ICT Services

Architecture Review Board
Terms of Reference

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Contents

1. Abbreviations

ARB……………………………………………………………………………………………Architecture Review Board

CIO……………………………………………………………………………Senior Director of ICT Services

EA…………………………………………………………………………………….…Enterprise Architecture

ICT Services…………Information and Communication Technology Services at the University of the Free State

ICT………………………………………………………………Information and Communication Technology

ManCo…………………………………………………………………… ICT Services Management Committee

TOGAF…………………………………………………………………..The Open Group Architecture Framework

UFS……………………………………………………………………………………University of the Free State

2. Definitions

Application Architecture: A description of the structure and interaction of the applications as groups of capabilities that provide key business functions and manage the data assets.

Architecture Framework: A conceptual structure used to develop, implement and sustain architecture.

Architecture: The structure of components, their interrelationships and the principles and guidelines governing their design and evolution over time.

Business/Process Architecture: A description of the structure of and interaction between the business strategy, organisation, functions, business processes and information needs.

Data Architecture: A description of the structure and interaction of the enterprise's major types and sources of data, logical data sets, physical data assets and data management resources.

Enterprise Architect: A professional who brings together rational business views with logical blueprints, enabling the transformation from business strategy to operational execution.

Enterprise Architecture: A discipline for proactively and holistically leading enterprise responses to disruptive forces by identifying and analysing the execution of change towards the desired business vision and outcomes. EA is used to steer decision-making towards the evolution of future-state architecture.

Technology/Infrastructure Architecture: A description of the structure and interaction of the platform services, and logical and physical technology components.

3. Objectives

The purpose of the ARB is to optimise the fragmented legacy of processes across the enterprise into an integrated environment that is responsive to change and supportive of the delivery of the business strategy. The ARB enables the UFS to achieve the right balance between IT efficiency and business innovation.

4. Mandate

The ARB was created in accordance with a directive issued by the ICT ManCo. The ARB serves as a supporting structure for the ICT ManCo.

5. Scope

The ARB considers and approves architectures in the following five EA domains:

- Business/Process Architecture (including Services Architecture)
- Information Architecture
- Application Architecture (including Security Architecture)
- Data Architecture
- Technology/Infrastructure Architecture

6. Membership

The ARB is representative of all key architecture stakeholders with decision-making authority across the UFS. The ARB consists of approximately 15 members, who each serves a two-year term.

The ARB is comprised of the following members:

- Vice-Rectors
- The Registrar
- Deans of the seven faculties
- The heads of Support Services departments
- The ICT heads/leads managing each of the internal service divisions
- The ICT heads/leads managing each of the four customer-facing delivery divisions
- The chairpersons of each of the CoMs (if not represented in the abovementioned groups)

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Board

The roles and responsibilities of the ARB are:

- To consider and approve UFS Architectures in the five EA domains, based on report results of prior investigations and /or testing.
- To set EA standards and ensure compliance.
- To evaluate, consider and approve new and emerging technologies.
- To ensure alignment and integration between all forms of EA.
- To review architecture proposals by considering the design, sustainability and enterprise-wide impact of EA proposals.
- To act as the primary oversight body for the EA programme.
- To provide integration across all UFS Architectures.
- To provide a governance structure for UFS Architectures.
- To provide a platform for the evaluation of architecture proposals.
- To set principles, policies and standards for the EA practice.
- To identify significant architectural gaps and risks that may affect a solution.
- To evaluate and validate designs to ensure alignment to strategic and operational goals.
- To reduce and manage complexity.
- To establish solution reusability through standardisation and reference models.
- To establish technology reuse and consolidation.

7.2 Executive Sponsor (ICT CIO)

The Executive Sponsor approves the ARB processes and extends executive support where needed. The Executive Sponsor has veto rights.

7.3 ARB Manager

The ARB Manager is the chairperson of the ARB and oversees the management of the ARB. The ARB Manager exercises and maintains control over the ARB. The ARB Manager ensures that committee members are informed about policies, procedures, standards and guidelines, as stipulated by the ARB.

The ARB Manager does not have a vote in the ARB, but does have the right to escalate a decision to the ICT ManCo, and/or refer a risk to another CoM. Referral or escalation happens in accordance with the engagement model, as described in Section 14.

The ARB vice-chairperson provides assistance to the chairperson (as requested) and hosts and chairs ARB meetings in the event that the chairperson is not available.

7.4 Permanent Members

These are the domain owners, domain experts and senior ICT decision-makers who provide subject matter expertise with regard to their respective domains. They have voting rights to approve decisions.

Members are accountable for the reviews, decisions and deliverables they submit to the ARB. Each permanent member confirms his/her availability for and attendance at ARB meetings. Permanent members have voting rights. Permanent members delegate a proxy in writing to act on their behalf when they are not

available for a meeting. Proxy members may vote. A quorum is formed by the members attending a meeting. Absent members or members without a proxy accept the decisions of the quorum.

7.5   Secretariat

The secretariat is responsible for setting up meetings, preparing minutes, delivering a complete agenda and distributing relevant documentation in a timely and professional manner, in accordance with the Committee's requirements. The secretariat does not have any voting rights.

7.6   Advisory Members

The ARB can invite internal or external advisors to ARB meetings to provide expertise on or knowledge about a subject. These are individuals who propose solutions or support resources for an evaluation. Advisory members do not have any voting rights.

7.7   Subcommittees and Work groups

Specialist, technical work groups and subcommittees are created and mandated by the ICT ManCo, as and when required.

8.   Meeting Types and Schedules

Sufficient time is allocated every month for architectural design reviews and ARB management. An ARB meeting lasts two hours. Board members meet between ARB meetings to prepare for the next meeting.

Architecture Board meetings are characterised by clearly identified agendas, explicit objectives, content coverage and defined actions. Board meetings apply best practices. All the members must be present for a vote to take place.

9.   Agenda

ARB meetings are structured around predefined, standardised agendas. Each participant is notified of the agenda and any supporting documentation on SharePoint. All participants must familiarise themselves with the contents of all these documents.

10. Decision Register

All decisions are noted in the meeting minutes and summarised in a decision register.

11. Action List

All actions to be taken by members are noted in the meeting minutes. Where actions have been allocated to an individual, it is that person's responsibility to report on the progress he/she is making compared to the action list.

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12. Communication

Decisions approved for communication are communicated by permanent members to reporting staff. All meeting minutes are tabled at ManCo meetings.

13. Governance

13.1 Principles

- The ARB is required to adhere to the policies and procedures set by the UFS.
- The ARB operates as part of an ICT Services governance structure referred to as the ICT Services CoM.
- A quorum of two-thirds is required to mandate meetings.
- Democratic decision-making applies. Although all opinions are heard and considered, the formal decision must be supported by all, irrespective of individual opinion.
- Decisions require a two-thirds majority of the total voting membership.
- The decision of the ARB is final and can only be overruled by ManCo.
- ManCo ratifies the minutes and submissions of the ARB.
- The ARB adheres to the roles and responsibilities described in Section 7.
- The ARB conforms to accepted EA principles.

13.2 Policy

The ARB adheres to all the principles, rules and regulations stipulated in this document.

13.3 Procedures

All procedures related to the governance of the ARB are defined, revised and approved by the ARB and ratified by ManCo. These procedures are attached to this document as Appendixes.

13.4   Standards and Guidelines

The ARB uses TOGAF as a best-practice framework for Enterprise Architecture.

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14. Engagement Model

The figure below illustrates the relationship between the ARB and the other committees of ManCo: