

# ***Minority Ethnic Students and Practitioners in Architecture***

***A scoping study for the  
Commission for Architecture and the  
Built Environment (CABE)***

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## ***I. Executive Summary***

In December 2001 CABE, working with the Society of Black Architects, commissioned the Policy Studies Institute to undertake a short piece of research to identify the scope of existing research and data on minority ethnic students and practitioners in architecture and to investigate future research options in this area.

The resulting scoping paper looks at the current situation for people from minority ethnic backgrounds in both higher education and employment and highlights the following key findings:

1. A wide range of information exists about the representation of minority ethnic students in architecture and related higher education courses. By contrast, very little data is available on the situation for architectural professionals from minority ethnic backgrounds.

### ***Education***

2. Representation of minority ethnic groups in Architecture, Planning and Building degree courses is lower than for higher education as a whole.
3. Minority ethnic applicants to Architecture, Planning and Building degree courses are more likely to be accepted to those courses than their white counterparts.
4. RIBA data from 2000/01 indicates a high drop-out rate for minority ethnic architecture students, especially during Part II. In 2000/01 9% of students entering Part I and Part II were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Only 4% of students completing Part II were of ethnic minority origin.

### ***Employment***

5. Relatively little data exists about the minority ethnic practitioners in architecture but RIBA statistics for 2001 indicate that 2% of registered architects are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

### ***Future research***

6. Other professions have researched the issue of minority ethnic representation and section four summarises findings from research studies in law, planning, higher education and medicine. This would provide a valuable reference point for any future work in architecture.
7. The paper concludes by identifying a range of quantitative and qualitative research options that would help to fill in the significant gaps in information about the architecture students and practitioners from minority ethnic backgrounds. CABE intends to work with partners to commission further work in this area during 2002.

## **2. Introduction**

The Policy Studies Institute is an Independent Research Institute, with a track record in carrying out research on minority ethnic groups and employment issues. We were approached by the Society of Black Architects, following a seminar on cultural diversity held at CABE in October 2001, to explore the potential for a research study into ethnicity and careers in architecture. Following an initial discussion with interested parties, it was agreed that CABE would make funding available for a scoping study, carried out under the guidance of a steering committee, which could inform the tendering process for any future research into these issues. The following individuals were members of the steering committee:

- Sunand Prasad (Penoyre and Prasad and CABE)
- Elsie Owusu (Society of Black Architects)
- Kate Anderton (CABE)
- Ben Castell (CABE)
- Hilary Clarke (CABE)

The steering committee provided invaluable insights, comments and suggestions. However, the views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the steering committee, CABE or the Society of Black Architects.

This report is the outcome of that process. The purpose of this document is to:

- identify existing research and data sources on ethnicity and careers in architecture
- identify research and data relating to ethnicity and careers in comparable professions
- identify possible areas for future research into ethnicity and careers in architecture and their cost implications.

## **3. Background**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Despite the existence of policies aimed at increasing racial equality in the UK many disparities remain. Such inequalities manifest themselves in all aspects of life, including educational and career prospects. Despite the fact that minority ethnic groups are on average more likely to have a degree<sup>1</sup> they are less likely to be in employment, more likely to be unemployed and they earn less than white individuals, to name just a few observable inequalities.<sup>2</sup> One aim of future research into 'Ethnicity and Architecture' should be to try and establish to what extent:

- the picture in architecture overlaps or diverges from overall observed facts and comparable professions
- ethnic differences are due to racism/discrimination as opposed to being 'explainable' by differences in socio-economic characteristics. This last distinction is of course not absolutely clear cut but important as it has different policy implications.

Further evidence on the situation of minority ethnic groups in architectural education and the architectural profession is presented below. As in the remainder of the report we consider the educational process separately from the employment situation. This seemed appropriate as these are two distinct areas and as they differ greatly with regard to data availability, suitable research methods and issues arising.

The educational process is described first, followed by some basic statistics on minority ethnic groups entering architectural education. The section finishes with a brief review of the situation in employment.

### **3.2 The Educational Process**

#### **3.2.1 The Structure of the Educational Process**

For architecture, the qualification process is longer than most higher education courses, though it is comparable with some of the higher professions such as law and

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<sup>1</sup> According to Figures from the Labour Force Survey (LFS, 2000, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter), 19 per cent of minority ethnic groups of working age (20-59) have a first or higher degree whereas this number is only 14 per cent for their white counterparts. However, individuals from minority ethnic groups are more likely to have no qualifications than white individuals. See also Modood *et al.* (1997) and Wadsworth (2001).

<sup>2</sup> There are a number of recent studies devoted to the performance of minority ethnic groups in the educational process and the labour market. Among them Wadsworth (2001) and the report published by the Cabinet office on February 20, 2002.

medicine. Basic architecture education consists of five years of study, plus two years of professional practice. Completing these seven years of training is a precondition for registration with the Architect's Registration Board (ARB) and to practice as a chartered architect in the UK. Architecture education is completed in three parts:

- Part I is 3 years (similar to other degree level courses)
- Part II (also called Diploma) is 2 years
- Part III (Examination in Professional Practice and Management)

Before sitting Part III students must complete 2 years professional practice under the guidance of an ARB registered architect. Professional practice can be completed in two parts, one year after Part I and the other year after Part II.

### ***Schools of Architecture***

There are 36 ARB and RIBA validated schools of architecture in the UK. At the undergraduate level (Part I), most schools provide the 'standard' BSc or BA in architecture courses. Some schools also run combined or specialist degrees, for instance in 'Architecture and Planning' or 'Architecture and Technology' or 'Architectural Structures'.

