maintain reporting cycle of risk register and risk strategy from staff to Board level. ▪ Monitor delivery against performance indicators (bi-annual), the Business Plan 	<p>Information provided to the Board on performance and risk is considered by the Board to be at the right level and provides the right level of assurance.</p> <p>Internal audit continues to be robust and add value, as assessed by the Audit Committee and the management team. Emerging and live risks are sufficiently mitigated by the actions in place or the level of are accepted as being within the Boards risk tolerance level.</p>	<p>Feedback was sought through the Board effectiveness review with amendments made to the presentation of risk in the Board papers.</p> <p>The Audit Committee and Board have regularly reviewed ARB's Risk Register. Additionally, there has been a focus on operational risks and the risks the consequences of the on-going Periodic Review bring. The Board have also discussed the risks and challenges the changes in Board membership will bring in 2016.</p> <p>Internal Auditors and the Committee have reviewed the</p>



		<p>(annual), ARB's purpose and objectives (annual).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure adequate reserves are maintained through review of reserves policy and maintenance of the policy minimum. ▪ Effective reviews of policies to be considered in 2015. ▪ Monitor the outcome of legal challenges for areas of improvement and trends, particularly where there may be a financial or reputational risk. ▪ Consider implications and risk of any changes as consequence of the Periodic Review. 	<p>The level of reserves maintained provides the appropriate level of reinsurance/confidence to the Board, the Government and key stakeholders. Relevant policies are reviewed within expected time frame. Risks will be adjusted on basis of an analysis of trend information and improvements.</p>	<p>progress we have made against previous recommendations The Audit Committee decided to go out to tender for its Internal Audit services in September with new auditors being appointed in November.</p> <p>A representative of DCLG attends Audit Committee meetings and has been complimentary about the organisation's efficiency.</p> <p>Adequate reserves have been maintained; the reserves policy was reviewed and amended by the Board in September 2015. The policy now reflects DCLG expectations.</p> <p>We have a rolling programme of policy/procedure reviews. Compliance reviews have been undertaken on the DCLG/ARB Framework, the Scheme of Decision Making, the Architects Act, a review of Transparency and a compliance review of the General Rules.</p> <p>Trend information on income and expenditure was used to set the 2016 fee.</p> 
3.	<p>Maintain adequate and appropriately skilled staffing levels that are utilised effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure sufficient staff resources are maintained to deliver statutory functions and the 2015 Business Plan. ▪ Maintain staff development budget and encourage flexible working, and interaction with outside organisations 	<p>Maintain adequate staffing levels in 2015.</p> <p>Evidence of increased flexible working across the organisation to deliver statutory functions.</p> <p>A committed and engaged staff resource (2015 Engagement survey).</p>	<p>The Operational Management Group has kept staff resources under constant review to ensure that ARB can continue to deliver on its statutory functions and Business Plan. Numerous conversations have taken place at Remuneration Committee, Audit Committee and at Board level in relation to the workload of staff, the inability to recruit during the first half of 2015, and the flexibility demonstrated throughout the year by the whole organisation.</p>



		<p>to further enhance knowledge, skills and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to cultivate an environment that supports engagement and encourages team members to reach their full potential. ▪ Ensure that pay and reward is competitive and attracts and retains high calibre staff. ▪ Review ARB's people strategy and key succession planning policy. 		<p>All staff training has taken place on: Effective Decision Writing, Equality & Diversity, and Dealing with Difficult Callers. In addition, team members have developed their individual skills through a wide range of courses, volunteering and participation opportunities</p> <p>Opportunities to learn new and develop existing skills have been offered to team members where possible so that we continue to cultivate an environment which encourages team members to reach their full potential.</p> <p>A pay and reward benchmarking exercise was undertaken and considered by the Remuneration Committee.</p> 
4.	<p>Deliver outcomes of the Periodic Review and maintain Government and Stakeholder confidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respond to outcome of review and develop an implementation plan if appropriate. Ensure there are sufficient resources in place, to deliver relevant outcomes. 	<p>No additional staff resources have been factored in to the 2015 budget in order to respond to the outcomes of the review.</p> <p>Statutory functions delivered efficiently and effectively, alongside any requirement for the organisation to change.</p> <p>An Operational Plan is devised once the outcomes of the review are known.</p>	<p>The outcome of the Periodic Review has been further delayed. Once the recommendations are known, an implementation plan will subsequently be developed.</p> <p>The budget for additional resources has not been utilised, but will carry forward into 2016.</p> <p>Despite significant staff resources being spent on the Periodic Review, statutory functions have been delivered throughout the year.</p> 



5.	Efficient financial management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear budget setting process agreed and understood by Board. ▪ Regular monitoring of outcomes against budget, along with forward planning, horizon scanning and early warning alert mechanism of variances to the Board. ▪ Prompt notification of fees. ▪ Alignment of budget to Business Plan, including capital projects. ▪ Provide 3 year forecasts to capture longer term financial obligations. 	<p>Deliver ARB's work as set out in the 2015 Business Plan within budget.</p> <p>To deliver the 2015 fee process efficiently, with clear and timely communication, with registrants who are aware of the fee cut-off date, resulting in a lower number of registrants being removed for non-payment than in 2014.</p> <p>An informed Board, who are provided information in a timely and concise way.</p>	<p>The Board has received regular updates on the organisation's finances through management accounts, including explanations for any variances to budget. Any potential external factors that may have an impact on ARB's finances have been reported.</p> <p>The 2016 budget has been set, with budgeting sessions undertaken.</p> <p>The reserves policy has been amended.</p> <p>Investment Strategy reviewed and amended.</p> <p>The collection of the 2015 Annual Retention fee went smoothly, with approximately 1,800 removals for non-payment of the fee. This led to significant resources having to be allocated to the removal and reinstatement process.</p> <p>The increased income arising from the growth in the Register was considered when setting the 2016 retention fee, enabling the 2016 fee to be held at the 2015 level.</p> <p>An early communication strategy was used to highlight and strengthen awareness of the 2016 fee deadline.</p> <p>Professional bodies and the press supported us in providing information on the deadline through their communications channels.</p> 
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6.	Compliance with legal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health and safety. ▪ Employment requirements. ▪ Data handling. ▪ PAYE. 	<p>No adverse health and safety incidents taking place during 2015.</p> <p>Implement any required changed to procedures and processes as required.</p>	<p>There have been no identified breaches of legal obligations in this period.</p> <p>Health & Safety reviews are taking place as required.</p> <p>We have updated our Staff Handbook in line with relevant employment requirements.</p> <p>Pension auto-enrolment is in place.</p> <p>Our response procedure to information requests under FOIA and DPA was audited, and provided with substantial assurance.</p> <p>Government’s Security Data requirements fulfilled.</p> <p>We have carried out IT penetration testing. Issues of data spamming investigated to ensure no security risk.</p> <p>We are undertaking further work in the area of business continuity planning, including a planned IT resilience project for 2015/2016.</p> <p>We are undertaking an internal review of our data handling.</p> 
7.	IT strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep under regular review the strategic IT development plan, maximising digital and self-service opportunities. ▪ Understand the ongoing needs and vision for the organisation, including a strategy on continuous 	<p>Internal and external systems remain stable with no down time.</p> <p>External systems remain accessible and fit for purpose, and responsive to any feedback received.</p> <p>The I.T. strategy continues to support the objectives of the Board.</p>	<p>Systems have remained reasonably stable throughout 2015 and internal upgrades to the network have taken place. We had two major hardware failures which led to 36 hours combined downtime. We have started a project to improve resilience in this area.</p> <p>Low level system development of systems has taken place with further planned for when the outcome of the Periodic Review is known, particularly in the area of Professional Standards.</p>



		<p>improvement and efficiency savings through technology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build further use of the organisations website and online tools/systems. 		<p>A review of our IT strategy has been undertaken with the identification of further IT streamlining opportunities. Investment in technology is key to being able to deliver more limited resources.</p> 
8.	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to continuously improve our communications with stakeholders, including updating the layout and content of ARB's website; developing our social media profile; and raising awareness of ARB and the Register of Architects. Develop effective relationships with Consumer Organisations 	<p>Increase in the number of visitors to the website.</p> <p>Regular messages about ARB disseminated via social media</p> <p>Demonstrable evidence of stronger relationships with consumer organisations and all stakeholders.</p>	<p>Website –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hits on the ARB website in 2015 were up 10% to 277,387. Hits on the online Register in 2015 were up 15% to 274,806, Searches of the online Register in 2015 have also increased by 12% to 382,849. <p>2015 has seen further success in building and maintaining stakeholder relationships. We have built a number of new relationships with consumer organisations and a number of the online directories. The HomeOwners Alliance has continued to publish content about the ARB, the Register and the <i>Meeting your architect form</i>.</p> <p>Focus groups – A staff focus group took place to discuss our digital channels, feedback to build on the information we gained from the focus group and interviews with students, architects and consumers. As a result of these findings plans have been put in place to reorganise the website and develop further 'self-service' and mobile friendly facilities in 2016. Building further buy-in to self-service and streamlined systems keeps the overall headcount of the organisation at a minimum.</p> <p>eBulletin – At the beginning of 2015, the design of the eBulletin was refreshed to make it more engaging and to</p>

