cabe > architecture and race

A study of black and minority ethnic students in the profession

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1
Ethnic composition of first degree architecture students, compared to architecture, building & planning; law; medicine & dentistry and all subjects

Table 2.2
Ethnicity over time – Part I entrants to seven schools of architecture in England (1992/93 to 2000/01)

Table 2.3
Ethnicity over time – Part I entrants to schools of architecture in England (1992/93 to 2001/02)

Table 2.4
Ethnicity over time – UK (1996-2002)

Table 2.5
Ethnic origins of Part I, Part II and Part III entrants and completers in England in 2000/01 and 2001/02

Table 2.6
Gender composition of first degree architecture students by ethnicity, compared to architecture, building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

Table 2.7
Age profile of first degree architecture students by ethnicity, compared to architecture, building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

Table 2.8
Mode of study for first degree architecture students by ethnicity compared to architecture, building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

Table 2.9
Highest qualification on entry by ethnicity for first degree architecture students, compared to architecture, building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

Table 2.10
Degree classifications for first degree architecture students by ethnic origin, compared with architecture, building & planning, law and medicine & dentistry.

Table 2.11
Ethnicity and social class

Table 2.12
Profile of postgraduate architecture students; highest qualification on entry, age, mode of study and gender

ABBREVIATIONS

ARB
Architects' Registration Board

CABE
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

CAD
Computer Aided Design

FE
Further Education

HE
Higher Education

HESA
Higher Education Statistics Agency

PSA
Professional Studies Adviser

PSI
Policy Studies Institute

RIBA
Royal Institute of British Architects

SOBA
Society of Black Architects

UCAS
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

01 INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

01 INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) commissioned the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) to conduct a study into the experiences of minority ethnic students in architecture. The under-representation of minority ethnic groups in the architectural profession has given rise to concern for a number of years. An equal opportunities policy was adopted by the RIBA in February 2001 and Paul Hyett, in his role as president, has highlighted the need to improve accessibility for women and people from minority ethnic backgrounds. A pilot study carried out for CABE by PSI (Barnes et al, 2002) found that the representation of minority ethnic groups on architecture, planning and building courses was lower than for higher education as a whole, but that such students were more likely than white students to obtain a place when they applied. This indicates that low application rates by minority ethnic groups are one issue for the profession. Minority ethnic students also appear to have a high drop-out rate relative to white students once they have entered the architectural education process.

The research project reported on here aimed to identify the issues which arise for architecture students from different ethnic backgrounds as they progress, in particular:

- how and why do the interests and intentions of potential architects develop and change as they pass through the education and training system?

- what happens to those who do not become practising architects?

- what are the factors which influence the career choices of individuals and whether or not they become architects?

- what is the influence of ethnicity, social class, gender and age on experiences of the education system and the decision whether to continue at each stage?

- what is the proportion of minority ethnic students in architecture?

- does this proportion vary significantly by school, region, etc?

A key issue for the research was to differentiate issues in architectural education which were specific to ethnicity, from those relating to gender, age and social class.

The project incorporates quantitative analysis of data on entry and drop-out rates, as a context to a qualitative study of individuals' experiences of architectural education, training and practice.

1.1 THE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Descriptive analysis was carried out using data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and findings presented using cross-tabulations.[1] Note that in line with the remit of CABE the focus of the study is restricted to England.

The HESA Research Data Pack 11: Ethnicity of Students 1999/2000 was used to analyse the current representation and characteristics of minority ethnic students. It covers all UK domiciled students and allows a selective analysis of students studying at institutions in England. HESA data does not include students at private institutions and does not allow separate analysis for validated [2] schools of architecture.

Analysis of changes in the representation of minority ethnic groups over time and between stages of architectural education was conducted using the RIBA Education Statistics. The RIBA survey data for the period of 1992/93 to 2001/2002 has been made available to this study. It includes data from validated schools of architecture in the UK. Only data provided by schools in England were used in this study. RIBA advises that the 'other' category of the ethnicity classification may include students who did not declare their ethnic origins.

UCAS on-line data for 1996-2002 was used to analyse changes in representation over time, as well as for the analysis of social class and ethnicity. UCAS data is based on all acceptances to full-time degree courses. Tables available on-line do not allow an exploration of ethnicity or class for the single subject line of architecture. Thus, analysis presented in this report applies to the broad subject area of *architecture, planning & building.* Time-series analysis was performed for the whole of the UK, as separate data for England, Scotland and Wales is only available from 2000 onwards. UCAS ethnicity classification changed in 2000 as a new category of 'mixed' ethnicity was introduced.

As this brief summary of the data sources suggests, there are important differences between the three datasets in terms of population, regional and institutional coverage and ethnicity classifications. Further details of each dataset, including a discussion of the limitations of their interpretation are contained in Appendix 1.

---

1 'Cross-tabulation' is a term used to describe tables illustrating the relationship between two or more variables.
2 'Validation' is a process whereby standards in architectural education are monitored and schools that meet the minimum standards in teaching and assessment are identified. The standards set are considered to be necessary to prepare students for professional practice. The validation exercise is currently jointly operated by the RIBA and the Architects' Registration Board (ARB). There are 36 schools of architecture in the UK. Some schools offer both validated courses that count towards professional qualification requirements and other non-validated architecture related courses that do not.

1.2 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Six interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, who included representatives from architecture schools with large numbers of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, and from professional and networking organizations. The issues explored in these interviews included:

- perceptions of progress within the profession in terms of equal opportunities issues

- recent initiatives in policy and practice

- issues faced by students at various stages in their education and training

- perceptions of the relative importance of ethnicity, gender, age and social class as barriers to individual progress

- barriers and opportunities to progress in this area

Key informants were also able to identify architects from minority ethnic backgrounds who would be suitable for inclusion in the interview sample.

In order to develop the main interview sample, we developed a short screening questionnaire (see appendix 2) which asked respondents for information on ethnicity, age, gender, social class, institution(s) studied, current career stage and architectural practice experience. This was distributed through heads of school to a range of different types of institutions offering RIBA-accredited architecture courses throughout England. Students were asked to return questionnaires electronically, and to provide their contact details if they were willing to be interviewed about their experiences. Approximately equal proportions of responses were received from white and minority ethnic students, and the returned screening questionnaires were used to begin building the interview sample. However, no Part III students replied to this sampling method, and consequently the sample was supplemented by using 'snowballing' techniques (asking

interviewees for suggestions of social contacts who fell into certain key categories), distributing the questionnaire through targeted sources, including professional studies advisers, relevant organizations such as SOBA and the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, and through placing the questionnaire on the CABE website. The remainder of the sample was fulfiled in this way to ensure that the final sample consisted of a range of students' experience. Snowballing was particularly useful for identifying former students who had dropped out of architectural training, who could not be reached through official mailing lists.

An interview sample of approximately 50 was subsequently developed, made up largely of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, but with subgroups of white students, overseas students, practicing architects, and former architecture students. Some of this sample were unable to be interviewed in the event, due to illness, workload issues and personal reasons, and subsequently 40 interviews were conducted. These displayed the following characteristics:

- a range of minority ethnic groups: 13 Asian; 2 Chinese; 8 UK white; 4 white 'other' (2 Turkish, 1 Latin American, 1 Slavic); 9 Black African; 3 Afro-Caribbean; 1 Black 'other'

- 23 women and 17 men

- attendance at a range of 23 different UK schools of architecture: 8 were currently at their first school or in practice following part I; 17 had changed school between Parts I and II or II and III or both; and 15 stayed at the same school for their training. 5 of those interviewed had also completed previous stages of their architectural training at overseas institutions

- 14 in the 18-24 age group; 11 aged 25-30; 8 aged 31-39; and 7 over 40

- 10 overseas students

- 14 interviewees currently at, or who left at, the Part I

stage; 15 at, or who left at, the Part II stage; and 11 who had completed their Part III architectural training

■ in addition to the key informants, we also interviewed 9 practicing architects and 4 people who had dropped out of architectural training (and several more who were between stages of their architectural training and were moving away from returning to university)

A topic guide was developed (see appendix 3) which covered:

■ personal information

■ the decision to study architecture and influences on this process, such as careers advice, media images, family background and the availability of role models

■ applying to architectural schools

■ architectural training at all stages, including problems experienced, aspects particularly enjoyed, a consideration of curriculum, teaching and support issues, and the development of architectural interests

■ diversity issues

■ work in practice

■ barriers to progression, reasons for dropping out, and support which would have helped

■ policy issues

Interviewers were 'matched' to interviewees as far as possible on the basis of gender and ethnicity to promote trust and maximise the development of rapport. Interviews took place in a variety of locations at students' discretion and lasted for about an hour to an hour-and-a-half. Interviews (46) were taped with interviewees' permission, were transcribed verbatim, and were downloaded, along with interviewers' fieldwork

notes onto NVivo, a software package for analysing qualitative data. All transcripts were analysed thematically and for conceptual similarity and difference, using a comprehensive coding frame which was developed from the topic guide.

In the report which follows, all interviewees have been assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity, and none of these correspond with any other interviewee's true identity. In some cases, particular identifying features of interviewees have also been disguised. We have also protected the identities of the institutions where informants studied, and refer to them as 'redbrick', 'élite' or 'former polytechnic/post-1992 university' to distinguish between different types of organization.

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

The analysis in this chapter provides a descriptive profile of the position of minority ethnic students in architecture to set the context to the qualitative study of individuals' experiences of architectural education. It explores the following issues:

- how well are minority ethnic students represented in architecture?

- are they represented equally well at different stages of education?

- have there been any changes in their position over time?

It also provides a detailed descriptive analysis of the profile of architecture students, covering

- comparisons between minority ethnic and white students in terms of age, gender, highest qualification held at entry, mode of study, first degree classifications and social class background

- differences between minority ethnic groups, where the sample is sufficiently large

- comparison of first degree architecture with architecture, building & planning[3]; law; medicine & dentistry and all students

2.1 CURRENT LEVELS OF REPRESENTATION

In 1999/2000, 74 per cent of first degree architecture students[4] studying in England described their ethnic origin as white and over eight per cent declined to provide this information (Table 2.1). Architecture students (over eight per cent) are slightly more likely than the average first degree student (six per cent) not to have declared their ethnic origins, but the differences are not great. Over eight per cent of architecture students did not provide this information, compared to six per cent of students in law. The difference between architecture and medicine & dentistry (over seven per cent) is smaller.

3 *Architecture, building & planning* describes the broad subject field, including students on building and planning courses, while *Architecture* describes the single subject line including only those on architecture courses.
4 This includes all **current** first degree students, including first, second and third year.

Table 2.1
Ethnic composition of first degree architecture students, compared to architecture, building & planning; law; medicine
& dentistry and all subjects

column percentages

Ethnic origin	Architecture	Architecture, building & planning	Law	Medicine & dentistry	All students	LFS Spring 01 18-25 year olds
White	73.8	81.6	66.3	61.1	78.1	80.0
Black Caribbean	1.1	1.3	2.4	0.3	1.3	1.0
Black African	2.0	1.8	4.9	1.2	2.0	1.0
Black other	0.6	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.7	0.2
Indian	3.5	2.3	7.4	14.0	4.7	2.2
Pakistani	1.6	1.1	5.0	4.5	2.2	1.7
Bangladeshi	0.7	0.4	1.4	1.0	0.7	0.8
Chinese	4.3	1.7	0.9	2.0	1.1	0.6
Asian Other	1.5	0.7	1.8	5.0	1.3	0.7
Other	2.5	1.2	2.9	3.0	1.9	2.3
Non-white total	17.9	11.2	27.9	31.4	16.0	10.4
Unknown	8.3	7.2	5.8	7.5	5.9	9.6
Base	4,325	17,236	29,080	20,016	729,179	4,716,782

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000) & LFS Spring 2001
Base: For HESA data, UK domiciled first degree students studying in England, excluding Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Students' place of study is based on the
'Region of Institution', defined as the 'geographical location of the administrative centre of the institution' by HESA. Students studying in England may normally be
resident elsewhere in the UK. For LFS data, 18-25 year olds resident in England
Notes: LFS 2001 ethnicity classification includes a 'mixed' category. For comparability, in this table 'mixed' is included together with 'other'

Almost 1 in 5 students recorded their ethnic origin as being one of the minority groups and fewer than three per cent of these indicated that they did not fall into any one of the ethnic categories provided and said they belonged to some 'Other' ethnic group. Among the minority ethnic groups, those from a Chinese (over four per cent) or Indian (over three per cent) background appear to be well represented. The situation in the subject field of architecture, building & planning differs considerably, with the proportion of non-white students falling to 11 per cent. This suggests that minority ethnic students are better represented in architecture than they are in building or planning.

The contrast between architecture, law and medicine & dentistry is also stark: compared with 18 per cent in architecture, 28 per cent of first degree students in law and 31 per cent in medicine & dentistry are non-white. Note that the considerably better representation of minority ethnic groups in medicine & dentistry and in law is largely explained by the higher percentage of Indian, Pakistani and 'other' Asian students in these subjects.

The representation of minority ethnic students in architecture appears poor in comparison to law and medicine & dentistry, but a comparison with all first degree students shows that the proportion of non-white first degree students in architecture is close to the average for all subjects in England – in comparison with 18 per cent in architecture, 16 per cent of all first degree students are from non-white backgrounds.

Next, representation of minority ethnic groups in architecture is evaluated in relation to the size of the minority ethnic population in England. For this, their numbers in architecture are compared to their numbers within the population of 18-25 year olds in England. Minority ethnic groups have a younger age profile than the white population (Peach, 1996) and thus this comparison gives a better measure of their relative representation in higher education.

Caution is needed in interpreting figures under one per cent and this applies to Black Other and Bangladeshi students, but overall, the figures show that relative to their population size, all ethnic minority groups are well or over represented among first degree architecture students in England. Those ethnic groups substantially over represented include Chinese (half a per cent in population, over four per cent in architecture); Black African (one per cent in population, two per cent in architecture) and Indian (two per cent in population, three and a half per cent in architecture). Previous research has demonstrated differences between minority ethnic groups in terms of their representation in higher education; Indian, Asian Other Black African and Chinese students being over represented while Bangladeshi students were under represented (Modood & Shiner, 1994). Overall, the position of minority ethnic groups in architecture is consistent with this picture.

The findings also confirm the suggestion made in the pilot study carried out by the authors last year that minority ethnic students have a higher probability of acceptance onto a course in architecture, building & planning than other subjects, provided that they apply (Barnes et al, 2001). Their relative 'over representation' suggests minority ethnic students do apply and are accepted onto architecture courses and that they do not face a particular barrier at the initial entry stage.

Among minority ethnic groups, the case of Chinese students is interesting. Chinese students are 'over represented' in architecture (relative to their size within the population of 18-25 year olds in England) to an extent similar to the 'over representation' of Indian and Pakistani students in medicine & dentistry and law. While fewer than one per cent (0.6 per cent) of 18 to 25 year olds in England are Chinese, twice as many of all first degree students (about one per cent) and seven times as many (over four per cent) of first degree architecture students are Chinese.

2.2 CHANGES IN REPRESENTATION OVER TIME

This section explores long-term trends in the
representation of minority ethnic students in
architecture. Two separate time-series analyses
were carried out using RIBA Education Statistics
and UCAS on-line data.

Table 2.2
Ethnicity over time – Part I entrants to seven schools of architecture in England (1992/93 to 2000/01)

row percentages

Year	White	African/Caribbean	Indian	Other	Base
1992/93	93.0	2.0	2.9	1.8	**536**
1993/94	88.4	0.5	5.6	5.2	**511**
1994/95	86.3	1.5	6.9	5.2	**460**
1995/96	90.1	1.1	4.5	4.1	**438**
1996/97	85.2	1.8	7.3	5.5	**435**
1997/98	85.2	1.5	5.8	7.3	**515**
1998/99	83.8	2.9	7.0	6.2	**514**
1999/00	84.3	1.4	6.4	7.7	**480**
2000/01	81.1	2.8	7.5	8.4	**520**

Source: Author's own calculation based on RIBA Education Statistics
Base: Number of Part I entrants to 7 schools of architecture in England where ethnicity data available for all years
Notes: Ethnic categories as in RIBA data. The 'Other' category includes students whose ethnicity was not known

Table 2.2 is based on RIBA education statistics and shows the change in the proportion of Part I entrants to seven schools of architecture in England, between 1992/93 and 2000/01. These seven schools were selected on the basis of having provided ethnicity data consistently for these years. RIBA data for 2001/02 were excluded to maximise the number of schools[5] included in the analysis.

Focusing on schools that were able to provide ethnicity data consistently provides a stable sample base for analysis of change over time, making it possible to estimate the extent of change in the representation of minority ethnic students. However, excluding schools with inconsistent reporting may also lead to a bias in estimates of the size of minority ethnic students in each year. For instance, none of the London schools are among these seven schools and therefore the figures indicating the proportion of minority ethnic students each year are likely to be an underestimate of their actual numbers[6].

Findings indicate that there has been a gradual decrease in the proportion of white students over this period. There is a rather sharp drop of five per cent from 1992/93 to 1993/94, followed by a steady fall in the next seven years, amounting to a total drop of over ten per cent. At the same time, the proportion of Indian students more than doubled and the proportion of students from 'other' ethnic groups increased more than four-fold. Once again, both of these groups experienced a sharp increase in numbers at the start of the decade, which was followed by smaller increases in following years. The representation of African/Caribbean students fluctuated somewhat and seems to have increased only marginally.

The drop in the proportion of white students may partly be due to the increase in the 'other' category. As noted above, this category includes students whose ethnicity was 'unknown' and the increase may be attributable to an increase in the number of students choosing not to declare their ethnic origins. In fact, analysis of UCAS data indicates an increase in 'unknown' ethnicity across all subjects.

The next analysis is based on data provided by all schools of architecture and aims to demonstrate the effect of fluctuations in the provision of data by schools of architecture, particularly those in London. Table 2.3 summarises the findings on ethnicity reporting behaviour of schools and illustrates how fluctuations in the number and location of schools providing the data can affect estimates of representation. Note that the analysis includes all schools of architecture in England, whether they have provided the data consistently or not.

---

5 The term 'schools' refers to the schools of architecture, unless otherwise stated.
6 Half of all minority ethnic undergraduates are based in London (Callender and Wilkinson, 2003).

Table 2.3
Ethnicity over time – Part I entrants to schools of architecture in England (1992/93 to 2001/02)

column percentages

Year	No. of schools in England	% of schools that did not provide data	No. of London schools providing data	White	African/ Caribbean	Indian	Other	Base
1992/93	27	37.0	4 in 7	86.9	2.9	2.9	7.1	**1090**
1993/94	29	37.9	4 in 8	80.6	2.5	5.3	11.4	**1125**
1994/95	29	48.2	2 in 8	84.9	3.1	6.5	5.4	**901**
1995/96	29	37.9	4 in 8	84.8	3.8	4.0	7.2	**1027**
1996/97	26	46.1	2 in 7	82.8	2.0	6.2	8.7	**763**
1997/98	26	34.6	4 in 7	84.2	2.5	5.5	7.6	**988**
1998/99	26	50.0	4 in 7	82.7	2.8	6.1	8.3	**783**
1999/00	26	38.4	3 in 7	85.7	1.8	4.5	7.8	**917**
2000/01	25	28.0	4 in 7	80.5	4.1	5.2	10.1	**1047**
2001/02	27	33.3	5 in 7	77.6	3.5	9.0	9.7	**977**

Source: Authors' own calculation based on RIBA Education Statistics 1992/93 – 2001/02
Base: The number of Part I entrants to schools of architecture in England
Notes: Ethnic categories as in RIBA data. The 'other' category includes students who did not declare their ethnic origins. Schools that do not normally run Part I level courses (eg Royal College of Art) are not included in the analysis

The first column indicates that the number of schools in England varied somewhat over the years in question. The fluctuation in the number of schools is presumably due to the introduction or cessation of courses. In one case, two schools based in a region merged, leading to a drop in the number of schools.

The second column shows the proportion of schools for which ethnicity data was not available. This also fluctuates over the years and varies between nearly one in two (50 per cent) in 1998/99 and less than one in three (28 per cent) in 2000/01. There is not a consistent pattern to this variation; it is not always the same schools providing data.

The third column shows how many of the London based schools provided data each year. Except for three years from 1993/94 to 1995/96, the number of schools in London is constant, but the number of schools reporting the ethnic origin of their Part I entrants varies. This ranges from two out of eight in 1994/95 to five out of seven in 2001/02.

The remaining columns show that the proportion of white students seems to have fallen over the years, but there is considerable fluctuation between years. While it appears to have dropped from nearly 87 per cent in 1992/93 to 83 per cent in 1996/97, it returns to nearly 86 per cent in 1999/2000. Similarly, the proportion of Indian students seems to have increased, but that too fluctuates and the figures for the 1993/94 and 2000/01 academic years are virtually the same (just over five per cent). The change in the proportion of white (and non-white) students is affected by changes in the number of schools reporting ethnic origins of their Part I entrants, in particular, by London schools, as these would be expected to have sizeable minority ethnic populations.

Schools' reporting of ethnicity data is puzzling and it is not clear why ethnicity data was not available from all schools of architecture. Some schools are consistent in their reporting behaviour (ie consistently did or did not provide the data), but in others reporting varied over the years. What is clear, however, is that fluctuations in the proportion of minority ethnic students are sensitive to the changes in the reporting behaviour of schools.

Good examples of this are between years 1993/94 – 1994/95 and 1999/00 – 2000/01.

Between 1993/94 and 1994/95, the proportion of white students increased by about four per cent. Over the same period, the number of London schools providing ethnicity data fell from four in eight to two in eight. Between 1999/00 and 2000/01, the proportion of white students fell by about five per cent. During these years, the number of London schools providing ethnicity data increased from three in seven to four in seven.

It is clear that changes in schools' reporting of ethnicity could simulate a change in the observed number of students even in the absence of any actual change. Thus, apparent fluctuations in the proportion of students may be due to variations in the number, size and ethnic composition of schools providing the data.

The last analysis presented in this section is another time-series analysis, this time using UCAS on-line data. Note that there are a number of key differences between RIBA and UCAS data and the purpose is not to make a direct comparison of findings[7].

7 See Appendix 1 for a detailed comparison of the data sets used.

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

Table 2.4 shows the ethnic composition of students accepted on to degree level courses in architecture, building & planning, compared to all subjects. The data covers the period of 1996 to 2002 and applies to the UK as a whole.

Table 2.4
Ethnicity over time – UK (1996-2002)

row percentages

All subjects	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	Unknown	White	% change	growth	Base
Year									
1996	8.1	3.0		1.4	4.9	82.6	100		246,503
1997	8.2	3.0		1.5	6.1	81.2	112	12.2	276,503
1998	8.6	2.9		1.5	7.2	79.6	110	-1.5	272,340
1999	9.0	3.0		1.7	7.0	79.3	113	1.8	277,340
2000	9.6	3.2		1.8	6.7	78.8	114	1.6	281,809
2001	9.7	3.1	1.7	0.7	7.2	77.6	121	5.8	298,057
2002	9.3	3.2	1.9	0.6	8.0	77.0	126	3.8	309,460

Architecture, building & planning

Year	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	Unknown	White	% change	growth	Base
1996	5.5	3.1		1.0	6.6	83.8	100		4,933
1997	6.1	2.8		1.0	7.8	82.2	105	5.2	5,191
1998	6.0	2.3		1.1	8.6	82.0	99	-5.6	4,902
1999	6.1	2.9		1.2	8.0	81.8	98	-0.9	4,856
2000	5.7	2.7		1.4	9.2	81.0	99	0.9	4,901
2001	7.2	2.7	1.3	0.6	10.2	78.0	100	0.5	4,927
2002	7.1	2.7	1.6	0.5	10.3	77.8	101	0.8	4,964

Source: Authors' own calculation based on UCAS on-line data 1996-2002
Base: Acceptances to degree level courses in all subjects and in architecture, building & planning in the UK
Notes: Addition of 'mixed' category in 2001 is likely to affect other categories; comparisons to earlier years must be treated with caution

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

Caution is needed in interpreting the drop in the last two years. In fact, UCAS advises against direct comparison of 2001 and 2002 data with previous years. Both in architecture, building & planning and all subjects, the reduction in the proportion of white students in the last two years is partly due to the introduction of the ethnic category 'mixed' and the continuing increase in the number of 'unknown' ethnicity. In architecture, building & planning, there is a small increase in the proportion of Asian students in the last few years.

White students made up 83 per cent of all UK acceptances in 1996 and this fell to 79 per cent in 2000. During this period, the proportion of Asian students increased by over one percentage point. At the same time, there has been an increase in the number of students not declaring their ethnicity ('unknown'). In architecture, building & planning, the picture is broadly similar; 84 per cent were white in 1996 and this fell slightly to 81 per cent in 2000. Similarly, there is an increase in the 'unknown' ethnic category, while the number of Asian, Black or Other ethnic groups remains constant. Any observed drop in the proportion of white students in architecture, building & planning from 1996 to 2000 is, therefore, largely explained by an increase in the number of students choosing not to declare their ethnic origins.