### ***Entry qualifications***

The RIBA offers schools of architecture with recognised courses the following guidance on minimum entry requirements:

Candidates should have passes in 2 subjects at the Advanced level or 1 subject at A-level with 2 AS-levels of the GCE together with passes in at least 5 GCSE subjects. Both the GCE A level subjects should be drawn from academic fields of study. GCSE subjects should include maths, English language and a separate science (physics or chemistry), or a double award in science. Ideally, students should have had a broad secondary education which encompassed a mixture of arts and sciences.

Students with suitable GNVQ/BTEC Diplomas or Certificates and GCSEs can be accepted by schools of architecture (*RIBA Website*). Information on entry qualifications for each school of architecture can be obtained from the schools.

### ***Funding***

'While architecture is a long course, both parts of the five-year degree are eligible for student loans and means-assessed tuition fees' (*RIBA Website*). Nevertheless, the prospect of funding a five-year course, to be followed by a professional practice period that is likely to be relatively low paid could be an important factor affecting initial choice of subject for prospective students. There are differences between the circumstances of different minority ethnic groups, but their overall social and economic profile is lower than that of the white population. Minority ethnic families could, therefore, be at a disadvantage and less able to fund a long education process

for their children. The same could be said of white families of working class/low income origin.

Minority ethnic students seem to be entering higher education at a later age (Modood *et al.*, 1997) and are more likely to be mature students. Mature students constitute a particularly disadvantaged group with regards to funding and could find it especially difficult to start and finish a longer than average course.

### **3.2.2 Minority Ethnic Groups and Architectural Education**

According to UCAS statistics from 2001, summarised in Table I (see Appendix), 76% of *all university applicants* were of white origin, 8% did not declare their ethnicity and 15% were of minority ethnic origin and 1% were of mixed race (white and another minority ethnic group). 78% of those *accepted on a degree course* were white, 1% was of mixed race, 7% did not declare their ethnic origin and 14% were of minority ethnic origin. These figures suggest that the representation of minority ethnic groups among applicants and acceptances in higher education is *higher than* their representation in the population as a whole. This tallies with the fact the individuals from minority ethnic groups are more likely to have a degree or higher qualification.

Within the category of Architecture, Planning & Building, 83% of *all applicants* were white, 7% did not declare their ethnicity, fewer than 1% were of mixed race and 9% were of ethnic minority origin. Looking at those *accepted on a degree course* in Architecture, Planning & Building, 78% of those accepted were white, 10% did not declare their ethnic origin, fewer than 1% were of mixed race and 11% were of minority ethnic origin. Thus, the representation of minority ethnic groups in Architecture, Planning & Building is *lower than* for higher education as a whole.

There are some differences between different ethnic groups, but for minority ethnic applicants, the probability of being accepted on a degree course is *higher* in Architecture, Planning & Building than for all subjects. While for white students the probability of acceptances is lower on an Architecture, Planning and Building course (60%) compared to all subjects (77%) the situation is reversed for minority ethnic students. They have a 75% acceptance probability in Architecture, Planning and Building compared to 70% for all subjects.

The on-line available UCAS data does not allow for specific analysis for Architecture students, but this should be possible to obtain from the original data set. (Details of the data available from UCAS is discussed below, in Section 3.2)

The RIBA Education Survey (see Table 2 in Appendix) provides some insight into the situation in architecture. The RIBA Education Department has been collecting information about architecture students since 1980s, but ethnicity data has been included only since 1995/96. The information is about the ethnic backgrounds of Part I entrants. Data on Part II entrants have been collected for the 2000/2001 academic year. In all the surveys not all the schools provided ethnicity data either because they did not collect ethnicity data or because they were unwilling to disclose it.

The lower numbers of minority ethnic students compared to the UCAS data might reflect the different definition of the study subject. UCAS data is for the broader group Architecture, Building & Planning while the RIBA figures only include architecture.

In 2000/2001, for the first time ethnicity information was collected for the different stages of study. 9% of those entering Part I and 8% of those completing Part I were of minority ethnic origin. 9% of those entering Part II were from minority ethnic groups, while this figure drops to 4% among those completing Part II. Finally, the proportion of Part III completers is 4%. This suggests a high dropout rate for minority ethnic students, with the highest drop being recorded during Part II. These percentage figures have to be interpreted with some caution as they are based on small numbers. A small change in absolute number (for example: one more school reporting with two more minority ethnic students) can shift percentages considerably.

### **3.3 Employment**

According to the ARB register, there are over 30,000 registered Architects in the UK. Registration with ARB is compulsory under the Section 20 of the Architects Act, 1997. Completing all three parts of the architecture education is a requirement for registration, with additional requirements for those qualified in EU countries and for those with other overseas qualifications. RIBA, the professional association of architects has over 32,000 members. Registration with RIBA is not compulsory. Furthermore, RIBA members include students and overseas members and subscribers from the general public. Information about minority ethnic architects is very limited. The ARB does not collect ethnic origin information.

RIBA has been conducting an 'Architect's Employment & Earnings Survey' since 1970. An ethnic origin question was included between 1991 and 1994 (inclusive), dropped in 1995 (for reasons unknown) and reintroduced in 2001. The 2001 Survey is based on a sample of RIBA members. It indicates that about 2% of RIBA registered architects are from minority ethnic origin.

## **4. Existing Data Sets**

In this section we discuss in some detail existing data sources and their suitability to study minority ethnic groups in architecture. It will be apparent that there is a wealth of information on the educational side but hardly anything on employment issues. There is also relatively little data on the important intersection of education and employment during the professional practice period. Some of the information given here reiterates what was said earlier. However, we feel it is important to bring all information on existing data sets together.