				<p>encourage architects to inform us of changes to their contact details. Additionally, signup to the eBulletin was opened up to all in 2015 with around 90 non-architects already signed up to receive this on a regular basis.</p> <p>Online videos – Several new online videos were launched in 2015, including a set of three videos providing information about the prescribed exam. These were launched in January 2015 and the combined total of views is 2,419, which equates to almost 10 days of staff time. Total views of all online videos have jumped substantially this year, the combined total views for all ARB online videos was 9,728 which is equivalent to 58 days of staff time.</p> <p>Social media – Our social media audiences have grown steadily across all channels. LinkedIn has proved particularly popular with followers increasing from 935, at the end of 2014, compared to, 1815 at the end of 2015.</p> <p>We continue to seek other areas in which to create videos as a way of providing information.</p> 
9.	<p>Continue our programme of efficiency and effectiveness reviews to improve the operation of the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of ARB’s website, in an attempt to further promote self-service provisions. Review processes to ensure duplication of effort, and ‘no value’ processes are eradicated. ▪ Review contracts to ensure value for money and on-going quality of service. 	<p>Robust, but agile internal working practices that deliver effective, timely outcomes for the users of our services.</p> <p>Constructive feedback received from the users of our services.</p>	<p>The review of the website continues, with improvements in all areas being made. We have launched an online complaints tool, and further enhanced the online application process.</p> <p>The tender for ARB’s corporate solicitor has been delayed pending the outcome of the Periodic Review.</p> <p>The tender for the misuse of title prosecutions legal contract was successfully completed with a new service provider in place for 2016.</p> 

10.	Explore and take up opportunities to work with stakeholders and partners to deliver ARB's objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actively seek opportunities for working with others. ▪ Build partnerships with others to influence the regulation of architects to protect consumers. 	Demonstrable evidence of broader working relationships with Stakeholders and Partners from the built environment, consumer and regulatory sectors.	<p>A number of stakeholders have been worked with to disseminate ARB's key messages (see section 8 above).</p> <p>An annual report on communications was submitted to the Board providing information on relationships across ARB's work. Our internal auditors undertook an advisory review of the organisation's stakeholder engagement arrangements. The review resulted in eight recommendations, which will be delivered during 2016.</p> <p>The election campaign continues to provide opportunities to work with others and to build on our networks, specifically in relation to E&D discussions/consultations.</p> 
11.	Undertake a review of our commitment to transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review our Performance Reporting mechanisms ▪ Review our Service Standards Complaints process ▪ Review what information we publish and maximise opportunities to increase what is available. 	Complete review and publish findings, so as to enhance the confidence of our stakeholders, as to our commitment to transparency and accountability	<p>A review of our commitment to transparency has been undertaken and presented to the Audit Committee. The report provided recommendations where improvements could be made, which will be taken forward in 2016.</p> 
12.	Respond to, and advise on European legislation that affects the regulation of architects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor EU legislation in terms of ARB's objectives / statutory functions ▪ Implement a communications plan to ensure architects are informed. 	<p>ARB will have responded to relevant consultations as appropriate.</p> <p>Staff will be aware of relevant developments, report these to the Board, ensure they are taken into account when taking strategic decisions and, where appropriate, communicated to architects.</p>	<p>Developments in EU legislation continue to be monitored. The ADR Directive has been transposed into UK law and discussions have taken place with DCLG as to ARB's obligations in this area..</p> <p>We informed registrants of a consultation process being undertaken by BIS into the development of a single market policy. We asked for registrants interested in this subject to</p>