On the whole, there appears to be little change in the representation of minority ethnic students in architecture, building & planning over the period in question. The small decrease in the proportion of white students is not reflected as an increase in the proportion of minority ethnic students, but appears to be due largely to an increase in the proportion of students not declaring their ethnicity. There is, however, a small improvement in the representation of Asian students.

It is interesting to note that there seems to have been a steady increase in the proportion of students not providing information about their ethnic origins. Compared to all subjects, students in architecture, building & planning are more likely not to have stated their ethnic origins, but all subjects experienced about a two-fold increase in the proportion of 'unknown' ethnicity between 1996 and 2002. Another interesting finding is that while the total number of students (all subjects) accepted onto degree level courses has increased by 26 per cent over this period, the number of students in architecture, building & planning has remained static.

2.3 CHANGES IN REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE STAGES OF TRAINING

The findings presented in section 2.1 suggest that minority ethnic students are represented well at the first degree level, both in comparison to all subjects and relative to their size within the population. However, only about two per cent of practising architects are from minority ethnic backgrounds (RIBA 'Architects' Employment & Earnings Survey, 2001[8]). This is well below their numbers at the entry stage and has given rise to concern in the profession. Questions were raised in relation to the minority ethnic students' experiences of architectural education. A key concern is that minority ethnic students may not be completing their training, despite setting out to qualify and work as architects.

The scoping study by PSI suggested that, based on the published RIBA survey of all UK architecture schools, the drop out rate seemed higher for minority ethnic students (Barnes et al, 2002) as fewer minority ethnic students were found at the advanced stages of training. This section is based on original RIBA survey data and examines, in further detail, the changes in the proportion of minority ethnic students at different stages of training.

The RIBA survey sought data on the ethnic origins of entrants to and completers of different stages in the last two years.

Table 2.5 shows the number of Part I and Part II entrants and Part I, Part II and Part III completers in England, in 2000/01 and 2001/02. The last column indicates the proportion of schools that were unable to provide data about ethnic origins of their students.

Note that the number of schools unable to provide ethnicity data increases in Part II and Part III. This means that schools' reporting varied between stages; even some of those consistently providing ethnic origins of Part I entrants were not able to give the same information for their Part II or Part III students or even for their Part I completers. This may suggest a difficulty with collecting this information, particularly for Part II and Part III students. Part II is offered and usually studied in full-time mode and it is not clear why collection of statistics should be more difficult than it is for Part I students. However, Part III is not available in full-time mode and consists of various part-time and short-term attendances at seminars and workshops and includes a long period of professional practice and this may create more logistical problems for data collection. Nevertheless, Part III students are required to register with a school of architecture, as compiling an approved portfolio and a broadly monitored process of professional practice is a compulsory part of the process of qualifying as an architect. Thus, schools would be expected to have a record of their students at Part III level.

In 2000/01, 80 per cent of Part I entrants and a similar proportion of Part I completers were white. Looking at Part II entrants in that same year, about 78 per cent were white, but a higher proportion of 84 per cent of Part II completers were so. Thus, there were fewer minority ethnic students among Part II completers than among Part II entrants. There is no data available for Part III entry, but 94 per cent of Part III completers were white, indicating that there are even fewer minority students among those qualifying as an architect.

In 2001/02, there was a similar overall pattern; 78 per cent of Part I entrants were white while nearly 84 per cent of Part I completers were so. In the same year, 81 per cent of those starting Part II and about 86 per cent of those completing Part II were white. Finally, 93 per cent of those completing the final stage of their training were white. Compared to Part I in 2000/01, there is a slight 'drop out' bias at Part 1 in 2001/02.

Compared to their position at the entry level, minority ethnic students are not represented well at the advanced stages of training and professional practice and this suggests that concerns over minority ethnic students' completion of Part II and Part III may be well placed.

8 The RIBA has been conducting an Architects' Employment & Earnings Survey since 1970. The 2001 survey is based on a sample of RIBA members. Ethnicity data was first collected between 1991-94, dropped in 1995 and re-introduced in 2001.

Table 2.5

Ethnic origins of Part I, Part II and Part III entrants and completers in England in 2000/01 and 2001/02

row percentages

	White	African/ Caribbean	Indian	Other	Base	% with no ethnicity data
Year: 2000/01						
Part 1 entrants	80.2	4.0	5.5	10.0	**1,050**	28.0
Part 1 completers	80.6	2.7	6.6	9.9	**585**	36.0
Part 2 entrants	77.8	3.5	6.4	12.1	**570**	38.4
Part 2 completers	84.1	1.4	3.3	11.0	**417**	46.1
Part 3 completers	93.5	1.5	3	2.4	**331**	57.6
Year: 20001/02						
Part 1 entrants	77.6	3.5	9.0	9.7	**977**	33.3
Part 1 completers	83.6	3.0	5.5	7.8	**561**	40.7
Part 2 entrants	80.8	2.6	4.5	11.9	**643**	35.7
Part 2 completers	85.7	3.0	1.8	9.3	**492**	42.8
Part 3 completers	92.7	1.6	1.2	4.4	**248**	59.2

Source: Authors' own calculation based on RIBA Education Statistics 2000/01 & 2001/02
Base: Entrants to and completers of Part 1, Part II and Part III. Schools that do not normally provide Part I level courses (e.g. Royal College of Art) are excluded from Part I entry analysis
Notes: Ethnic categories as in RIBA data. 'Other' includes students whose ethnicity was unknown

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

As with the analysis of ethnicity over time, variation in schools' reporting of ethnicity may have affected the figures observed. For instance, in both years, only two schools in London (and not the same two) provided data on Part III completions. Another important point to note is that figures do not apply to a cohort, but show the proportion of students at each stage in the same year. In other words, these figures are **not** based on following **the same group of students** throughout their training. Consequently, it is difficult to make a direct inference about drop-out rates.

The presence of few minority ethnic students at Part III level could also be a reflection of the relatively recent increase in the number of minority ethnic students entering the subject. Findings in the previous section are suggestive of a gradual increase in their representation (Asian or Indian students in particular) over the last decade and, given the length of architectural education and the flexibility allowed over the completion of Part III, it may be some time before this improvement in entry is reflected in Part III completion rates.

2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS

This section describes the profile of first degree and postgraduate students in terms of gender, age, mode of study, highest qualification on entry, degree classifications and social class[9]. Except for social class analysis, which is based on UCAS data, all the other tables are based on HESA data and findings are presented separately for first degree and postgraduate students[10].

2.5 GENDER AND ETHNICITY

While more than half (53.5 per cent) of all first degree students are female, this is true of only a quarter (26.5 per cent) of architecture students.

With only about one in five (22.5 per cent), the proportion of female students is even lower in architecture, building & planning. In sharp contrast, there are more than twice as many female students in law (59.5 per cent) and in medicine & dentistry (53.1 per cent).

Within architecture, there are some differences between ethnic groups. Among whites, about one in four (25.5 per cent) students are female. The proportion of women is lowest among Black Caribbeans (20.4 per cent) and highest among Other Asians (44.6 per cent). The proportion of women is also higher among Black African (29.4 per cent), Pakistani (27.9 per cent), Chinese (33.2 per cent) and Other (37.7 per cent) ethnic groups (Table 2.6). On the whole, there are more female students among minority ethnic groups than among whites. Students with 'unknown' ethnicity present a gender profile similar to whites.

There has been concern in the profession for some time about the poor representation of women and the findings suggest that even at the first degree level women's representation is drastically disproportionate to their numbers within the population. It seems that many women may not be considering architecture as an option or not gaining access to architectural education[11].

---

9 The data did not contain social class or degree classification information for postgraduate students.
10 For first degree students, architecture is compared to architecture, building & planning, law and medicine & dentistry and also to all first degree students. Such a comparison was not seen as appropriate for postgraduate students as differences between subjects in terms of requirements become more pronounced

at postgraduate level and could not sensibly be made without investigating and taking into account these differences in considerable detail.
11 Graff-Johnson et al. 2003.

Table 2.6
Gender composition of first degree architecture students by ethnicity, compared to architecture,
building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

row percentages

Ethnic origin	Female	Male	Base
White	25.5	74.5	3,194
Black Caribbean	20.4	79.6	49
Black African	29.4	70.6	85
Black Other	[35.7]	[64.3]	[28]
Indian	24.5	75.5	151
Pakistani	27.9	72.1	68
Bangladeshi	[29.0]	[71.0]	[31]
Chinese	33.2	66.8	187
Asian Other	44.6	55.4	65
Other	37.7	62.3	106
Unknown	25.2	74.8	361

All students			
Architecture	26.5	73.5	4,325
Architecture, building & planning	22.5	77.5	17,236
Law	59.5	40.5	29,080
Medicine & dentistry	53.1	46.9	20,016
All subjects	53.5	46.5	729,179

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000)
Base: UK domiciled first degree students studying in England, excluding Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Students' place of study is based on the 'Region of Institution', defined as the 'geographical location of the administrative centre of the institution' by HESA. Students studying in England may normally be resident elsewhere in the UK
Notes: Figures in brackets should be interpreted with caution, as the sample size is too small to permit reliable analysis

2.6 AGE AND ETHNICITY

The majority of first degree students are between the ages of 18 and 24; four out of five first degree students are under 24 years old. On average, nearly 58 per cent of students in architecture are 18-20 years old and a further 29 per cent are 21-24 years old, leaving 13 per cent in the over 25 categories. In architecture, building & planning, students are considerably older with 26 per cent aged over 25. With only seven per cent aged over 25, students in medicine & dentistry are younger than architecture students. By contrast, law students are older with 24 per cent over 25 years old.

White and minority ethnic students are broadly similar in terms of age, except for three groups. The first one is black students; they stand out as having a very different age profile to others. While about 12 per cent of white students are over 25, nearly 45 per cent of Black Caribbean and about 37 per cent of Black African students are over 25 years old. This is broadly similar to the profile of black students in higher education as a whole (Cabinet Office, 2003). The second is Chinese students; they are the youngest of all. While the proportion of over 25s varies between five per cent for Indian and 45 per cent for black students, only two per cent of Chinese students are over 25 years old. The third exception is those students whose ethnic origins are not known. They are older than most ethnic groups, but younger than black students. Compared to 12 per cent of white students and 45 per cent of black students, nearly 22 per cent of them are over 25 (Table 2.7).

Architecture is a 'young' subject field, compared to all subjects; with the exception of black students, there are fewer 'mature' students in architecture than in higher education as a whole. This may partly be due to the perception of architecture education as involving a long and demanding training period, which could make it less attractive to older students. It could, however, be said that law, similarly, involves a long training period, but seems to attract more 'mature' students. This could perhaps partly be explained by the provision of conversion courses in law for students with a first degree in other subjects. In fact, this is a preferred qualification route in the profession (Shiner, 1997). Nevertheless, the presence of large number of black mature students suggests that older students are accepted on to architecture courses and that schools do not seem to consider age to be an issue when accepting students.

Table 2.7
Age profile of first degree architecture students by ethnicity, compared to architecture,
building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

row percentages

	Under 18 years	18 – 20 years	21 – 24 years	25 – 29 years	30 years and over	Age Unknown	Base
Ethnic origin							
White	0.3	60.8	27.3	6.6	5.1	0.1	**3,194**
Black Caribbean	0.0	36.7	18.4	20.4	24.5	0.0	**49**
Black African	0.0	36.5	27.1	20.0	16.5	0.0	**85**
Black Other	[0]	[46.4]	[28.6]	[7.1]	[17.9]	[0]	**[28]**
Indian	0.0	64.2	30.5	2.6	2.6	0.0	**151**
Pakistani	0.0	55.9	32.4	7.4	2.9	1.5	**68**
Bangladeshi	[0]	[64.5]	[32.3]	[3.2]	[0]	[0]	**[31]**
Chinese	0.0	59.9	38.0	1.1	1.1	0.0	**187**
Asian Other	3.1	59.9	29.2	6.2	4.6	0.0	**65**
Other	0.0	47.2	34.0	9.4	9.4	0.0	**106**
Unknown	1.1	41.3	36.0	13.3	8.3	0.0	**361**

	Under 18 years	18 – 20 years	21 – 24 years	25 – 29 years	30 years and over	Age Unknown	Base
All students							
Architecture	0.3	57.9	28.8	7.2	5.6	0.1	**4,325**
Architecture, building & planning	0.1	44.0	30.3	10.8	14.6	0.2	**20,016**
Law	0.3	58.5	17.2	7.2	16.7	0.0	**17,236**
Medicine & dentistry	0.5	45.8	46.7	5.2	1.8	0.0	**29,080**
All subjects	0.2	56.9	23.6	6.4	12.8	0.1	**729,179**

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000)
Base: UK domiciled first degree students studying in England, excluding Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Students' place of study is based on the 'Region of Institution', defined as the 'geographical location of the administrative centre of the institution' by HESA. Students studying in England may normally be resident elsewhere in the UK
Notes: Age groups as provided by HESA. Figures in brackets should be interpreted with caution, as the sample size is too small for a reliable analysis

2.7 MODE OF STUDY AND ETHNICITY

The majority of higher education students study on a full-time basis. Among all first degree (77 per cent) and first degree architecture students (79 per cent), more than three quarters are full-time students.

In medicine & dentistry, there are very few students who are not studying full-time. In law, 81 per cent are full-time. In architecture, building & planning, the proportion studying full-time falls to 50 per cent and this suggests that non-full time modes of study are more common in building and planning subjects. This may reflect the nature of education involved, particularly in building where part-time work placements may be part of the training.

Within architecture, 78 per cent of white students and even higher proportions of Chinese (79 .1 per cent), Pakistani (83.8 per cent), Indian (88.1 per cent) and Asian Other (93.8 per cent) students are full-time. The exceptions, once again, are Black Caribbean and Black African students. Compared to other students, they are between three to eight times more likely to be studying part-time (Table 2.8), which is probably because they are more likely to be mature students and may need to work in the absence of parental financial support or may have other care/family responsibilities.

Another interesting difference exists between White and Chinese students on the one hand and students from the other minority ethnic groups on the other; while 16 per cent of Chinese and 13 per cent of white students were classified as being on a 'sandwich/other' mode of study, this falls to nine and seven per cent for Pakistani and Indian students and to one and two per cents for Black African and Black Caribbean students. Students with 'unknown' ethnic origins are also substantially more likely (11.6 per cent) to be found on such programmes of study. This could be an important difference as sandwich mode often includes a guaranteed work-placement and could provide the gateway to first work experience. However, the only architectural course which meets this criterion is at the University of Bath, where Part I is completed in four years and periods of recognised work experience are combined with academic study in years 2, 3 and 4. However, in HESA data, nine other universities are also listed as offering sandwich courses at Part I level. It seems that some universities describe their Part I or Part II programmes as sandwich including the 'year out' that comes between these stages, although no work-placement is guaranteed during that year.

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

Table 2.8
Mode of study for first degree architecture students by ethnicity compared to architecture, building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

row percentages

Ethnic origin	Full-time	Part-time	Sandwich & other	Base
White	77.8	8.8	13.3	3,194
Black Caribbean	73.5	24.5	2.0	49
Black African	72.9	25.9	1.2	85
Black Other	[75.0]	[14.3]	[10.7]	[28]
Indian	88.1	5.3	6.6	151
Pakistani	83.8	7.4	8.8	68
Bangladeshi	[90.3]	[9.7]	[0.0]	[31]
Chinese	79.1	5.3	15.5	187
Asian Other	93.8	3.1	3.1	65
Other	85.8	7.5	6.6	106
Unknown	80.6	7.8	11.6	361

All students				
Architecture	78.9	8.9	12.2	4,325
Architecture, building & planning	50.4	26.4	23.2	17,236
Law	80.8	16.5	2.6	29,080
Medicine & dentistry	99.7	0.3	0.0	20,016
All subjects	77.0	10.2	12.7	729,179

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000)
Base: UK domiciled first degree students studying in England, excluding Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Students' place of study is based on the 'Region of Institution', defined as the 'geographical location of the administrative centre of the institution' by HESA. Students studying in England may normally be resident elsewhere in the UK. Figures in brackets should be interpreted with caution, as the sample size is too small for a reliable analysis

2.8 HIGHEST QUALIFICATION ON ENTRY AND ETHNICITY

On average, nearly three quarters (71 per cent) of first degree architecture students hold A-levels or equivalent qualifications. This is comparable to the figures for all subjects (72 per cent) and law (73 per cent). The proportion holding what may be considered 'standard' qualifications of A-levels or equivalent rises to 89 per cent in medicine & dentistry, but falls to 60 per cent in architecture, building & planning.

Within architecture, there are some differences between ethnic groups. The proportion of those holding A-level or equivalent qualifications drops to 47 per cent for Black Africans and 42 per cent for Black Caribbeans. Compared to white students (eight per cent), Black African and Black Caribbean students are more than twice as likely (18 per cent) to have been accepted on the basis of HE credits or qualifications. Similarly, Black African students were more than three times as likely (16 per cent as opposed to five per cent) and Black Caribbean students were four times more likely (21 per cent) to hold 'other' qualifications – qualifications that were different from any of the standard forms of qualifications and therefore could not be categorised within the existing classification (Table 2.9). This may be partly explained by the fact that that black students are older and mature students would perhaps be expected to hold non-standard qualifications. Black African students are also considerably more likely to be accepted without 'formal' qualifications (ten per cent as opposed to one per cent of White students). Students in the 'none held/none required' category may be those with overseas qualifications that did not correspond exactly to the UK qualification categories.

Although the majority of students hold standard/traditional qualifications at entry, the presence of students with non-standard qualifications suggests that students from non-traditional educational backgrounds, including those with overseas qualifications are gaining access to architecture courses.

Table 2.9
Highest qualification on entry by ethnicity for first degree architecture students, compared to architecture,
building & planning, law, medicine & dentistry and all subjects

row percentages

	First degree or equivalent & higher	HE credits & qualification	A-level or equivalent	Other	None held or required	Not known	Base
Ethnic origin							
White	4.5	8.1	74.7	4.7	1.4	6.5	**3,194**
Black African	4.1	18.4	46.9	16.3	10.2	4.1	**49**
Black Caribbean	3.5	22.4	42.4	21.2	3.5	7.1	**85**
Black Other	[10.7]	[28.6]	[42.9]	[3.6]	[0.0]	[14.3]	**[28]**
Indian	3.3	9.9	71.5	4.6	0.7	9.9	**151**
Pakistani	4.4	8.8	64.7	8.8	0.0	13.2	**68**
Bangladeshi	[0.0]	[19.4]	[77.4]	[3.2]	[0.0]	[0.0]	**[31]**
Chinese	5.3	8.0	75.9	3.2	0.5	7.0	**187**
Asian Other	4.6	4.6	67.7	12.3	3.1	7.7	**65**
Other	6.6	12.3	69.8	5.7	0.9	4.7	**106**
Unknown	10.0	5.3	53.5	5.0	3.9	22.4	**361**

	First degree or equivalent & higher	HE credits & qualification	A-level or equivalent	Other	None held or required	Not known	Base
All students							
Architecture	5.0	8.6	71.4	5.3	1.7	8.0	**4,325**
Architecture, building & planning	2.8	17.5	59.9	6.3	2.8	10.7	**17,236**
Law	2.8	5.0	73.1	9.1	2.0	8.1	**29,080**
Medicine & dentistry	6.1	0.4	88.6	0.5	0.0	4.4	**20,016**
All subjects	1.6	8.8	71.8	8.6	1.8	7.3	**729,179**

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000)
Base: UK domiciled first degree students studying in England, excluding Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Students' place of study is based on the 'Region of Institution', defined as the 'geographical location of the administrative centre of the institution' by HESA. Students studying in England may normally be resident elsewhere in the UK
Notes: Figures in brackets should be interpreted with caution, as the sample size is too small for a reliable analysis

Table 2.10
Degree classifications for first degree architecture students by ethnic origin, compared with architecture,
building & planning, law and medicine & dentistry.

row percentages

	First class	Upper second	Lower second	Third class/pass	Unclassified	Base
Ethnic origin						
White	11.1	40.8	33.9	10.4	3.8	**711**
Non-white	2.9	39.3	39.3	14.3	4.3	**140**
Unknown	8.8	26.5	29.4	29.4	5.9	**102**
All						
Architecture	9.7	39.0	34.2	13.0	4.1	**953**
Architecture, building & planning	7.6	40.8	38.5	9.7	3.4	**4,059**
Law	4.2	48.0	41.2	6.2	0.5	**7,420**
All subjects	8.2	44.5	35	7.3	4.9	**194,044**

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000)
Base: All qualifications awarded to first degree students in England, during the period of 1 August 1999 to 31 July 2000 and reported to HESA by
15 November 2000
Notes: Degree classification as provided by HESA. 'Non-white': Sample sizes for minority ethnic groups were too small for a reliable analysis and thus all
were added together as non-white

2.9 DEGREE CLASSIFICATION AND ETHNICITY

Compared with the average for all higher education students in England (eight per cent), architecture students are slightly more likely (nearly ten per cent) to obtain first class degrees and also more likely to obtain third class degrees (13 per cent as opposed to seven per cent). By comparison, law students are about half as likely (four per cent) to obtain a first and they are also less likely to gain a third class degree.

Within architecture, there exists a sharp difference between white and non-white students. Compared with three per cent of non-white students, 11 per cent of white students obtained first class degrees in 1999-2000. Non-white students are more likely to obtain lower second class degrees (39 per cent as opposed to 34 per cent) third class degrees (14 per cent as opposed to ten per cent) than white students. Students whose ethnic origins are unknown were most likely to receive a third class degree (29.4 per cent); three times as likely compared to white students; twice as likely compared to non-white students. However, they did noticeably well in achieving first class degrees; being less likely to do so than white students, but about three times more likely than non-white students.

2.10 SOCIAL CLASS AND ETHNICITY

UCAS data was used to explore social class differences between white and minority ethnic students in architecture, building & planning. The data is for 2000 entry cohort and applies to students resident in England. Note that the data available on-line does not allow for a cross-tabulation of social class by the single subject line of architecture.

Compared to about 15 per cent in architecture, building & planning, over 37 per cent of students in medicine & dentistry and nearly 13 per cent of all students are from social class I[12] (Table 2.11).

Within architecture, building & planning, there are sharp differences between white and minority ethnic students. White students are substantially more likely to come from social class I and II compared to black and Asian students; about twice as likely compared to Asian students and three times more likely compared to black students. Black and Asian students are also over represented among those with unknown social class and caution is needed in drawing conclusions about the social class profile of minority ethnic students. Unknown ethnicity is also highly correlated with unknown social class, indicating that students who refused to answer the question about ethnicity also did not answer the social class question.

12 Further information about UCAS variable definitions, including social class, is included in Appendix 1.

Table 2.11
Ethnicity and social class

row percentages

Social class	I	II	IIIM	IIIN	IV	V	X	Base
Architecture, building & planning								
Asian	8.7	26.1	26.5	10.8	7.7	2.8	17.4	**287**
Black	6.4	32.1	12.9	17.1	9.3	2.1	20.0	**140**
White	17.0	40.5	16.7	10.8	7.1	1.6	6.4	**2,925**
Other	16.2	27.9	14.7	19.1	13.2	2.9	5.9	**68**
Unknown	5.8	14.4	7.9	5.0	3.7	1.3	62.0	**382**
All	14.8	36.2	16.4	10.6	7.0	1.7	13.3	**3,802**
Medicine & Dentistry	37.6	34.8	7.3	7.8	4.1	0.9	7.6	**4,813**
All subjects	12.7	38.5	14.1	12.2	7.8	1.8	13.0	**255,734**

Source: Authors' own calculation based on UCAS data, 2000 entry for England
Base: First degree architecture, building & planning students in England
Notes: Social class I is Professional, II Intermediate, IIIM Skilled manual, IIIN Skilled non-manual, IV partly skilled, V unskilled and X unknown

2.11 CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

The profile of postgraduate architecture students was explored using HESA data. The actual number of minority ethnic students is too small to carry out a reliable sub-group analysis, thus white students were compared to all non-white students (Table 2.12).

Nearly 57 per cent per cent of all postgraduate architecture students hold a first degree and a further 11 per cent had other HE credits/qualifications at entry. About one in five (17.6 per cent) already had a postgraduate qualification. White students are more likely (19 per cent) than non-white students (15.7 per cent) to have a postgraduate qualification, but the difference is not large. However, this information is substantially more likely to be missing for non-white students; about 17 per cent, compared to ten per cent of white students. Students whose ethnicity was unknown are placed mid-way between the two groups.

Non-white postgraduate students are considerably younger than white students. Compared with 32.8 per cent of white students, 40.2 per cent of non-white students are 18-24 years old. Students with unknown ethnicity have an age profile more similar to white students. This contrasts with the age profile of first degree students who were broadly similar, with the exception of Black African and Black Caribbean students who were older. Among first degree students, only the Chinese were found to be younger than white students.

