

International Routes to UK Registration for Architects

Equality impact assessment for consultation

Name of policy	International Routes to UK Registration for Architects		
Summary of the policy and its aims	<p>The policy proposes changes to ARB’s Prescribed Exam and UK Adaptation Assessment.</p> <p>ARB recognises, or ‘accredits’, UK qualifications that enable people to join the architects’ profession and we set international routes for those without UK qualifications. Having recently reformed how we regulate UK qualifications – which included updating the competencies that architects need to demonstrate – we are proposing to overhaul our international routes to UK registration to align them with our new approach to UK education and training, and to improve access to the UK Register by simplifying the examination process and removing unintended complexity and barriers.</p>		
Date of this assessment	Published 3 October 2024		
What approach is being taken to consultation or engagement?	<p>The consultation will be open for 3 months. Respondents will be able to respond through our public Citizen Space consultation platform.</p> <p>The consultation has followed previous engagement, including a listening event with stakeholders from a range of backgrounds who have experience of the current route and a survey of internationally qualified architects.</p>		
Is the policy likely to have a <u>negative</u> impact on any particular demographic or group with a protected characteristic, <u>more than it does for other groups</u>?			
	YES	NO	If YES, what is the likely additional impact?
Age		NO	
Disability		NO	
Gender reassignment		NO	

Marriage and civil partnership		NO	
Race		NO	We do not expect a direct negative impact but we recognise that the policy mostly applies to non-UK qualified professionals. There is a risk changes may produce anomalies which could therefore have a disproportionate negative effect on certain groups. We will aim to identify and avoid these, informed by the consultation, so would welcome stakeholder feedback of any potential negative effects.
Religion or belief		NO	
Sex		NO	
Sexual orientation		NO	

Any further comments on how the policy may:

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- reduce inequalities of outcome that result from socio-economic disadvantage

One of the aims of this policy change is to improve access to the architects' profession in the UK. If the architects' profession is drawn from and representative of different types of communities and lifestyles, it will be better equipped to design environments for different types of communities and lifestyles. We therefore believe our proposals will have a positive impact on equality, diversity and inclusion in the built environment, and for everyone in our society who uses designed buildings, spaces and places.

The policy mostly applies to professionals with international qualifications in architecture. Therefore, any benefits from the proposed changes would also be more greatly experienced by that group. For example, currently the exam takes the form of a complex mapping exercise and if English is not someone's first language, they may struggle with context and expression. This would be improved as part of the proposals.

One of the guiding principles for our overhaul of the prescribed exam is 'fairness and inclusivity'. Having heard at our stakeholder listening event that the exam is experienced as unfair and stressful, we believe change is needed to create an accessible exam that mitigates against bias. A new, better exam could help to diversify the makeup of the profession so that it better reflects the makeup of society, whilst upholding standards and protecting the public.

As part of the proposals, it is our hope that multiple third party organisations would seek to offer accredited examinations, and that they would offer a range of assessment formats. In the same way that different qualifications accredited by ARB are taught and examined in different ways, we think that a range of exam providers offering a range of assessment methods – all quality assured and accredited by ARB – would offer candidates more flexibility and choice. This approach would cater to different learning, practice and

communication styles. For example, some candidates may prefer oral examinations, and others written. This diversity of methods could have a positive impact towards candidates with disabilities or those whose first language is not English.

When is the policy expected to be implemented?	Q3 2027		
	YES	NO	If YES, when will this be carried out?
Does this impact assessment need to be reviewed later?	YES		This impact assessment should be reviewed if the policy substantially changes following consultation.