### **4.1 General**

There are a number of large national data sets containing information about ethnicity, education, a number of socio-economic characteristics, labour market status and in some cases wages. However, despite their large scales they are not suitable to study minority ethnic groups in architecture. The largest of these national surveys is the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS is a quarterly survey with each quarter containing information on about 140,000 individuals. However, of these only about 75,000 are of working age (20 to 60), and among them only about 100 are architects. The number of architects from a minority ethnic background is below five. Thus, even pooling a number of quarters would leave too few architects from a minority ethnic background for a meaningful quantitative analysis.

A much larger data set is of course the Census 1991<sup>3</sup>. However, full Census data is not available on an individual level. There are three sets of data on hand. Unfortunately, none of them is – in our opinion – suitable to study the issue of ethnicity and careers in architecture. Our judgement is based on information readily available on the Internet. There might be changes in access for the 2001 Census which should be further investigated. The three available data sets are:

- i) Published Tables based on the full Census. There is information on minority ethnic groups but not by occupation.
- ii) Published Tables based on a 10% sample of the Census. Most information on economic activity falls into this category. The problem here is that the occupations are very broad<sup>4</sup>, and architecture is not one of them.
- iii) There is a 2% individual sample available, i.e. 1.1 million records. From the documentation available it is not clear, whether occupation is recorded in more detail for this 2% sample. Even if architects could be identified, we would predict fewer than 50 minority ethnic architects (prediction based on proportions in LFS, see above). Furthermore, the Census does not contain any wage or income information.

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<sup>3</sup> Data from the 2001 Census will be available in 2003.

<sup>4</sup> The nine categories are: Managers and administrators, Professional occupations, Associate professional occupations, Clerical and secretarial occupations, Craft and related occupations, Personal and protective service occupations, Sales occupation, Plant and machine operatives, and other occupations.

## 4.2 Education

There is quite a wide range of information about the representation of minority ethnic students in architecture. These are set out below.

### **RIBA Education Statistics**

RIBA has been commissioning a survey of all schools of architecture since the 1980s. This is a specialist survey providing information only about students of architecture, excluding Planning and Building students. There have been some changes to the content of the survey over the years, but in relation to student profiles, the data collected included mainly the following:

- Applications to Part I
- New entrants to Part I and Part II
- Examination results
- Number of overseas students
- Number of women students on Part I and Part II and their examination pass rates

Information on the ethnic origin of students began to be collected in 1995/96.<sup>5</sup>

The ethnicity classification used in the survey allows for a distinction to be made between four groups:

- White
- West Indian/African
- Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi
- Other/Not disclosed.

The published report provides information about the number of Part I entrants by ethnic origin. Data on the ethnic origins of Part II entrants and Part III completers were collected for the first time in 2000/2001. The published survey reports, which are available from RIBA, do not provide information about individual schools, as this is considered confidential.

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<sup>5</sup> Although all schools of architecture seem to have participated in the surveys, not all of them recorded or provided information about the ethnic origin of their students. The number of schools providing this information seems to have fluctuated and peaked at 23 in 1995/96 and 1999/2000. Depending on the ethnic minority intake of those schools that did not provide ethnicity information, the proportion of minority students would be expected to rise or fall correspondingly.

### **Higher Education Statistics**

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and supplies data on higher education students. Data collected is comprehensive and begins with the 1994/95 academic year. The latest published figures are for 1999/2000. In all HESA publications, information about minority ethnic origin students is based on those who declare their ethnicity; those refusing to provide this information are excluded.

HESA statistics include information on the mode of study (part-time or full-time), level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate), domicile (home or overseas), subject, age, gender, institution, ethnicity, exam results and disability. Statistics for each year are available from HESA in print and electronic formats. The published report includes some information about all minority ethnic students. However, this information is not easily interpretable and it is not possible to derive information specifically on architecture students.

HESA also published two specialist Research Datapacks on Ethnicity in Higher Education for the 1994/95 and 1996/97 academic years. These Datapacks include information about demographic characteristics, entry qualifications, choices of study programmes and institutions, qualifications obtained and first destinations after course completion. These Datapacks contain more detailed information about minority ethnic students and may allow for an easier extraction of data on architecture students. The Datapacks are obtainable from HESA both in print and electronic format.

Individual level data seems to be available from HESA, which would allow customer determined analyses.

### **UCAS Statistics**

UCAS publishes information about all applicants and accepted applicants. Data collected by UCAS includes information about subject, institutions, age, region, qualifications, ethnicity and social class. This information is available in various formats. Annual Statistical Tables are available for 1994-2001. Summaries of these data sets are also provided. There is an On-line Statistical Enquiry Service which allows users to extract some specific data about ethnic minority students.<sup>6</sup> The Annual Datasets run from 1996-2001. They are stored in Excel Spreadsheets containing subsets of all variables. These can be converted into individual data to conduct further analyses. However, it would not be possible to link the different subsets. UCAS might be prepared to make more comprehensive data sets available.

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<sup>6</sup> This is how we obtained the information contained in Table I.

### **4.3 Employment**

In comparison with education, data sources on employment are very scarce. The only one we are aware of is the RIBA Architects' Employment and Earnings Survey. This has been carried out annually since 1970. The survey is based on a random sample of all architects, but the latest survey sampled RIBA members only, due to the unavailability of data from ARB. It seems that the sample excludes retired and overseas resident members. It would also be expected that Student Members and Subscriber Members were excluded, but this cannot be confirmed from the survey report. Ethnic background information was first collected between 1991-1994, and again in 2001. Asking the authors of the report (Mirza and Nacey) did not reveal any further information about why the ethnicity question was dropped for the 1995 survey and reintroduced in 2001.