For first degree students it was noted that minority ethnic groups were either similarly or more likely than white students to study full-time, though this was slightly obscured by the high percentage of black students studying part-time. At the postgraduate level, non-white students (38.8 per cent) are more likely than white students (29 per cent) to study full-time. Students whose ethnicity was unknown are the most likely (51.9 per cent) to study full-time and the least likely to be on sandwich/other modes of study. White (20.8 per cent) and non-white (23.5 per cent) students are equally likely to study on sandwich/other modes of study. This also contrasts with the profile of first degree non-white students, who were less likely to be on sandwich programmes, with the exception of Chinese students, who were the most likely to be found on such programmes.

Compared to first degree students (26.5 per cent), there are even fewer female postgraduate students (23.7 per cent). As for first degree students, the number of female students seems to be higher among non-whites (29.9 per cent) than whites (22.4 per cent). In terms of gender profile, students with unknown ethnicity are once again placed mid-way between the two groups.

Table 2.12

Profile of postgraduate architecture students; highest qualification on entry, age, mode of study and gender

column percentages

	All	White	Non-white	Ethnicity Unknown
Highest qualification on entry				
Postgraduate	17.6	19.0	15.7	13.8
First degree or equivalent	56.8	56.2	54.1	60.6
HE credits/HE qualifications or lower	11.0	12.3	10.3	7.1
Other	1.7	1.6	1.1	2.4
None held/required	1.4	0.8	2.1	3.1
Not known/sought	11.4	10.0	16.7	12.9
Age groups				
18 – 24	32.9	32.8	40.2	28.7
25 – 29	37.1	36.3	37.0	39.6
30 & over	30.0	30.9	22.8	31.6
Mode of study				
Full-time	34.6	29.0	38.8	51.9
Part-time	47.2	50.2	37.7	42.5
Sandwich & other	18.2	20.8	23.5	5.5
Gender				
Female	23.7	22.4	29.9	24.5
Male	76.3	77.6	70.1	75.5
Base	**2,313**	**1,583**	**281**	**449**

Source: HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999-2000)
Base: UK domiciled postgraduate architecture students studying in England, excluding those studying in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Students' place of study is based on the 'Region of Institution', defined as the 'geographical location of the administrative centre of the institution' by HESA. Students studying in England may normally be resident elsewhere in the UK. Includes students enrolled on a course as at 1 December 1999
Notes: 'Non-white': Sample sizes for minority ethnic groups were too small for a reliable analysis and thus all were added together as 'non-white'

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

2.12 SUMMARY

This chapter provides strong evidence to suggest that minority ethnic students are found on first degree architecture courses in substantial numbers. Relative to the size of the minority ethnic population among 18-25 year olds in England, all minority ethnic groups are well and in some cases (eg Chinese) 'over represented' at the first degree level. This is similar to the 'over representation' of minority ethnic groups in higher education as a whole and indicates both that architecture is as attractive to them as any other subject, and that they are being accepted onto courses when they apply.

What happens once a student from a minority ethnic background starts his/her training is less clear. On the basis of the data available, it is not possible to make firm inferences about drop-out rates, but findings do show that, compared to Part I, there are fewer minority ethnic students at the advanced levels of Part II and Part III. Analysis based on HESA data similarly indicates a drop in the number of minority ethnic students at the first degree completion and postgraduate levels. An exact calculation of drop-out rates would be possible with panel data and a future cohort study following the same group of students through the training process would make a significant contribution to filling this data gap by allowing a reliable analysis of drop-out rates.

Analysis of long-term trends in representation based on RIBA data suffers from inconsistencies in schools' reporting of ethnicity data for their students. The apparent drop in the proportion of white students at the Part I entry level between 1992/93 and 2000/01 seems, to a large extent, to be due to variation in schools' reporting of ethnicity data. Analysis based on UCAS data suggests that both the total number of students and the proportion of white students in architecture, building and planning have been largely constant over the last seven years, with a small increase in the proportion of Asian students.

RIBA statistics are uniquely valuable in that, unlike the other sources of HE data, they allow a focus on validated schools of architecture, in other words, on students who are training to qualify as architects. Improving the RIBA's survey of schools to encourage a higher and more consistent provision of ethnicity data by schools of architecture would generate the data for a more conclusive analysis.

The findings also indicate some interesting differences between white and minority ethnic students, which are explored further in the qualitative research. At first degree level, Black African and Black Caribbean students have a substantially different profile; they are older, more likely to have held non-traditional qualifications at entry, and more likely to study part-time. The Chinese are, by far, the best represented minority ethnic group. They are also the youngest and more similar to white students in terms of their preference for sandwich study programmes. At the postgraduate level, minority ethnic students as a whole are younger and more likely to study full-time and equally likely to be found on sandwich programmes of study. A future study exploring the experiences of black and Chinese students would be useful, particularly for investigating the outcomes for two distinctly different groups.

A key and very clear finding is that architecture remains a 'male' profession. Even at the entry level, the representation of women is well below their number within the population and it is strikingly low compared to their position in other similar professions, such as law and medicine & dentistry.

02 THE REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE

In terms of first degree classifications, outcomes are polarised in terms of ethnicity, as white students are four times more likely to obtain a first class degree than minority ethnic students. White students in architecture, building & planning are also more likely to come from social class I (professional) and this figure would perhaps expected to be higher among 'architecture' students. Social class data is missing for nearly one in four minority ethnic students and this warrants caution in interpreting the figures but it seems that, although minority ethnic students seem broadly similar to white students (with the exception of black students), in terms of the other characteristics explored they tend to come from lower socio-economic groups. The interesting question is to what extent this is likely to have an effect on outcomes for minority ethnic students and, again, the qualitative analysis investigates the interplay of social class and ethnicity in experiences of architectural education.

03 THE DECISION TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE

03 THE DECISION TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE

This chapter considers the various issues involved in the decision to study architecture, including the factors which created an interest in design and construction, and how these have interacted with other influences to inform subsequent career decisions. It examines the role of secondary schools and parents in nurturing or discouraging architectural career ambitions, in the context of wider issues such as public perceptions of architecture as a profession, preconceptions about gender and ethnicity, and the structure and funding of architectural education and training.

3.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL INTERESTS

For most of those interviewed, the decision to study architecture had been made at secondary school, either around the time of GCSE choices or in the first year of A-level study, although some people had transferred from other undergraduate degrees. A few interviewees, from all ethnic backgrounds, said that they had been interested in three-dimensional design since their early childhood. Suria recalled how her mother had planted the seed of an interest in architecture in response to seeing her drawings:

I was ten years old when my mother said to me that I should aspire to be an architect. I think that is because I used to do three-dimensional drawings when I was small and I liked to do just some sketches of homes and things like that, and the drawings were three dimensional, you know, and that's when my mum said "I think you're going to be an architect".

A number of people named particular architects whoes work had provided inspiration to them; names such as Le Corbusier, Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, Edward Cullinan, Alvar Aalto, Renzo Piano and Mies van der Rohe were mentioned in this context. Others identified specific buildings that had motivated them; Ruth described a visit to a Ronchamp church as 'an epiphany' while Catalina was lyrical in praise of the Farnsworth House, which she credited with single-handedly inspiring her decision to become an architect:

I don't know if you know, it's a very beautiful glass house in the middle of a forest, and it's kind of totally transparent. I don't know, it transmitted something kind of spiritual, something really positive in a way, really enlightening.

Parents had often been instrumental in supporting and encouraging architectural interests, for instance by organising visits to buildings; one interviewee remembered being given a monograph on a favourite architect as a sixteenth birthday present, while another recalled an eighteenth birthday outing to the Lloyds building.

For others, and this was a theme associated particularly with non-white overseas students, exposure to the processes involved in building and construction had been the initial stimulus to their interest in architecture. Sadiki described how seeing houses built and extended around him in the township where he was raised had led to an early fascination with construction:

I was eight, it was in the early 80s and there were many houses that were being you know, built up, people extending their houses, that sort of thing. I always found it very fascinating how they went about it you know; digging foundations, laying the brickwork, always checking, you know, that it's level and stuff like that. When other boys my age would be mucking about at the ball, kicking it about all over the place, I would be on a building site.

For Mariam, another Black African overseas student, the rapid growth of large-scale construction had inspired an interest in the built environment, which was linked to a passionate commitment to contributing to her country's development. The rapid growth of the industry also encouraged her to view her career prospects as good, and she described her decision to become an architect as 'investing in the future'.

3.2 THE INFLUENCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND CAREERS ADVISERS

Teachers and careers advisers are a potential source of information and advice on careers, and one which may be particularly important for those, such as working class students and those from minority ethnic groups, whose parents may be less familiar with the educational system, and are therefore much more reliant on the quality of advice offered, as Prema commented:

Because most of the parents do not know much about education themselves it's left to the teachers to act as that parental adviser for education instead.

It was argued that there was a need for more people to be introduced to architecture via the educational system, both at secondary school and by encouraging more people to take architecture degrees, if the profession is not to reproduce itself simply by means of existing social networks, which will tend to perpetuate existing divisions of gender, ethnicity and social class. Jessica, a white Part I student, commented on the under-representation of minority ethnic students on her course:

There are quite a few people who have got architecture in the family. And I think there's not very many people that are doing the course that weren't already very well aware of architecture as a career option. And it's something that people don't consider at all, not just people from ethnic minorities but I think people that don't have experience of, who don't know architects… and then most architects practising are white men, then that needs to be… opened out more so that people who might do the course, not necessarily like with the intention of becoming an architect, because if you start it then you're more likely to become an architect than if you don't start it at all.

Interviewees were asked about the extent to which they had learnt about architecture, and been encouraged in their ambitions, by teachers or careers advisers. A number of overseas students pointed out that they had not had access to careers advice in the sense that this is understood in the UK, since it had not been part of their educational tradition or facilities. Exceptions to this general rule were Ife, who had 'some sort of test when I was sixteen and they sort of suggested that I'd be good at civil engineering' and Suria, whose secondary school had not only carried out systematic testing, but had also helped to put her in touch with people associated with the profession.

The careers advice which people had received in UK secondary schools appears to have been very patchy and was not generally regarded as 'useful' or 'influential'. Few people appear to have been introduced to architecture as a possible career choice in this way. Sanjit, who had attended what he described as a 'very good grammar school' where there was an expectation that pupils would follow a profession, was one of a minority who had come to consider architecture as a direct result of careers advice:

We were encouraged to use the careers library and me and my mate went in there and looked up stuff, how much aeroplane drivers get paid and stuff like that, silly stuff but then when I thought about it seriously, the idea of just designing a building, having a building you'd designed being made was just satisfying really.

Ashia had also found out about architectural education and training as a result of being required to write letters requesting careers advice as part of a coursework module.

Most of the other people interviewed had less positive experiences to report. Those who were already interested in architecture had often been given little advice and, at worst, had been actively discouraged from proceeding along their chosen career path. The former appeared to stem from a lack of familiarity with the type of academic qualifications required, while the latter predominantly affected women and those from minority ethnic groups, as careers advisers perpetuated a stereotype of white men as being most likely to succeed in the profession.

03 THE DECISION TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE

Ryan, a white student, had gone to the careers adviser with the idea of studying architecture and had been given advice about the A-levels required which had led him not to take a subject involving drawing, which he saw in hindsight as unhelpful. Jessica, another white undergraduate, had been told by a careers adviser at her sixth form college that she was studying unsuitable A-levels to pursue an architectural degree. She commented that this might easily have deterred her from applying, saying:

If I hadn't done my own research before speaking to them, then that would have put me off, I probably wouldn't have applied, because they told me "there is no way you'll be able to do it". But I knew they were wrong, because I had looked into it myself.

Marlee, a young Black Caribbean woman currently studying at Part I, had asked to be considered for a placement in an architect's office as part of Year 10 work experience (age 14/15) and recalled her disappointment that this had gone to a fellow student while she had been selected to work for two weeks in a job centre instead. By contrast, Sanjit, also currently studying at Part I, had been selected for an architectural work experience placement and this had provided him with a valuable first exposure to the profession.

There was evidence of widespread and overt gender stereotyping in the careers advice women interviewees had received. One architect (Maggie), who had been at secondary school in the 1970s, recalled being told "Oh no, you couldn't possibly be an architect, only men are architects. You could be a very good interior designer." Similarly, Ruth, another woman architect in practice, said that her careers adviser had 'very much put me off. I went to an all girls school, they were very much of the opinion that it… wasn't really the sort of thing that women did', although she noted that in her own case this had merely increased her determination to succeed. Much more recently, Prema had been told by her careers advisers that it was 'a boy's game' and something which 'sounds good, but in reality you just don't want to do it.'

Stereotypes based on ethnicity, as opposed to gender, appear to have been conveyed more subtly than those related to gender. One interviewee from a Caribbean background (James), who said that 'it wasn't something that anyone helped me to pursue, in terms of applications or things like that' commented that:

At school they thought it was quite a strange choice. I remember my art teacher talking about a student before going into architecture; I think he felt he had a much stronger portfolio. I remember him in particular being surprised that I was going for it.

While he had given this little thought at the time, on reflection he felt that now he 'would be a lot more suspicious of the fact that I didn't get more help'. Latif, an architect from an Indian background, had also been told at secondary school that he was unlikely to succeed:

Well the first barney I had was at school to be honest; they didn't think I was geared up to become an architect, so I got the wrong careers advice, told not to pursue it. I'm not a person to easily back down so I did my own research even at that age… basically I had to set out to prove that I could do it, and that it's possible to become an architect.

Students who had gone on to study architecture, again often those who were female and/or non-white, and who had obvious abilities in relevant subjects, had not always been identified as possible candidates for the profession by their secondary schools. With hindsight, Kesia, a Black African student, noted with surprise the fact that no-one had 'ever suggested architecture' as a career option, despite the fact that she had regularly won prizes for fine art. Samantha's comment on the experience of careers advice was fairly typical of this group:

I do remember talking to careers advisers, and I can't remember what they suggested, but I don't think anyone suggested architecture. I remember thinking at the time that they just didn't seem to understand where I was coming from at all.

Overall, individual teachers appear to have been much more significant than careers advisers in terms of encouraging architectural ambitions. Grace, a Black Caribbean woman, said of her secondary school that **'there were individual teachers who were encouraging and kind of recognised one's particular skills but certainly not the careers advisers'.** Samantha commented that her design and technology teachers had been **'enormously encouraging'**, saying:

They were very happy for me not to go to PE and not to go to RE, and not to go to other lessons. If they had free lessons, they'd give me, you know, we'd do more, basically woodwork and making things and design in the workshop.

Murad had also been introduced to the idea of studying architecture by a design and technology teacher, who **'spotted that I had a talent… and tried to push me on'**, while for Catalina, an art teacher had provided some more limited encouragement.

In terms of other careers considered, few of those interviewed appeared to have considered related occupations in the construction industry such as planning or structural engineering, since most had been attracted primarily by the design element. Alternative careers mentioned included graphic design, fine art, product design and fashion.

3.3 PARENTAL SUPPORT, EXPECTATIONS AND PRESSURES

Parental approval of architecture as a legitimate career choice is also likely to be a key factor influencing choice of degree subject, not least because parents are a vital source of financial support during study. The research identified a widespread perception that students from minority ethnic backgrounds are not generally encouraged to become architects, largely because of lack of familiarity with the profession, a view expressed by several key informants. Maggie, who is involved with several professional bodies, commented that:

They're not encouraged in school, and maybe not encouraged by their parents or family, that it's not a traditional role for people, whether Indian or Afro-Caribbean, or whatever it might be.

This view was also pervasive among the architects and students interviewed. Rafiq, a Pakistani architect in practice, commented that one reason there were so few architects from his own background is **'because they don't know the architecture profession exists.'**

There is a well-known cultural stereotype that minority ethnic parents, and especially those from an Indian and Pakistani background, prefer their children to enter a high status profession, and many respondents, and especially those from these backgrounds, acknowledged this as having some basis in reality when discussing their parents' responses to the idea of their studying architecture. Sanjit was typical of the views expressed:

I know it is a bit of a stereotype but I think most Asian people would like their children, generally speaking, to do something like medicine or law, something that is very well respected and very well paid.

There was also anxiety about the extent to which architecture could provide a sustained career, as a comment made by Sadiki's parents revealed: **'Will you be able to make a living out of that?'** Sanjit argued that such attitudes have their origins in the financial insecurity many Indian and Pakistani parents had experienced in their own lives, and to the need to send money overseas to support members of their extended family. While he described his own father as having **'spoken to me about how much money lawyers make and things like that'** he had some sympathy with these attitudes and did not feel under real pressure to alter his choice of career, saying **'I don't think he seriously wants me to completely change what I want to do just for the money.'**

03 THE DECISION TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE

For Jehangir, parental expectations had been instrumental in the choice of a more vocational architectural degree rather than a fine art course, a decision that was the source of some personal regret:

Yes, it opened up the arts field to me, but it also had the professionalism behind it. And I honestly do think that part of that comes from my family, my upbringing, and having that professionalism behind you.

For women, parental attitudes to studying architecture had sometimes been influenced by cultural attitudes to gender-appropriate roles. Catalina, a white student from the EU, commented that although her parents had always been supportive of her, they were not entirely happy with her decision to enter a male-dominated profession, although they had never explicitly stated this: 'even though they did not say it, I can feel that there is something funny [to them] about being a woman and an architect'. Similarly, a young Muslim woman who took part in a group discussion argued that her parents, in addition to seeing an architectural career as lacking status relative to law or medicine, felt uneasy about the idea of her being interested in entering a profession which they felt to be 'full of builders'.

For many of those who said that their families had reservations about their decision to study architecture, these concerns were directly related to the length of architectural training, and the difficulty of providing funding over this extended period. Students themselves also often felt reluctant to impose a financial burden on their parents, particularly where they were not from a wealthy background, as Bashir explained:

I'm afraid the one fear I had perhaps now looking back was that the length of the course and how long it actually takes to get into work, and that's perhaps partly to do with my background… [my] family's not well off or anything and it was difficult to know that I'd have to have that length of study before I could start earning, that was perhaps the one difficult decision to make.

The larger family sizes common among some minority ethnic groups may make it harder for parents to provide financial help over an extended period, and several non-white students referred to their position in the family, for instance older siblings having already completed their education, when discussing their parents' ability to provide support.

3.4 FAMILIARITY WITH THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

Those interviewed were also asked about their contact with architects before deciding to study the subject. Overall, around half had not known any architects personally before deciding to study architecture, and this was the same for the white and minority ethnic interviewees in our sample[13]. For those who did have contact with architects this tended to be via having a close relative in the architectural profession or a related occupation, such as engineering, surveying or construction. Jamila's father and uncle were both architects, and both she and her sister have gone on to become architects, an example of the well-known 'architectural dynasty' phenomenon. Ruth, another architect in practice, described how she had absorbed a love of the subject from her architect father in childhood:

I was always very fascinated by drawing things and making things, and I was always interested I think in environments and their effect on me, and I remember being very fascinated by the drawings my father brought home and I could read plans from an early age and I was always really interested in looking at these things.

Similarly, Rafiq's grandfather was an architect and he had received considerable encouragement and advice from him, and from his friends and colleagues. For some students, having a relative in architecture (or a related profession such as engineering or surveying) was less of a direct influence, but had nonetheless provided a general exposure to design which they might otherwise have lacked. As Chesna, whose father was an engineer and had an architect as a godparent, put it, 'that didn't really influence me, it was more like it was all around'.

---

13 Although it is obviously much more likely to apply to white students in general, given the current levels of representation of ethnic minority groups in the profession.

03 THE DECISION TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE

Having a friend or relative in the profession often provided a source of advice about courses; some parents from other occupational backgrounds were also able to draw on their wider social networks to make these sorts of resources available, as Jessica explained:

After I decided to apply, after I applied, I talked to my Dad and one of his friends is an architect, and I went to visit him and talked to him about it, but I didn't know him before I applied.

Similarly, Mariam's father, who had originally hoped that she would study medicine, had accepted her decision, and mobilised a good deal of support from among his social circle:

He really supported me, and any of his architect friends, he would tell them I was doing architecture and anything architectural he would tell me about it, in a magazine or on the TV, he really supported me.

In some cases, family or friends had also been able to provide periods of relevant work experience before and during architectural studies. For instance, Ruth had worked for her father before going to university and in the holidays, and Anna had worked for a firm she knew via her architect uncle after finishing her 'A' levels. For Suria, her father's work, and his interest in her career, had provided the opportunity to see projects realised at a very early stage in her training:

He is a builder, he's a very hands-on person… and once I remember, he was saying that he wanted to build a small sort of chalet, like a weekend home, somewhere remote in the suburb. And I designed something for him, just using cardboard. And I came back here, I was in my first year I think, I came back here [and] by the time I went back again for [a] holiday, he'd built it!

The existence of role models and networks within the profession is also likely to be important in terms of feeling confident to undertake the course. Bashir, who had no contact with architects before starting his Part 1, commented that it had seemed 'maybe unrealistic for me to get into architecture easily', saying 'you see, a lot of other people on my course had come into architecture with family who were architects'. Latif also explained that at the time when he chose to apply, he 'hadn't met an architect', let alone 'an Asian architect, to be honest I've only ever come across Asian architects in the last two to three years'.

3.5 PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF ARCHITECTS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA

Those interviewed generally agreed that media coverage of architecture, because of its tendency to focus on a few famous individuals, has tended to lead to it being 'glorified', leaving the public with the (mis)conception of an architect as a 'rich white male' who is 'influential', earns 'a fortune' working on 'prestigious' and 'creative' projects, and lives in a 'nice house'. There was much laughter and levity as practising architects recalled their youthful 'illusions' of earning 'loads of money'. On a more serious note, it was argued that the low pay rates available in the profession are a key factor responsible for the under-representation of people from minority ethnic groups:

Architecture pays considerably less than what anybody would hope for in a profession… that is probably the single most dissuading factor for people to go into it from ethnic minorities or whatever; of course, as you'll understand, for people of an ethnic background having a secure income to support your family, and not only your immediate family, often your extended family as well, is absolutely essential, which is why people will go into other careers, businesses and other professions that will guarantee them a good level of income. (Murad)

Jie, who had seen numerous friends leave the profession for less interesting, but better remunerated, posts in the IT sector, argued that:

Architecture has to compete for the best students from an ethnic minority background. If I was from an inner city background and had to choose between law, medicine and architecture, architecture wouldn't really get a look in.

03 THE DECISION TO STUDY ARCHITECTURE

Relatively few people saw the media as having had any influence on their interest in architecture, or in their choice of architecture as a career, pointing to the relatively recent growth of public interest and debate on architecture and the built environment. Guang was referring to the late 1990s when he commented that, 'back then I don't think there was much media coverage', a point echoed by Samantha, who had been an undergraduate in the mid-1980s: 'Remember, this was a long time ago… architecture didn't have the profile that it's got now.'

Kesia commented that, as a teenager, 'I wasn't reading the right magazines and then I didn't really know anything about media coverage of architecture at all'. Murad, however, had been given architectural magazines by a sympathetic teacher and these had acted as an immediate catalyst to his interest, as he explained:

He gave me a few magazines to have a look through, particular architectural magazines and I was hooked… once I had the inspiration from those first few magazines I looked at, then I actually opened my eyes and I started looking at buildings.

On the other hand, given the large amount of interest in architecture now evident in the media, this was felt to be an important avenue for change on diversity issues, a point that will be returned to later in the report.

The following chapters go on to consider experiences in architectural education, and to look at the factors which influence individual career trajectories within architecture, and the decisions involved in whether or not to continue training at various stages.

04 EXPERIENCES OF STUDYING ARCHITECTURE

04 EXPERIENCES OF STUDYING ARCHITECTURE

This chapter considers the experiences of students at the various stages of their architectural education. The sample included current students at all levels; other interviewees were reflecting on their experiences at earlier stages of education and training. In a few cases, the experiences described had taken place a number of years previously.

4.1 APPLYING TO ARCHITECTURAL SCHOOLS

When reflecting on the process of choosing which schools of architecture to apply for at Part I, and which offers to accept, interviewees identified a range of factors that had influenced their decision. As one would expect, the reputation and standing of particular institutions had played a large part in the selection of schools to which applications had been made, and this applied to both white and minority ethnic students. Rafiq, a student from a Pakistani background, said of his school that **'it's got a hundred years of history'**, while Anna, a white student, when asked why she had gone to a particular school, commented simply **'it's the best'**.

Other students, again from all ethnic backgrounds, had made decisions primarily on the basis of course design or curriculum issues, particularly where they had a specific interest in design or in engineering issues. Prema said of her course **'it was the combination of architecture and planning that attracted me'**, and Grace had applied to **'the only two schools that offered architectural engineering'**, while Bashir commented of his choice that **'some schools have a more engineering slant, if you like, and I wanted more of a design based course'**.

