

ACE POLICY POSITION 2016

OPTIMISING
PROFESSIONAL
MOBILITY



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE



■ Highlights

- ACE's policy is to promote the internationally established standard of 5 years study plus two years professional practice experience, set out in the *UIA/UNESCO Charter for Architectural Education*¹, as the minimum standard for architectural education in Europe.
- Professional Practice Experience is critical to consumer protection and quality in the built environment. It is the bridge between the achievement of the graduate standard and having the skills and expertise to apply that knowledge, skill and competence effectively. Professional Practice Experience equips the architectural graduate with the skills to function effectively in the practice environment dealing with contracts, regulations, finance, contractors, other professionals, site supervision, consumers and clients.
- These skills, which can only be delivered in a live practice environment, are essential. While the importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is increasingly recognised at EU level it cannot replace mandatory Professional Practice Experience prior to establishment as a professional.
- The majority of EU Member States have long required standards higher than the Minimum Standard set out in the Professional Qualifications Directive (the 'PQD'). Any downward pressure on standards, which may seem attractive in economically pressured times, is especially dangerous because it undermines consumer protection and confidence, hindering graduate and professional mobility, recognition on an international scale and gives a misleading impression of the standards that apply in EU Member States. This can have a negative impact on confidence in the market for services within the EU.
- For these reasons, ACE continues to actively promote the international standard (5 years study plus 2 years practical experience) as the explicitly stated minimum standard for architectural education in Europe.

■ ACE policy

Architectural Education and Training in Europe has a strong core in terms of the knowledge, skill and competence required and the professional activities undertaken. However, different approaches to regulation in Member States and limited variations in the skills profile required of architects, mean that the profession has to operate on the basis of a shared minimum threshold rather than a common standard. ACE welcomes the raising of the minimum standard for architectural training from four years full time study to four years full time study plus two years of practical professional experience or five years of full-time study. Although this is still below the standard applying in the majority of EU Member States and internationally, it is considered a step in the right direction.

ACE continues to advocate strongly for a situation where all graduates are required to undertake practical professional experience (traineeship) before being regarded as eligible for full recognition as independent professionals.

ACE is actively engaged in analysing the education, training, and regulatory systems that currently exist within the EU to ensure that Member Organisations are fully supported in ensuring appropriate standards, systems and documentation for the smooth introduction of the new provisions of the Professional Qualifications Directive (cf. ACE/ENACA study on the *Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive and impact on the architectural profession*).

Article 46 has stood the test of time well, defining, as it does, the minimum standard of knowledge skill and competence required of architects in eleven succinct and clear statements. ACE will actively contribute to any future discussion on the content of the Article 46 competence statements (a-k) and their use in the context of the Directive.

¹UIA/UNESCO Charter for Architectural Education



■ Background

January 2016 was the deadline for full implementation, including transposition into national law, of the Modernised Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC per 2013/55/EU). This is the second major 'regime' change in less than a decade following the changeover from the 1985 Architects' Directive to full implementation of the 2005 Directive in October 2007.

ACE's primary focus at this time is on ensuring the appropriate and smooth transposition and implementation of the Directive to facilitate the mobility of architects and architectural graduates in the context of supporting consumer protection and promoting quality in the built environment in the EU through the continued promotion of appropriate standards of education and training for architects.

In addition, ACE is actively promoting the clear exposition of architectural education and practice standards as they apply in the EU to ensure that highly skilled EU architects have appropriate access to International markets, and that migrant architects coming to the EU meet the same standards required of EU qualified professionals.

■ Annexe

- *Modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive and impact on the architectural profession*, study produced by the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) and the European Network of Architects' Competent Authorities (ENACA), 2014

OTHER ACE POLICY POSITIONS 2016

- THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE IN ENERGY EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION
- URBAN REGENERATION: RENOVATING THE EXISTING BUILDING STOCK
- QUALITY-BASED PUBLIC PROCUREMENT
- THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND THE ROLE OF THE PROFESSION IN DELIVERING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- DISSEMINATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE
- REGULATION OF ARCHITECTS
- SUPPORT FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF BINDING MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS

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