## **5. Existing Studies**

The position of minority ethnic groups in the labour market as a whole is well documented. By contrast, the representation of minority ethnic groups in architecture is largely under researched. The information collected by RIBA on students and professionals is largely descriptive. The sections below provide details of studies carried out in comparable professions.

### **Minority ethnic groups in Law**

A Law Society Survey of 1988 (as quoted in King *et al.*, 1990) revealed that only 1.5% of all practising solicitors were from minority ethnic groups, but this has increased in recent years. According to the latest Law Society Annual Statistics Report, in 1999-2000, solicitors from minority ethnic groups accounted for 7.6% of all solicitors on the roll and 6.1% of solicitors with practising certificates. The King *et al.* study of 1990 looking into the position of minorities in the solicitor's profession found that:

- More minority students than white students come from manual backgrounds (20% compared with 11%). Minority students are older, more likely to come from major urban areas and more likely to study at polytechnics and other colleges of higher education, have relatively lower point scores on entry. The largest ethnic group is Asians, followed by Chinese, Black Caribbean, Black African and Malay
- In searching for trainee (articled clerk) positions, minority ethnic candidates sent twice as many applications, but received fewer interview offers
- Career advice obtained, school record, family background, and contacts in the profession were suggested as factors to be influential in obtaining articles
- Minority ethnic applicants were twice as likely as white applicants to be asked questions about their family background in the interviews, and fewer of them found articles with commercial firms
- There was no difference between minority ethnic and white finalists in terms of their job moves after completion of articles
- There was no difference in the salaries paid
- Minority ethnic finalists are more likely to work in small practices
- Minority ethnic students tended to blame outside factors such as discrimination when they were unable to obtain articles, while white students blamed themselves.

The Law Society commissioned a cohort study, which followed half of all entrants into law degrees and CPE courses in England and Wales for six years, about 4,000 people. The questionnaire and design of this cohort study would form a good basis for any future parallel study on the architectural profession.

The findings for the different waves are reported in different studies:

- Halpern, D. (1994)
- Shiner, M. and Newburn, T. (1995)
- Shiner, M. (1997)
- A further report (on years 5/6 of the cohort) was due for publication in 1999. However, we have been unable to trace it.

Key aims of the research:

- What are the educational and social backgrounds of those entering the legal professions and how representative are they of the general population?
- How do the interests and intentions of potential lawyers change as they progress through college and beyond?
- What levels of wastage are there along the routes to the legal professions and what happens to those who do not become lawyers?
- What are the factors that influence individuals' career choices and whether or not they become lawyers?
- Do gender, age, and ethnicity affect the career paths of those hoping to enter the professions, and if so, how and when?

Key findings year 1 and 2:

- Slightly more women than men were doing undergraduate law degrees
- People from minority ethnic groups were not under-represented (14% of home undergraduate law students and 8% of Common Professional Examination (CPE) students) compared to 6.9% of population as whole and 11% of the University sector as a whole. But Black and minority ethnic students were most concentrated in the new universities and least concentrated in Oxbridge and (amongst CPE students) the College of Law
- 1 in 5 had a close relative in the legal profession and people were assessed as 10 to 20 times more likely to pursue a law degree if one parent was a lawyer
- 25% of law undergraduates (and 44% of those doing CPE) were from independent schools (cf 14% in university sector as a whole)
- Those who attended Oxbridge had a much better chance of obtaining places on Legal Practice Courses (LPC, to become a solicitor)

- Even once academic performance was controlled for, those from minority ethnic groups, those who had attended a comprehensive or secondary modern school and those who had been at a new university had a relatively poor chance of obtaining a training contract.

#### Key findings year 3 and 4:

- Finance was a key reason why people did not progress to LPC or Bar Vocational Course (BVE) after their degree or CPE. Of those who did do the courses,  $\frac{3}{4}$  ended up in debt, and these debts were considerable (average £5000 (LPC) or £6000 (BVC) at 1993 prices)
- Those who had taken CPE courses found it easier to progress through all later stages. These were already the most privileged group (white, attended independent schools and highly qualified parents) and this tended to increase advantages exponentially
- Discrimination and harassment were widespread. Pupil barristers were more than twice as likely as trainee solicitors to have experienced harassment or discrimination in the workplace. One third of all pupils from a minority ethnic background reported experiences of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of ethnicity
- Of solicitors, women were less likely than men to be working in private practice. People from less privileged social backgrounds were under-represented in City firms and over-represented in high-street firms. People from minority ethnic groups were particularly likely to find jobs in small high-street practices, over and above what would be expected from their stated interests, which seems to reflect patterns of recruitment by 'Black' firms
- Access to BVC appeared to be fully explained by academic qualifications. But access to pupillage was harder for those with law degrees (as opposed to CPE), especially non-Oxbridge law degrees, disabled people and those from less privileged social backgrounds (but no differences were observed by age, gender or ethnicity)
- Work experience was the key to progression in career. Family links could provide work placements. This was often unpaid or poorly paid, so that students who needed to earn money could lose out on relevant work experience. Many people tend to get their first job with the chambers where they were a pupil or with the law firm where they trained, so access is a key determinant of later progress

#### **Minorities in Higher Education**

Carter *et al.* (1999) find that about 6-6.5% of academic staff in UK higher education institutions are non-white, and just over half of them are non-British nationals. Chinese, Asian Other and Indian groups are the largest groups, accounting for three quarters of non-white academic staff. Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black Other are significantly under represented in academic posts. Non-white staff

are more likely to be in medical schools, pre-1992 universities, least in colleges and post-1992 universities.

