



Ref: TP/SOL/2019

27 September 2019

The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
Palace of Westminster
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Dear Home Secretary

Ref: Migratory Advisory Committee Shortage Occupation List

I write on behalf of the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) and its fellow professional institutes, the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). We wish to highlight our concerns regarding the recommendations made in the recently published MAC report on the Shortage Occupation List (SOL).

We were disappointed to note that most construction professionals including Chartered Architectural Technologists, Chartered Surveyors, Chartered Construction Managers and others were not recommended for inclusion on the List despite the well-documented, critical skills shortage and ageing workforce in the UK construction industry.

There are numerous reports to support the need for skills and which illustrate the state of the sector. The CITB Construction Skills Network: Industry Insights: Labour Market Information 2019-2023¹ indicates a shortfall in all professional occupations and non-manual occupations. The second highest occupation required is for construction professionals and technical staff which has an annual recruitment requirement of 3260.

RICS' UK Construction and Infrastructure Market Survey² found that 30% of construction professionals surveyed believe that hiring non-UK workers was critical to the success of their businesses. A cross-industry research report: Shortage occupations in construction³ which was undertaken to support the continuing efforts by the UK construction industry to understand and manage skills shortages in construction surveyed more than 160,000 employees in the industry and highlights those professions that are consistently reported as shortage occupations, including Construction Project Managers, Production Managers and Directors in Construction and Chartered Surveyors.

¹ <https://www.citb.co.uk/documents/research/csn-reports-2019-2023/csn%20report%20for%20uk%202019-2023.pdf>

² <https://www.rics.org/uk/news-insight/research/market-surveys/uk-construction-and-infrastructure-survey/>

³ <https://builduk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Shortage-Occupations-in-Construction-A-cross-industry-research-report-January-2019.pdf>



The recently published Auger report May 2019 Independent panel report: Review of Post 18 Education and Funding⁴ states that Universities are being run as businesses and as a consequence they are not operating to meet the needs of industry or the economy as a priority. This is confirmed and evidenced by HESA and UCAS data which illustrates a significant shortfall in Architectural Technology, Construction Management and Building Surveying graduates.

In 2016, the Farmer Review⁵ was commissioned to evaluate the current and future state of the UK's construction labour model. One of the critical symptoms of failure and poor performance identified in the Review was workforce size and demographics. The Review highlighted a projected decline of 20-25% in the available labour force within a decade; a capacity shrinkage that would render the industry incapable of delivering the levels of GDP historically seen. Furthermore, it would undermine the UK's ability to deliver critical social and physical infrastructure, homes and built assets required by other industries to perform their core functions.

While it is welcome news that the Shortage Occupation List has been expanded to include architects, the UK needs a wider breadth of built environment professionals to ensure we can deliver on key government priorities from housebuilding to infrastructure. We would suggest that the need for occupations is based upon competence rather than title, and other construction professionals such as those mentioned above would undoubtedly be competent to undertake the important functions required in the construction industry.

We consider that the shortlisting and ranking of the SOL should be in synergy with societal, economic or environmental needs to address important issues such as - but not restricted to - the UK's housing shortage, quality control measures including health and safety (particularly in the wake of Grenfell) and new innovations, practices and technologies, through the engagement of *competent* professionals . We therefore suggest that the focus of MAC's recommendations should be on competence, skills needs and shortages rather than the job title or the profession. In fact, the Construction & Built Environment Education Advisory Committee and its Education Sub-Group are exploring the development of occupational mapping which would address supply, need and demand in local areas, considering which skills are needed and focusing on function rather than job title.

We invite you to consider our comments and review the MAC recommendations in view of this.

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805127/Review_of_post_18_education_and_funding.pdf

⁵ www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Farmer-Review.pdf



Yours sincerely

Francesca Berriman MBE
Chief Executive
Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists

Caroline Gumble
Chief Executive
Chartered Institute of Building

Matthew Howell
Managing Director, UK & Ireland
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Cc

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service

The Right Honourable Oliver Dowden CBE MP
Minister for the Cabinet Office

The Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education

The Rt Hon Stephen Barclay MP
Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union

Professor Alan Manning
Migratory Advisory Committee