



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

## Access to the Profession

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Work Group Acquisition of Professional Experience

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Presentation of New Document and Recommendations

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Final

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### **Acquisition of Professional Experience: Practical organisation** (Original in FRENCH)

#### **Definition and Objective of Professional Training**

A period of structured professional training that is complimentary to academic studies is indispensable to the autonomous practice of the profession of architect. It permits the acquisition or the development of knowledge, understanding and skills that are not, or not sufficiently, covered during academic studies. This is necessary in order to ensure that the competences for professional practice, that may be prescribed by regulation or by accredited professional bodies, are acquired before the granting of an authorisation to practice (see also the ACE document "Acquisition of Professional Experience: Principles").

Taking account of the constant evolution of the conditions of professional practice, architects must now envisage their training as a form of continuous learning that takes place throughout their full career and that allows them to adapt their practice to the conditions and new approaches to which they are confronted. The period of professional training that supplements the academic studies can be considered as the first stage of this continuing learning and could already be integrated into the framework or system put in place by professional bodies.

#### **Means of acquiring professional competences**

The acquisition of professional competences can be assured by several different means:

It should preferably take place by full, monitored pursuit of professional architectural practice duties within an office run by registered architects, as certain of the required competences cannot be reasonably acquired by any other means than this kind of experience (see the document referred to further above). It should allow the aspiring architect to follow all of the different stages of a construction or renovation project from inception to completion.

It should be noted that this contact with professional life also gives to the aspiring architect the opportunity to discover different aspects, types of practice or specialisation that he or she often does not know of and thus allows him to broaden his appreciation of the range of professional roles open to architects.

In particular the period of professional training should assist the aspiring architect to develop the ability to represent the interests of the client.

The acquisition of professional competences can also, in part, be assured by:

- Training undertaken in construction companies in order to acquire certain specific competences,
- Case Studies or personal projects undertaken by the aspiring architect,
- Complimentary professional courses that are conceived to deliver the necessary additional or deeper knowledge (for example, in the form of lectures or seminars),
- Other training tools such as written documents, websites, audio and/or video material etc.

#### **Parties involved in the training**

In the running of this training, one can identify the following actors:

- The aspiring architect: holder of a recognised qualification in architecture who is undertaking a period of professional training during which he acquires complimentary professional competences that puts him in a position to be positively accepted, by the relevant competent authority, as a fully competent architect (refer to the ACE Report on Accreditation and Validation).
- The organiser of the training: a professional or official body that organises and supervises the period of training and that, sometimes, undertakes the evaluation of the training before giving an authorisation to practice.
- The adviser: a competent person, preferably an architect, appointed by the organiser of the training, or chosen by the aspirant in order to follow and advise him during the period of training and to best prepare him for his evaluation. This adviser must be independent of the employers.
- The employer: this is an office (for example, an architects' practice, local authority administration, independent architect etc.) within which the aspiring architect gets all or part of his training and with which he is tied by a contract that defines his rights and duties, notably in relation to his remuneration.
- The director of training: an experienced, competent person, preferably an architect, who works in the office that employs the aspirant and who helps him to discover different facets of the profession.

#### **Duration and status of professional training**

The general position, defended by the ACE and by the UIA foresees a period of complete architectural academic studies of a minimum duration of five years supplemented by a minimum of two years of professional training. At the end of this period of studies and training the aspiring architect can receive his professional qualification (by virtue of the successful completion of a final evaluation that renders him apt to be validated as a fully competent professional).

This period of professional training finds its natural timing after the acquisition of an academic qualification. It is possible that a part of the required period can be found after the Bachelor qualification and before completion of the Masters qualification. In all cases, it is recommended that at least one year of professional training takes place after the Masters qualification is acquired. The period of professional training should not, however, be confused with any office experience that may be a part of the academic studies.

#### **General organisation and the links between the professional and academic worlds**

The general organisation of this period of professional training should be taken in charge or supervised by the professional body or bodies that are responsible for access to the architectural profession and the subsequent control of the profession.