Minority staff are more likely to be in research-only posts. The greater difference is between British and Non-British staff. The latter are highly concentrated in research-only, fixed term, post-doctoral posts. Women in all groups are less likely to be in academic work, more likely to be in fixed term contracts and in part-time posts, and less likely to be in senior posts. Women from minority ethnic groups are the most disadvantaged.

Other key findings include:

- A third of institutions did not have a racial equality policy. Of those which did, six out of ten covered recruitment, just over half covered career progression and only four out of ten covered contract status. Three quarters of all institutions monitor job applications by ethnicity, but only a quarter had made policy decisions on the basis of these. Monitoring internal promotions, grievance and disciplinary procedures is less common
- One in four reported experiences of discrimination in job applications (this rises to 30% among non-British), 15% in promotions, and one in five from staff or students
- Between 40-50% of all respondents were sceptical about their institution's commitment to Equal Opportunities
- 55% of British minorities believed 'greatly' or 'partly' that there is discrimination in Higher Education employment
- Minority staff resent being typecast by ethnicity, nationality and gender, which results in the marginalisation of minorities and their concerns.

### ***Minorities in the Planning Profession***

A recent study (Ahmed, *et al.*, 1998) of the representation of minority ethnic groups in the planning profession identified the findings below:

- The overall qualification level (to A levels or to degree level) of minority ethnic groups is at least as high as that of whites – and higher for some groups (e.g. Asians), but people from a minority ethnic background tend to enter High Education at a later age and with more varied entry qualifications. (see p.18 for further details)
- Awareness of planning as a career option is very limited. This is true for the general population and even more so for minorities
- 1.1% of the RTPI Corporate Members describe themselves as being of minority origin, whereas 4.3% of Student members describe themselves as ethnic minority.

- The proportion of minority students was
  - 1992/93: 1.9% among full-time and 9.1% among part-time students
  - 1993/94: 3.0% among full-time and 0.0% among part-time students
  - 1994/95: 1.7% among full-time and 9.3% among part-time students

The 1993/94 figures seem odd and RTPI note (p. 15) “RTPI wishes to point out the Data supplied by Planning Schools may not be completely reliable in terms of comprehensiveness or accuracy”

- Minority ethnic students are over-represented at the postgraduate level
- Both in planning and housing, the majority of public sector employers include an equal opportunity statement in the adverts. In the private sector of the planning profession, 62% did not have an EOP statement
- A survey of RTPI corporate members and former student members was conducted. Aims and some findings are listed in the report, but the number of respondents (38) and the response rate (14%) are too small to draw any valid conclusions from these

### ***Minorities in Medicine***

We have found relatively little on minority ethnic groups in medicine. A study of doctor’s careers by Allen (1994) contains relatively little on minority ethnic groups. The two main findings with regard to minorities are:

- Among the cohort of doctors that qualified in 1986:
  - White – 91%
  - Black Caribbean – Fewer than 1% (no women)
  - Pakistani – 1% (2% of women and no men)
  - Chinese – 2% (3% of women and no men)
  - Mixed – 2%
- When asked ‘Whether doctors think they have ever failed to get a job because of their ethnic origin’, 5% of the men and 2% of the women said Yes. (NOTE: 7 respondents only). Among men, discrimination had mainly taken place at Senior House Officer (SHO) level, although two men reported it at registrar level, while women reported it at GP trainee or GP principal posts

A more recent study by Allen (1996) looked at minority ethnic doctors in more detail. However, the study was concerned with the complaints procedure and possible discrimination in the process of complaints. As such it is a very specialised study and not of direct relevance for the study of minority ethnic groups in a profession as a whole.

A recent study not reviewed here is Coker (2001). The GMC and BMA websites revealed no further research or studies into the subject.

## **6. Views of Stakeholders**

Improving the access of minority ethnic groups to education and employment within the architectural profession will need to involve a range of stakeholders. These include professional bodies, employers, employment agencies, educational institutions and interest groups. The profession may also benefit from the experiences of related bodies which have been seeking to address similar issues within other professions, such as law and medicine. As part of the scoping study, we contacted a number of people from these groups, and asked them to identify key issues facing people from minority ethnic groups entering or seeking to make progress in the architectural profession. These included:

- 2 specialist recruitment agencies
- 2 large architectural practices from the AJ top 12
- 3 people involved in teaching architecture
- 2 practising architects from a minority ethnic background
- 1 representative of a professional body
- 1 representative of a local government body

The following sections report key issues which were highlighted by these discussions. Their implications for future research are identified in section 7.

### **6.1 Education**

Of those who were currently teaching architecture students, one person particularly emphasised the socio-economic background of many students from minority ethnic groups, and the effects which this can have on their academic performance. Many of those studying in London were said to be still living with parents and siblings, in homes which were often lacking in space and facilities for preparing drawings and models. Part-time jobs, taken on to cope with low incomes, were also said to be something which could make it harder to concentrate on the course. The extent to which ethnicity and social class can combine to create disadvantage was mentioned by many of those we spoke to, and it was felt to be important that any future research attempts to separate out these issues as far as possible.

One person felt that addressing the lack of theoretical debate and representation around issues of ethnicity and diaspora in the discipline was considerably more important than simply seeking to increase the number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds. Two lecturers described the curriculum as failing totally to address traditions of architectural design other than European, and one lecturer described an overseas student (who had subsequently dropped out of the course) being mocked savagely for producing a design scheme using low-tech construction methods which are in common use in her country of origin. The overwhelming lack of role models was said to be something which could make it harder for students from black and minority ethnic groups to feel a 'sense of belonging' within the discipline and the profession, and tutors from minority ethnic backgrounds were aware of the additional responsibilities this placed on them. One person commented that the drop out from Part I may be in large part due to the increasing use of

architecture as a 'general purpose' degree. However, this would not account for a variation in rates of dropout by students from differing ethnic groups.

The process of professional identity formation was seen as important both by those involved in teaching and by architects from minority ethnic backgrounds. The five years after qualification were described by one architect as absolutely crucial, both in terms of getting the experience required, and in terms of developing self-confidence and a strong professional identity through achieving success. Experiences of discrimination during this period could therefore be particularly damaging. An architect who had herself been unfairly selected for redundancy early in her career described how she had failed to recognise this as discrimination at the time, and had experienced a crisis of confidence about her abilities. Architects from minority ethnic groups highlighted the tensions between a professional identity based on high levels of ability in design and the dangers of being stereotyped on the grounds of ethnicity. One said 'I want to be seen as a good architect, full stop, and only incidentally as from an ethnic minority'. Several people we spoke to expressed concern that developing practices or training schemes aimed at providing more opportunities for architects from minority ethnic groups was a good idea, but could result in 'ghettos' of particular types of work, especially in the social and community sector.

## **6.2 Employment**

Discussions with stakeholders suggest that important issues in employment include problems obtaining placements for professional practice experience, the absence of role models and mentors for newly qualified minority ethnic architects entering the workplace, and fairly widespread experiences of direct and indirect discrimination. For some students from minority ethnic backgrounds the professional practice placement was argued to be a first encounter with discrimination in the profession, either being unable to obtain a placement or having negative experiences in work. We were told that very few practices have equal opportunities policies, and there was argued to be some resistance to the concept of equal opportunities in the profession as a whole, as this is seen to imply a commitment to 'social' aims at the expense of good design and advancement based on meritocracy. For this reason, it was said that even firms with equal opportunities policies do not always include a statement to this effect when advertising jobs.

Both agencies we spoke to said that over 95 per cent of practices ask people to send in CVs rather than standardised application forms, and both practices we spoke to confirmed that this was the procedure adopted. The use of standardised application forms is usually seen as a prerequisite for the implementation of equal opportunities policies, and was a key recommendation arising from the cohort studies into the legal professions. One large practice described itself as having an equal opportunities policy but was unable to say whether this was referred to in advertisements and did not carry out ethnic monitoring of its workforce, which was described as being 'fairly typical of the profession as a whole - mainly male and white'. Some organisations require contractors to provide information on equal opportunities and workforce composition. One person working in a local government body commented that while some firms appear to collect this routinely, it more often appears to have been collected specifically in relation to a particular tender. He also commented that

while such schemes are intended to encourage and reward good practice, there is a danger that they can lead to the selection of large firms which have the capacity to produce the required paperwork, rather than those which have the most genuine commitment to implementing equal opportunities.

Progress within the profession was seen to be often linked to the extent to which people were perceived as willing to put in long hours and their success in gaining commissions for practices, rather than their design ability as such. Access to work on prestigious projects was described as a key element in building a career portfolio. Firms in the private sector were described as extremely conservative and risk averse, and often reluctant to give a young architect from a minority ethnic background the vital 'break' they need early in their career. Local government and the social housing sector were seen as offering more scope for progress for people from minority ethnic groups. In private practice, recruitment to associate or partnership level was described as largely an informal process, although one practice we spoke to uses an annual performance appraisal, and was in the process of standardising this across its various branches with the aim of ensuring equitable outcomes.

## **7. Potential Research**

### **7.1 Introduction**

One aim of this scoping study is to identify possible areas for future research into ethnicity and careers in architecture and their cost implications. First, we discuss some cost implications in general, followed by a list of possible research themes and topics. This list is not comprehensive and contains general as well as more specific ideas. More detailed research suggestions and costings of such projects would be part of the tendering process (should CABA wish to commission more research) and it would be inappropriate and misleading to attempt to cost them at this stage

### **7.2 Cost Implications**

#### **7.2.1 Analyses**

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses could feature as part of future research.

Thorough **quantitative** analyses of existing data (including ordering and preparation of data sets, descriptive analyses, statistical/econometric modelling) will cost in the region of £20,000 – 50,000 depending on the number of different data sets considered, the number of research questions and the extent of the econometric and statistical modelling.

Meaningful **qualitative** studies would normally include 40/60 depth interviews and/or 5 focus group discussions. Preparing and conducting the interviews and group discussion, reviewing, organizing and analysing the resulting material would cost around £40,000 – 60,000 for each broad topic area.

#### **7.2.2 Data Collection**

Data collection is generally expensive. It is most important to consider ‘sampling’ issues carefully, i.e. who should be questioned, how many (employers, employees, members etc.) should be included, should there be over-sampling of specific sub-groups (minority ethnic groups in this case). Also critical is the design of the questionnaire. Both activities are difficult to cost in general terms. Sampling issues should be considered by tendering institutions.

Postal questionnaires would be the most economical option, even though they generally result in relatively low response rates compared to face-to-face interviews. However, response rates can be influenced by reminding individuals and by organisational endorsement of the questionnaire, i.e. covering letter from CABA, RIBA or ARB. The cost of producing, sending out and processing a postal questionnaire is a minimum of about £10 per questionnaire.