Several people mentioned leaving home as an important part of their motivation for choosing schools of architecture at some distance from where they grew up. Tanya said that she wanted **'the whole university experience'** while James described himself as **'hell-bent on leaving the family home'** and keen to experience all that London had to offer. Murad, similarly, had decided **'on principle'** not to apply for a school in his hometown. Overall, non-white students are more likely than white students to remain in the parental home

while at university (Callender and Wilkinson, 2003), for reasons which may include cultural preferences, a desire to remain in London, and financial issues, but this theme did not emerge strongly from the qualitative research reported here.

For some people, the final choice of school was made in large part on the basis of intuition and a positive feeling about the place of study as a whole. For instance, Ife had chosen her school partly because she liked the city, while Prema recalled being impressed by the architecture school buildings when she went for interview. Similarly, Murad, who had fond memories of first seeing the city where he had studied **'on a crisp February morning'**, had found it **'a fantastic place'** and **'a wonderful city'**, and these positive impressions had influenced his decision.

Other interviewees described a more deliberate process of weighing different factors to reach a decision about what was best for them as a person. In some cases this had involved a re-evaluation of 'prestigious' institutions, as students assessed what was offered against their own interests, preferences and values. Latif, a British Asian student, had felt alienated from some schools, because he felt he was being judged for his background, rather than his portfolio, when attending interviews, although he emphasised that he had been more conscious of social class than ethnicity in this context. Jessica's initial impression of one school had also been marred by her interview experience, and she had chosen to take up a place at a less prestigious, but more welcoming, institution:

The impression I got from my interview there and my day looking round was: that it was like 'we are best, we are brilliant, come if you want, but we're not that interested in you'. No, it wasn't… it's like 'we don't need to make an effort with our course, because we're brilliant'. Whereas here I felt they were more interested in the people coming into the school.

04 EXPERIENCES OF STUDYING ARCHITECTURE

Only one minority ethnic student referred specifically to diversity issues as a reason for choosing to study at a particular university for Part I, but such factors may also have been implicit in decisions to study at London institutions[14] close to where people were already living. One Black Caribbean woman had moved during her Part I because of feelings of isolation, but ethnicity did not appear to be a major factor influencing choice of Part II institution.

The cost of living had deterred some students from less well-off backgrounds from studying in London, at both Part I and Part II. Prema said that she had not taken up the offer of a place at a prestigious school **'purely because financially I could not afford to live out there'** while Ryan attributed the decision to study in the North of England partly to feeling unable to afford living in London, or at least not being able to achieve **'the same quality of life'**. Sadiki, an overseas student, also described being unable to take up the offer of a place at a prestigious US university because of the level of fees charged. Some of these decisions involved trade-offs for minority ethnic students which did not apply to their white peers; choosing a London university in order to study in a more ethnically diverse environment could create severe financial pressures, while choosing to live elsewhere to save money could imply a degree of cultural and social isolation and a lack of peer support.

Not everyone had found it easy to make an informed choice of course, and this applied particularly to those without prior contacts within the profession[15]. Sanjit said of his initial search for a Part I place:

At first I wanted to go to [name of school] but I'd misread one of the guides, you know the ones that say which are the best universities and things… it was actually in alphabetical order!

Mariam, an overseas student, also observed that she had made her choice of course 'blindly', saying:

I chose it because it sounded good. I didn't know anything about [school]. I looked at the prospectus and it looked okay and the students looked friendly and from the ratings and everything it was a good university, but I didn't know anything about [city] at all, or Europe.

Those who had gone on to study at Part II appeared to have developed a clearer idea of their interests and how these would best be developed during their undergraduate studies, and this informed their decisions about whether or not to move schools. Some key informants also suggested that there is a growing trend of specialism at Part II, which tends to lead people to favour certain courses depending on their particular architectural interests.

Ruth, a white architect who had experienced some problems at Part I, commented that this had made her more discriminating about her decision at Part II, although she had ultimately decided to return to the same school:

I decided who I wanted to work with before I'd gone back, I made sure that I, you know, lay the groundwork and got to know the people I wanted to work with and so on and so forth, so I mean by that stage I mean I was a bit more savvy about my own, you know, my own destiny if you like.

Among our small sample, overseas students interviewed who had studied for Part I in the UK were more likely than 'home' students to remain at the same institution for Part II, although there were several instances where students had come from overseas at this level having already completed Part I. Several students, both white and non-white, from post-1992 universities had entered prestigious institutions such as the Bartlett and the AA at Part II.

14 49% of minority ethnic students live in London, compared with 13% of white students (Callender and Wilkinson, 2003; Callender, forthcoming).
15 While in our sample white and non-white students were equally likely to have such contacts, the current under-representation of minority ethnic people in the architectural profession means that this will generally apply disproportionately to non-white students.

4.2 WORKING PRACTICES IN ARCHITECTURAL SCHOOLS

Generally students described themselves as happy with the curriculum at Part I, although several identified particular subjects, such as structures, professional practice, building regulations and technical subjects such as ventilation, which they had found more difficult or less intrinsically interesting. A number of people recognised that that Part I was necessarily more general and welcomed the opportunity to develop particular interests of their own at Part II, although a few felt that the increased pace of work at Part II gave less scope for creativity. In contrast to the individual interests developed in earlier periods of education and training, Part III was generally regarded simply as a means to an end, since it is a legal requirement in order to register as an architect.

Some British minority ethnic students felt that courses had been somewhat Eurocentric in their focus on Western traditions of architecture, but this was not a strongly expressed theme in the interviews as a whole. What was of more concern was a set of 'taken for granted' cultural assumptions which were seen to disadvantage those, such as working class and overseas students, who did not necessarily share them. These included an assumed familiarity with a range of European building styles, which would only be the case if a student had already travelled widely at the time they entered university. Suria commented:

Even though you're not even thinking about it, you travel abroad and you live in a hotel, or you go around Prague for example, or Paris, and what can you see? Eiffel Tower. You don't even have to think about it. By the time you go into architecture school and people talk about [the] Eiffel Tower, you have it in your brain. Someone else might not even know what you're talking about, because they never actually had the experience. That's what I mean, it's quite exclusive.

Overseas students, particularly those from African countries, also commented on the differences between the functional approach to building with which they were familiar, and the design aesthetic expected of them by

their schools. Chicha had been baffled when he had been asked to read the novel 'Wuthering Heights' as the background to a design brief, and it had taken him several years, in which he described 'breaking out' of his existing conceptions of architecture, to grasp what tutors were expecting of him; his subsequent progress in the profession has not been straightforward:

You know, you have to give the design an attitude… and it's now I realise it. Then I didn't really understand why we had to read a book first… it's like, to kick your imagination and your sensitivity to the way that you would design it… to study the character of these people that you're designing the houses for.. So it's not just 'Oh, this is a piece of land, can you design a four-bedroom house?'

Working in the studio is central to the experience of studying of architectural education, and the ways in which studio space is inhabited by particular individuals and groups is likely to be indicative of their overall integration and comfort within the institution, and even the discipline as a whole. A number of students commented on the culture of working long hours in the studio as something which they enjoyed, referring to a sense of 'camaraderie', and clearly relishing being able to exchange ideas and time with fellow students. Ashia commented that she preferred to work in the studio because 'you interact more with other people, you know what they are thinking about, what they are doing and you can ask them what they think', while for Jehangir:

The studio **was** architecture, so that's what I enjoyed about it, designing, being in the studio. The atmosphere of the studio was really good. And you're around all your mates, you know, early hours of the morning.

Where studio space is at a premium, patterns of use and non-use may be suggestive of subtle hierarchies of status, or at worst, of patterns of exclusion and discrimination. Gender was the theme most strongly articulated in terms of non-use of studio space. For instance, Ruth described a 'competitive', 'macho' and 'laddish' culture that had caused her to withdraw from using the studio and work at

home. Two white students who were both studying at the same school made contrasting observations about studio working, which were revealing in terms of the way in which their access was mediated by gender. Ryan, who made extensive use of the studio, spoke highly of the variety of teaching styles on offer:

The good thing is there [are] different studios, you can choose what you're interested in. You can do a very practical detailing studio, or you can choose like a socially conscious, politically strong studio… you have that variety.

By contrast, Jessica noted that her use of the studio was limited by a degree of pressure on available space and facilities:

It's hard because there aren't many drawing boards, we've got a few drawing boards and some computers, but there aren't all the facilities here and you're pushed to work at home.

Ethnicity as such did not appear to be an issue in terms of the use of studio space, although some interviewees commented on the fact that overseas students tended to form fairly segregated subgroups within studios.

Other issues raised by students were the requirement to pay for studio space at one school, and the need for extended opening hours, especially for students in paid employment and those with limited facilities in their living accommodation.[16] Suria compared her previous university, which was open until ten in the evening, with her current school, which was closed after 8pm and at weekends. Although the issue had been raised at several board meetings, there appeared to be little prospect of change.

Critiques, almost universally referred to by interviewees as 'crits', at which students formally exhibit and present their design work for appraisal, are a feature of all Part I and Part II courses, and are central to the learning experience. They clearly have a certain mystique, and some interviewees recalled instances of their own or fellow students' work being **'rubbished'**, **'pulled apart'** or **'destroyed'**, leaving people **'depressed'** and

'demoralised' and leading some to drop out. Overall, however, there was a recognition that while crits could be **'intimidating'**, **'harsh'**, **'scary'**, **'gruelling'**, or at worst **'traumatic'**, they provided an essential way of developing the skills needed to succeed in the profession. Maggie was typical of this view, saying:

It's a very tough system, but in a way that is the way in the real world that you've got to present your project to clients, or if you're at competitive interview. So you've actually got to learn that system of how to present your ideas.

Similarly Ryan described them as **'a good way of introducing you to public speaking'**, and commented that **'if they drop the career, if they drop out because of [crit] then I don't think they're suited to architecture, personally.'**

Ruth, who had experience of the system both as a student and as a tutor, commented that:

There are two types of critiques really; there are those that take on the brief and will try to help the students, and there are those who don't give a damn about either of those things and are just performing and they're about showing how clever they are, and they're the worst because they're the rudest, they're the least sort of interested and probably learn the least from; they may be very entertaining but it's not a learning situation, put it that way.

Although there were examples of men who struggled to cope with crits, the view was widely expressed that women generally find it harder, being more inclined to **'take it personally'** and less **'aggressive'** and **'competitive'** in defending their work, and several women interviewees recalled crying or seeing other women **'reduced to tears'** when their work was criticised. Alison said, **'Oh God, I could never go back to doing it, I'm so glad that bit of my life is over'**, while Jamila explained that she had never really grown hardened to the experience, **'some people get used to it and have a hard skin or whatever, but I was always one who feels you're taking me apart if you take my**

---

16 Again, given the generally disadvantaged socio-economic profile of minority ethnic students, this is likely to disproportionately affect non-white students.

work apart'. Happily, however, both are now successful architects in practice.

No-one described overt instances of racism during critiques, and Jehangir argued that 'everyone gets a good thrashing in them, but the last thing you hear is racism in something like that', although being from a minority ethnic group was identified as something that could increase the sense of insecurity and 'exposure' felt by students. Some women students, by contrast, had experienced overt and 'jaw-dropping' sexist comments. It was argued that women's lack of representation on judging panels also tended to undermine confidence, and increased the possibility of subtle forms of discrimination occurring, as Ruth commented, 'I think it's particularly acute when you're female and all your jury are male'; this point is likely to apply with at least equal force to minority ethnic students.

Several key informants argued that critiques are increasingly being used in more constructive ways than in the past, and students also gave examples of good practice in this area. Mary, who said that 'before I went into architecture I wasn't aware of that whole kind of side of it', commented that 'teachers and tutors are very, very kind of good about it, and they don't put any pressure on people' and that she had not seen 'anyone really struggle with it'.

Jessica described the use of critiques as a formative, rather than summative, assessment, involving peer as well as tutor review, and commenting that feedback on work in progress was more useful than once it is complete:

Halfway through the project we have a crit, like an interim review, so there's a lot of focus put on that before you finish, so you get your criticism and feedback and there is still time to act on it, and then we have a pin-up at the end of the project, which is just like an exhibition, and then everybody walks around and then you discuss it all as a whole. But it's less you present the work and then it's criticised, it's more we talk about the whole body of work.

Similarly, James, who described the experience of having his work criticised publicly as 'heartbreaking', had found the group projects he had been involved in more suited to his style of working:

Not because I could hide in the background behind everybody, but there was something about working on a collaborative project and then bringing it together and working out how you would do a presentation. If it went really badly it wasn't just you standing there with everybody looking at you, you were in a group.

4.3 TEACHING RELATIONSHIPS

As one would expect, experiences of tutor relationships varied both across institutions and individually. The tutorial relationship was variously described as 'intense', 'emotional' and 'very personal'; Catalina had experienced it as 'overwhelming' at first. This could lead to problems where there was a clash of personalities. These could arise because of contrasting theoretical and stylistic preferences, and many students argued that the 'subjective' nature of aesthetic critique was problematic. Grace observed that 'the way they judge you at the end and the way they pass you at the end is very unclear so you kind of have to guess that', while Sadiki also commented that it was difficult for students to understand the rationale for marks awarded:

They would always make comparisons to students, you naturally do and find out why that one got a higher mark than yours and at times, you know, the teacher would give them no explanation, no explanation was given, or never used to hold much water, you'd always end up being frustrated.

Armando described being worried because the tutor had not approved his project and the two internal tutors had been unable to agree a mark; an entire year of anxiety and uncertainty was brought to an end only when the external examiner passed the work. It was suggested by several students that in these sorts of situations it would be beneficial to have someone 'neutral' to turn to, whether within the school or in the form of an independent arbiter.

04 EXPERIENCES OF STUDYING ARCHITECTURE

Several people interviewed referred to 'favouritism' by tutors which had made them feel 'left out' and unsupported, although it was not generally associated with or perceived as racial discrimination, and indeed, had sometimes involved black students (although it is interesting to note that the students who identified this phenomenon tended to be from minority ethnic groups). Rather, tutors were seen to have identified early on a group who were likely to succeed, and which they were perceived to 'put all their energy into'. This group was characterised by interviewees as consisting of people who 'already had a handle' on the subject when starting the course, often having 'access to people in architecture', sometimes via a parent in the profession, and perceived as able to 'get away with blue murder'. Mariam recalled that although she had a good tutor in the first year, after that:

I didn't find them helpful at all, they only concentrated on the students who were good at it. They had they favourites who they concentrated on and marvelled at their work and the rest of us who weren't that good were just left.

Some minority ethnic students whose parents had not been to university[17], such as James, would have appreciated more pastoral support from their tutors, and felt that they were only able to ask for advice about matters strictly related to their work. Interviewees emphasised that good tutors could make a huge difference. Murad described how he had relied on a trusted tutor to provide informal mentoring, in the form of support and advice in his final year:

The admissions tutor again, even though she was not in that official role, unofficially she did that job for me and she did it very well, and it can be just as simple as 'don't worry, do your best, it'll all work out', and that's all it takes.

Suria, an overseas student, felt that she and other non-white students had benefited a great deal from the support of a lecturer who was herself a from a minority ethnic group, saying:

17 Again, while the issues raised are likely to be similar for both white and non-white students from a working-class background, this situation is more likely to apply to a non-white student, because of the relatively disadvantaged profile of most minority ethnic groups and the fact that their increased representation in higher education is of recent date.

People loved her, me and my friends… she gets to know you, "Do you have any problems? Any personal problems? Do you want to…? Do you need any help?" So you can go and see her after tutorial hours and things like that. It really helped. She's really concerned. So I think it was made easier because of that, when I was there. I had that support.

Jehangir had asked a personal tutor to intervene when placed in a group with someone he felt unable to work with, and had been 'really impressed' with the way they had dealt with it: 'We were friends, we were good friends, but we can't work together. It's a hard line you know, trying to tell someone, so the school took care of it.'

4.4   FINANCIAL ISSUES

Financial problems, and the high costs of undertaking a lengthy period of study, were widely perceived by those interviewed as reasons why there might be lower rates of application to study architecture and higher rates of drop-out among minority ethnic groups and those on lower incomes. This perception was borne out by the experiences of many students. The findings of this qualitative research reflect Archaos's 1998/99 survey of architectural students' finances, which found that 93% of respondents were in debt (compared to an average of 75% among students more broadly), and that 80% considered themselves to be in financial hardship (Hayhurst and Corbett, 2000).

The cost of living was an issue, particularly for those who had studied in London, where rents were very high. High rents could sometimes lead to living in cramped conditions, which made it difficult to work at home. In the most extreme case, a student described having to move her bed into a hallway in order to erect a drawing board, much to the displeasure of her landlord.

The cost of model-making materials, printing and computers was also widely discussed as a drain on finances, and there were perceptions of unfairness in that actual marks could be influenced by the resources which students were able to devote to presentation.

Several of the less well-off students commented that they were deterred by the cost of fieldwork trips, and that this was a strong consideration in choosing modules. All of those who raised this as an issue were non-white and living in London. As Marlee explained, while she was attracted to the idea of a module with a fieldtrip in Japan or Australia, **'realistically though I just couldn't afford it'**, while Suria said that she and several other students at her school had opted for a particular module because the fieldtrip was not compulsory. While fieldtrips were an expense, some students appeared to be more resourceful than others in funding these, and low income had not always prevented people from taking part. Akua made a point of going on these, and simply found paid work immediately on her return to cover the costs; her school had also provided one free overseas trip. Cari had been unable to take part in the majority of fieldtrips on her course, but had managed to obtain funding to take part in one long-haul trip.

The cost of fieldwork trips was less of an issue where trips were arranged within the UK, or in European locations where fares were relatively low, which had happened in some schools. Given that for many students these trips were among the most stimulating and enjoyable aspects of the course, it is unfortunate that people should be excluded from them by income constraints. As discussed below, students in paid work also faced time pressures in respect of fieldwork.

The majority of students appeared to have received at least some financial support from their parents, who paid all or part of their fees or accommodation costs, but the capacity to do this, and the resources available for this purpose, clearly varied considerably, and in some cases it was not possible for parents to contribute. For instance, Latif had known from the outset that his parents could not afford to support him financially, so had never asked for this, although he was keen to emphasise that his parents had been emotionally supportive. Even where parents were able to provide financial support, students were not always comfortable with this; as Jehangir explained, **'I borrowed a lot of money from my parents, and if I had it any other way I wouldn't want to do that.'**

4.5 WORKING PART-TIME

It was generally acknowledged by interviewees that the demands of an architecture course are such that it is not desirable to do paid work in term-time. Nonetheless the majority of current students interviewed had done so for at least some part of their studies. Similarly, half of the architectural students in Hayhurst and Corbett's (2000) sample who worked part-time felt that this had had an adverse effect upon their studies. Those Part I students who had not found it necessary to do paid work in term-time, found it hard to imagine how they would have coped with the volume of coursework required if they had also been in employment. Guang said that he had been quite typical of his university in not having to work part-time: **'Most of us students were quite good, I think there were only a few who had to work, so I think we were quite lucky in that sense'**. Those who had studied some time ago were also quick to acknowledge how much more difficult the situation has become for students in recent years, with many more students working part time. Callender and Wilkinson (2003) demonstrate that 58 per cent of students now work during term-time, for an average of 14 hours per week.

James, who was at university during the early 1990s, had initially worked on Saturdays, but had found it **'incredibly difficult'**, and had given this up in order to concentrate on his studies, and his parents had provided additional financial support in order for him to do so. Armando also commented on the all-absorbing nature of the discipline, saying: **'architecture you work Monday to Sunday, you have to do it all the time'**; he had a young family when studying and felt that he had not been able to do his academic work justice because he worked part-time. Prema, a current Part 1 student, had recently given up her part-time job because it was **'difficult to balance'** and she felt it was interfering with her studies.

Among those currently studying and in paid employment, working hours varied considerably, from just a few hours a week to almost full-time, reflecting the degree of financial pressure faced by individuals. Notably, all those working very long hours were studying at London schools, and the majority were non-white. Cari, who had

sometimes worked up to 38 hours a week, explained the pressures which had led her to move to part-time study, taking two years to complete the final year of Part I:

I was just running from work, from college to work, and that spent a lot of energy and then handling my course at the same time, it was sometimes being distracted and then it was all so tiring.

Raha had also worked full-time while studying part-time. Several students felt that their academic work had suffered as a result of their paid employment, seeing it as the cause of failed exams and modules. This is consistent with other research evidence, which demonstrates an association between longer work hours and poorer degree results (Callender, forthcoming). Grace's parents had stepped into the breach after an exam failure, and this had helped a good deal:

This year's been much better; my family have helped me, been able to help me so therefore I've been able to devote myself entirely to studying

Some schools were felt to actively discourage part-time work, while in reality it was a necessity for most of their students. Teaching staff were also argued to be generally lacking in understanding about the demands of part-time work. Marlee, a Part I student who was working up to 25 hours a week for a retail furniture chain, said of her tutors:

I don't think, they don't quite understand, because I remember one point they were finding dates for our trip to this Eden Project and I said, "Oh, I can't do that because I'm at work," and they were just like, "Well, take the day off." Well, if I don't work I don't have any money and wouldn't be here.

She went on to explain that she had used her entire annual holiday entitlement in order to complete work to meet a project deadline, and thus had absolutely no flexibility if she wanted to remain in this employment. Suria and Sadiki had also both missed out on overseas fieldwork trips because they were unable to get sufficient time off work. By contrast, a student in a post-1992 University where paid work was regarded as an almost universal expectation,

commented that tutors had found ways of accommodating this: 'They have to work around the students working'.

The majority of people interviewed appear to have done some paid work at Part II level. By this stage, many students felt uncomfortable accepting help from their parents, even where they were able to provide this. 'Year out' work experience had also provided skills and contacts, which made it easier for students to find work at this stage, and several were working in architectural offices.

Attitudes to paid work outside architecture varied; some students preferred to be working in employment that could help to consolidate their architectural education, although students on low incomes tended to view this as a luxury they were unable to afford, given the greater earnings available in other jobs. Others actively preferred to be involved in unrelated, and less stressful employment, as Grace explained:

The pressures of having to meet deadlines whilst you're at work are huge, and something I find very difficult to deal with and just tend to kind of switch mindsets, so for me it's much easier to be working outside the profession in a low-pressured job.

Paid employment was also seen as something that could be detrimental to social life and the formation of professional networks. Suria, who was working 20 hours a week, said 'I have to juggle between working and studying' and commented that 'you want to be able to get a life as well. It's not all about going to school and working', while Sadiki, who was combining Part II study with work as an architectural assistant said:

I never get enough time to socialise, the only time I get to see them is when we have a lecture and after that I have to rush either to work or I am going home pretty late, so I never find time to say 'Oh, let's go for a drink', or anything.

In a profession such as architecture, which depends so heavily on the personal networks developed by individuals, this time constraint may have long-term detrimental effects on career progression.

04 EXPERIENCES OF STUDYING ARCHITECTURE

4.5 ISSUES SPECIFIC TO MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS

Many minority ethnic students related experiences of feeling isolated, uncomfortable or out of place in a predominantly white environment while studying, especially at Part I, when everything was new to them. Prema said that she would have welcomed seeing 'a face, I guess, a minority ethnic face in architecture', while Ashia said of her university 'If you read the profile, you wouldn't imagine me to be one of the students, basically'. Grace expressed this sense of alienation even more strongly, saying that at her institution, although it had many overseas students, she was 'probably one of the most hated group of students in the sense that I'm British, I'm black, so in one sense you can say I stick out like a sore thumb', while acknowledging that in terms of social background she had experienced fewer problems:

In another sense, that [I'm] also not particularly privileged, not particularly deprived either, I [mix] with professionals and so on, in that sense I kind of fit in… I don't have a sense of being ostracised or anything because I'm not rich.

For Marlee, who had grown up in a multicultural area, and taken this for granted, it had been a shock to discover that 'I was the only [black student] in my year' and she had moved to another university after a year of feeling 'alien'. As she explained 'I was used to being around a lot of black people and I got to [name of school] and there was just, at the University, anyway, there were none… I saw about two, the whole year I was there'. This degree of isolation could have pedagogical implications, because of the associated lack of awareness of cultural difference, as well as being socially alienating, as Suria explained:

But there is something about the experience, the learning experience, it's like you have to understand the rest of the people and how they think and how they approach the issues, but to get them to understand what you are saying, it's quite difficult. So you have to really justify what you are trying to do.

Murad also argued that 'I think you are seen as being a little bit odd in some respects, almost not fitting in' and, although he argued that this had not affected him personally,

architecture is a very social course by nature of the hours you spend, so on and so forth, and if you come from an ethnic background that's more, shall we say exclusive, and likes to keep to its own, or you're not used to integrating with other people so easily, it's difficult.

It is notable that all these accounts were framed in terms of the student needing to accommodate and adapt to the institution, rather than vice versa. One student argued with some force that there should be no attempts to widen participation in architecture by minority ethnic groups until institutions make a committed attempt to change their existing practices.

Some students from working class backgrounds also felt uncomfortable in the university environment, particularly at élite institutions where many students had been to public school, as Ruth explained:

I'd been in an inner-city comprehensive… I was really shocked by how different they were to me, and I couldn't get on with them at all, and to this day I still don't feel comfortable in that sort of company.

