



***Conditions for
Accreditation***
2020 Edition

February 10, 2020

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Introduction

Accreditation in architecture is a voluntary quality-assurance process by which services and operations are evaluated by a third party against a set of standards established by the third party, with input and collaboration from peers in the field. Accreditation is evidence that a collegiate architecture program has met standards essential to produce graduates who have a solid educational foundation and are capable of leading the way in innovation, emerging technologies, and in anticipating the health, safety, and welfare needs of the public.

1—Context and Mission

To help the NAAB and the visiting team understand the specific circumstances of the school, the program must describe the following:

- The institutional context and geographic setting (public or private, urban or rural, size, etc.), and how the program’s mission and culture influence its architecture pedagogy and impact its development. Programs that exist within a larger educational institution must also describe the mission of the college or university and how that shapes or influences the program.
- The program’s role in and relationship to its academic context and university community, including how the program benefits—and benefits from—its institutional setting and how the program as a unit and/or its individual faculty members participate in university-wide initiatives and the university’s academic plan. Also describe how the program, as a unit, develops multidisciplinary relationships and leverages unique opportunities in the institution and the community.
- The ways in which the program encourages students and faculty to learn both inside and outside the classroom through individual and collective opportunities (e.g., field trips, participation in professional societies and organizations, honor societies, and other program-specific or campus-wide and community-wide activities).

2—Shared Values of the Discipline and Profession

The program must report on how it responds to the following values, all of which affect the education and development of architects. The response to each value must also identify how the program will continue to address these values as part of its long-range planning. These values are foundational, not exhaustive.

Design: Architects design better, safer, more equitable, resilient, and sustainable built environments. Design thinking and integrated design solutions are hallmarks of architecture education, the discipline, and the profession.

Environmental Stewardship and Professional Responsibility: Architects are responsible for the impact of their work on the natural world and on public health, safety, and welfare. As professionals and designers of the built environment, we embrace these responsibilities and act ethically to accomplish them.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Architects commit to equity and inclusion in the environments we design, the policies we adopt, the words we speak, the actions we take, and the respectful learning, teaching, and working environments we create. Architects seek fairness, diversity, and social justice in the profession and in society and support a range of pathways for students seeking access to an architecture education.

Knowledge and Innovation: Architects create and disseminate knowledge focused on design and the built environment in response to ever-changing conditions. New knowledge advances architecture as a cultural force, drives innovation, and prompts the continuous improvement of the discipline.

Leadership, Collaboration, and Community Engagement: Architects practice design as a collaborative, inclusive, creative, and empathetic enterprise with other disciplines, the communities we serve, and the clients for whom we work.

Lifelong Learning: Architects value educational breadth and depth, including a thorough understanding of the discipline’s body of knowledge, histories and theories, and architecture’s role in cultural, social, environmental, economic, and built contexts. The practice of architecture demands lifelong learning, which is a shared responsibility between academic and practice settings.

3.2 Student Criteria (SC): Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes

A program must demonstrate how it addresses the following criteria through program curricula and other experiences, with an emphasis on the articulation of learning objectives and assessment.

SC.1 Health, Safety, and Welfare in the Built Environment—How the program ensures that students understand the impact of the built environment on human health, safety, and welfare at multiple scales, from buildings to cities.

SC.2 Professional Practice—How the program ensures that students understand professional ethics, the regulatory requirements, the fundamental business processes relevant to architecture practice in the United States, and the forces influencing change in these subjects.

SC.3 Regulatory Context—How the program ensures that students understand the fundamental principles of life safety, land use, and current laws and regulations that apply to buildings and sites in the United States, and the evaluative process architects use to comply with those laws and regulations as part of a project.

SC.4 Technical Knowledge—How the program ensures that students understand the established and emerging systems, technologies, and assemblies of building construction, and the methods and criteria architects use to assess those technologies against the design, economics, and performance objectives of projects.

The following (from the 2020 Procedures, section 3.5.2) describes the types of evidence required for the assessment of SC.1 through SC.4:

Primary Evidence for Student Criteria (SC) SC.1 through SC.4. These criteria will be evaluated at the understanding level. The program will submit the primary exhibits as evidence for SC.1-4 to the visiting team in an electronic format 45 days before the visit. Programs must provide the following:

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5—Resources

5.1 Structure and Governance

The program must describe the administrative and governance processes that provide for organizational continuity, clarity, and fairness and allow for improvement and change.

- 5.1.1 **Administrative Structure:** Describe the administrative structure and identify key personnel in the program and school, college, and institution.
- 5.1.2 **Governance:** Describe the role of faculty, staff, and students in both program and institutional governance structures and how these structures relate to the governance structures of the academic unit and the institution.

5.2 Planning and Assessment

The program must demonstrate that it has a planning process for continuous improvement that identifies:

- 5.2.1 The program's multiyear strategic objectives, including the requirement to meet the NAAB Conditions, as part of the larger institutional strategic planning and assessment efforts.
- 5.2.2 Key performance indicators used by the unit and the institution.
- 5.2.3 How well the program is progressing toward its mission and stated multiyear objectives.
- 5.2.4 Strengths, challenges, and opportunities faced by the program as it strives to continuously improve learning outcomes and opportunities.
- 5.2.5 Ongoing outside input from others, including practitioners.

The program must also demonstrate that it regularly uses the results of self-assessments to advise and encourage changes and adjustments that promote student and faculty success.

