



ArchitecturalReview@communities.gov.uk

The IHBC National Office
Jubilee House High
Street
Tisbury
Wiltshire SP3
6HA
Consultations@ihbc.org.uk

8th November 2021

Dear Sir

Review of architects regulation: call for evidence

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation is the professional body of the United Kingdom representing conservation specialists and historic environment practitioners in the public and private sectors. The Institute exists to establish the highest standards of conservation practice, to support the effective protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and to promote heritage-led regeneration and access to the historic environment for all.

We are very pleased to have the chance to comment on the consultation document. This response mirrors but also adds to those comments made in the online survey where questions were inaccessible for respondents who are not architects. The survey format did not make all the questions quoted in the call for evidence available for all respondents to answer. Many of the detailed questions about skills and knowledge which we wished to comment on were accessible only to architects. The issues the review considers should be addressed by other built environment professionals to give a full picture of the current situation from all perspectives, not just that of architects. Without that evidence, or the perspective this gives, the review cannot produce meaningful and useful reform.

Biographical details

I. Are you an:

(c) Non-architect – professional body with a substantial proportion of architects as members

V. (follow up to I) If answered (c), are you a:

(I) Other (please specify) Professional Body

Architects Registration Board (ARB)

1. Are you familiar with the work and the remit of the ARB?

(a) Yes

2. Do you value your registration with the ARB?

(a) Yes – we have members who are registered

3. Do you have confidence in the ARB to deliver regulatory reform?

(c) Unsure

4. Please feel free to expand on any of your answers

We are a professional multidisciplinary institute and many of our members are also registered with the ARB. We are concerned that the nature of this consultation is primarily directed at architects. The detailed questions about skills and knowledge are only accessible to architects. The issues the review considers should be addressed by other built environment professionals to give a full picture of the current situation from all perspectives, not just that of architects. Without that evidence or the perspective this gives the review can not produce meaningful and useful reform.

10. Do you believe that anything was missing from your architectural education?

Detailed training in the conservation of historic buildings

11. Do you believe that there is a need for greater specialisation within architecture?

(a) Yes

12. If yes, at what stage do you think specialisation should take place?

(a) During pre-registration education and training (i.e. Parts 1-3)

(b) Early career post-registration

(c) As part of advanced practice

At all of these stages and continuing on throughout practice.

13. How much do you interact with architects or architectural practices?

(b) Often

14. What skills, knowledge, experience or behaviours do you value in architects or architectural practices?

Early career architects

15. Are you a recruiter or employer of architects or architectural assistants?

(b) No

16. If yes, in your experience, is there a sufficient supply of high-quality applicants?

(c) Unsure

17. Are there skills, knowledge, experience or behaviours which, in your opinion, applicants are typically missing?

A specialist knowledge and understanding of the conservation of historic buildings without the need for further training

Functions of an architect

19. How often do you work with people that fulfil functions commonly associated with architects but who are not fully registered architects with the ARB?

(b) Often

20. Do you believe that there are functions for which only a registered architect (or a team which includes registered architects) should be employed?

(a) Yes

Please elaborate on your answer

Our work is based on recognition of the value of interdisciplinarity which is founded on a respect for the differing capacities and skills represented within a range of professions.

21. "The architects I work with are generally competent to fulfil the functions I expect of them." How true is this statement for you?

(a) Extremely true

22. Do you believe that there any professions within the construction sector which are currently either over-regulated or under-regulated? If so, please state which and why.

Architects, Engineers, Quantity Surveyors, Project managers etc are all regulated but in the field of conservation of historic structures and complex they often need additional skills which are not currently being met or regulated within those professions.

23. What changes to regulation could help achieve a strengthened, more accessible, innovative and inclusive architectural sector?

Provision of additional training and skills within all the above professions in the area of conservation of historic structures and complexes.

24. In your experience, how likely is it that an architect holds a project manager / leading role in a design or construction project?

(c) Sometimes

25. In your experience, are responsibilities shared across a team of people rather than held by a named architect?

(b) Often

26. Please feel free to expand on any of your answers

The role of a project manager is quite different from that of an architect so if the architect is to work as a project manager that needs to be specified.

Access to the profession

27. Did you face any barriers to entering the profession? Please expand on your answer, including whether this was before or after qualification

The training takes a considerable length of time and is intense. Affordability in terms of time and educational costs is a barrier

28. Do you believe that the practice of architects is accessible to and understood by those outside of the profession, for example prospective students or others in the construction industry? Please expand on your answer

(g) Sometimes

29. Do you believe that, generally, the profession is inclusive of gender, disability, race and sexuality? Please expand on your answer

(b) Often

30. In your opinion, what could be done to improve access to the profession for those from under-represented backgrounds (including socio-economic status, age, gender etc)?

More financial support for training and perhaps support for developing certain competencies during that training period

33. In your experience, why do students not finish the qualification process to become an architect?

The training is very intensive and requires considerable resilience. It requires a strong sense of self and strong self-confidence.

Architectural practice

34. In your opinion, are there any barriers to innovation in the architectural / construction sector? If so, what are they?

35. How often does sustainability and/or energy efficiency feature in the design stage?

(a) Always

36. How often are these considerations realised in the final build?

(c) Sometimes

37. If sometimes, rarely or never, why not?

Lack of full supervision of implementation and client budget cost cuts

38. How often does building safety feature in the design stage?

(f) Always

39. How often are these considerations realised in the final build?

(f) Always

41. Do you believe that architectural education provides an appropriate amount of interaction with other fields of study?

(b) Moderately agree

42. Do you believe that architectural education would benefit from greater engagement with other disciplines?

(a) Yes

43. If yes, which disciplines and for what purpose?

Interdisciplinarity is most important in conservation work on historic structures or complexes including their wider setting and it is important to have a good understanding of the craft based skills necessary to carry out works of conservation and repair.

Architects engineers, surveyors, project managers, natural and urban landscape practitioners, a wide range of craftspeople stone masons, sculptors, plasterwork, timber specialists, stained glass etc.

Personal details

44. The Department intends to run a series of workshops to further explore these topics. Would you consent to be contacted to attend one or more of the workshops?

(a) Yes

45. If yes, which topics would you be interested to discuss at a workshop? Please select all that apply. Please note: This is an indicative list of workshop topics which may change as we gather and consider responses

(c) Types of registration and specialisms

Yours sincerely

Fiona Newton
IHBC Operations Director