				<p>contact us and we put them in touch with the BIS team running this exercise, thus ensuring the voice of architects would be considered during the policy development process.</p> <p>The education models specified in the Directive are currently being explored, with legal advice being sought.</p> 
13.	To continue to improve governance arrangements within the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a Board and Committee effectiveness review, and implement any actions from the review. ▪ Ensure the Board has sufficient, evidence based, timely information, in which to make informed decisions. ▪ Be alert to best practice in the arena of governance and recommendations on how to continually improve. 	<p>Outcomes of effectiveness reviews will be actioned and taken forward as appropriate.</p> <p>Governance arrangements will be kept up to date, reviewed where appropriate, and adjusted to meet best practice.</p>	<p>An effectiveness review was undertaken at the end of 2014, the results of which were considered by the Board in February 2015. Actions arising from the effectiveness review were progressed by the Board during its development day. The 2015 review will be reported to the Board in February 2016.</p> <p>An internal audit of the Board's governance arrangements has been undertaken. The outcomes of the review were considered by the Audit Committee.</p> 
14.	Continue to review, develop and implement our equality and diversity action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and amend the plan as required. ▪ Collect and analyse Equality and Diversity data, and utilise the information to influence policy decision making ▪ Make the data fully available to assist others in 	<p>10% growth in the data collected in 2014.</p> <p>Annually published data which is of value to the Board and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>An Equality & Diversity survey of the Register was commenced in May 2015, with published support from RIBA. Changes to the online complaints tool will allow for a greater capture of information in disciplinary matters.</p> <p>The Board was provided with an annual update in relation to our work in this area and the statistics of information held will be published in February 2016.</p> <p>Relationships have been built with similar organisations and</p>

		<p>their policy information gathering</p>		<p>best practice shared.</p> <p>An internal audit was undertaken in relation to the Board's Commitment to E&D. The findings of the review, which was classified as a substantial assurance review was discussed by the Audit Committee in November.</p> <p>Equality & Diversity training has been provided to all staff, Board members and examiners.</p> 
15.	<p>Manage ARB's reputation to ensure there is public confidence in the regulation of architects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise the profile of ARB's role, in order to communicate the role of regulation ▪ Strengthen our relationships in the regulation and consumer sectors. ▪ Gather feedback from those that use our services, to ensure we are offering relevant and accessible services in a way which adds value ▪ Deliver a communication plan which raises awareness of the role of ARB, in particular the public Register of Architects ▪ Communicate the value of 	<p>Understanding of key regulation and consumer/client issues, which assists the decision making of the Board.</p> <p>Publish measureable key performance indicators, and report against them biannually.</p> <p>Increased use of Search the Register facility through enhanced awareness of its value, enabling consumers to make informed choices.</p>	<p>ARB's performance against KPIs are reported to the Board biannually.</p> <p>Work has commenced on a communications piece to highlight ARB's regulatory role. An A-Z of regulation was posted on social media.</p> <p>More visits to the website demonstrate greater presence of the role of ARB.</p> <p>ARB has highlighted its regulatory remit to visitors at consumer shows, explaining the difference between regulators and professional bodies.</p> <p>Corporate press releases refer to ARB's regulatory role and statutory remit.</p> <p>We continue to seek feedback from the users of our services. A report on the feedback gathered was noted by the Audit Committee in November.</p>

		<p>using a registered architect to enhance public/consumer/client understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attend relevant consumer events to raise awareness of ARB's role and the public Register, through exhibiting and speaking opportunities 		<p>ARB continues to develop relationships with other regulators to understand best practice.</p> 
16.	<p>Monitor the impact and outcomes resulting from the Scottish Referendum and General Election</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liaise with Government and stakeholders to keep up to date with developments. ▪ Develop an understanding of the relevant outcomes of the Referendum and their impact ▪ If appropriate, develop plans to respond to relevant outcomes. 	<p>Liaise with government to gain a clear understanding of outcome and impact of the Referendum.</p> <p>If appropriate, develop plans to deal with relevant outcomes.</p>	<p>The Scottish Referendum did not materially affect ARB's business.</p> <p>Good relations with the DCLG are being maintained so that ARB is aware of, and can react to, any changes in Government expectations.</p> <p>The Board expanded its entry on the Risk Register to include change of Government/ Policy and an EU Referendum to ensure a close eye is kept on any impact the risks might have.</p> <p>There was no need for action in 2015, but a plan will need to be considered in relation to withdrawal from the EU.</p> 

Glossary

APSAA	Association of Professional Studies Advisers in Architecture
AAE	Association of Architectural Educators
ASN	Architecture Students Network
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DPA	Data Protection Act 1998
EEA	European Economic Area
ENACA	European Network of Architectural Competent Authorities
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act 2000
FReM	Financial Reporting Manual (Government document)
IOC	Investigations Oversight Committee
IP	Investigations Panel
PQD	Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications
PCC	Professional Conduct Committee
SCHOSA	Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture