

# ACE POLICY POSITION 2016

THE IMPORTANCE OF  
LIFE-LONG LEARNING  
AND THE ROLE OF  
THE PROFESSION  
IN DELIVERING  
CONTINUING  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT (CPD)



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE



## ■ Highlights

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as a distinct part of life-long learning, is a necessity. It is increasingly mandatory for professionals around the world and is particularly important for architects.
- The practice of Architecture demands the acquisition of a solid base of knowledge and skills through 1) academic training at university level and 2) professional practical training (traineeship). These two steps, which are essential prerequisites, must continue to be enriched through CPD, covering the evolving concerns of the profession as well as the professional practice of architects.
- It is essential that architects themselves - through their professional bodies – participate in the implementation of CPD.
- The mandatory character of CPD in all EU Member States, based on similar quality guidelines, is fundamental in ensuring that the competencies of architects in their professional practice be recognised throughout Europe.
- ACE will consistently remind its Member Organisations about this obligation, clearly expressed in the Professional Qualifications Directive, and the need to consider mandatory CPD as one of the key conditions for mobility.

## ■ ACE position

Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as a distinct part of life-long learning, is now a necessity and obvious to everybody. It is increasingly mandatory for professionals around the world and is particularly important for architects because of:

- The significant and rapid evolution of construction techniques and their increased complexity;
- The evolution and expansion of the legal, regulatory and standardisation framework (notably at EU level);
- The increased complexity and the mutations of the professional framework (regarding communication techniques, Building Information Modelling, etc.) and its enlargement (mobility within the EU and internationalisation of markets, etc.);
- The role and involvement of architects in relation to changes in society and the daily life of people, through the creation of living environments adapted to these changes: increased urbanisation and mobility, changes in family structures, growing demand for safety and comfort, etc.;
- The increase in the need for specialist skills for new work areas: conservation and retro-fitting being but two;
- The need to be agile, employable and capable in order to stay in profitable work and to meet the continual force of disruption;
- The need to deliver for and communicate / engage with clients, stakeholders and communities;
- The challenges associated with safely and profitably running a SME business; and
- In particular, the challenges architects are facing in the areas of energy savings and sustainable development.

All this implies the acquisition of a solid base of knowledge and skills, the maintenance of competence to practice and the need for professionalism. These skills must then be applied, updated and developed continuously. This solid base can be acquired through:

- academic training at university level, where theoretical and practical aspects of architectural training are balanced, guaranteeing the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences covering all the skills expected in the Professional Qualifications Directive<sup>1</sup>;
- the enrichment, development and implementation of the acquired skills through professional practical training. This traineeship must be completed under the supervision or direction of a body approved for that purpose by a competent authority.

<sup>1</sup>Directive 2013/55/EU of 20 November 2013 amending Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional



These two steps are essential prerequisites, which must however continue to be enriched through Continuous Professional Development (CPD). CPD must cover the evolving concerns of the profession as well as the professional practice of architects and must remain anchored with them.

To this end, it is essential that architects themselves - through their professional bodies – participate in the implementation of CPD by:

- determining the required competencies including the on-going need to be inclusive, public-focused, ethical, and responsive to climate issues and building performance;
- setting out trends, identifying needs and gaps and helping members and member organisations to be future-focused yet agile;
- initiating, encouraging and organising training initiatives;
- evaluating training initiatives properly (relevance of the subject, learning aims and outcomes, needs of learners, quality of courses, accessibility and cost, etc.) so as to contribute to their improvement;
- providing CPD at a range of prices, styles and delivery modes through multiple channels, including the recognition of informal activities;
- recognising differences in generational attitudes towards learning at a time when five distinct generations may be in the workforce;
- ensuring the effective dissemination and promotion of CPD towards architects.

This involvement of the profession must take place at all levels: local, national or international. The ACE is implementing this policy by:

- providing a platform for reflection and discussion, with other interested parties, on issues relating to the continuing professional development of architects;
- ensuring the dissemination of CPD best practice examples among its members;
- promoting its system of recognition and registration of continuing professional training, based on commonly accepted UIA guidelines for CPD systems and materials;
- encouraging Member Organisations to implement minimum, mandatory CPD requirements for architects in each country;
- by guiding European architects to best practice and thinking on CPD and competence.

This recognition system helps to encourage initiatives, to increase the amount of training and to facilitate the sharing of courses both within and outside the EU.

As mobility is one of the goals of our profession in Europe, equivalent professional skills is a necessity. The mandatory character of CPD in all the Member States, based on similar quality guidelines, is fundamental in ensuring that the competencies of architects in their professional practice be recognised throughout Europe.

ACE will consistently remind its Member Organisations about this obligation, clearly expressed in the Professional Qualifications Directive, and the need to consider mandatory CPD as one of the key conditions for mobility in addition to other factors such as ethical obligations and greater competitiveness.

## ■ Background

According to Article 22 b) of the Professional Qualifications Directive<sup>1</sup>, *“Member States shall, in accordance with the procedures specific to each Member State, ensure, by encouraging continuous professional development, that professionals whose professional qualification is covered by Chapter III of this Title are able to update their knowledge, skills and competences in order to maintain a safe and effective practice and keep abreast of professional developments”*.

## ■ Annexe

- *ACE Register on Continuing Professional Development*

# OTHER ACE POLICY POSITIONS 2016

- THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE IN ENERGY EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION
- URBAN REGENERATION: RENOVATING THE EXISTING BUILDING STOCK
- QUALITY-BASED PUBLIC PROCUREMENT
- DISSEMINATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE
- OPTIMISING PROFESSIONAL MOBILITY
- REGULATION OF ARCHITECTS
- SUPPORT FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF BINDING MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS

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