When discussing the relative importance of social class and ethnicity in terms of feeling a sense of belonging and ease at university, James made the point that it was possible to 'pass' in the sense of changing accent, dress or other aspects of self-presentation, but that there is no getting away from the colour of your skin:

For me, there was still that niggling thing in the back of my head, when standing up in front of people, is this without prejudice, do you see me as a black person? There's no way of hiding that, whether I come from a different social class or dress differently, people don't see me. I would still say there are significant differences.

Prema described problems in relation to her membership of a visible religious minority. An observant Sikh, who adopted a form of dress more usual among Sikh men, she had encountered incomprehension from fellow students and tutors alike, and described feeling like an 'outcast', particularly early on in her course.

The common practice of serving alcohol at exhibitions and crits, together with the dominance of pubs and restaurants as places for social and professional networking had caused discomfort to several Muslims. As Bashir explained, this had limited his extra-curricular socialising:

Culturally I'm very different, you know, I don't drink, many of the things socially, outside the actual architecture, I didn't get involved with.

Suria similarly said that while she was 'happy' during her Part I studies she felt that 'I didn't fit in very well. I mean in terms of, for example, I am a Muslim so I don't hang out in bars'. She went on to explain that, although she did join fellow students at times such as after crits, not being a drinker had resulted in a degree of social isolation because relationships tended to develop off-campus rather than in the studio.

For overseas students, the problems common to minority students as a whole were sometimes compounded by lack of familiarity with the UK educational system, communication problems, and issues of cultural misunderstanding. Students from a variety of countries described a period of adjusting to differences in the educational system (as well as problems with British 'accents', 'food' and 'sense of humour') and had sometimes chosen unsuitable course modules, owing to a lack of guidance. Communication issues could arise because of linguistic or cultural misunderstanding, and some tutors were described as often being at best 'colour blind', while others were noted as having been overly curious or making frequent well-meant but insensitive references to students' countries of origin. These sorts of issues could exacerbate any existing tensions in the student/tutor relationship.

Some overseas students argued that their needs tended to be ignored by tutors, who assumed a knowledge of European culture and design traditions. Mariam explained that those who lacked this background were at a significant disadvantage and had to invest a considerable amount of time in attempting to keep up with their UK peers:

Always having to… catch up and the extra hours that we have to put in to try and understand the background, I think they should take that into account.

Others argued that tutors routinely devoted more time to UK students. This could be the cause of some resentment, given the large amount of fees payable by overseas students. As Ade said:

They want students when we apply, we are overseas students when it comes to fees. Once we are inside we are black students, we are no longer an international student.

In some cases, students gave examples that appeared to amount to outright discrimination, such as a failure to provide detailed feedback on work completed, even where this was routinely provided to home students.

Several people interviewed commented that overseas students tended to socialise mainly among themselves, and this impression was confirmed by overseas students' own accounts. Sadiki said 'being a foreigner I don't have that many friends', while Mariam, who commented that 'all the Chinese students would stick together because they are used to a way of working together. They work very hard, they wake up early and go to bed late' commented that in her first year she had been 'a bit of a loner' before finding her own 'group'.

05 EXPERIENCES OF WORKING IN ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

05 EXPERIENCES OF WORKING IN ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

This chapter discusses interviewees' experiences of finding and entering practice ('year out') posts in the periods between Parts I and II and Parts II and III, and for those who qualified as architects, outlines the sorts of work they have been doing since. About two-thirds of the sample had experience of working in practice, and this had taken place in a variety of types of architectural practices. Typically architectural practice consisted of a placement between Parts I and II and between Parts II and III, but several students had worked in a number of different practices during their time out of university, sometimes for two or more years.

5.1 FINDING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE POSTS

There was relatively little standard practice in terms of how students found professional practice posts, and jobsearch strategies ranged from sending out one carefully targeted application or cold-calling a particular architect, to making 'hundreds' of unsuccessful applications (the latter being by no means an unusual experience amongst those we interviewed). A few schools helped students in finding and applying for suitable practice positions; other students found posts through their social networks; and others again found the whole experience rather more unsupported, and reported having to identify and approach suitable practices themselves. These strategies varied in their success. Access to appropriate forms of social capital varied, with some people having direct access to the profession via a friend or close family member, while others had actively developed networks by involvement in various student bodies. A third strategy consisted of minority ethnic students using community networks to obtain work on the margins of a profession from which they were being largely excluded. Those lacking any social networks in the profession upon which to draw were heavily reliant on direct help from their institutions, and faced major barriers where this was lacking. For this latter group, the process of finding professional practice posts appeared to be a critical time in their architectural training, and lack of success could result in them failing to return to Part II, a theme which is taken up in chapter six.

The most common theme relating to finding practice placements was that this process was very much left to students' own initiative. Gaung, a young British-Chinese student, explained that he had found his current first practice post through an informal arrangement his redbrick institution had with a local employer. However, he pointed out that his institution had not gone so far as providing support in finding a post. He would have preferred to work for a London-based architect, and had sent off at least 50 applications towards this end, without success.

Guang: It was left very much to [the] last minute because everyone's too busy with their work, their project work and hand-ins, so it was very rushed and by the time you left school that's when you started applying and you didn't have that much support. I mean if your tutors are going to help you or recommend jobs that would have been great.

Interviewer: Okay, but your tutors weren't able to recommend anything?

Guang: No, they just said apply to what you're interested in and a lot of people do that and I think the main thing is they need support on how you do your CV and how you write your letters and what's the best way to sell yourself; they have some lectures on it but not that much, it's up to you.

Another student at the same institution observed that his school kept a file of architectural firms, which students could use to identify suitable employers, but that this was very much out of date:

It's not saying 'they've got a job', it's just saying 'here's a list of firms in [city]'. It might have been like 20 years ago or something, but hey!

In fact, the most comprehensive system of supporting students in finding practice posts revolved around an individual tutor who performed the duty out of personal interest rather than because it was a formal function of the school. As Chesna, an overseas student noted:

There is a notice board and there is one person who, it's not her job, but you kind of go to her if either if you're an employer or employee, and she kind of puts people in touch with each other.

By contrast Ryan, a white Part II student, had found his first practice position through being personally recommended by one of his tutors, an experience which reemphasises the importance to career progression of maintaining good relationships with university teaching staff. Similarly, other students had found placements within their tutors' practices. The importance of these networks suggests that any favouritism which does exist may offer significant advantages to those who enjoy it. The non-white and overseas students who reported contentious relationships with their tutors were thus deprived of an important source of assistance in finding work.

Cari, a young Turkish woman hoping to start her Part II studies in the near future, provided an alternative example of how social networks are employed in gaining architectural experience. In discussing the difficulties of obtaining practice experience, she explained that she would have been unable to gain the necessary architectural experience without the support of the Turkish community, through whom she had been employed on various design projects. While this was enabling in one sense, it had also constrained the range of opportunities available to her.

The research also encountered examples of students who had found placements through family contacts, a phenomenon which is related to the architectural 'dynasties' identified in chapter three, and which highlights the social as well as material resources associated with particular class groupings. For example Sadiki, a Black overseas Part II student, found a position through **'a friend of my uncle's'**, while Rafiq, a Pakistani architect, had drawn initially upon contacts of his grandfather's to find work. It seems likely that particular ethnic groups will possess fewer of these critical resources, particularly where students' parents are relatively recently settled in the UK or are domiciled overseas. Several overseas students also noted that

work experience obtained in their country of origin was not eligible for accreditation.

Mary, a white Part II student, commented that the amount of help students received in finding placements varied from school to school, often resting upon certain key concerned individuals. She was generally critical of the existent support frameworks in architectural schools:

I mean some schools are quite good in that they'll go through practices and say, "They'd be good to work for. They wouldn't," and all that kind of stuff. But PSAs tend, PSAs, that's Professional Studies Adviser, tend to give very little support to actually teaming you up with a practice. Sometimes practices will approach schools and say, "We've got a place," put an advert up or something, in which case the school might help you, but there isn't a formal network of PSAs and practices working together to actually put people into employment. So there's no support, I think that's a big problem.

She noted that much architectural recruitment is via word-of-mouth, but added that she had developed her own more practical strategies, which involved drawing upon the social networks she had developed at architectural school (as an Archaos representative, these were more wide-ranging than might be usual), although she thought that students were now also making increased use of professional agencies to find work:

And so, I mean a lot of architects' jobs you get through friends, through people you've known at architecture school and just ringing them up and saying, "Is there a job in your office?" It tends to be a big way that people get jobs.

James, an Afro-Caribbean man who had left architecture after Part I, also commented on the seemingly random or inequitable element to finding work, **'even for the very good students, it seemed so hit and miss… even if you were really good, it still seemed as if you needed to know somebody.'** This was a widely shared view and students who had been successful through the application process frequently referred to themselves as

'lucky'. Students found it difficult to assess the explicit role which ethnicity played in this process, although there certainly appeared to be a relationship between 'favoured' (rather than 'deserving') students and the kind of architectural knowledgeability that stemmed from family connections and cultural occupational traditions. Discrimination in the architectural profession was argued to be fairly widespread, with around half of those interviewed feeling that there was some discrimination, but this was seen as being often overt or unconscious, and only a few students felt that they had experienced direct discrimination in recruitment. However, the interviews also gave the impression of a highly developed ethos of individualism within the profession, which would make it harder to acknowledge discrimination, and encourage interviewees to interpret their lack of progress as a personal failure, as many did. Gopan, an Indian Part II student, had consciously rejected discrimination as an explanation for his problems in finding work:

I have English friends who were getting jobs and I wasn't and when I tried to figure out why the easiest thing is to say, 'Ah I'm Asian.' I realise now it wasn't that, it was the way I presented myself, the way I marketed myself.

In the same way, individuals who had succeeded tended to view this as an argument for the absence of discrimination. For example, Jehangir commented that:

For me I think it's all personal, this is my opinion. If I want to do architecture I'll do it. If I don't, then I won't.

Chicha, a Black African student who was unemployed at the end of his Part II, had considerable difficulty finding a position. He had tried using a number of agencies, but his jobsearch efforts had met with no success. He blamed this on his relative lack of experience, in that he felt employers were looking for people who required minimal training. This awareness of the difficulties associated with finding work could affect students' experiences, often in quite negative ways. Akua, a Black African Part II student admitted that she was constantly preoccupied with whether she would be able to find the

sort of job she wanted in her next placement period. Marlee, an Afro-Caribbean young woman also at Part II, raised the issue that it appeared to be much easier for students to get internships with architectural practices in the US than the UK. Consequently she and several of her peers were considering looking to America for placement opportunities.

Students tended to be unclear as to whether discriminatory practices were operating in the recruitment process or whether it was just an extremely competitive (and somewhat nepotistic[18]) field. Murad, a practicing Pakistani architect, reflected, **'maybe then my ethnicity may have played a part in me not getting a job.'** Although he had tried the process of open recruitment, he had met with no success and eventually was grateful to be able to draw on his social networks to find a position: **'it was only through a contact of my father's that I managed to get a job which is again, I'm pulling strings, and I was lucky to have had that opportunity.'**

Overseas students faced particular difficulties obtaining placements. Raha, a Black African Part II student, reflected that her accent or surname provided some explanation as to why her applications had received so little attention. Similarly Ade, another Black African student, noted that the only occasions he had obtained an interview had been when he used an English name. A number of students explained that the only reason they could come up with for the disproportionate failure of their applications was that employers were wary about getting involved in anticipated visa and work permit issues. Kesia, a Black African overseas student at the Part I stage, had actually had this response formalised for her by a number of employers who responded 'we don't employ international students.' For some overseas students, the UK jobsearch process was also alien to them and, lacking support from their institutions, it took them some time to decipher how to negotiate it. Mariam, an African student who had dropped out of her architectural studies after Part I, described the difficulty she had experienced making sense of the system, in particular her lack of understanding of the 'selling yourself' mentality of UK interviews:

18 Again, this implies institutional discrimination since it implicitly favours those with existing connections to the profession, the vast majority of whom, as has already been noted, are white.

I have to admit I didn't quite understand what an interview was, so if it was me interviewing me I wouldn't hire me! I looked a bit too timid and you want someone who is confident. But once I found out what they required of you, what to do, I read up on the internet what you are required to do, what they are looking for. Then I applied for other interviews and I still didn't get a job, so I just don't understand what I need to do.

Although she felt she had become 'an expert job hunter', she had eventually given up on the process after becoming increasingly 'strained' and despondent. However, she frequently considered going back into architecture, and provided a clear example of someone who would have benefited from more institutional support during this stage of her training.

Overseas students often faced an additional pressure in that their parents or governments had met their course fees, and they consequently found it difficult to talk to their families about the problems they were experiencing when so much was perceived to be at stake. It was also hard for them to come to terms with these difficulties when they contrasted sharply with successful periods of work practice completed overseas. Overseas students' options were further restricted in terms of returning to their home countries to gain this experience, by the RIBA's rulings on what it recognised as work experience.

Armando, a South American mature student, raised the point that, despite having won several competitions, employers were put off his candidature by his age. He came to this conclusion to explain the minimal response he had received to his multiple applications. Like Cari, he had also resorted to the use of community networks to obtain self-employed work.

The London-centric concentration of architectural practices also posed a problem for some students who had established themselves (and sometimes also their dependent families) in another part of the UK, but who were unable to obtain job offers from practices outside London. As chapter four has already illustrated, moving to London had cost implications, and this could pose

particular difficulties when students' parents were unable to provide financial assistance.

Afet, a Turkish architect, referred to the economic context in finding work. She attributed her ease in finding work to the then boom in the economy, 'there was a boom [in] '87, I got a job [clicking her fingers] like that', which she contrasted to the more competitive current environment. It certainly seems likely that less established or privileged groups in the population will suffer more than others in a constrained labour market.

In response to the difficulties they had experienced finding practice positions, some of the self-employed architects we interviewed, notably women, made particular efforts to offer good work placements to students within their own practices, and paid attention to promoting a diverse workforce and family friendly employment practices.

5.2 PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

Experiences of work in practice could also be a 'make or break situation' in terms of deciding whether and how to continue in the profession. The quality of relationships with colleagues, and the professional respect and opportunities that interviewees had to become involved in interesting projects, made a huge difference in terms of the benefit they derived from their practice placements. Negative experiences, whether these consisted of sex or race discrimination, or simply low pay and a lack of stimulating work, had led some students to reconsider their future career options, while positive experiences reinforced a commitment to qualifying in the profession.

To an extent, students were realistic that their pay during this period would be poor, and they would be doing a lot of the more mundane tasks in a practice, but they relished the opportunities to use the skills already developed in their training, to be given a degree of responsibility, and to represent the firm in dealing with clients. Jehangir, a British Asian student, explained, reviewing his year out practice experience:

But then I got a lot of good experience, even to the point where I did a feasibility study in designing my own building. Just went out to a client. That's part of my portfolio now. So it was great.

In Jehangir's case, at the end of Part I he had been considering opting for an MA in a more artistic subject, but his positive experience in practice convinced him that architecture was what he wanted to do, and to return to university to study for his Part II. Like many other students who had gone to work in small firms, he speculated that this type of work enabled him to enjoy a degree of personal mentoring and a larger range of experience than might have been possible in a larger firm. Jehangir was another example of a student who had actively created beneficial social networks, and these had helped him in deciding on his placement. He contrasted his choice, which was facilitated by the knowledge he had developed through his involvement in professional organisations, with the information generally available to his fellow students:

I am quite lucky because I sit on the RIBA, I sit on all these boards, so I kind of know what to look for and what's happening out there, so I can make a good judgement of where I want to go.

Other students noted that their main consideration in deciding upon their placement was selecting a practice which fitted in with their developing architectural interests. So for example, Ryan chose a local authority employer specialising in urban regeneration, an experience which he thoroughly enjoyed and felt was particularly useful in terms of 'personal development' and deciding the architectural direction he wanted his career to take.

However, several students commented that their own or their peers' experiences of practice placements were much less satisfactory, being expected to take on the role of office junior, fetching tea and coffee for the qualified architects, and receiving limited opportunities to practice their professional skills. Nevertheless, knowing the difficulties of finding placements, some of these students felt compelled to remain in unchallenging

positions for the duration of their practice period. Rafiq, a Pakistani architect, reflected on his placement experiences that the allocation of work had been discriminatory:

I mean their attitudes were not right, I never liked it. It was the same with the Asians, I mean I'm coloured, what they try to do is they give us donkey jobs and then the time for the placement comes they give better jobs, frontline jobs on offer to the whites and Asians, they [the monotonous jobs] are what is left.

It was where students had these more negative experiences of practice that low pay became more of an issue and the themes of 'exploitation' and 'cheap labour' were raised. It was also noted by Sanjit, a Part I student, that perceptions of low architectural pay, both in practice positions and as a qualified architect, might deter some ethnic groups, particularly those which attach a strong cultural value to providing support to the extended family:

But I think if architects were to be paid something similar to what a lawyer or a doctor is paid, or an accountant or a businessman or a banker, then there would be more ethnic architects. I think that is pretty obvious.

Some students returned to the same architectural practice for their second practice placement. This tended to be because they had enjoyed their first placement so much and felt that it was an environment in which they were comfortable and where they were optimistic that they would enjoy good developmental opportunities. However, most took up their second placement at a different practice, either because they did not have the opportunity to return to their first employer, because they had no wish to do so or, more strategically, because they were keen to develop as wide a range of experience as possible over the course of their training. These decisions were also complicated by the range of factors described in the previous sections.

Students sometimes reported that architectural practice was useful not only in terms of gaining experience and

skills, but also in providing the intellectual space for them to re-evaluate their priorities. This could go either way: several students reported leaving architectural training after this period of reflection, while others felt that it had enabled them to take a step back from studying and to decide that this kind of work was right for them. For example, Chesna explained how she had benefited from returning to the same employer for her second period of architectural practice. This trusted environment had provided her with the opportunity to practice interesting work and to distance herself from some of the pressures which built up over the course of her Part II. She felt that she had subsequently developed a new enthusiasm for taking her Part III:

The second time I took a year out, I really do recommend that, because I was really stressed out, I didn't have any energy and things like that. In that case it helped me a lot.

For some, particularly people who had not felt they fitted into their universities, or who had considered the curriculum restrictive, their practice placement had provided a confirmation of their capabilities which reinvigorated their enthusiasm for architecture. As Ruth, a white architect with her own practice, explained:

I think by the time I'd taken a year off I felt a bit more confident and actually, it opened new avenues to me which I didn't think that the degree course did. And I think I discovered a world of practice that opened more avenues to my mind than I had within the enclosed and institutional world of this sort of small college.

By contrast, for others their placements confirmed their developing suspicions that architecture was not the career for them, and they subsequently dropped out. For example, Bashir's doubts had been building over the course of his Part II, and his second practice placement was a time when these thoughts crystallised:

Mm, mine is a fairly complex situation that, in my year out, I did certain things which influenced me quite a lot. When I went back I had a slightly different mindset, and half way through that year I found it very difficult to continue because my heart wasn't in it. I wanted to be doing something else, and so when these things happen, and this confirmed to me that this is not the thing for me, and it was a bit difficult for me to continue.

Bashir responded to these doubts by doing some freelance drafting work, a strategy which enabled him to keep himself 'at the borderline of architecture' while considering whether it was the career he wanted to pursue in the longer-term.

However, it was not purely the way in which they were treated and the opportunities they enjoyed that made work placements a beneficial experience for students. Anna, a white former architect, explained that her placement between Parts II and III had provided her with a wealth of opportunities for personal development. However, she subsequently realised that this was simply was not the type of architecture that she was interested in pursuing:

I went to work in [city] and did my second year out, and that was for a big commercial firm, and they were very supportive actually, they were very good to their students and I was detailing a large office block. It wasn't the kind of architecture I wanted to do because it was a commercial firm, and I wanted to work for somebody much more kind of cutting edge.

A point made by a few of the students was that they found the hierarchy of architectural practice problematic. While this may be a reflection of the quality of the practice placements they experienced, their attitude was partly linked to the self-sufficiency and independence which their courses had fostered in them. It would be interesting to track these students to see if they end up setting up their own practices as a strategy. For example, Sadiki contrasted his enjoyment of a placement where he had been given the opportunity to manage his own projects, with the frustration he experienced reporting to multiple lines of management:

05 EXPERIENCES OF WORKING IN ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

[in his first placement] I was responsible for my own projects, you know I would run the answer to the senior partner, whereas here [in his current placement] and in all the other firms that I've worked for you were put in a particular zone and there [are] four or five other people ahead of you who you have to keep answering to, and it's not always easy to please… I always prefer working on a one to one basis, wherever I am working, and if it is a project I write myself, I sort it out myself, you know, should any issues arise.

Students who had taken the opportunity to work overseas for all or part of their practice period tended to have particularly enjoyed these placements, and emphasised the diversity of experience which they had been able to enjoy, which led them to consider a wider array of jobs in the future.

A theme which was related in part to the difficulties students often experienced finding practice positions, was the lack of planning they were able to enact in relation to this phase of their training, and a general paucity of assistance. Thus students' existing disadvantage could be further accentuated over the course of their training, with those with more contacts able to gain a greater diversity of practice experience, which then positioned them as more attractive architects to potential employers and enabled them to develop their specialist areas of interest.

The diversity of architectural practices' workforces was a salient issue for many of those interviewed. Those who had gone into practices where senior members of staff came from a range of ethnic groups pointed to the valuable role models provided by such colleagues, and the subtle effect of their environment in increasing their self-confidence. While most students from minority ethnic groups working in all-white workforces felt that this aspect of their workplace was lacking, a few commented that it was not an issue which they felt uncomfortable with, such were the nature of their collegial relationships. For example, Jehangir, who was working on his first practice placement, commented that his personality fitted very easily into most workplaces:

Until recently I was the only Asian in the practice, and I had a great time. But then I kind of get along with anyone… It's just me.

As noted in chapter 4, in relation to education, this is generally a process in which minority ethnic students must learn to adapt to the profession, rather than the profession seeking actively to accommodate them.

A number of interviewees also commented on the under-representation of women in architectural practice, and on their segregation into lower occupational positions. It was also noted that ethnicity and gender could compound one another, making practice a less comfortable experience for those who contrasted with the largely male white profile. While statistics illustrate that architecture is becoming increasingly diverse, it seems likely that particular niche and specialist practices are leading the way in diverse workforces, and that these (smaller) practices may not be the ones where students secure their early practice experience. It was not only women who voiced this perception, as illustrated by Sanjit, an Indian student studying for his Part I, who commented on the discrimination which can occur due to what may be a largely unconscious reproduction of existing patterns of employment:

Right now I reckon 95% of architects are white people, and white males as well. I don't know, maybe white males generally prefer to employ white males rather than anybody else.

5.3 TYPE OF ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICES

A number of interviewees argued that there was a gendered dimension to career choices within the profession. Maggie, a white architect, suggested that women generally regarded the public sector as a 'good' employer, having well-established equal opportunities policies. By contrast, smaller private companies were less geared up to combining career breaks with ongoing progression:

They're more family-friendly, they're more family-orientated, much more flexible, they do

flexible hours, flexi-time. They're more childcare-orientated, and some of them have childcare facilities. You don't get that in our industry, in the main practitioners in this industry.

Maggie's response to combining motherhood with architectural practice had been to set up practice with her husband, and they lived in the house where they also worked. Indeed, architect couples appeared to be a relatively common phenomenon, which in light of the tight-knit social networks which develop on architectural courses is unsurprising. Several women also commented that setting up practice with their husbands afforded women a degree of employment protection which would be more difficult to secure as private sector employees. Another strategy, adopted by a few of the women interviewed, was to combine working for their own architectural practice with university lectureships, the latter providing a degree of job security and enabling them to maintain a range of working relationships which may not have been possible within these small practices.

Mary also noted that certain types of architecture were often more appealing to women:

I think a lot of women move into kind of regeneration and I think a lot of women probably choose not to do straight architecture. A lot of my friends kind of did go through that whole period of whether they should actually move into it… Because I think they like to work with people a bit more and have a more hands-on approach to that kind of stuff.

The majority of participants' architectural experience, however, was located in private sector practice, reflecting the profile of the profession as a whole, ranging from 'one-man bands' to multi-nationals and interviewees' own practices. The type of work taken on by these practices ranged from large-scale commercial and residential developments, to more specialist or design-led, 'cutting-edge' architecture. A large proportion of interviewees' reportedly most interesting past experience had taken place in overseas practices, which offered a variety of work. Interestingly, this kind of mobility tended to occur early on in interviewees' careers,

presumably because of its incompatibility with partners' commitments and raising a young family.

5.4 SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Self-employment may be a positive choice, allowing an individual to follow their particular interests, or may be adopted as a coping mechanism in the face of exclusion or discrimination. Self-employment as a positive choice was described as stemming from the relationships developed while working in practice placements, as Mary explained:

'Cause the really big practices, like [name] and [name] and all those kinds of places, they've really borne a lot of young teams of designers that have moved off and set up their own practice. And a lot of big practices are, they're very good about that, you know, they kind of nurture that, they're not annoyed that they leave and go off and set up their own practices. It's quite often very accepted that people will go to a practice to get the experience to then move on, I think that's quite good.

