
ACE – EAAE Joint Working Party

Directive 2005/36/EC - Position Statement on Minimum Duration of Studies

Final

This statement was endorsed by the Council of the European Association for Architectural Education (EAAE) on the 25th November 2007 and by the General Assembly of the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) on the 30th November 2007:

Position Statement

of the Joint Working Party between the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) and the European Association for Architectural Education (EAAE) on the minimum duration of architectural studies:

Whereas the "Architects Directive" (85/384/EEC) has been replaced by the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC);

Whereas the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications brings in a number of significant changes in relation to the manner in which recognition procedures for those holding architectural qualifications are carried out without having taken account of the developments resulting from the adoption by the EU Member States of the Bologna Process;

Whereas, at the same time, the principal provisions of the "Architects Directive" have been incorporated into the Professional Qualifications Directive, most notably the minimum duration of studies for architectural qualifications, which remains at four years;

Whereas the reforms to the structure of third-level courses flowing from the progressive adoption and implementation of the Bologna Process are beginning to impact on the under-graduate population of the EU and by which, for the Architectural Sector, the most commonly adopted model for the required two-cycles is a first cycle of three years duration and a second cycle of two years duration;

Whereas the professional representative and regulatory bodies of all countries of the EU, Member Organisations of the ACE, have formally adopted a policy that calls for the education of architects to consist of at least five years of academic studies supplemented by two years of professional practice experience;

Whereas the Heads of Schools of Architecture have adopted The Chania Statement, in which they state that the studies that lead to the diploma in architecture may give access to the profession of an architect must of five years duration;

Whereas the General Assembly of the ACE has formally adopted the recommended standard of the International Union of Architects (UIA, adopted at Beijing 1999) that sets the minimum level of qualifications for architects worldwide at five years education followed by two years of practical training;

Whereas the ACE and the EAAE are aware that five years academic training does not, on its own, necessarily provide to the holder all the skills and aptitudes necessary for the independent practice of the profession of architect;

The Joint Working Party of the ACE and the EAAE petitions the incoming Slovenian and French Presidencies of the EU and subsequent Presidencies, in the public interest and to establish consistency in relation to the required minimum duration of studies within the architectural sector, to take up the issue of the minimum duration of studies within the relevant formation of the Council of Ministers so as to propose a revision to the first paragraph of Article 46(1) of the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) as follows:

Existing version	Proposed amended version
<p><i>Article 46</i> Training of architects</p>	<p><i>Article 46</i> Training of architects</p>
<p>1. Training as an architect shall comprise a total of at least <i>four</i> years of full-time study or <i>six years of study, at least three years of which on a full-time basis</i>, at a university or comparable teaching institution. The training must lead to successful completion of a university-level examination.</p>	<p>1. Training as an architect shall comprise a total of at least five years of full-time study at a university or comparable teaching institution. The training must lead to successful completion of a university-level examination.</p>

Rationale

The discipline of architecture has been recognised by many Member States and by the Council of the European Union as being a matter of significant public interest. The quality and genuine sustainability of the built environment in which we all live and work has a considerable impact on well-being and prosperity. It is therefore essential that persons pursuing the practice of architecture have a high level of qualification.

The profession and the schools of architecture are unanimous in their support for a minimum duration of five years academic training for persons wishing to become architects. This is because they are aware of the wide range of skills and aptitudes that a person must acquire in order to be able to responsibly pursue the practice of the profession and they recognise that the minimum level required is five years.

Changing the prescribed minimum to five years studies will ensure that the provisions of the Professional Qualifications Directive will be harmonious with the Bologna Reforms that, for all schools of architecture within the EU, now have a minimum of five years for the successful completion of the two-cycles required by the Bologna Process, in common with many of the other sectoral professions.

Revising the provisions of the Professional Qualifications Directive will therefore bring the European legislation into line with the actual situation as it prevails across the EU. It is recalled that the original negotiations that led to the inclusion of a minimum duration of four years took place in the 1970's and early 1980's when there were still such courses in existence. This is no longer the case and so the law should be changed to reflect this fact.

The Joint Working Party of the ACE and the EAAE requests that it be kept informed of progress on this issue and it remains ready to provide expert assistance to the Presidencies of the EU, should that prove to be necessary and appropriate.

End of statement