



ARCHITECTS' COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DES ARCHITECTES D'EUROPE

Date: 5 December 2012
Ref: 293-bis/WH/MHoF/idp

Access to the Profession

Work Group Professional Qualifications Directive (PQD)

Annex 1 to the ACE proposed amendments

Final

THE NEED FOR TRAINEESHIPS IN ARCHITECTURE

I. Professional Practical Experience: the traineeship

For architects, the requirement for *Professional Practical Experience* ("traineeship"), covers the acquisition of a range of skills and knowledge that are essential to practice the profession. This period (usually 2 years) is distinct from formal academic education (usually 5 years). In most EU Member States, traineeship occurs after completion of formal academic education (under the Bologna Accord, the diplomas typically comprise a Bachelor's Degree after 3 years, and a Master's Degree after 2 more years) but in some, a part can be undertaken before/during the Masters). Traineeship builds on the knowledge, skill and competence acquired in academic education and focuses on the requirements for effective/appropriate exercise of the profession of architect, requiring an approach based mainly on experiential learning. Traineeship can only substitute for a lack of academic training to a small degree and ought to be seen predominantly as a complementary to the academic education of architects.

II: Knowledge, Skill and Competence: objectives of the traineeship

The main purpose of the traineeship is to give the trainee the ability to manage and deliver architectural projects including the various construction phases. An indicative, non-exhaustive list of competencies would include: architectural practice (ethics, duty to the public, building users and clients; communication; critical appraisal etc.); brief development; project management; pre-design and site analysis; project services and systems; schematic design; design development and design documentation; construction documentation; contract administration; construction management and practice management. This is essential to ensuring, in the interests of consumer and public protection, the quality of the built environment and the trainee graduate's own interests, that s/he is fully equipped to meet the standards required of the professional practitioner.

III: Positions on the need for traineeship

The UNESCO-UIA Charter on Architectural Education describes training requirements as follows: *"The balanced acquisition of knowledge and skills [...] requires a long period of maturation; ... studies in architecture should always be not less than 5 years of full-time studies in a university or an equivalent institution, plus 2 years' experience in an architectural practice. At least one year must be devoted to professional practice following the conclusion of academic studies."* The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) has long endorsed this 5+2 model for minimum training conditions:

- Recommendation n°1:

Traineeship is essential, so as to have experience that complements academic studies in order to transform the academic qualification into that of a 'professional architect' accountable for completely/competently representing/defending the interests of clients, the building users and of the public at large as an autonomous professional.

- Recommendation n°2:

In accordance with the UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism: Professional Rules for the Practice of Architecture, the traineeship is undertaken over a minimum of 2 years (part of which may occur after the Bachelor's Degree and before the Master's Degree which completes the academic education and leads to the authorisation to practice (e.g. license).

- Recommendation n°3:

The acquisition of professional competences during the traineeship can be aided by a variety of means (theoretical courses, seminars, audio-visual tools, etc.) to reinforce real, structured experience obtained through the execution of real studies and projects.

- Recommendation n°4:

The description of professional competences and the level to be reached for each 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 same professional bodies can also be closely involved in the evaluation of competences that grant access to autonomous practice of the profession.

The reasoning behind these recommendations is:

In architecture, academic study ends with a qualification to start work in the discipline. Additional experience is essential to transform the holder of a qualification into an independent professional able to fully represent/protect the interests of clients, building users and the public at large.

The development of an architect occurs through acquiring awareness, knowledge, understanding and skills in the many/varied fields of practice. The academic qualification is only the first step.

Experience leads to the ability to put the content of education into practice. Only after acquiring such experience is it responsible to declare competence to consumers, by use of a license or other right to practice as an individual.

ACE policy on traineeship has long since followed the above recommendations, is used for benchmarking traineeships throughout the EU/EEA and provides useful guidance/benchmarking for Competent Authorities (though ACE does not consider it necessary to develop a common curriculum).

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