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The (re-)introduction of graduate apprenticeships to the landscape of architectural education in 2018 represents a watershed moment, as architectural practices may once again now opt to take on and accept responsibility for educating and training the next generations of architects.

The implications of these changes in the relationships, dialogue and ‘duty of care’ for our professional bodies, for our regulators, for architectural practice and for higher education are significant as the responsibilities and expertise of each are repositioned.

Providing less debt-ridden options for future students alters the historical status quo and suggests new and different roles for all parties. It also signals a collective need to recognise, respect and harness existing forms of knowledge and skills in new ways. For the first time, the craft of architectural education will be tested and regulated in architectural practice. Practitioners will be required to professionally educate as well as to educate professionally. In such a context where does this position ‘business of research’?

A number of contributors to this issue of AD describe the kind of ‘research’ and how it is conducted and integrated in the business models of architectural practice, and the enrichment and added-value it brings to the production and evaluation of built work. This ‘research’ is undoubtedly of significant value to those practices and their production, but how is it systematically translated, shared with others and captured for future generations? How does the architectural profession learn, advance and enhance the quality of architecture and the public realm through a collaborative dialogue?

The Research Excellence Framework is the system for assessing the quality of research in the UK’s higher education institutions (HEIs), it defines research as: ‘a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared’. This is a generous definition in outlining knowledge development, but critically requires that knowledge from research is accessible to others and can inform and advance – in this case – architectural knowledge and all modes of its production.

Given the changing nature of architectural education, the introduction of graduate apprenticeships and the expansion of research in practice, there is now an imperative for a different strategic dialogue.

Jeremy Till’s elegantly concise articulation of architectural research, commissioned by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in 2007,¹ and Harriss’s and Hyde’s essays in this issue,

each in their different ways, press for the democratisation and diversification of architectural research futures, although who and these conversations are facilitated remains unclear. How can professionals and researchers come together and take collective responsibility for ‘open access’ to their research and its contribution to the development of architectural knowledge?

Consensus as to a working definition of research would be a first and helpful step forward, particularly as there are still significant gaps in our inter- and intra-professional dialogue, in our willingness and capacity to ‘share’ knowledge and facilitate professional learning, and inconsistency in teaching the competencies and rigour of research practice. Designation of research as a core professional competency may also serve to resolve a longstanding pedagogic challenge, where research is generally perceived as the remit of academics and of limited ‘value’ to practice.

Given the changing nature of architectural education, including the (re)introduction of graduate apprenticeships and the growth of research in practice, there is an imperative for a new strategic dialogue. Professional responsibilities and expectations need revisiting, and the changing relationships between architectural practice and higher education re-examining to re-position the expertise we all bring to our profession. Sharing research is possible, as is integrating teaching, research and research skills within architectural practice if there is a collective will to do so. But it requires all parties to learn new ways of working together and towards common goals.

Research is by definition a shared practice; it is not a practice confined to individual or localised endeavour, but about a wider contribution to architectural knowledge. It is our professional

responsibility to ensure to support future generations of architects and architectural researchers in practice and in higher education, by giving them agency and ensuring they can contribute to the quality of the buildings, cities and landscapes they occupy. 1

Note

1. First published as Jeremy Till, 'Three Myths and One Model', *Building Material*, 17, 2008, pp 4–10; https://jeremytill.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/post/attachment/34/2007_Three_Myths_and_One_Model.pdf.

A student working on a design proposal to challenge the identity of London, London School of Architecture (LSA), London,

2016

The LSA's postgraduate programme was founded in 2015 to offer an alternative route through the profession, providing an answer to the crisis affecting contemporary British education, which was accused of being expensive and out of touch with the realities of working in practice. The LSA is supported by the Practice Network – a community of 100 London practices who provide work placements, teaching and physical resources (meeting- and classrooms, computers, printing facilities). In order to remain 'cost neutral' for the students, the school does not have an institutional base. Instead it 'plugs' into existing institutions and practices, making the most of underused resources across Lo