About a fifth of the people interviewed had set up their own private practices or worked freelance in the architectural field. Interestingly, this was less often a positive choice than a response to difficulties finding suitable work or in order to avoid problems experienced working in architectural practice.

For example, Armando, a Latin American man who had completed his Part II and had experienced severe problems finding practice positions, combined some lecturing with freelance work. Interestingly, this work tended to be for non-British clients, whom he felt were somewhat uncomfortable about working with British architects, and better able to relate to someone from his background. Together with a colleague, the pair were currently looking at how they might make further inroads into identifying a niche market. Maggie also noted that the disadvantages which women and minority ethnic groups may find breaking into the élitist architectural profession, could be redeployed as an asset in self-employment, using their difference to appeal to

markets which the industry has traditionally ignored. In her own case, she reflected that a sizeable proportion of her clients were women or were drawn from the Irish community, which made for more rewarding relationships for her as these were groups she felt she interacted well with.

As noted above, self-employment was also a strategy which could be used to counter the conflictual relationship between the workload demands of architectural practice and the expectations of family formation which couples developed in their late 20s and early 30s, and correspondingly more women than men in our sample had entered into self-employment.

One of the ironies of self-employment was that, whereas interviewees saw it as being a way of taking control of their life, enabling them to become self-sufficient and to concentrate on the aspects of architecture that they most enjoyed, within the small-scale practices that the self-employed people we interviewed worked, they found that much of their time was taken up with day-to-day administrative tasks. For example, for Anna, who had given up her work as an architect in a firm, while self-employment had enabled her to escape the aggressive site relations she had hated, she found that the activities she was involved in were repetitive and failed to draw upon her talents:

I'm bored stiff with it… and I'm thinking this is crazy, I've sort of scaled myself right down, I've ended up doing quite a lot of the work that I really would rather not be doing.

5.5 PROBLEMS IN ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

Beyond the much-cited problems of architectural practice, such as working for low wages, taking on unchallenging workloads, and the difficulties of finding employment at all and particularly in the most prestigious and interesting practices, interviewees drew attention to a number of difficulties in practice that related to their ethnicity or gender within a largely white male profession.

Ryan, a white student, argued that one reason why race and gender discrimination may be more prevalent in architecture than in comparable professions, such as law and medicine, is because of its close links with the construction industry. There have also to date been fewer opportunities to create a client base from within a particular ethnic community, since architectural clients have traditionally come from the wealthiest and most powerful (white) segments of society. Ben, a Black Caribbean architect in practice, noted that one of the reasons he had enjoyed a particular job was not simply because of the design challenges it raised, but because 'I wasn't having to meet clients as much, you know there wasn't that sort of awkwardness, because it can be awkward sometimes'. He went on to explain that, although he had never experienced any particular incident at work,

You know, subconsciously, you have this thing about, because perhaps people aren't used to seeing many architects, black architects around, maybe there's an element of will they trust you or whatever, and so I think subconsciously… I'd be lying if I said it wasn't in the back of my mind.

This lack of ease also appeared to relate to social class and the degree of social confidence that stemmed from a familiarity with certain cultural practices. For instance it was argued that a woman who had attended private school and an élite university might find it easier to become assimilated within an architectural practice than a woman who had been to a comprehensive school and a redbrick or new university. This process was complex, since the suggestion was less that they would provoke different reactions within the industry (although this might sometimes be the case) than that their own experiences might lead them to feel more or less comfortable in particular environments, and to heighten their awareness of the ways others responded to them. This section presents some examples of the types of problems interviewees experienced in practice, to illustrate the ways in which ethnicity and gender sometimes problematised this stage of architectural training.

Grace, a Black British Part II student, had actually been dismissed from her first practice position, an experience that she directly attributed to race discrimination:

I was the only female engineer and the only, definitely the only black person in the office and I say I was a case of very subtle, a victim of very subtle bullying by an individual who had caused another ethnic member of staff to leave. These are things that are really intangible, it's very difficult to say, because no-one will ever say to you, oh you know, nobody will ever abuse you in an explicit way unless they're stupid, but you recognise the differences in the way people are treated and what's said to you and what's not, what you're included in and what you're not included in and so on, that's been my experience.

Given that relatively few interviewees raised instances of direct discrimination, it is revealing that Grace disclosed this information at a second interview organised at a later date (after the interviewer's tape recorder failed halfway through the initial interview) and, at her own request, at her home, where she felt she could be 'freer'. This suggests that there may be a public response to these issues which collapses under probing in a supportive environment, and that discrimination is in fact a more significant factor than might initially seem apparent.

There was also a number of more subtle instances of discrimination, which could be difficult for interviewees to interpret in terms of their ethnicity, but which had served to make them feel uncomfortable. Bashir, a British Asian man who was not practising architecture at the time he was interviewed, despite having completed his Part II, described an experience from his practice placement:

I went to the planning meeting… so the client turns up and he was sort of saying, quite subtly but obviously, "A bit strange that [architectural firm] employed you," and… I could see where he was coming from and… I just smiled politely… and didn't take it too seriously, but I felt that was out of place.

It was difficult to anticipate whether Bashir would eventually return to architecture and to interpret his current position. He was involved in drafting work for a firm of surveyors and expressed ambiguous feelings about his career at the time he was interviewed. While he did not attach particular weight to this incident with a client, it does seem telling that he subsequently found it more comfortable to work for himself than in practice, and these forms of discrimination may have a profound long-term impact on architects' choices and ambitions.

A number of the women interviewed reported having experienced problems within architectural practice in terms of negative workplace relationships that many found increasingly emotionally draining. These were often described in terms of 'bullying'. In several instances these had prompted them to leave posts, sometimes to set up practice on their own where they felt they would have more control over this process (as discussed above), or to move into alternative positions. However, at least one person felt that the expectation that combative workplace relations were regarded as part and parcel of architectural practice was unacceptable, and consequently left the profession. This interviewee, Anna, a white woman married to another architect, had been of the rising stars among her cohort at a leading architectural school. She explained how, following a series of unsatisfactory and exploitative workplace relations, one particular confrontation had acted as the final straw:

Anna: And this particular builder who I think, I mean I don't know, I can only think that he must have been deeply psychologically disturbed, or something, I went for one site meeting and he'd obviously decided that, you know, obviously all the things that always happen, he was going to lay into me on that particular site meeting… I mean he hadn't been easy before then but he had decided that he would take me upstairs in to an upstairs room with his site agent as witness and he just shouted at me for about three quarters of an hour.

SP1: You weren't ready for it or you, ...

SP2: It sounds like nothing, it sounds pathetic but you know it really upsets me even now… I stood there and I thought I never met a man like this before in my life, and I tried to be quite detached about it, but he was very, very abusive and very, I mean he said horrible things to me. And by the end of the time, I don't know how long it was, it felt like a long time, I believed him. All the things that he'd told me…

SP1: He'd constructed a reality almost, yeah.

SP2: So that wasn't very good.

SP1: So what was the outcome of that?

SP2: Well the outcome was that, having explained the set up of the office, I got back to the office. No support at all… I think my reaction after that was that I never wanted to put myself in that situation ever again.

Crucially, this presented far from a satisfactory outcome for Anna, who continued to work on some architectural projects freelance and acted as the main caretaker to her children. While this enabled her to negotiate a much more rewarding quality of life, she was aware that in another sense her architectural flair was not being challenged in the same way in this role, saying, 'It's just kind of tragic really.'

These findings reflect those of the University of the West of England researchers who studied women leavers (de Graft-Johnson et al, 2003), in that particular kinds of workplace conditions can gradually erode architects' confidence and reduce their job satisfaction. Like the Bristol research, our research suggests that this is not necessarily an issue of direct discrimination, but that certain groups possess fewer forms of privileged types of cultural capital that are associated with successful responses to the machismo of architectural practice. For example then, architects' sometimes bullish relationships with builders and a workplace sociability associated with alcohol may preclude or sit in tension with the cultural attitudes of particular groups, and make integration into such environments more challenging for them.

06 FACTORS INFLUENCING DROP-OUT AND LACK OF PROGRESS

06 FACTORS INFLUENCING DROP-OUT AND LACK OF PROGRESS

Although increasing numbers of people from minority ethnic backgrounds are entering architectural schools, they remain under-represented in the profession, as chapter 2 discussed. Data limitations make it difficult to distinguish drop-out; chapter 2 discussed the available evidence, which is suggestive of higher drop-out rates about minority ethnic students, but cannot be conclusive on this point. This chapter identifies the range of issues affecting progress and drop-out which individuals described in qualitative interviews.

6.1 FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The people we interviewed agreed that drop-out was a recognisable feature of architectural education, and identified a number of reasons why people's paths might move away from their chosen profession. However, this was a complex phenomenon, associated with several critical points in the process of training, as well as being linked to individual experiences which coloured interviewees' subsequent ambitions. Furthermore, the factors which caused people to think about dropping out appeared to exert a stronger pressure on people who lacked crucial financial or social resources to cope with the demands of architectural training. As previous chapters have illustrated, these are circumstances that minority ethnic groups are more likely to experience.

Broadly, issues that affected drop-out were associated with the architectural education process itself and with experiences of working in architectural practice. Unsurprisingly, undergraduate architectural students tended to focus on the issues which were closest to them at the time of the interview, that is those concerned with the architectural education process, while interviewees at Parts II and III, practicing architects, and people who had dropped out of architecture gave more attention to issues concerned with professional practice.

In terms of architectural education, interviewees provided a number of very concrete examples of attrition rates. One qualified architect described there as having been 'a humongous drop-out rate' at his central

England university between Parts I and II, while others provided estimates ranging from a quarter to over half of their peers moving away from architecture over the course of their training.

6.2 THE DESIGN AND LENGTH OF ARCHITECTURAL COURSES

The fragmented structure of the architectural education process, encompassing a lengthy period of training and potentially involving affiliation with a number of different institutions and places of work, during which time conflicts might occur, was flagged by many of those interviewed as providing greater opportunity for students with problems to drop out of architecture. Furthermore, interviewees repeatedly observed that certain groups, such as women and people from minority ethnic or lower socio-economic backgrounds, might find the extended period of training more problematic, providing increased opportunity for financial problems to occur.

Interviewees generally regarded the phenomenon of students dropping out of their Part I early on as unproblematic and comparable to what happens on other degree courses. They regarded these individuals as people who had simply chosen the wrong course, and who might well go into allied courses, such as architectural studies or design, but felt that it was better that they took this decision early because of the intense commitment that an architectural degree required.

People have dropped out… and they would rather be doing another course. It's almost like my situation, getting into it to find out if you actually like it, but some people did stay on that don't like it. I'm not quite sure if it's worth staying on in that case. (Ashia)

One tutor at an architectural school estimated that there was from five to eight percent traffic from straight architecture to architectural studies over the course of an average degree cohort.

Students tended not to feel that this kind of early departure because of mismatches between personal

interest and academic content was related to ethnicity, or felt that if it was, the relationship was too subtle for them to detect. A second point of dropout because of academic content was identified at the end of Part I (prior to taking up architectural placements). Latif explained this in terms of the architectural degree providing a good broad training for students, relevant to a range of careers, but that at Part II the training would become much more architecturally-specific, and that therefore people who had decided not to practice as architects made rational decisions to complete their Part I before moving into alternative educational or training programmes:

I think people should realise that Part I is a good point to sort of say more, I'm suited to management or whatever, and go off, so that what you do get left with at Part II is people who are suited and do want to become architects.

People who realised during their undergraduate degree that architecture was not the career for them, often strove to complete their Part I in order to obtain a degree which they could use in a range of occupations. For example, James, who had subsequently moved into the educational sector, described a process of disengagement from architecture, which was set in the context of the strategic importance of a degree:

Towards the end of the second year, I realised that it wasn't what I wanted to do full-time as a career. It was really important to me to finish the degree, partly because I didn't want to let my parents down as well... I identified it as not being my vocation and the longer I went through the degree, it became clearer to me, certainly from what the tutors were saying, that you either have or haven't got it.

While these kinds of explanations undoubtedly played some role in explaining architectural education attrition rates, to some extent they are not atypical of any higher education course, and fail to explain in particular the accentuated drop out rates of minority ethnic groups. While the structure of architectural training provided natural break points, in particular at the end of year 1 and year 3 of Part I training, for people to leave if they were

not enjoying the course, there are also a number of more architecturally-specific reasons which explain why drop-out rates particularly characterise the experiences of certain groups of students.

Prime among these was the seven year minimum period required to qualify as an architect, which self-evidently raised cost implications, particularly in the context of the movement away from local authority support and the increased use of student loans and part-time working strategies (the latter bringing with it its own workload management issues). Many interviewees noted the importance of parental support – emotional, practical and financial – in being able to pursue their architectural studies. However, students whose parents were less able to provide financial support (or who they did not feel able ask), or who had no (proximate) families, felt these financial pressures much more acutely, and they were more likely to become the cause of considerable personal stress. As previous chapters have argued, these factors are likely to disproportionately affect students from minority ethnic groups.

Christopher, an Afro-Caribbean student who had benefited from a bursary from the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, explained that this had been a major asset in his being able to pursue architecture. The fact that he was married and thus experienced rather different pressures from younger students, also emphasised the particular financial pressures that certain types of students would face on an architectural degree. Several interviewees made the point that people from minority ethnic and lower-income backgrounds were likely to experience these pressures particularly sharply, and subsequently drop out of degrees because they were felt to be too expensive to pursue. Maggie reflected, **'it's the cost of a long education with no income, and that's for anybody. More privileged people, who are generally the middle-class, white, will have their parents to help them out.'** These financial pressures could be even more intense for overseas students, who paid higher fees and who therefore might be expected to come from more affluent backgrounds, but who faced their own set of pressures knowing the financial investment their parents had made in their education and

not wanting to let their parents down or ask for additional help when they were struggling.

Several students also pointed to the length of architectural training as something which set them apart from their peers. For example, Sadiki explained that it could be difficult to stay motivated when you saw your university friends on other courses get jobs, and be able to buy into the markers of an adult status while you were still training. He noted that you sometimes had to be very determined to see your course through, particularly when architectural training provided several opportunities to stay in architectural practice:

I mean being a capitalist society, as you know money rules, and you compare our course with guys who are doing mainly commercial or something like that, their course maybe takes three years max, and they start working while you are still in college, you know, pulling the bag and cycling to college, that sort of thing, someone's busy driving a car and, you know, living a life and that sort of thing… It ends up being frustrating, so you end up trying to find easier means of making a living.

In addition to the length of architectural training, the specific costs of the course could put pressure on students with fewer resources, as chapter 4 has discussed. These financial issues could be intensified for students who studied in London, where it was widely recognised that the cost of living was higher and commuting was often cumbersome, yet these institutions were often particularly attractive to students for various reasons, including ethnic diversity, academic reputation, and in order for Part II students to be near 'cutting-edge' practices. Most of the students we interviewed worked at least part-time as a strategy to afford the demands of architectural degrees, and the need to do so was likely to be intensified for those from poorer backgrounds, although this brought with it difficulties in terms of managing intensive workloads, and coursework and even personal health could suffer as a result. Mary, a Part II student, directly attributed these difficulties to the lack of a cohesive infrastructure to support students' financial problems:

I think a lot of people after their degree, probably drop out because of money… because they probably can't afford the next two years, and also because there isn't very much kind of, in terms of financial support. I mean the RIBA put up a few scholarships, and the Stephen Lawrence, but obviously that's kind of limited in who can have that… in lots of other professions they'll be kind of, a lot of the actual kind of companies will put up sponsorships for people, and that doesn't really exist in architecture, so I think that's quite a big problem.

Grace noted that several of her peers 'kind of dropped out and disappeared when their funding stopped.'

Akua observed that the structure of architectural training, with the expectation that students will engage in architectural practice between Parts I and II and Parts II and III, itself provides a context in which students have the space to undertake an objective assessment of their expectations, and that this may be a time when personal stresses come to a head and people decide not to return to the next stage of their education. This may be exacerbated where students are loosely or no longer affiliated to the institution where they completed their previous training, and lacking the support to move on to the next stage, dropping out becomes a relatively undramatic decision, particularly if students decide to continue in their practice posts and to work as unqualified architectural assistants or technicians. Several Part II students pointed to the steep drop-off in their class sizes between Parts I and II, and several had witnessed friends deciding not to return to school for Part II, following experiences during their time in practice:

There was a Spanish girl, and she stopped, she stopped, had a few years' gap. I think she had some personal problems and then she got married, it was even more difficult for her to go back to Part II, but now, I don't know what she is doing at the moment, but she was a very talented girl, she was very talented and should have been a qualified architect. (Cari)

Similarly, Chesna talked about her practice experience in terms of, **'It gets a bit tough and sort of emotionally exhausting and you kind of drop out,'** an experience she had dealt with by taking a **'year out'**, a strategy which might easily have resulted in a different outcome. Emma had also done this, **'I needed to get my head together about was this really what I wanted to do, I mean I did have crises about whether to stick with architecture.'** Another overseas student, Catalina, explained,

I think it is a very tiring career because it's very intense, you need to be really fit! Like it's a killer, you know. And I think if you don't have this aim from the very beginning, it's very easy to drop out. Very easy.

For others, this period of reflection coincided with other opportunities, which forced an alternative decision. For example, after his Part II, Bashir had been lured into some attractive design work in the .com industry, and he went on to freelance, although he remained undecided about whether he would eventually return to take his Part III, and felt that he needed to **'get myself into the frame of mind to do that.'**

The fragmented structure of architecture, and the various strategies which students may adopt to deal with pressures at particular critical points can make it difficult to gauge drop-out rates, and to assess whether exits from courses were likely to be permanent or temporary. Attrition rates then, have different meanings and consequences. For example, people who dropped out of architecture at the end of their first year (Part I) because in retrospect it was the wrong course for them and who may transfer onto allied courses such as design or engineering, possessed a very different set of motivations and face distinctive problems from those who dropped out at the end of their first degree or after their diploma, some of whom may actually continue to work in the architecture industry. Furthermore, as Mary pointed out, a common pattern was for students to extend periods of architectural practice when they were undecided about whether to continue training, and that additionally particular schools possessed cultures of returning to the same school after practice or moving to another school,

which could make it difficult to subsequently track students' progress. This in-built lack of continuity can make it difficult to anticipate whether individuals who lapse from the records of institutions will eventually return to their studies there or elsewhere, or whether they have left architecture for alternative professions. The extent to which this issue plays a significant role in explaining apparent drop-out rates could be further explored through longitudinal research with architectural students.

The rather unusual way in which Part III sits in the educational system, provides a further explanation for the apparent extent of drop-out rates. Several students referred to the lack of a strong feeling of affiliation with an institution or peer group during Part III, and the heightened pressures they experienced during their second period of professional practice, which could lead to them deferring or forgetting about the idea of sitting their Part III exams. Additionally, in many practices there appeared to be a culture of continuing to work without taking the next step to become a fully qualified architect, meaning that there was little impetus to distinguish yourself from this. Chesna, a Part II overseas student explained:

A lot of people don't think Part III is necessary because you can work in a practice and everything without a Part III.

Catalina, another Part II overseas student, reflected that this reprioritisation was compounded by mounting financial concerns and workload pressures:

I think because when you start working, again if you didn't have from the very beginning an aim to finish, once you start working you have other concerns, and I mean studying again at Part III is like an additional concern. And especially, I think London is a city that gives you the opportunity of different timetables, and so in order to do further studies, but I think the economic bit is always a problem.

Notably, implied in Catalina's response was that geography made a difference, in that people living in London had greater access to a range of universities

whose Part III schedules might fit in with their own. This opportunity is likely to be related to social class to some extent, since, as chapter 3 discussed, some students from less affluent backgrounds deliberately avoided London because of the higher cost of living. Nevertheless, this Part III phenomenon explains at least part of the observed drop-out rate among architectural students, although students who had adopted such a strategy had not actually left the industry.

6.3 GENDER ISSUES

It was widely acknowledged in interviews that architecture remains largely a 'boy's game', perceived to consist of '95 per cent white males'[19] and where women still lack role models. Catalina argued that this situation is on the cusp of change, with women's architecture being highlighted at the moment. Men interviewed tended to comment on the large drop-out rate amongst women they had studied with. As Murad said, 'by the time you get through your Part II, your Part III, there aren't many of them left'. Many people argued that gender discrimination was at least as significant as racial discrimination, if not more so. Alison said that of fifteen women on her course 'I was one of two that finished' and commented that 'it did become slightly more intimidating the further I got'. Ruth also commented on the lack of women teaching staff at the school where she had done both Part I and Part II, 'I was not taught by a single female throughout the entire five years that I studied there'.

It seems likely that the onset of family formation in the late twenties and early thirties is a real issue for women, which sits problematically with the expectation that students will devote their energies whole-heartedly to architectural training and practice for the best part of a decade. As Ashia pointed out, the demands of architectural education can be somewhat overwhelming, and can test the commitment of people who have other pressures upon them at this point in their life:

You have to adapt to the course and be into it, so personally attached to it, so you don't nine-to-five it and forget about it. The whole thing about being in this world full of people doing the same kind of thing as you, and if you don't like that you might want to change. We are thinking about architecture all the time on this course.

Maggie, an architect in practice, made the point that women were more prone to leaving the profession for allied occupations which made use of their architectural knowledge, partly in order to avoid the kind of conflictual relationships outlined in chapter five:

A lot of the women that drop out will go into teaching. Because teaching is, if they've got children at least they've got the summer holidays off, and that's affordable, it's still interesting, it's still in the profession. A lot of women go into journalism, they go into media, they'll be on the radio on the subject of the environment, or whatever it might be. Or they simply drop out all together. It's an awful long time, and a terrible waste of talent I think for people to be dropping out like that.

6.4 TEACHING SYSTEMS

The rather unique style of architectural education raises a number of potential difficulties for students, which sometimes resulted in their dropping out of courses. As discussed in chapter 4, the expectation that students should work in tutorial groups, their success in which hinged upon their forging strong social networks and learning particular presentational techniques which were likely to impress their tutors or tutor, sometimes worked to heighten the sense of difference between more deprived students and what they regarded as the privileged norm. It sometimes appeared to be assumed that students were aware of the rules by which these interactions were governed (which might indeed be the case if they came from architectural backgrounds or had benefited from the confidence-enhancement of a private-school education). However, many of those we interviewed reported experiencing this style as alien, and found that communication about these expectations was lacking and privileged.

---

19 In reality 13 per cent of practising architects are female, and 2 per cent are from a minority ethnic group.

06 FACTORS INFLUENCING DROP-OUT AND LACK OF PROGRESS

Murad, a male Asian architect, recalled the problems he had experienced with his tutor, and how these had very nearly led to him dropping out after Part I:

My final year was a very rough year… I had a very bad tutor and the tutor rocked me so much that he actually made me doubt myself and my buildings, and I lost almost three good years that I'd put in and made me really think long and hard about going back to architecture itself, that was the crunch time for me.

Others had been assessed as failing. For example, Maggie, an architect with her own successful practice, reflected on being failed on a technology course (a decision which she felt in retrospect was discriminatory since women were disproportionately failed). At the time, she recalled how it had been implied that she should drop out of her degree (an opposition which only spurred on her determination):

It was their little excuse to hold me back, I was horrified, horrified. And he said, "Well if we hold you back, are you going to continue?" I said, "Of course I'm going to continue!" They were hoping I'd say no I think. But they failed loads of women, the women were really hard hit on, and I think it kind of diminishes your confidence, and I'm sure it might have been similar to you [talking to female colleague]. That you'd really feel the sexism, and it was very heavy on you.

Similarly, Afet, a female Turkish architect, recalled receiving a letter from her institution asking her to consider changing course, something she felt capable of resisting only because she had the strong support of her family.

As discussed in chapter 4, the crit system was raised by several students as something which they had observed contributing to their peers' decisions to drop out of architectural training. Although no one we spoke to had dropped out of courses primarily because of this, it seems likely that where students are already experiencing difficulties, this kind of negative experience will weigh heavily upon their overall motivation.

Several students pointed to the isolating effect of being the only or one of a few students from a minority ethnic background in their year, as chapter 4 discussed, and commented on the implications for their support networks. Reflecting this, students who had studied in institutions with a more diverse student profile often reported feeling more comfortable in these environments. Furthermore, some students were able to point to examples of instances where their ethnicity had set them apart, either from their own perspective, or in terms of the treatment they had received from tutors. Sadiki, an overseas male student explained this in terms of *'the issues with just the treatment of black students being different in schools where people give you enough time, give you enough of their time to have a fair deal and understand where you are coming from… It's not always the case.'*

That many of these negative experiences of architectural training were described by individuals who had gone on to successfully complete Parts I and II, or who had qualified and were now practicing as architects, and that we interviewed a minority of people who had dropped out of architecture, is revealing in terms of the extent to which these experiences appear to characterise the educational process. Indeed, it is likely that we have only uncovered the tip of the iceberg in terms of these adverse experiences.

