

Government responds to consultation on amendments to the Architects Act

- New proposals to recognise architects' international qualifications
- Wider transformation of architects' register to maintain standards
- Part of ongoing reforms to improve competence of professionals across the built environment sector

A new recognition system to acknowledge architecture qualifications from around the world will be implemented as part of the Professional Qualifications Bill, ensuring the UK remains a leading, global destination to practise architecture.

The government has responded to a consultation on proposed amendments to the Architects Act, which will ensure professional standards within the sector are maintained and enable international architects to practise in the UK.

To support this, the [Architects Registration Board \(ARB\)](#) – the profession's regulator – will allow architects with certain international qualifications to join their UK Register.

Wider proposals to drive up professional competence in the sector will be implemented via the Building Safety Bill.

Under these new measures, the ARB will be given new powers to monitor the way architects manage their Continuing Professional Development (CPD), in line with other regulated professions – encouraging architects to develop their competence to practise.

Housing Minister Chris Pincher MP said:

Following an overwhelmingly positive response to our consultation from the architecture profession, we are delighted to be moving forward with firm proposals that will make a real difference to the lives of architects around the world.

This fundamental realignment of the profession will reassert the United Kingdom's reputation as a global leader in architecture, ensuring we continue to attract the best architects from around the world to build back better on the homes and infrastructure in this country.

This forms part of ongoing reforms to improve the competence of professionals across the built environment sector, who have a responsibility for designing, constructing and managing homes and buildings.

These reforms build on major legislative improvements being made by government in relation to fire and building safety.

Minister for Investment Lord Gerry Grimstone said:

Britain has a global reputation for professionalism and excellence in services like architecture, and this important change will ensure that UK architecture qualifications remain the gold standard around the world.

Our new laws will enable world-class architects to continue working in the UK and can make it possible for the Architects Registration Board to open up opportunities for British architects working with our global partners.

Alan Kershaw, Chair of the Architects Registration Board, said:

Today the government has confirmed its intention to create new powers for the ARB, which we will use to introduce a scheme to monitor the Continuing Professional Development of architects.

This is an opportunity to recognise formally the considerable amount of development activity that most architects already do. We will develop our approach in collaboration with architects and use our regulatory powers to promote consistency across the profession.

ARB's new role in recognising international qualifications is another positive step. We are going to ensure all individuals registering under this new process are held to equivalent standards, to maintain excellence across the architectural profession, whilst also ensuring the United Kingdom continues to benefit from the varied skills and experience international architects bring with them.

The [government's response to a consultation](#) on proposed amendments to the Architects Act 1997 include:

- strengthening the Architect Registration Board's role in monitoring and maintaining the competence of architects on their register
 - increasing public confidence by listing disciplinary orders against an architect on the register
 - allowing the Architect Registration Board to expand its list of chargeable services to cover the full range of services by the Architect Registration Board
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Government confirms plans to modernise trade union regulator

- Government confirms plans to modernise the regulator for trade unions to boost transparency and provide reassurance to workers that high standards will be maintained
- new enforcement powers and levy mechanism will bring the Certification Officer into line with other regulators like the Pensions Regulator
- changes to the regulator, previously approved by Parliament, do not affect unions' rights to campaign on public policy or individual workers' rights to join a union and take part in union activities

The regulator for trade unions and employers' associations will be modernised to uphold high standards across the sector and provide reassurance to union members, the government has confirmed today.

The reforms, which have previously been approved by Parliament, will bring the functions of the Certification Officer into line with other regulators, like the Pensions Regulator, Financial Reporting Council and Electoral Commission.

Under the plans, which will reassure union members by ensuring unions uphold high standards, the Certification Officer will be able to respond when a third party raises concerns that a union or employers' association may have breached its statutory duties. The Certification Officer will also be able to begin an investigation where they suspect a breach themselves.

Breaches of statutory duties include allowing someone with a criminal record to hold a senior position, mismanaging political funds, failing to hold elections where required, refusing to allow access to accounting records when requested, and refusing to comply during investigations by the regulator into potential wrongdoing.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

Trade unions can play a key role in helping workers understand their rights, which is why it is so important that the regulator is able to ensure they are complying with the law. Ensuring unions fulfil their statutory duties is to everyone's benefit, including union members.

These measures put the Certification Officer on a par with other regulators, and will ensure organisations are fully transparent and maintain high standards, while providing reassurance to union members.

Like other regulators, such as the Electoral Commission, the Officer will

have the ability to apply financial penalties to employers' associations or trade unions of up to £20,000 where the most serious breaches are found to have occurred.

The Officer will be funded by a levy on the organisations it oversees, in line with other regulators such as the Pensions Regulator and the Financial Reporting Council. To ensure the levy, which is set to come into force in April 2022, is affordable, the government plans for it to be capped at 2.5% of a union or employers' association's annual income, while organisations with the lowest income will be exempt entirely, and the government is engaging with relevant organisations to finalise the detail prior to implementation.

The changes do not affect the rights and functions of trade unions, and will in no way impede the ability of organisations to campaign around public policy.

Details of the changes are set out in the response to two government consultations on how the changes should be implemented, which will be published later today.

- The principle of the levy has previously been agreed by Parliament. The government will now engage further with relevant organisations to finalise the detail of the levy. Following this engagement, draft regulations for the levy will be laid before Parliament
- the government will also now lay regulations for the Certification Officer to have the power to impose financial penalties. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the intention is for the regulations to come into force in April 2022. Alongside the power to impose financial penalties, the government will also commence the investigatory powers and levy on the same date
- in addition to being capped at 2.5% of an organisation's annual income, the levy will be limited so that it does not exceed the expenses of the Officer over a three-year period. The levy will also not have to cover legal costs arising from the Officer's investigations and the cost of appointing external inspectors

Since last year alone, the government has taken a range of action taken to protect workers' rights, including:

1. Providing a well-earned pay rise to around 2 million of the UK's lowest-paid workers through a higher minimum wage, backed up by a full communications campaign to make sure people check their pay.
2. The National Living Wage, which we extended to 23 and 24 year olds, is now 33% higher than the minimum wage in 2015. This means that the average annual earnings of a full-time worker on the NLW have increased around £4,000.
3. Young people and apprentices also saw above-inflation increases to their minimum wage rates.
4. Enabling workers to carry over more annual leave, due to the pandemic
5. Increasing the reference period employers use to calculate holiday pay to improve seasonal workers' wages

6. Setting out plans to crackdown on restrictive employment contracts to ensure up to 1.8 million low paid workers across the UK can pick up extra work if they want to
 7. Protecting the earnings of furloughed workers who take Maternity Pay and other forms of Parental or Adoption Pay
 8. Bringing into force 'Jack's Law', a world-first, which gives statutory leave for parents who suffer the devastating loss of a child
 9. Conducting a review into how victims of domestic abuse can be supported in the workplace, setting out the impact that domestic abuse has on victims, the challenges that it brings for employers and what best practice looks like.
 10. Introducing Key Information Documents to ensure that temporary work-seekers have all the facts they need to know upfront.
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[MHCLG appoints a new non-executive director](#)

Press release

The Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary, Robert Jenrick, has appointed Lord Gary Porter, CBE as a new non-executive director on the MHCLG Departmental Board.



Lord Porter's appointment took effect for 3 years from 7 June 2021.

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said:

I am delighted to welcome Lord Porter to the board of MHCLG. His hands-on construction experience and advocacy for building safety will be a huge help to the department's important work as we help the country recover and build back better from the pandemic.

Lord Porter has been the Leader of South Holland District Council since 2003. In 2013, he was made a CBE for services to local government and in 2015 he was elevated to the Lords. He was formerly the vice chairman and then chairman of the Local Government Association. A bricklayer by trade, Lord Porter has spent most of his career in the construction industry. In 2000 he graduated as a mature student with a BA (Hons) in history and politics. In 2011 he gained a post-graduate certificate in shared services and in 2014 was made a Shared Service Architect fellow.

Lord Porter is currently a non-executive director of the Norse Group and

chairman of the advisory board for the Effective Governance Forum, a cross-party think tank. He is also a Commissioner on the Association for Public Service Excellence's 2030 commission.

MHCLG and the role of the Departmental Board

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is a ministerial department to create great places to work and live, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.

The Board is chaired by the Secretary of State and includes other ministers, senior officials (the Executive Team), a lead non-executive and a number of non-executive Board members. The Board's focus is on strategic leadership, performance and delivery. The non-executive directors (NEDs) also attend the 'non-ministerial board', which comprises the executive team and the NEDs and whose focus is on organisational effectiveness, people, and forward planning.

The Board operates according to recognised principles of good corporate governance:

- Leadership – communicating a clear vision for the department.
- Effectiveness – challenging and scrutinising performance, to ensure our plans are realistic and challenging.
- Accountability – promoting the government's goal of transparency through clear and fair reporting.
- Sustainability – taking a long-term view about what the department is trying to achieve.

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[Secretary of State for International Trade speech at DLA Piper](#)

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