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## Review of Teaching Funding

**RIBA response submitted to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) on developing the funding method for teaching from 2004-05**

**1. Do you agree with the proposal to move to five price groups, by splitting price group B?**

Agree

**Comments?**

The RIBA is in support of a graduated banding of subjects to reflect more accurately cost of delivery of different types of subjects

**2. Do you agree with the proposed assignments of individual academic cost centres (for HEIs) or learndirect codes (for FECs) to price groups?**

Disagree

**Comments?**

The location of architecture in price group C does not reflect the actual costs of the subject.

The RIBA has found that the ability of institutions to deliver the full scope of the subject to the standard required for professional recognition is being compromised by inadequate funding. Increasingly, the RIBA's Visiting Boards, which visit schools of architecture every five years, have commented that inadequate facilities, space and equipment, and deteriorating staff/student ratios are having a negative impact on course standards and the ability of institutions to deliver all our requirements for validation. Should this situation continue, we are sure we will be faced with the prospect of withdrawing recognition from a number of courses due to declining standards, because of inadequate resources. It should be noted that;

- UK architectural education is a significant earner of foreign revenue, as evidenced by numbers of overseas students studying architecture in the UK, well above the national average, despite course length
- UK architectural education is the 'gold standard' world-wide, as evidenced by the growing network of overseas schools of architecture seeking links with UK schools of architecture & the RIBA
- British Architects contribute significantly to the UK economy as net exporters.

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Architecture is an intensive course, which spans both art and science, with an emphasis on practical experimental research. The various strands of an architecture course, from fine art and the history of architecture to materials performance, environmental control, structures and construction methods, construction management, finance and principles of professional practice, ethics and behaviour, client communications, planning and building law, health & safety requirements, and

so on, all have to be integrated and evidenced in the central activity of making building design propositions. To deliver the breadth of the curriculum, the discipline requires an extensive range of physical resource, particularly in terms of studio space, sophisticated IT, CAD, photographic, and technical workshop facilities and staff expertise to support student learning in all these areas. The iterative project-based learning central to our method of design teaching, with its sustained one-to-one staff student contact and frequent small group teaching, group tutorials and criticisms, requires a high staff/student ratio. The RIBA therefore maintains that Architecture cannot adequately be provided in the current price group.

We understand that the evidence used to inform HEFCE's review of price groups emerged from your transparency review of actual HE costs. This method is flawed. Current resource is inadequate and any survey of actual delivery costs will only reveal the extent of the under-funding, not what is required to deliver architecture at an appropriate cost base. Work by the Association of Scottish Schools of Architecture (2001) demonstrated that the true costs of educating a UK architectural student to a reasonable standard to meet RIBA requirements for recognition and the Government's ARB (Architects Registration Board) prescription was in excess of £6,100 pa.

One example of inadequate facilities was highlighted by the recent Construction Industry Computing Association (2001) survey of computer provision. The CICA survey demonstrated that architecture courses are significantly under provided for in terms of appropriate IT in comparison with both UK engineering courses and US architecture courses. For example, US schools of architecture spend 13 times more on IT than UK schools of architecture, IT equipment is replaced 1.6 times more frequently and US architectural IT support staff support less than one quarter the students of their UK equivalents. Architects play a pivotal role in the construction industry (which represents 11% of UK GDP) and must be equipped to use IT effectively, both in design and to fulfil their professional obligations at the hub of design & construction processes.

The grouping of architecture with built environment and planning, which are not design-led programmes, do not require this level of teaching input or resource, or have the same breadth of curriculum is incorrect. The location of architecture with price group C, particularly given the proposed reduction in funding for this group, will further reduce the capacity of architecture courses to deliver appropriate resource input for this course type. In the Institute's opinion, price group B provides a more appropriate description and is a better reflection on resource inputs required for undergraduate architecture courses to maintain standards necessary for RIBA recognition and ARB prescription.