#### **7.2.3 Cost Sharing**

As the cost of any future research project are considerable, CABA might consider sharing costs with other potential sponsors. The following list contains ideas of potential co-sponsors and is not comprehensive in any way:

- Other organisations within the architectural profession (RIBA, ARB, large practices)

- Organisations concerned with professional development and working life (Industrial Society)
- Charitable Organisations (Nuffield Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Leverhulme Trust)
- Government Departments (Commission for Racial Equality, Department for Education and Skills, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Trade and Industry)

### **7.3 Research Themes**

There are a number of different methods to conduct further research into the topic. Here we present some of them briefly before we discuss potential research topics and themes. These topics were derived from our examination of the subject, from studies in other professions and from the discussions we had with stakeholders. Where possible we indicate which of the methods would be most appropriate to investigate a specific topic/theme. As before we distinguish the educational process from the situation in the profession. However, some topics could not be classified easily and are reported under the heading 'General'. These lists are an eclectic collection of ideas and are by no means comprehensive.

#### **7.3.1 Methods**

Each of the methods below is given a symbol which is used below in the section on research themes to indicate which method(s) would be appropriate to investigate specific themes.

**Quantitative analyses of existing data sets** give a descriptive picture of the situation. Statistical and econometric methods can be used to account for observed differences (for example: can the observed difference in the representation of different ethnic groups in the student population be accounted for by differences in their observed characteristics) and some relationships can be modelled (for example: which are the variables explaining the probability of acceptance to an architectural course).

**Qualitative methods** are more suitable to investigate *why* certain things happen. They can shed light on the black-box left by descriptive quantitative analyses. For example: A quantitative analysis might reveal a particularly high dropout rate at a certain stage of the architectural training. The role of qualitative methods would be to find out more about why and in what circumstances students drop out.

**Data collection** for quantitative analysis might be necessary where there is no existing data in an area of special interest. This could be by postal questionnaires, telephone or personal interview. The former is the most economical option; personal interviews the most expensive.

- Employer survey
- 'Employee' survey based on the sample of all practicing architects, thus also covering self-employed architects

- Survey of Architectural schools

Conducting a **Cohort study** would be a special case of data collection. It would involve selecting a group (for example students entering the first year of architectural education) and following them over a longer time period. Data collection for a cohort study could be done with all the approaches discussed above and also involve a qualitative element if one opts for personal depth interviews. There is the added problem (and cost) to finding the same individuals after a given time period (normally a year).

A cohort study has the great advantage that it would also include 'drop-outs' (people who left the educational process or the profession) which would not normally be covered with the other research methods discussed above (for example if architects change their profession they would not be on the ARB register anymore.)

One disadvantage of cohort studies is that it takes time to get results. Even if one started with 2002 entrants it would take nearly 10 years to get some first feedback on the situation in employment.

### **7.3.2 General**

- The importance of role models (and of wider issues of representation in the theory and practice of the discipline) in education and the profession. Methods: cohort study, qualitative methods
- The importance of networking, family links etc. Methods: cohort study, qualitative methods
- Set-up and evaluation of (formal or informal) mentoring schemes. Methods: cohort study, employer survey, qualitative methods
- Theoretical/academic research into the identity formation of architects as professionals (and of other professions such as law or medicine). Methods: this might be an area for a PhD studentship
- There would be some scope for qualitative research into the opportunities and barriers faced by people from minority ethnic groups at particular stages of their careers. Methods: qualitative methods.

### **7.3.3 Education**

- Architecture education is a more time and finance intensive course than most other higher education courses. The structure of the education process may also render it more vulnerable to discontinuity and therefore to non-completion. An examination of the qualification process should be a part of an investigation into the position of minority ethnic groups in Architecture. This could include a consideration of what each stage consists of in terms of professional development, transitions between the stages, time it takes to finish each part in practice, and whether this structure is likely to disadvantage ethnic minority applicants.

Methods: quantitative analysis, qualitative methods, cohort study.

- Information about the ethnic minority intake of each architecture school would be useful. If in addition to the established 'hierarchy' of schools, there are schools of architecture which are seen as the particular preserve of minority ethnic groups, the impact of any such division, and the 'label' of the architectural qualification on employment prospects could be significant. Similarly, it needs to be established, whether the various 'architecture related' courses lead to different avenues of practice in the profession, and how minority ethnic groups are represented in these courses.

Methods: quantitative analysis, survey of architectural schools.

- A detailed examination of entry qualifications required by each school, their respective ethnic minority intake and qualification profiles of ethnic minority applicants & acceptances could be carried out:
  - investigating if there are divisions among schools of architecture, whereby certain schools recruit on the basis of more traditional 'A' level qualifications and may therefore exclude those with non-traditional qualifications
  - investigating if non-traditional qualifications are considered by architecture schools and to what extent this creates an advantage for minority ethnic applicants, who may be more likely to come from non-conventional backgrounds.

Methods: quantitative analyses, survey of architectural schools.

- An investigation of funding arrangements could include a study of how much courses cost in practice (course materials, etc.), what students think about it and the importance of financial difficulties & support through Part III (including an examination of the salaries available during professional practice). The study could examine:
  - to what extent funding is a factor in effecting the initial choice of subject
  - the social class profile of architecture students
  - differences within minority groups by class
  - the effects of funding arrangements on 'mature' students

Methods: qualitative methods, cohort study.

- A detailed study into the representation of minority ethnic groups at different stages of the educational process. The analysis would also try to account for under- or over-representation of any groups.

Methods: quantitative analysis, cohort study.

- Identifying whether there are differences in dropout rates by ethnic background and try to account for such differences. This could also include qualitative research into the reasons why people apply for, drop out or remain in architectural education and identify the types of support which would help them to continue

Methods: quantitative analysis, qualitative methods, survey of architectural schools, cohort study.