5.3 Curricular Development

The program must demonstrate a well-reasoned process for assessing its curriculum and making adjustments based on the outcome of the assessment. The program must identify:

- 5.3.1 The relationship between course assessment and curricular development, including NAAB program and student criteria.
- 5.3.2 The roles and responsibilities of the personnel and committees involved in setting curricular agendas and initiatives, including the curriculum committee, program coordinators, and department chairs or directors.

5.4 Human Resources and Human Resource Development

The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequately funded human resources to support student learning and achievement. Human resources include full- and part-time instructional faculty, administrative leadership, and technical, administrative, and other support staff. The program must:

- 5.4.1 Demonstrate that it balances the workloads of all faculty in a way that promotes student and faculty achievement.
- 5.4.2 Demonstrate that it has an Architect Licensing Advisor who is actively performing the duties defined in the NCARB position description. These duties include attending the biannual NCARB Licensing Advisor Summit and/or other training opportunities to stay up-to-date on the requirements for licensure and ensure that students have resources to make informed decisions on their path to licensure.
- 5.4.3 Demonstrate that faculty and staff have opportunities to pursue professional development that contributes to program improvement.

5.4.4 Describe the support services available to students in the program, including but not limited to

6—Public Information

The NAAB expects accredited degree programs to provide information to the public about accreditation activities and the relationship between the program and the NAAB, admissions and advising, and career information, as well as accurate public information about accredited and non-accredited architecture programs.

Appendix 1—Statement on Changes to the NAAB *Conditions* and *Procedures* for Accreditation

Changes to the *Conditions for Accreditation* and the *Procedures for Accreditation* are outlined in Section 6.2 of the NAAB Policy Manual. That section is referenced below for information:

Section 6.2 Changes to the NAAB *Conditions* and *Procedures*

The NAAB's *Conditions* and *Procedure* have been revised several times over the years. These revisions reflect the NAAB's commitment to continuous improvement by allowing programs the flexibility to adapt to a dynamic context. The three review types are:

1. **Annually:** The NAAB *Conditions* and *Procedures* are reviewed annually by the NAAB's Assessment and Evaluation Committee for *nonsubstantive* changes that do not modify the prior meaning of a criterion and are normally intended to improve clarity, structural consistency, format, or grammar and syntax. The A+E Committee shall propose changes to the NAAB board for approval. *Nonsubstantive* revisions approved for implementation will be included in the *Conditions* or *Procedures* for the next visit cycle.
2. **Periodically:** The NAAB *Conditions* and *Procedures* are reviewed periodically by the A+E Committee for *substantive* changes. *Substantive* changes are defined as the addition of a new criterion or a revision to an existing criterion that modifies its prior meaning. For *substantive* changes, the A+E Committee shall recommend a suitable review and comment period and an appropriate implementation plan to be approved by the NAAB board. Final approval of any substantive change rests with the NAAB board.
3. **Accreditation Review Forum:** Every eight years, the NAAB Board of Directors will invite its collateral partners (ACSA, AIA, AIAS, and NCARB) to participate in a process of assessment, research, analysis, and review of the current *Conditions* and *Procedures*. The process will be designed to engage participants in substantive conversations on the future of architecture education in order to identify changes in the *Conditions* and *Procedures* that will promote excellence and innovation in architecture education.

Appendix 2—Statement on NAAB-Accredited Degrees

The following statement must be included, in its entirety, in the catalogs and promotional materials, including the program’s website, of all accredited programs and candidate programs.

“In the United States, most registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for licensure. The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), which is the sole agency authorized to accredit professional degree programs in architecture offered by institutions with U.S. regional accreditation, recognizes three types of degrees: the Bachelor of Architecture, the Master of Architecture, and the Doctor of Architecture. A program may be granted an eight-year term, an eight-year term with conditions, or a two-year term of continuing accreditation, or a three-year term of initial accreditation, depending on the extent of its conformance with established education standards.

Doctor of Architecture and Master of Architecture degree programs may require a non-accredited undergraduate degree in architecture for admission. However, the non-accredited degree is not, by itself, recognized as an accredited degree.”

That text must be followed by this information about each NAAB-accredited program:

[name of university, name of academic unit] offers the following NAAB-accredited degree program(s) (If an institution offers more than one track for an M. Arch. or D. Arch. based on the type of undergraduate/preparatory education required, please list all tracks separately):

[name of degree] (prerequisite + total number of credits required)

In addition, the program must publish the year of the next accreditation visit for each accredited program.

Programs that have been granted candidacy status must also include the following in its entirety:

“The NAAB grants candidacy status to new programs that have developed viable plans for achieving initial accreditation. Candidacy status indicates that a program expects to achieve initial accreditation within six years of achieving candidacy, if its plan is properly implemented.

In order to meet the education requirement, set forth by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, an applicant for an NCARB Certificate must hold a professional degree in architecture from a program accredited by the NAAB; the degree must have been awarded not more than two years prior to initial accreditation. However, meeting the education requirement for the NCARB Certificate may not be equivalent to meeting the education requirement for registration in a specific jurisdiction. Please contact NCARB for more information.”

That text must be followed by this information about each candidate program:

[name of university, name of academic unit] was granted candidacy status for the following professional degree program(s) in architecture:

[name of degree] [prerequisite + total number of credits required]

Year candidacy awarded: [year]

Next visit: Continuation of Candidacy, [year] or Initial Accreditation, [year]

Projected year to achieve initial accreditation: [year]

Earliest graduation date projected to meet NCARB education requirement: [year]