### **3. Do you agree with the proposed price group weightings?**

Disagree

#### **Comments?**

The proposed price group weightings further diminish the resource attached to architecture courses. A more sensible redistribution, given the principle of zero sum constraints, is to reduce the weightings of price group B1 to permit the increased allocation to subjects in price group B2, and to keep price group C at the current weighting of 2.

**4. Do you agree that the assumed fee level per FTE for part-time undergraduate students should match that for full-time undergraduates?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

**5. Do you agree that assumed fee levels for postgraduate taught students should be increased to reflect the average levels of fees charged, but be capped to ensure they do not exceed the level of standard resource for a price group D subject?**

No answer

**Comments?**

We support the statement in para 37 regarding the regulated fee for postgraduate taught students on architecture courses.

**6. Do you agree that, as a temporary measure, a 10 per cent premium should be applied for students on foundation degrees?**

Strongly disagree

**Comments?**

Given HEFCE's requirement for a zero sum base, the introduction of Foundation degrees, and the proposal to provide a funding premium, will divert resource from conventional degrees and further institutional capacity to deliver good quality, professionally recognised, degree programmes.

**7. Do you agree that all students on sandwich years-out should be assigned for funding purposes to price group C, irrespective of their subject of study?**

Agree

**Comments?**

No comment

**8. Do you agree that a 10 per cent premium in the main teaching method should be applied for part-time students?**

Agree

**Comments?**

No comment

**9. Do you agree with the proposed method for incorporating the 2003-04 funding for rewarding and developing staff into the main teaching grant?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

**10. Do you agree that compensation for increases in TPS costs should be allocated solely through teaching grant from 2004-05?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

**11. Do you agree that the current 1.5 per cent pensions premium should end from 2004-05?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

**12a. Do you agree in principle that we should replace the current postcode-based allocation for widening access with an allocation for 18- and 19-year-old full-time undergraduates based on the average performance of the school attended (or an area-based proxy for school attended) at age 16?**

Strongly disagree

**12b. Do you agree in principle that we should replace the current postcode-based allocation for widening access with an allocation for other full-time and part-time undergraduates based on the average educational achievement within their ward?**

Agree

**Comments?**

Question 12a: In principle we support the idea of replacing the current postcode based allocation for widening participation with an allocation for 18- and 19-year-old full-time undergraduates based on the average performance of the school attended. However, this should be on the basis of the school attended at age 17, 16, i.e. post GCSE.

**13. Do you agree that some of the funding for improving retention of full-time undergraduate students should be allocated to reflect total FTEs weighted by price group and institutional premiums?**

Agree

**Comments?**

No comment

**14. Do you agree that funding for improving the retention of full-time undergraduates should also reflect risk factors associated with subject of study, as well as age and entry qualifications?**

Strongly agree

**Comments?**

No comment

**15. Do you agree that, for full-time undergraduates, the proportionate split of funding should remain approximately 20 per cent for widening access and approximately 80 per cent for improving retention?**

Agree

**Comments?**

Our research, for example 'Why do Women Leave Architecture?' (2003), suggests that in our subject area, retention is a more critical issue than recruitment. The RIBA would therefore agree with maintaining the current ratio of expenditure.

**16. Do you agree that, for part-time students, the proportionate split between funding for widening access and for improving retention should match that for full-time undergraduates?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

**17a. Do you agree that, instead of collecting the detail in our HESES survey, we should use a previous year's HESA data to determine the attribution of students to price groups?**

No answer

**17b. Do you agree that, instead of collecting the detail in our HESES survey, we should use a previous year's HESA data to determine the attribution of students to standard-length or long courses?**

No answer

**17c. Do you agree that, instead of collecting the detail in our HESES survey, we should use a previous year's HESA data to determine the attribution of students to assumed fees categories?**

No answer

**17d. Do you agree that, instead of collecting the detail in our HESES survey, we should use a previous year's HESA data to determine the proportion of students treated as non-completions?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

**18. Do you agree that institutions experiencing holdback for exceeding the 5 per cent tolerance band should have an opportunity to recover any funding deducted from their baseline if they recover their position in the following year?**

No answer

**Comments?**

No comment

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