- The use of architecture as a general-purpose degree

Methods: quantitative analysis, cohort study.

### **7.3.4 Employment**

- A key issue in the legal profession which may also have salience to the architectural profession is that of segregation by area of expertise (social/commercial) and locality, as solicitors and barristers from minority ethnic groups are over-represented in the social sector, and tend to serve an inner-city population. There may also be value in examining the impact of recent efforts by bodies such as the Law Society and the bar Equal Opportunities Committee on recruitment and progression of minority ethnic groups in the legal profession.

Methods: employer survey, employee survey.

- Recruitment procedures (use of CVs vs. application forms, advertising, equal opportunities policies, use of agencies, standardisation across branches of large practices).

Methods: employer survey, employee survey.

- Different career and employment paths/histories.

Methods: employee survey, cohort study.

- Extent of ethnic monitoring in practices and agencies

Methods: employer survey.

- Career development in the first five years after qualification.

Methods: qualitative methods, cohort study.

- How individual architects within practices are selected to work on particular projects.

Methods: employer survey.

- Scope and evaluation for 'charter-marking' (e.g. like the Bar Mark, for barristers' chambers signed up to equal opportunities practices).

Methods: employer survey.

- The extent to which people from minority ethnic groups are over-represented in sole practice/small firms/social sector.  
Methods: employer survey, employee survey.
- Characteristics of employers in relation to the proportion of employees from minority ethnic background.  
Methods: employer survey, employee survey.
- Past and present subjective experiences of discrimination  
Methods: qualitative methods, cohort study.
- Wage discrimination  
Methods: quantitative analysis, employer survey, (employee survey).
- The importance of self-employment as a strategy to counter discrimination  
Methods: employee survey, cohort study.

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RIBA (various years) *Education Statistics*

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### **Consulted websites:**

ARB	<a href="http://www.arb.org.uk/">http://www.arb.org.uk/</a>
BMA	<a href="http://www.bma.org.uk/">http://www.bma.org.uk/</a>
Census	<a href="http://census.ac.uk/cdu/">http://census.ac.uk/cdu/</a>
Data Archive	<a href="http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/">http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/</a>
GMC	<a href="http://www.gmc-uk.org/">http://www.gmc-uk.org/</a>
HESA	<a href="http://www.hesa.ac.uk">http://www.hesa.ac.uk</a>
Law Society	<a href="http://www.lawsoc.org.uk">http://www.lawsoc.org.uk</a>
RIBA	<a href="http://www.architecture.com/">http://www.architecture.com/</a>
UCAS	<a href="http://www.ucas.ac.uk/">http://www.ucas.ac.uk/</a>

## Appendix

**Table I. UCAS applicants and degree acceptances by Ethnic Origin**

(Percentages in parenthesis)

Ethnic Origin	Population as a whole	All Subjects			Architecture, Planning & Building		
		Applicants	Degree acceptances	Acceptance probability	All applicants	Degree acceptances	Acceptance probability
White	51,874 (94.5)	302,636 (75.7)	231,370 (77.6)	76.5	6,362 (83.4)	3,845 (78.0)	60.4
Bangladeshi	163,000 (0.29)	3,278 (0.8)	2,148 (0.7)	65.5	18 (0.2)	16 (0.3)	88.9
Black African	212,000 (0.38)	8,546 (2.1)	5,494 (1.8)	64.3	102 (1.3)	82 (1.7)	80.4
Black Caribbean	500,000 (0.92)	4,823 (1.2)	3,058 (1.0)	63.4	60 (0.8)	45 (0.9)	75.0
Chinese	157,000 (0.28)	3,783 (0.9)	2,935 (1.0)	77.6	128 (1.7)	101 (2.1)	78.9
Indian	840,000 (1.53)	17,234 (4.3)	13,030 (2.3)	75.6	172 (2.3)	112 (2.3)	65.1
Pakistani	477,000 (0.86)	11,040 (2.8)	7,424 (2.5)	67.2	110 (1.4)	77 (1.6)	70.0
Ethnic other	376,000 (0.68)	10,499 (2.6)	7,542 (2.5)	71.8	116 (1.5)	109 (2.2)	94.0
Mixed Race	290,000 (0.52)	4,752 (1.2)	3,609 (1.2)	75.9	52 (0.7)	39 (0.8)	75.0
Unknown		33,054 (8.3)	21,447 (7.2)	64.9	5,06 (6.6)	501 (10.2)	99.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>399,645</b>	<b>298,057</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>7,626</b>	<b>4,927</b>	<b>64.1</b>

Source: Authors calculation from UCAS data. UCAS statistics include home students only. Population numbers from Modood *et al.* (1997, p. 13) based on Census 1991 data. 'Ethnic other': 'Black other' and 'other Asian' for Census data, other groups and mixed race within minority ethnic group for UCAS data. 'Mixed Race': 'other groups' for Census data; mixed White with minority ethnic group for UCAS data.

**Table 2: Minority Ethnic Students according to RIBA survey**

Academic Year	Number of schools providing ethnicity information	Entrants	Minority ethnic entrants	%
1995/96	23	1,279	84	6
1996/97	19	1,089	68	6
1997/98	21	1,252	81	6
1998/99	17	2,315	- <sup>a)</sup>	6
1999/2000	23	2,315	-	6
2000/2001	22	2,294	-	9 b)

Source: "RIBA Education statistics"

<sup>a)</sup> In the later reports only the percentage of minority ethnic students was published and actual numbers were not available.