6.5 ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

The process of finding and working in architectural practice positions was raised by a number of students as a difficult time and one when graduates could potentially drop out of their architectural training. Many students appeared to have received minimal or no support from their institutions in finding practice positions, and many of the most successful graduates had drawn on personal contacts (often accessed through their parents or family friends who worked as architects), an option not available to students from less privileged backgrounds, which may well include UK students from minority ethnic groups. Background came into the equation not only in terms of finding practice posts, but also in terms of the kind of part-time work students were able to obtain over the

course of their studies, which was likely to influence the character of their architectural training experiences. Jessica explained:

The job I do in the summer is just in a restaurant, in a bar… but I was trying to get work this summer with architects, just a dogsbody, just photocopying or anything, but people I know whose dads are architects do with their dads, or with their uncle, or a friend of the family, or something, and it's true that [if] people's dads do have a roll of tracing paper lying around that they don't need any more or an old drawing board or that sort of thing. I mean I've got that to a certain extent because my Dad's got lots of books about architecture because he is interested in it. But yes, if you don't… I don't know it just makes it easier.

Similarly Sadiki explained that architecture operated on a 'who you know basis… it's like an old school society of which you might have never had a chance to be exposed to.' Grace reiterated the point that students from minority ethnic groups may be outside the particular professional and family-related social networks which help them to find jobs, and elaborated that cultural differences could continue to set them apart from their colleagues once in placements:

When you come out into the workplace, and you know people have trouble finding jobs, there is this kind of network that if you're part of, it makes it easier for you to find a job; if you're outside that I can imagine it is extremely difficult. And then once you actually get a job it can be quite difficult to maybe function in an environment that's coming from a different, I don't know, maybe has a different cultural base to your own, you know, maybe differences in sense of humour, things that are definitely culturally based and I think that this can be a huge problem, I think you have to be quite tough.

She further explained that taken-for-granted job-seeking strategies like producing a CV or writing a letter of application were class-specific, and that the rules of engagement were not evident to everyone.

Overseas students reflected on particular difficulties finding practice posts[20], an experience that they attributed to employers' reluctance to expose themselves to Home Office negotiations. They reflected that this form of discrimination was facilitated by their names giving a clue as to their ethnic origin. Kesia, an overseas Nigerian student explained how she had eventually been forced to give up on her architectural training because she was unable to find a placement in the UK. She had even contemplated returning to her home country to gain experience there, but had discounted this option after learning that the RIBA was unlikely to recognise this form of practice. She subsequently went into the financial sector, which she perceived as more secure work. Mariam, another African overseas student experienced similar problems, and described the devastating effect which these difficulties had had on her, feeling that she had let her family down:

I went for many interviews, but I never even got one job and I thought, you know what, I don't really want to do this any more… after the third year, when I tried getting a job, I almost went into a depression and I had to tell my dad then, I had tried everything… It is not a good feeling to be rejected all the time.

She too had subsequently gone into alternative work, although it was clear from the interview that she had not totally given up on the idea of architecture, although she regarded these ambitions as unrealistic.

Mary, a white student who was working towards Part III, made the point that one of the reasons why overseas students experienced these problems was because employers made assumptions about their language capabilities, conjecturing that they would not be confident in dealing with clients.

Practice positions offered an extremely wide range of experience, and several students reflected that the lack of institutional guidance as to what placements would suit them best, could result in people accepting unsatisfying posts which led them to question their suitability to architecture. Jehangir, a student who was currently working in his placement explained how his

20 A point confirmed by PSA comments

employer was particularly supportive and had pushed him forward to acquire new skills. However, he acknowledged that the converse could all too easily be true, and explained how he had strategically sought work experience with a smaller practice because of the variety of work that would be available to him, and noted that comparatively speaking, experience with a larger well-known architect might look better on his CV and improve his employment prospects. Despite this, he recognised that the personal mentoring he had received in his position was playing a fundamental role in encouraging him to continue with his training:

Interviewer: It spurred you on to go to Part II?

Jehangir: Yes. And it's also the fact that I went to where I chose to go. I think if I'd gone somewhere else – I'm just speculating here – but if I had taken a job in London, a big firm, I don't know whether I would have been encouraged to do it.

Jamila, a Black African Part II student at a new university, made the point that being less integrated into architectural social networks, people from minority ethnic groups may be given less critical opportunities during their time in practice, which could affect their subsequent experiences and lead to disillusionment with the profession.

The low pay which students received during their practice experience, and the contrast with what they had anticipated and the long hours they were expected to put in, could exacerbate any difficulties interviewees were already experiencing at this time. Jie reporting having earned only £8,000 a year during his practice, and this, combined with the monotonous work he was given, made it difficult for him to remain motivated and not 'quit'. Ryan also made this point about the frustrations of practice, contrasting the undergraduate experience in which students become very used to pursuing challenging projects and thinking for themselves, with their practice experience when they were often asked to perform repetitive and relatively undemanding tasks:

The main reason that people don't come back [to Part II] is that you work so hard in the education, and when you get out, get a job, and you're often doing detailing work and you're working in a big practice and you become a number and you're paid very badly… I mean that's the reason I think people haven't come back.

Many more students referred to the phenomenon of becoming 'CAD slaves' during their architectural practice, an experience which seemed to be particularly linked to working in large firms with specialised job functions.

In a more subtle way, problems experienced during practice placements could become more heightened for people who lacked networks in the architectural world (such as students from some minority ethnic groups), since these could provide access to informal mentors with whom students could discuss their problems, gain encouragement, and devise survival strategies.

6.6 DISILLUSIONMENT WITH ARCHITECTURE

The main reason for dropping out of architecture during the latter stages of training was a growing disillusionment with the profession and what it had to offer. These feelings often developed during students' first architectural practice experiences, in terms of being able to observe how the professional operated first hand, but could also develop later on when interviewees were fully qualified architects, or after gaining their diplomas.

Disillusionment frequently centred around the relatively low pay which fully qualified architects could expect to achieve, in comparison to allied professions such as medicine and law, unless architects were prepared to set up their own practices. For example, Jehangir talked about a friend of his who had dropped out of architecture and moved into investment banking, mainly because she did not feel that the salary she could achieve as an architect was sufficient to provide her anticipated family with a good quality of life. He reflected that these issues might be heightened for minority ethnic groups, particularly if they did not come from affluent

backgrounds and were more sensitive to financial and security issues: **'I just think that coming from an ethnic minority you're aware of that.'**

Low pay also affected some groups more than others. For example, as Bashir, an overseas student, explained, students from some minority ethnic backgrounds may have more responsibilities at this stage in their life, which makes continuing in low paid work less sustainable as an option:

People from my cultural background tend to marry earlier which means whilst a lot of the people I knew as architects at my age were sharing accommodation with colleagues all of whom would chip in… once you got three or four professionals living in a house it's not an issue, but if you're actually trying to support an household it's difficult, I couldn't, one reason I couldn't continue with architecture is I simply couldn't afford it, it didn't pay, it just didn't pay, and after six or seven years of studying it's very difficult to struggle through in a job.

Despite its relatively low pay, architecture as a profession carried with it the risk of being sued, like law and medicine. Jessica explained that this could be a very real fear for some students and, combined with other aspects of their observations in practice, could make continuing seem an unattractive prospect:

[You're] constantly hearing horror stories about people not earning very much, getting sued, not actually being able to do the thing they want to do.

Ryan, a white male Part II student, explained that paradoxically dropping out was easier for architectural students because the degree attracted a particular sort of person and because the educational process was so comprehensive that it equipped them for a career in a range of professions, which they could move into relatively easily if they became disheartened with architecture:

A lot of people are very, very intelligent people who could do most jobs. And became they're able to do

most jobs and they come from privileged backgrounds, they do tend to go and do other jobs if they can do it. And they've got the skills and they've been taught to think for themselves on this course. By teaching you to think for yourself, you feel that you want a better life, in terms of you want to do well. So you've got to do something else because architecture won't provide that. So I suppose it shoots itself in the foot in some ways by teaching you to think for yourself. I don't think dropping out is a bad thing at all, there may be good things coming out of it.

Others became cynical about working in architectural practices because of low pay, lack of creative freedom, and problematic working relationships, issues which they dealt with by moving into alternative professions, setting up their own practices, or more frequently, by going freelance. It became apparent about halfway through the interview with Anna, an apparently successful freelance architect, that she had sacrificed an illustrious career by becoming self-employed in response to a bullying episode. It is difficult to anticipate how common this sort of experience is; Anna admitted to never having talked to her architect friends about it and had only ever discussed with a handful of people, but it was clear that for her it had been a **'crunch point'** in her career. Bullying did seem to be a problem that women had experienced much more than men, and several female architects referred to the aggressive nature of site relations, and the undertone of professional undermining which they had had to deal with.

The research also uncovered a number of examples of covert and overt racial discrimination which problematised interviewees' experiences. Sadiki referred to architects from minority ethnic groups being **'exploited'**, and explained that, **'you are always having to start fighting the stereotype that oh, what can a black guy do?'**

However, disillusionment sometimes also centred around frustration with the actual work of architecture, based upon observations made during practice experience. For example, Marlee's practice had made her cynical about

what architecture actually involved, and she regarded a
lot of the day-to-day work as monotonous and having
relatively little to do with design and creativity. She had no
intention of actually going on to practice as a qualified
architect, and intended to make increasing use of her
freelance design work in the future. Her opinions were
given credence by her friends' experiences, many of
whom were highly talented architects who had won
prizes for their work, but who had been unable to
obtain the kinds of jobs they wanted. Similarly Raha
had witnessed several of her friends being unable to
acquire architectural positions, and had subsequently
become increasingly ambivalent about her own future
in the profession.

07 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

07 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter of the report draws together the themes from previous chapters to make practical recommendations for the various stakeholders involved in the delivery and regulation of architectural education and professional practice, including individual schools, professional bodies, and interest groups. The previous chapters have shown that it is not single, but multiple and often cumulative barriers which explain the differential dropout rates experienced by particular groups in architectural education and, correspondingly, action to address these would need to take place on a number of fronts and by a number of policy actors.

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, stemming from the MacPherson report, places a legal duty on public bodies to ensure that the promotion of racial equality is central to their work. This duty affects educational institutions, professional bodies and some architectural employers, and the findings of this research are therefore relevant to a large number of stakeholders in the profession. Several priority areas emerged from the research:

- the profile of the discipline

- the need for better data

- the importance of role models and mentoring

- improved communications, work culture and academic feedback

- increased support during practice placements

- financial support

- support for overseas students

7.1 RAISING THE PROFILE OF ARCHITECTURE AS A DISCIPLINE

One finding of the research was that not enough people are exposed to architecture as a career option at school. Although our research has shown that, for both minority ethnic students and women, dropping out may be more

of an issue than applying to study architecture in the first place, some of our interviewees argued that there is still much to be done in this respect. Jehangir's generally positive experiences of architectural education had led him to believe that taking the first step was biggest barrier to be overcome:

Their job is to teach architecture, and I don't think it wholly matters what ethnicity you're; you will learn a way to think. But I think it's actually getting the students to apply first of all.

The careers advice which people had received in secondary school tended to be poor, and for some had been actively discouraging of students' desire to go into architecture. Most people who had gone on to study architecture had taken it upon themselves to find out more about the profession (often facilitated by family contacts). Some people had been given the wrong advice about what A-levels to take, which could have been highly detrimental if they had relied exclusively upon this advice. There certainly appeared to be a lack of knowledge about architecture amongst school-level careers advisers, coupled with ingrained ideas about the sort of people who went into and were likely to succeed in architecture. Outreach and media work such as that undertaken by Women in Architecture and Architects for Change is providing a positive counter to this. CABE has as one of its key aims the provision of materials on buildings and the built environment for schools and FE colleges that can be delivered within the national curriculum, and these may also provide a means of promoting a diversity agenda. Architecture schools and firms might also consider getting more involved in pre-sixteen careers programmes, such as year 10 work experience, or in providing 'open-days' to provide a positive image of the opportunities available in architecture, and to counter the stereotype that only middle class white men can succeed in architecture, in order to make the profession more accessible to a diverse population. Enthusiasm was also expressed for the proposed establishment of the Stephen Lawrence architecture centre.

07 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The RIBA and ARB were seen to have a key role in publicising an image of the profession, via the media, that would make it more widely known and attractive to future generations of architects. As Jehangir commented:

You can't change what the parents are going to say to a child about stability within their future, but by opening it out to schools a lot more, getting students to do workshops, finding out about what architecture is, about design, not only architecture but design and art, and getting maybe people who are actually from ethnic backgrounds to go out and talk to schools: "This is what I did, and if you want to do it, you can do it as well".

It was argued that there should more be emphasis on modern architecture, rather than what was seen as a general tendency to focus on great buildings of the past, and a feeling that more should be done in terms of 'getting people interested doing it younger'. Role models such as David Adjaye were also felt to be important ambassadors for the profession, and events like Architecture Week and Open House were regarded as vital mechanisms in making architecture more accessible to potential students. Other suggestions made were that the RIBA could support schemes whereby architects from a diverse range of backgrounds got involved in schools' career programmes, or that it could give its backing to an accessible magazine aimed at young people.

However, more generally, the interviews revealed a limited awareness of who organisations such as Archaos and SOBA were and how they could help, although students often talked about the need for networking organisations. There also appeared to be little sense of connectedness to RIBA, which many students regarded as remote and élitist. Some went so far as to suggest that the RIBA needed to undergo a fundamental reorganisation to make it more accessible to students.

7.2 A NEED FOR BETTER DATA

The quantitative analysis of education data has demonstrated the importance of having full and accurate statistics on the ethnicity and other characteristics of architecture students, in order to be able to track their progress within the profession. At the same time the analysis undertaken has highlighted the fact that there are large gaps in the data at present. This is an area where considerable improvement is required in order for reliable ethnic monitoring to be carried out. The lack of data relating to London schools is particularly troubling given the concentration of minority ethnic students in London.

Key informants also made the point that better quality information was needed on ethnicity, and that there needed to be an ongoing commitment to ensure that this was routinely provided, collected and maintained, and that it should be made available in the public domain to allow further analysis. Reflecting the rather patchy evidence that has existed until relatively recently, James explained that, 'I would have thought that this certainly needs to be questioned at universities. It's very difficult to make good quality judgments on the way forward without having that research to back it up.'

There is a need for further research on experiences of professional practice, and there would also be value in establishing a cohort study to follow a group of architects from the start of their training, particularly in view of the fact that some students disappear from view, and occupy ambiguous positions with respect to continuing in the profession, at certain stages of the process. The experiences of students such as Bashir, Cari, Armando and Chicha, whose architecture careers were all in some senses 'stalled', would not be identified by any existing sources, even if the data were more rigorously collected.

7.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE MODELS AND MENTORING

The research has highlighted the importance that minority ethnic and female students attached to having role models, and the cultural, social and academic isolation which can arise in their absence. One obvious way in which architecture schools can signal their commitment to diversity issues, attract more minority ethnic students,

and improve the support offered to those who are currently under-represented in the profession, is by ensuring that staff teams include women and members of minority ethnic groups. In addition to permanent appointments, this may also include visiting lectureships, exhibitions, talks and seminars. Increasing diversity may lead naturally to changes in the academic interests of the staff team; it may also be necessary to make dedicated efforts to improve the cultural diversity of curricula.

A number of women and minority ethnic students argued that mentoring, perhaps by a recent graduate or student further on in their degree from a similar background to their own, would have been helpful to them, particularly in the first year of their Part I course. This was one of the strongest recommendations made by students themselves. Students argued that those from the same ethnic background as themselves would understand the cultural issues and family pressures which could impact on study, without needing to have this explained to them. Mentoring is therefore one way in which people could receive the pastoral support which some felt they lacked while studying, and would be of particular value to students in building their social networks in schools with less diverse student profiles. It was recognised that SOBA was able to fulfil some of this role, and the pilot schemes operating in some schools were well-spoken of, but it was felt that additional resources were needed to make such schemes a reality for more of the student population. Jamila, a successful Black architect with her own practice, reflected:

I think for a lot of the younger people, I think it's important for them to see role models and feel there is someone they can chat to if they have a problem. I think that's really quite useful, to see them along the course and to give them encouragement as well.

Indeed several of the architects we spoke to appeared to be taking on this role within their own practices in a fairly informal way, and this kind of initiative could be usefully joined up with schools to promote dialogue at an earlier stage in students' education.

This enthusiasm for mentoring was somewhat tempered by a concern that such systems needed to be implemented sensitively. Bina, an Indian student studying for her Part I at a redbrick institution, was one of several to argue that it needed to avoid **'labelling'** or **'stigmatising'** people. This is likely to be particularly an issue in schools with relatively homogeneous student profiles, in which students may make particular efforts not to draw attention to their distinction from the white male norm. Anna, a white former architect who had qualified from one of the most élite schools, felt that she might have benefited form mentoring earlier in her career, but qualified this by explaining, **'I would have hated anyone to have known about this at the time'.** She also raised the issue of whether mentoring opportunities would be taken up by those most in need:

I mean I'm just wondering whether it would have been good to have heard real life experiences from women architects, but actually I probably would have just pooh-poohed it, thought "Well I'm, I won't be like that".

She also noted that mentoring would need to come from neutral sources so that students' vulnerabilities were protected, and talking about them bore no risk of jeopardising their academic or employment record.

7.4 IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS, WORK CULTURE AND ACADEMIC FEEDBACK

It is important that architecture schools make efforts to ensure that crit juries are, as far as possible, representative of the student body. This would be valuable to improve perceptions of fairness, but more importantly, in order to provide an atmosphere in which more women and minority ethnic students can flourish. The experiences of the students we interviewed suggest that it would be helpful if schools could make more use of crits as a means of formative assessment, and allow group, as well as individual presentations. Students also argued that they would benefit from greater clarity in the feedback provided on their work. Overseas students in particular had experienced difficulty finding out what was expected of them and how their performance could be

improved, suggesting that communication is key to addressing these issues and that schools need to work to ensure that assessment procedures are transparent to everyone and can be seen to be applied uniformly.

A number of students had experienced problems with particular tutors who appeared disinterested in their work or who they felt engaged in favouritism. However, most seemed unaware of how they might go about negotiating a change in their assigned tutor, and lacked the sort of neutral advisory or pastoral care service which might have provided guidance in addressing these issues. Sadiki made the point that this kind of service could have a fairly broad remit in helping students negotiate problems they experienced in their courses:

I mean if there would be someone you could just approach and then just tell them, okay this is the issue that I have at hand what would you advise me to do with the college or within the faculty itself, would be most welcome but as it is, may be because, you know, I'm not there all the time, I don't quite get to know all the procedures and stuff.

Other students noted that their tutors were extremely busy and, recognising this, they were loath to bother them for help. However, it was noted that more one-to-one tuition for particular subjects would be beneficial, if only offered on an infrequent basis.

Integration into social networks during training was a critical issue for students, and impacted upon their qualitative enjoyment of their courses, but also played a significant role in the extent to which they were able to succeed at schools. However, inappropriate behaviour such as aggression or cultural insensitivity could sometimes lead to students withdrawing from these networks, and measures such as studio booking systems, women only studio-time, and a countering of the alcohol culture often associated with events and fieldtrips (which, for example, could alienate practicing Muslims) would go some way towards addressing these.

7.5 INCREASED SUPPORT DURING PRACTICE PLACEMENTS

The research highlighted the crucial role which 'year out' experiences play in whether students drop out or continue in their architectural training, and this is an area where students would benefit from a much greater degree of support than appears to be routinely provided at present. For women and minority ethnic students, this was often a key stage at which they encountered covert or overt discrimination, whether in the recruitment process or within the workplace itself.

Many students commented that they would have appreciated receiving more help from their schools in identifying and approaching architectural practices where they might find work following their Part I and Part II studies. Minority ethnic students, and in particular overseas students, repeatedly explained that they felt they lacked a coherent understanding of the best way of finding placements or in terms of what they might be doing wrong which explained their lack of success, but relatively few people we spoke to had received much help from their institutions. Part of the problem in this process appeared to be that after Part I or II had been completed, institutional ties were weakened and students could become stuck in a limbo period where they were relatively isolated. Crucially, students seemed to have little awareness of relevant organisations (such as Archaos) which might be able to offer them support during this period, and there is a clear need for awareness-raising in terms of the ways in which professional or networking bodies might be able to help. One student pointed to a joint scheme which she had heard operated in the States, offering collaboration between employers and schools in order to support the process of finding practice posts, and she suggested that something similar could be implemented in the UK.

The research identified practice as a key time when students might drop out of their architectural training, pointing to a need for greater support mechanisms over this period. In addition to support during their studies, some interviewees reflected that they would have benefited from advice on how to build a career profile,

in terms of what kind of experience they should have been seeking to gain, rather than simply taking whatever work was offered. Others would have welcomed practical advice, for instance on how to how to deal with difficult situations, such as being sidelined by colleagues or being shouted at by builders, and reference was made to the type of training offered to junior doctors about how to deal with difficult members of the public, which involves awareness sessions and role plays. It was also suggested that Professional Studies Advisers should be proactive in asking 'year out' students whether they have experienced issues such as sexism, racism, or bullying, since many people will be reluctant to reveal these unless prompted. A few commented that access to networking organisations would be useful in providing people with support in dealing with a new range of situations, and in helping them overcome difficulties and talking through their doubts with a sympathetic ear.

7.6 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

There is a demonstrable need for additional funding for those in lower-income groups, many of whom are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and the research identified financial worries as a key factor underlying both drop-out rates and an initial reluctance to apply. Those in receipt of bursaries from the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust were extremely grateful for this help, which had made a significant difference to whether or not they were able to pursue their architectural education.

Particular financial pressures were faced by those living in London, because of the high cost of living, and this was an issue which disproportionately affects minority ethnic students, who are more likely to live in London. There is therefore a particular need for bursaries to be targeted at those studying at London schools. Financial worries were also a problem for some overseas students, who needed to work to raise their course fees, and for those with their own families to support. Paid employment could be detrimental to architectural studies at any stage, but was particularly so in the final year of Part I, and there would be some benefit in bursaries aimed specifically at this crucial stage. Longer studio opening hours would also help address the needs of students whose financial

imperative to work part-time conflicted with their academic expectations.

Costs associated specifically with architectural study, such as the need for presentational materials, could also be addressed through bursary and scholarship schemes, although there was also an argument to be made here that schools might encourage the use of more 'low-tech' presentations, for example, using cardboard, in order that students with fewer resources were not disadvantaged or embarrassed. Additionally, while some schools covered the costs of fieldtrips, others offered no assistance, and a greater range of funding to cover these would help students to participate in all aspects of their education. Many students noted that they would welcome the inclusion of fieldtrips to less exotic locations (which some schools had already addressed), which they might feasibly afford. Anonymous bursaries might also be a way in which schools could deal with this issue.

7.7 SUPPORT FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Overseas students faced particular issues, which schools appear well placed to address. In particular, there was a demand for the provision of increased guidance about the modular structure of UK degree courses and on how to construct a balanced programme of study. Some overseas students may also benefit from a specific grounding in European architectural traditions. This could be offered by individual schools, or might perhaps be provided by one of the professional bodies, and could be offered in innovative ways, such as via the internet. Additionally, overseas students in particular, found that curricula could sometimes be Eurocentric, and there would seem to be a demand for courses which covered a greater diversity of architectural tradition, which would make a UK training a more attractive and transferable asset for overseas students.

The relative social isolation of overseas students, particularly in institutions where a lower proportion of their intake has traditionally been drawn from overseas, was also an area which might be addressed through a publicising of networking organisations and the establishment of local groups. Overseas students may be

further disadvantaged by having to work very long hours in order to meet their fees, which limits the time they can spend in the studio and in integrating themselves into social networks, and this is an issue to which schools need to be sensitive.

Another issue faced by overseas students was their lack of familiarity with the English architectural education system, and many felt that they would have benefited with an induction course which revisited the basics and which made more explicit course expectations. Lacking this, several students noted that they had been playing 'catch-up' throughout their studies, and that they would have performed better and experienced less stress if this kind of facility had been offered. For some overseas students, English language was also an issue, and they required additional support in order to present their work effectively.

APPENDIX 1: DATA SOURCES

APPENDIX 1: DATA SOURCES

Three separate data sets were used in the study:

- HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999/2000)

- RIBA Education Statistics (1992/93 – 2001/02)

- UCAS on-line data sources (1996-2002)

HESA RESEARCH DATAPACK 11: ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS (1999/00)

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is one of the key sources of information on higher education students. The data used in this study is a special collection of statistics with a focus on minority ethnic students. At the time of the analysis, 1999/2000 version was the latest ethnicity data pack available.

The HESA data pack consists of three separate Excel pivot tables and two of these were found useful for this study. The first one (ie 'HESA Standard Higher Education) is based on all higher education enrolments as at 1 December 1999 and excludes overseas students. The following information from this table was used: ethnic origin, age, gender, level of study (eg undergraduate, postgraduate), highest qualification on entry and mode of study (eg part-time, full-time).