Nevertheless and in order to ensure the indispensable continuity of training and to permit useful feedback, it may be desirable to associate and involve the world of academic education in its organisation, both in the follow-up and in the final evaluation of aspiring architects.

It is also desirable that aspiring architects are represented in the organisation of the training in order to ensure that their point of view is taken into account (as should the directors of training and the advisers)

In order to defuse and solve any conflicts that might arise (and independently of any legal means of recourse that the parties may enjoy) the organiser may maintain dialogue with the aspirant (via, for example, his adviser) and with the director of the training or the employer and may put in place a conciliation body.

#### **General conditions for professional training**

It is the responsibility of the organiser of the training to clearly fix the expected objectives and the conditions in which the training must be undertaken. For example:

- The minimum number of hours expected (monthly, annual or global),
- The proportion of the training period that must be undertaken with an architect,
- The types of tasks that must be undertaken,

- The keeping of a *log book*,
- Proposed or obligatory complimentary courses,
- The limits and conditions that relate to the tasks that can, if at all, be undertaken by the aspirant in his own name during the period of training.

They must also determine the means of evaluation that will be used to assess the aspirant for eligibility to be authorised or licensed to practice (validation?).

These different objectives and conditions should, ideally, be regularly evaluated and eventually re-defined in order to take account of any evolution in the training of architects and in the practice of architecture.

It is also necessary to foresee provisions that can allow for dispensations or adaptations to the process in order to account for particular situations that are peculiar to certain aspirants (for example in terms of relevant, previously acquired experience).

### **Evaluation of the accomplishments of the aspiring architect**

The ACE believes that it is necessary to evaluate the level of competences acquired by the aspiring architect. Different means of carrying out this evaluation are possible and can be combined, for example:

- A regular evaluation by means of:
  - An interview,
  - An analysis of work files,
  - The examination of the log book or reports submitted by the aspirant (and/or by the director of the training),
- A final evaluation by one of the means listed above and/or an exam.

These evaluations (and particularly any final exam) should be carried out or supervised by more than one person in order to guarantee impartiality. The aspirant should also be able to benefit from a means of recourse in case of problems or disputes. When he is refused he must have the possibility to benefit from a new evaluation carried out by a different jury.

### **Status, functions and duties of a director of training**

It is important that the aspiring architect is properly supported by competent and experienced professionals that also possess the necessary probity. The choice of a director of training from within an office is therefore essential.

The organiser can set minimum conditions that are imposed on the directors of training (for example, in terms of their experience, the conditions of practice or the maximum number of aspirants that can be taken on at any one time).

In all cases the aspirant should be given a range of tasks that are sufficiently varied (in terms of the type of projects and work dealt with by the office) in order for him to acquire, over the full period of his training, an overall vision of his future profession and of the required competences. He will also ensure that the aspirant is not confined to a series of dull, repetitive tasks.

The director of training should also permit the aspiring architect, via flexible working hours, to acquire the necessary competences by having access to other useful sources of training (preparation of case studies, personal projects etc.).

### **Status and function of the adviser**

Given the difficulties that sometimes arise due to the fact that the employer is frequently also the director of training, the intervention of an external adviser can be very beneficial.

It is up to the adviser to guide and advise the aspirant to change office or complete his training through other sources if it becomes apparent that this is necessary in order to get the best training and to satisfy the required conditions.

### **Employment conditions for the aspiring architect**

The social status under which the aspirant undertakes his training (employee, independent, etc.) depends on the general conditions set out in the country in relation to work and professional practice. One must be watchful that the status accorded is as favourable as possible.

Notwithstanding his particular status within the office, the aspiring architect should benefit from the same conditions as others in relation to social security and health benefits, in full respect of the legal requirements and social conventions in force.

It is necessary to take account of the fact that even if the aspirant must continue to train, he already has a considerable amount of knowledge and competence at the end of his academic studies. The director of training must therefore ensure that these competences are valued and accorded to the aspiring architect in accordance with his progress.

The employer will ensure that, among other things, the aspirant is properly insured for his professional liability and against accidents in accordance with his level of involvement.

The conditions of employment of the aspirant should ideally be defined in a clear and detailed contract. In the interest of all, the organiser can propose a model contract and can set, if necessary, the minimum conditions of engagement by the employer of the aspiring architect.

If necessary, the organiser may negotiate with the relevant competent bodies the conditions that define the general status appropriate to this type of training.

### **Duties and attitude of the aspiring architect**

The aspirant should respect the commitments that he has contracted with the employer and/or director of training (in terms of presence, notice etc.) as well as the general conditions of work.

The aspirant must ensure that, over the period of his professional training, he acquires all of the knowledge, understanding and abilities that are required in order that he is fully qualified for full practice of the architectural profession.

As a future professional, the aspirant will ensure that he participates in the work and life of the office in a positive and responsible manner, in a spirit of perfect collaboration and in full respect of the ethical principles of the profession. He should, notably, demonstrate discretion and respect the confidentiality of the work that he is assigned by the office that employs him.

He should equally fulfil his obligations in relation to the organiser (in relation to formalities, communication of information etc.) and adviser.

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<p><b>APPRENTISSAGE DE LA PRATIQUE PROFESSIONNELLE</b></p> <p><b>RECOMMANDATIONS</b></p> <p><u>Préambule :</u>        On trouveras ci-après l'ensemble des recommandations proposées en matière d'apprentissage de la pratique professionnelles. Les nouvelles recommandations issues du projet de Charte ont été intégrées (<b>en rouge</b>) dans la liste des 5 recommandations déjà adoptées par l'AG (<b>en noir</b>) suite au rapport sur l'Expérience professionnelle.        Dans ces recommandations des adaptations ont été effectuées pour :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tenir compte de la nouvelle terminologie qui remplace « Expérience professionnelle » par « (période d') Apprentissage de la pratique professionnelle »,</li> <li>- adapter ces recommandations antérieures à l'adjonction des nouvelles.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACQUISITION OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE</b></p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p><u>Introduction</u>        Set out below is the full set of proposed recommendations relating to the acquisition of professional experience. The new recommendations that have arisen out of the work on the Charter for Interns are included (in <b>red</b>) in the list of 5 recommendations already adopted by the GA following the report of the Work Group on Professional Experience. Within these recommendations, certain changes have been introduced in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take account of the new terminology that replaces "Professional Experience" by "Acquisition of Professional Experience"</li> <li>Adapt the earlier recommendations in light of the new ones</li> </ul>
<p>1 . Une expérience complémentaire aux études académiques est nécessaire et même essentielle pour pouvoir transformer la qualification académique en une formation d'architecte professionnel apte à représenter et à défendre de façon complète les intérêts du client, des usagers, et plus largement du public en tant que professionnel autonome.</p> <p>2 . Conformément à l'Accord UIA pour la Recommandation de Règles Professionnelles Internationales de l'Exercice de l'Architecture, <b>cet apprentissage de la pratique professionnelle</b> devrait s'étendre sur une période de deux années (en sus des cinq années préconisées pour la formation académique). Cette période (dont une partie peut éventuellement être intercalée dans la période de formation académique) donne accès à l'autorisation d'exercice qui peut être matérialisée par l'obtention d'une licence.</p> <p>3 . Durant cette période, l'acquisition des compétences professionnelles nécessaires peut être réalisée par différents moyens (cours théoriques, séminaires, outils audio-visuels, <b>stages effectués au sein d'entreprises de construction</b>, etc.) mais implique, pour un certain nombre d'entre elles, une expérimentation concrète obtenue à travers une pratique professionnelle <b>encadrée par des architectes</b></p>	<p>1. It is necessary, even essential, to have experience that complements academic studies in order to transform the academic qualification into that of a professional architect capable of completely and competently representing and defending the interests of the client, the users and the public at large as an autonomous professional</p> <p>2. In accordance with the recommendations of the UIA Accord on Recommended International Professional Rules for the Practice of Architecture, the acquisition of <b>this experience in professional training</b> practice should extend over a period of two years (in addition to the five years recommended for the academic education). This period (of which a part can be taken during the period of academic education) gives access to the authorisation to practice which may, for example, take the form of a licence.</p> <p>3. During this period, the acquisition of the necessary professional competences can be achieved by different means (theoretical courses, seminars, audio-visual tools, <b>training undertaken in construction companies</b>, etc.) but requires, for a certain number of these competences*, a real experience obtained via structured professional practice experience <b>under the supervision of an experienced architects (responsible for the</b></p>