The second pivot table (ie HESA Qualifications Obtained) is based on all qualifications obtained during the 1999/2000 reporting year which were returned to HESA by 15 November 2000, also excludes overseas students and it was used for analysing first degree classifications.

Population coverage

The HESA standard HE population has been derived from the HESA July Individualised Student Record. It includes all higher education enrolments as at 1 December 1999 except (i) dormant students (those who have ceased studying but have not formally de-registered), (ii) postdoctoral students and (iii) students studying for the whole of their programme of study outside of the UK. Students who left the institution prior to 1 December 1999, or who commenced a programme of study after this date are not included in the figures.

The HESA qualifications obtained population is a count of student enrolments associated with the award of an HE qualification (excluding HE credits) during the period 1 August 1999 to 31 July 2000 inclusive. It does not include dormant students (awards from dormant students are tabulated separately). This population includes all qualifications obtained during the 1999/2000 reporting year, which were returned to HESA by 15 November 2000.

Variable definitions

Age
Age is as at 31 August 1999.

Ethnicity
Ethnicity categories used are:

White
Black Caribbean
Black African
Black Other
Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Chinese
Asian Other
Other
Unknown

For continuing students, where the information is not already known, institutions have the option of recording the student's ethnic group as not yet sought. As a result, some institutions have not returned ethnicity data for some of their students. In addition, students may choose not to reveal their ethnicity. HESA therefore advises that the figures reported in analyses are derived from a subset which may not be representative of the total student population.

APPENDIX 1: DATA SOURCES

Domicile
UK domiciled students are those normally resident in the UK, including those living in the Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

Domicile data was supplied to HESA in the form of postcodes (UK domiciled students) or country codes. Where no data was supplied about the student's domicile, fee eligibility was used to determine whether domicile was UK or overseas. Thus, all students eligible for home student rates for fee purposes are classified as home students. This may include students who may have arrived in the UK relatively recently or those intending to return to their home countries after completing part or all of their studies.

Region of Institution
Refers to the administrative centre of the institution and allows separate analysis for England.

Level of study/level of qualification
Variable has four categories:

Postgraduate research
Postgraduate taught
First degree
Other undergraduate

First degree includes first degrees, first degrees with eligibility to register to practice (doctor/dentist/veterinary surgeon), first degrees with qualified teacher status (QTS)/registration with the General Teaching Council (GTC) for Scotland, enhanced first degrees, first degrees obtained concurrently with a diploma and intercalated first degrees.

Postgraduate taught includes those doctorate, masters, postgraduate bachelors degrees and postgraduate diplomas and certificates studied not mainly by research including PGCE and professional qualifications.

Highest qualification on entry
1. Postgraduate qualifications excluding PGCE
2. PGCE
3. First degree of a UK institution

4. Other graduate or equivalent qualifications
5. Higher Education credits
6. Other higher education and professional qualifications
7. GCSE A-level, SCE Highers and equivalent
8. A-level equivalent qualifications
9. Access courses
10. GCSE/O-level qualifications only; SCE O grades and standard grades
11. Other qualifications
12. No formal qualification required/held
13. Not known/sought

These categories were re-grouped as:

1. First degree or equivalent and higher (1,2,3,4)
2. HE credits or qualifications (5,6)
3. A-level or equivalent (7,8)
4. Other (9,10,11)
5. None held/required (12)
6. Not known (13)

Mode of study
Variable has four categories: full-time, part-time, sandwich and other.

Full-time students include all students studying full-time (for more than or equal to 24 weeks in the academic year), students on thick or thin sandwich courses (except where they have been tabulated separately), and those on a study-related year out of their institution.

Part-time students include those studying part-time, on block release, during the evenings only, full-time for less than 24 weeks in the academic year or those employing 'Other modes of study'.

Other modes of study include those students writing-up theses or on sabbatical, except where they have been tabulated separately.

Classification of first degrees
Certain qualifications obtained at first degree level are not subject to classification of award, notably medical and general degrees. These, together with ordinary degrees, have been included within the unclassified category. Third

class honours, fourth class honours and the pass category have been aggregated. Lower second and undivided second class honours have been aggregated.

Points to remember in interpreting HESA data

- HESA data does not cover private institutions (ie the Architectural Association).

- It does not allow a distinction to be made between validated and non-validated courses. A strict focus on validated courses would be desirable, as this would exclude students on non-validated architecture-related courses that do not form part of the training required to qualify as a registered architect. HESA subject line of 'architecture', however, may include both. The RIBA advises that there are not many non-validated courses, but individual courses cannot be identified using HESA data.

- In terms of levels of study, HESA data classifies students into four categories, allowing a distinction to be made between 'first degree' and 'postgraduate' students. The question is, how architecture students at Part I, Part II and Part III levels would be classified in terms of these categories. HESA advises that institutions would be expected to return Part I students as first degree, Part II students as 'postgraduate taught' and could not provide any clear guidance on Part III students. The RIBA, by contrast, suggests that, in England at least, both Part I and Part II students are officially considered undergraduate for funding purposes, and should be returned to HESA as 'first degree' students.

Looking at the characteristics of first degree and postgraduate students covered by the data, the most common entry qualification for first degree students is A-levels or an equivalent qualification (held by three quarters), with only five per cent holding a degree. This suggests that, on the whole, first degree students are likely to be Part I students. The situation is less clear-cut with postgraduate students; 57 per cent have a first degree and 17 per cent already have a postgraduate qualification. It seems that HESA

postgraduate category may include both Part II and Part III students. Nevertheless, findings based on HESA data, will be reported for first degree and postgraduate students, rather than Part I, Part II or Part III.

RIBA EDUCATION STATISTICS (1992/93 – 2000/01)

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), Centre for Architectural Education conducts an annual survey of schools of architecture in the UK. Data is collected about students on validated courses. The survey data for the last ten years has been made available to this study. Statistics for 1992/93 to 1997/98 were supplied in Excel, 1998/99 to 2001/02 in paper format. RIBA Education Statistics includes data from all schools of architecture in the UK. Only data provided by schools in England were used in this report.

Topics covered in the survey

Applications to Part I by gender and by mode of study
Entrants to Part I by ethnicity
Entrants to Part I by gender and by mode of study
Entrants to Part II, completers of Part I, Part II and Part III by ethnicity (since 1999/2000)
Part I, Part II and Part III examination results by gender
Number of overseas students
Expected future intake for Part I and Part II and other staffing related statistics

Ethnicity classification

White
African/Caribbean
Indian
Other

Note that other includes 'unknown' ethnicity.

UCAS ON-LINE STATISTICS (1996-2000)

Population coverage

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) collects data on all applicants to UK member universities

and colleges and on those accepted to full-time Degree, DipHE, HND and a small number of HNC courses. Note that UCAS statistics do not include applicants to part-time or postgraduate courses.

Note that separate data for England, Scotland and Wales is only available from 2000 onwards.

Variable definitions

Ethnicity classification

UCAS allows two classifications: one detailed, one more broad based.

'Ethnic origin' variable would be more detailed but was not chosen because data is based on degree acceptances only and the number of students from each ethnic group would be too small for a reliable analysis. 'Ethnic group' variable was used instead and this has the following categories:

White
Black
Asian
Mixed (since 2000)
Other
Unknown

UCAS ethnicity classification changed in 2000 as a new category of 'mixed' ethnicity was introduced and UCAS advises against comparing post 2000 data with previous years.

Social class

UCAS assigned social class to applicants based on parental occupation. If the applicant was aged 21 years or over, the occupation of the person contributing the highest income to the household was requested. Social class data are only available for home applicants.

From 1991 to 2001, UCAS used the 'Standard Occupational Classification 1991'.

Socio-economic status replaces social class in UCAS data from 2002 entry.

COMPARING THE THREE DATA SETS

	HESA Research Datapack 11: Ethnicity of Students (1999/00)	RIBA Education Statistics (1992/93 – 2001/02)	UCAS on-line data (1996-2000)
Regional coverage	UK domiciled students studying at institutions based in England	UK domiciled students studying at schools of architecture in England	UK domiciled students accepted on to undergraduate courses in the UK. Regional analysis is possible from 2000 onwards.
Subject focus	Both architecture and architecture, building & planning is possible	Architecture	Architecture, building & planning
Level of study	First degree or postgraduate	Part I, Part II, Part III	New entrants to undergraduate courses
Course type (validated/non-validated?)	May include both validated and non-validated courses	Validated courses only	As analysis applies to architecture, building & planning, would include non-validated
Private institutions included?	Excluded	Included	Excluded
Ethnicity categories	White Black African Black Caribbean Black Other Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Asian Other Chinese Other Unknown	White African/Caribbean Indian Other 'Other' includes unknown	White Black Asian Mixed (since 2000) Other Unknown More detailed categories available and compatible with HESA, but not used as sample size is too small

APPENDIX 2: MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 2: MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tick ✔ all boxes that apply

1 How old are you?

....

2 What is your sex?

Male ○   Female ○

3 Which of the following best describes your current position?

Student   ○   Looking after family   ○

Full-time employment ○   Part-time employment ○

Self-employment   ○

4 In what year did you start your architectural training?

....

5 Which stages of your architectural training have you completed?

Part I ○   Part II ○   Part III ○

6 Where did you study or are you currently studying architecture?

Please write in the name of the institution for each stage:

Part I...

Part II..

Part III ....

7 Did you study or are you studying architecture as an overseas or UK student?

UK student ○   Overseas student ○

8 Have you ever worked in architectural practice?

Yes ○   No ○

9 If you are currently in paid work, do you work in the architectural profession?

Yes ○   No ○

If yes, about how long have you worked in this profession?

Fewer than five years ○   5 – 10 years ○

Over 10 years   ○

10 What is the highest qualification obtained by either of your parents?

No qualifications ○   NVQ level   ○

GCSE level   ○   A-level   ○

Degree level   ○   Post-graduate level ○

11 How would you describe your ethnic background? (these are standard census definitions, but feel free to use your own definitions instead)

White   ○   Black African   ○

Indian   ○   Black Caribbean ○

Bangladeshi ○   Black Other   ○

Pakistani   ○   Chinese   ○

Asian Other ○   Other   ○

Please specify.........…………

APPENDIX 2: MINORITY ETHNIC STUDENTS IN ARCHITECTURE QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of the research, we are interviewing a small number of people chosen to represent a range of different circumstances and personal characteristics (including both white and minority ethnic groups), to look at their (past and present) experiences of studying architecture. We will keep the identities of everyone we interview anonymous.

Interviews would last for about an hour, and cover a range of topics concerned with the factors that influence students' career choices, and the sorts of issues or barriers they may have faced during their architectural training or education. These would be arranged for a time and venue that suits you. If you are willing to take part in these interviews, please provide your details below.

Name(s): …………………………………………......……

Address: ....……………………………………………

.................……………………………………………

.................……………………………………………

Please provide your preferred contact details:

Telephone:.................……………………………..

Best time to ring: ...…………………………………

Email: ....……………………………………

Thank-you for your help in completing this questionnaire. If you have any further questions about the research, please contact Helen Barnes, Jane Parry or Melahat Sahin-Dikmen on 020 7468 0468.

Please complete this questionnaire and return to: **mesa@psi.org.uk**

Alternatively, print off a hard copy and post to:

Helen Barnes
PSI
100 Park Village East
London NW1 3SR

APPENDIX 3: ETHNICITY AND ARCHITECTURE – CABE

APPENDIX 3: ETHNICITY AND ARCHITECTURE – CABE

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed today. My name is [ ] and I am working for the Policy Studies Institute [PSI]. We have been asked by CABE to carry out research looking at the stages where people decide to continue or drop out of architectural education and training, and to explore why so few people from a minority ethnic background complete their education and training. I'm going to be asking about what you are doing at the moment, and about your experiences during the different stages of your education and training.

1. About yourself (ASK ALL)
I'd like to start just by asking you a bit about yourself, and where you are at the moment in terms of your career.

1.1 According to the form you returned, you are (check back details provided here – eg doing your part III at Westminster)

1.2 Do you mind me asking, how old are you now?

1.3 And what's your household situation? eg single, married or living with a partner (with/without children), lone parent

2. The decision to study architecture (ASK ALL)
One of the things we're interested in is how and when people make the career choices they do, and the influences on these, and I'd like to ask you a bit about this now.

2.1 Do you remember how you first came to think about architecture as a career, and how old you were then?

Probes:
Parent, friend or relative in the profession
Interest in a particular building/building type (and how this came about)
Who did you talk to about this?

School/careers adviser suggested the idea
[probe on careers advice received]
Media coverage of architecture
Did you think that this was something that you could do?
Why/why not?
Was there anything that made it seem difficult to achieve?
What was that?

2.2 What sorts of things made you decide to go on and study architecture?

Probes:
What appealed to you about it?
Was there anything that was off-putting?
Did anyone particularly encourage you?
Did you know anyone who was an architect?
Or who was training to be one?
What did your parents and friends think of the idea?
[probe on parents' occupations]
Did anyone try to discourage you?
Who was this?
What sort of things did they say?
Was there a particular architect whose work inspired you or who you saw as a role model?
Why was that?
How did you come across them?
How did you go about finding out more about it?

2.3 Did you consider any related careers such as planning or structural engineering?
Why/why not?
[probe on career routes which started this way and then went into architecture]

2.4 How old were you when you started studying architecture? (if not at 18/19, ask about what else they did first)
Where did you apply and what were your reasons for this?

2.5 Did you set out with the definite idea of qualifying and practising as an architect, or did you have an open mind about this when starting your degree course?

3. Part I study (CURRENT AND PREVIOUS STUDENTS)

(For those who are not current Part I students – 'Thinking back to when you did your Part I, can you tell me…)

3.1 a Where did you/are you do (ing) your Part I?
(When were you there?)
Was it your first choice of university? [probe]

3.1 b Why did you choose this school/course?

3.1 c What things appealed to you?

3.1d Was there anything that was off-putting?

Now I'd like to ask about your experiences of Part I study in more detail.

3.2a Can you describe for me what the architecture school at [institution] is like?

Probes:
What kind of public profile does/did the school have?
And how does the reality compare?
What is/was the student profile like?
(eg very privileged/ethnically and socially diverse/do or do not need high grades to be accepted)
Are/were you happy there /do/did you feel as if you fit(ted) in? (Why not?)

3.2b Do you feel that the curriculum reflects/ed your personal interests and concerns?

Probes:
What are you enjoying/did you enjoy the most?
Why?
What are you enjoying/did you enjoy the least?
Why?
Did you find/are you finding any aspects of the course particularly difficult?
What are these?
Why?
Is anyone helping/did anyone help you with these issues?
What additional support would you (have) welcome(d)?

3.2c Did you complete the course, or did you leave before the end?
Probe on reasons for dropping out and what they did next.
How do you feel about your decision in retrospect?
Would anything have made it easier for you?

Have you also studied at Part II? **If yes, go to Section 4.**

If no, go to section 6.

4. Part II study (CURRENT AND PREVIOUS STUDENTS)

(For those who are not current Part II students – 'Thinking back to when you did your Part II, can you tell me…)

4.1a Where did you do/are you doing your Part II (when were you there?)

4.1b Why did you choose this school/course?

4.1c What things appealed to you?

4.1d Was there anything that was off-putting?

[Omit if remained at same institution for Part II]

4.2a Can you describe for me what the architecture school at [institution] is like?

Probes:
What kind of public profile does/did the school have?
And how does the reality compare?
What is/was the student profile like?
(eg very privileged/ethnically and socially diverse/do or do not need high grades to be accepted)
What's the staff profile like? (eg any famous names, reflects diversity of student body?)
Are/were you happy there/do/did you feel as if you fit(ted) in?
Why not?

[Ask all]

4.2b Do you feel that the curriculum reflect/s/ed your personal interests and concerns?

Probes:
What do you/did you enjoy the most?
Why?
What are you/did you enjoy(ing) the least?
Why?
Are you finding/did you find any aspects of the course particularly difficult?
What are/were these?
Why?
[probe for financial and emotional as well as academic difficulties, eg buying materials, relationship with tutor, fitting in]
Is anyone helping you with these issues?
What additional support would you (have) welcome(d)?

4.3 Did you complete the course, or did you leave before the end?
Probe on reasons for dropping out and what they did next.
How do you feel about your decision in retrospect?
Would anything have made it easier for you?

Have you also studied at Part III? **If yes, go to Section 5.If no, go to section 6.**

5. Part III study (CURRENT AND PREVIOUS STUDENTS)
5.1a How long was the gap between doing your Part II and your Part III?
How typical is that compared to other people you know?

Can you tell me about your year out experience?
When did you do this (after Part I and II, all after Part II – Why?) I'll be asking you more about these when we talk about work experiences later.

5.1b Why did you choose this school/course?

5.1c What things appealed to you?

5.1d Was there anything that was off-putting?

Now I'd like to ask about your experiences of Part III study in more detail.

[omit if remained at same institution]

5.2a Can you describe for me what the architecture school at [institution] is like?

Probes:
What kind of public profile does the school have?
And how does the reality compare?
What is/was the student profile like?
(eg very privileged/ethnically and socially diverse/do or do not need high grades to be accepted)
Are/were you happy there/do/did you feel as if you fit(ted) in? (Why not?)

[ask all]

5.2b Do you feel that the curriculum reflects/ed your personal interests and concerns?

Probes:
What are you/did you enjoy/ing the most?
Why?
What are you/did you enjoy/ing the least?
Why?
Are you/did you find/ing any aspects of the course particularly difficult?
What were these?
Why?
Did anyone/Is anyone help/ing you with these issues?
Is there any additional support you would (have) welcome(d)?

5.3 Did you complete the course, or did you leave before the end? (Why did you leave?)
Probe on reasons for dropping out and what they did next.
How do you feel about your decision in retrospect?
Would anything have made it easier for you?

6. Your situation during your architectural education and training (ASK ALL)

I'd like to understand a bit about your situation during your architectural education and training, where you were living, finances and so on. Perhaps you could tell me

briefly about the different stages.

6.1 Where did you live when you were a student? eg in parental home, halls of residence, bedsit, private accommodation/alone, with other students, lodgings. How did this affect your studies? [probe on commuting distance, privacy and space issues, quality of life]

6.2 Would you say that most of your friends were studying architecture or other subjects?
What about in terms of the people you've kept in touch with?
Did any of the people you went to school with go on to study architecture?

6.3 How did you fund the additional expenditure demanded by studying architecture? – things like materials, and fieldtrips. Probe on family help, loans, outside work.

How did this make you feel?
How did it compare to your peers?

6.4 Did you take part in any paid work other than your architectural practice over the course of your student years? Probe on what this was, how much time it took up, financial issues, etc.

*7. Diversity issues and architectural education
(ASK ALL)*
7.1 How well do you feel the architecture schools you have attended (so far) have addressed issues of diversity – eg ethnicity, gender, disability, and social class?

7.2 Do you think that discrimination is widespread in architecture?
Why do you say that?
Do you remember witnessing any direct or indirect forms of discrimination against particular groups or individuals during your architectural education and training?
Can you tell me more about this?
Was it challenged?
Who did this?
What was the outcome?

7.3 Have you personally experienced any particular issues as a result of your ethnicity/gender/financial and social class background?

Probes:
Can you tell me more about this?
Do particular incidents stand out in your mind?
What were they?
How did these issues make you feel?
Did they influence your desire to continue training?
Can you tell me more about this?

8. Working in architecture
8.1 Are you currently employed in an architectural practice?
If yes, obtain details of job, as below
If no, go to section 9 or 10

Job title and type of work done
Private or public sector
Small/large practice
Type of work – eg large scale commercial, small scale residential, conservation

How long there
Permanent or temporary?
Pay level?

8.2 Have you had other architectural jobs?
Details of these, as above, briefly.
Include professional practice/'year out' experience, and where this fits with periods of study

8.3 Which jobs have you enjoyed most/least?
Why?
Have you had any problems at work/What were they?

8.4 How easy has it been to get jobs at the various stages?

Probes:
Did anyone help you to find work?
Who was this? How did they help?
How easily would you have managed without this help?
Was there any support which you didn't get (or which

you saw others get) which you think you would
have benefited from?
Can you tell me more about that?
How easy was it to get the type of experience
you needed for Part III?

8.5 Do you remember witnessing any direct or indirect
forms of discrimination against particular groups or
individuals when working in architectural practice?
Can you tell me more about this?
Was it challenged? Who did this?
What was the outcome?

8.6 Have you personally experienced any particular
issues in the workplace as a result of your
ethnicity/gender/age/financial and social class
background?

Probes:
Can you tell me more about this?
Do particular incidents stand out in your mind?
What were they?
How did these issues make you feel?
Did they influence your desire to continue?
Can you tell me more about this?

9. People currently working in non-architectural jobs
9.1 What is your job?

9.2. How long have you been doing this?
How much do you enjoy it?

9.3 How do you feel about your decision to do this sort
of work instead of architecture?

10 Policy issues [ASK ALL]
10.1 Why do you think some people from minority ethnic
backgrounds drop out before completing their training,
or qualify but do not practise as architects?

10.2 What do you think is the single biggest issue facing
someone from a minority ethnic [your] background in
training to be an architect?
How important is ethnicity, compared to other issues
(such as gender and social class)?

10.3 Do you think there should be more effort made to
encourage people from minority ethnic groups to train
and practice as architects?
How?

Probes:
What could bodies such as ARB and the RIBA do?
What could individual schools do?
What could employers do?
Who else could have an impact?
How?
What would have made a difference to you at earlier
stages of your education and training?
In your current position, what changes could
improve your situation?

10.4 Is there anything else about your architectural
education and training which you'd like to say, and
that we haven't covered?

Thanks, offer to send summary, close.

Interviewers to complete:

Gender
Age
Current or last level of study
Ethnicity
Household situation
Current or last education institution
Current employment
How old when started to study architecture

APPENDIX 4: REFERENCES

APPENDIX 4: REFERENCES

Ahmed, A, Couch, C, and Right, L (1998), *Feasibility study into the recruitment of black and minority ethnic groups into the planning profession,* London, RTPI

Barnes, H, Bonjour, D & Sahin-Dikmen, M (2002), *Minority Ethnic Students and Practitioners in Architecture, A scoping study for the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment,* London, CABE

Cabinet Office (2003), *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market – Interim Analytical Report,* Performance and Innovation Unit, London

Callender, C and Wilkinson, D (2003), *2002/03 Student Income and Expenditure Survey: Students' Income, Expenditure and Debt in 2002/03 and Changes since 1998/99,* Research Report for the Department of Education and Skills, No. 487

Callender, C (forthcoming) *Studying in London,* GLA, London

Doidge, C (ed) (2000), *The Crit: An Architecture Student's Handbook,* Oxford, Architectural Press

Fitzgerald, R Finch, S and Nove, A (2000), *Black Caribbean Young Men's Experiences of Education and Employment,* Research Report 186, DfEE

Graft-Johnson, A, Manley, S and Greed, C (2003), *Why do women leave architecture?* Research Report funded by RIBA and match-funded by UWE

Halpern, D (1994), *Entry into the Legal Professions – The Law Student Cohort Study Years 1 and 2,* Research Study 15, Research and Policy Planning Unit, London: Law Society

Hayhurst, N and Corbett, M (2000), *National Survey of the Finances of Architectural Students in the UK,1998/9,* Archaos Report

Jones, T (1993), *Britain's Ethnic Minorities, An analysis of the Labour Force Survey,* PSI, London

King, M, Israel, M and Goulbourne, S (1990), *Minority ethnic groups and recruitment to the solicitor's profession,* Law Society, London

Modood, T (1992), *Not Easy Being British – colour, culture and citizenship,* Runnymede Trust and Trentham Books, London

Modood, T and Shiner, M (1994), *Ethnic Minorities and Higher Education,* PSI, London

Modood, T, Berthoud, R, Lakey, J, Nazroo, J, Smith, P, Virdee, S, Beishon, S (1997), *Minority ethnic groups in Britain – Diversity and Disadvantage,* London, Policy Studies Institute

Pathak, S (2000), *Race Research for the Future – Ethnicity in Education, Training and the Labour Market,* Research Topic Paper 01, March, London: DfEE

Peach, C (ed) (1996), *Ethnicity in the Census, Volume Two: Ethnic Minority Populations of Great Britain,* HMSO, UK

Shiner, M and Newburn, T (1995), *Entry into the Legal Professions – The Law Student Cohort Study Year 3,* Research Study 18, Research and Policy Planning Unit, London: Law Society

Shiner, M (1997), *Entry into the Legal Professions – The Law Student Cohort Study Year 4,* Research Study 25, Research and Policy Planning Unit, London: Law Society

The views in this report are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of CABE. Although every care has been taken in preparing this publication, no responsibility or liability will be accepted by CABE or its employees, agents and advisers for its accuracy or completeness. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the data contained in this report is correct, no responsibility can be taken by the authors or CABE for omissions or erroneous data provided by a third party or due to information being unavailable or inaccessible during the research period.