expérimentés (responsables d'apprentissage) et par la réalisation d'études de projets. Cette immersion doit permettre à l'aspirant d'aborder les différentes étapes d'un projet de construction.

4. La détermination précise des compétences professionnelles nécessaires et du niveau à atteindre pour chacune d'elles, afin d'être en adéquation avec les conditions de la pratique professionnelle propre à chaque pays, doit être réalisée avec les instances professionnelles et idéalement en relation avec les instances académiques. Ces critères doivent être régulièrement évalués et redéfinis.

5. L'organisation générale de la période d'apprentissage professionnel devrait être prise en charge ou en tout cas supervisée par la ou les instances professionnelles responsables de l'accès à la profession d'architecte et du contrôle ultérieur de celle-ci. Ces instances doivent fixer clairement les objectifs attendus ainsi que les conditions et modalités dans lesquelles doit s'effectuer l'apprentissage.

6. L'organisateur doit notamment fixer les conditions minimum imposées aux responsables d'apprentissage ainsi que les conditions d'engagement de l'aspirant qui doivent être définies dans un contrat clair et détaillé.

L'aspirant doit être correctement assuré et doit bénéficier d'un statut et de rémunérations qui correspondent aux compétences qu'il a déjà acquises.

7. Ces mêmes instances professionnelles peuvent également être parties prenantes dans l'évaluation éventuelle des compétences, donnant accès à l'exercice professionnel autonome. Cette évaluation doit être neutre, formalisée et des modalités de dispenses et de recours éventuels doivent être prévues.

8. Afin d'assurer la continuité de la formation et de permettre d'utiles retombées en amont, il est souhaitable d'associer et d'impliquer le monde académique dans cette organisation, tant en ce qui concerne le suivi que l'évaluation des aspirants architectes. Il est également souhaitable que ces derniers soient représentés au sein de cette organisation.

9. L'architecte professionnel autonome veille à maintenir le niveau des connaissances et compétences acquises durant la formation

internship) and through the execution of real studies and projects. This immersion should permit the aspiring architect to gain experience in the different stages of a construction project.

4. The exact description of the necessary professional competences and the level to be reached for each one of them in order to meet the conditions set at national level should be devised and agreed with the professional bodies and, ideally, in collaboration with educational bodies. These criteria must be regularly reviewed and updated.

5. The general organisation of this period of professional training should be taken in charge or at least supervised by the professional body or bodies that are responsible for access to the architectural profession and its subsequent control. These bodies should clearly set out the expected objectives as well as the conditions and means by which the internship should be undertaken.

6. The organiser should set the minimum conditions that are imposed on the directors of training as well as the conditions of engagement of the aspiring architect, which should be defined in a clear and detailed contract. The aspiring architect should be correctly insured and should benefit from remuneration that corresponds to the competences that are already acquired.

7 The same professional bodies should also take a full part in any final evaluation of the competences acquired that lead to independent professional practice. This evaluation should be neutral, formalised and the possibilities for dispensations and appeals should also be set out.

8. In order to ensure the indispensable continuity of training and to permit useful feedback, it may be desirable to associate or involve the world of academic education in its organisation, both in the follow-up and the final evaluation of aspiring architects. It is also desirable that aspiring architects are represented in the organisation of the training.

9. The professional, autonomous architect must ensure that the level of knowledge and competences acquired during the academic education and period of professional experience

académique et la période d'expérience professionnelle grâce à la post-formation.	is maintained through continued professional development.
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