

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR ACCREDITATION OF INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAMMES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Board of Architects Malaysia was formed under the provisions of the Architects Act 1967 and it is responsible for the enforcement of the said Act. Section 27D (1) of the Act stipulates the following :

“27D(1) Subject to this Act, any person who is a corporate member of the Institut Pereka Bentuk Dalaman Malaysia or the Malaysian Society of Interior Designers or has obtained a qualification which the Board considers to be equivalent thereto shall be entitled on application to be registered as an Interior Designer.

- 1.2 Under Section 4(1) of the Act, the Board is empowered:

“(gb) to appoint a council, consisting of such members of the Board, Professional Architects and other persons as may be determined by the Board, to advise and regulate all matters relating to architectural and interior design education including the certification and recognition of such programmes.”

- 1.3 In line with the above functions, the Board is responsible for determining the standard for entry into the interior design profession and the accreditation of interior design programmes for recognition by the Board.
- 1.4 For this purpose, the Council of Accreditation and Architectural Education Malaysia (CAAEM) was formed under the auspices of the Board to regulate all matters relating to the architectural and interior design education.
- 1.5 This document provides information on the objectives, criteria and procedures of accreditation for programmes of study in interior design.

2.0 INTERPRETATION

2.1 In this policy and procedure, unless the context otherwise requires –

‘Accreditation’ refers to the official acceptance and endorsement that a particular programme has been assessed and accredited to have attained the approved standard required by the Council of Accreditation and Architectural Education Malaysia (CAAEM).

A programme that has been accredited is referred to as a recognised programme by the Board.

‘Board’ refers to the Board of Architects Malaysia.

‘Credit Hours or Credit Units’ refer to the weightage given to each course which is required for the completion of the total programme in accordance with the **Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) definition**.

‘Conditional Accreditation’ means the school still enjoys the same privileges under full accreditation but must take action on the shortcoming identified by the Panel. If fulfilled the conditional accreditation can be upgraded to full accreditation for a period of **three (3)** years which shall deem to commence from the date of the conditional accreditation.

‘Council’ refers to the Council of Accreditation and Architectural Education Malaysia (CAAEM) formed under the auspices of the Board.

‘Core Courses’ refer to courses of substantial credit value which relate to interior design.

‘Course’ refers to a subject of study which runs for multiple weeks involving contacts with academic staff and other students in a variety of forms including lectures, tutorials, seminars and workshops as well as on-line and electronic communication. A number of courses may make up a sequence of study, eg. Interior Design 1, Interior Design 2, etc.

‘Electives’ refer to a range of courses offered by the programme for the purpose of pursuing individual interests or specific needs in addition to the core courses.

‘Interior Design’ shall also refer to interior architecture.

‘Panel’ refers to the Visiting Panel set up by the Council.

‘Programme’ refers to the sequence of courses taken to qualify for the degree or award in which a student is enrolled.

‘School’ refers to the entity within a tertiary educational institution that conducts the interior design programme leading to an award of qualification in interior design.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF ACCREDITATION

- 3.1 Accreditation of educational programmes in interior design seeks primarily to ensure that the standards attained by successful graduates of the programmes are adequate with regard to the design, technical and professional skills required for competent and professional interior design practice.
- 3.2 An interior design programme which has been accredited by the Board shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of the Board’s examination in interior design.
- 3.3 Towards this objective, the Board assesses the programmes of study leading to the awards of qualifications in interior design and accredits programmes which are in line with the requirements of the Board.

4.0 POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

- 4.1 Institutions conducting a degree level programme having the word ‘interior design’ or ‘interior architecture’ in the name of the programme or the award are required to get the advice of the Board at the inception of such programmes. *The word ‘interior design or interior architecture’ in a programme*
- 4.2 Accreditation process is conducted upon the application of the institution offering the interior design programme. *Application for Accreditation*
- 4.3 If the institution runs more than one programme of study in interior design and wishes the programme to be accredited, the institution is required to apply for the accreditation of each of the programme separately. *Running more than one programme*
- 4.4 If an institution wishes to run a programme at a different location or mode of study, the institution is required to apply for separate accreditation of such programme.

- 4.5 Accreditation of the programme of study is for a period of not exceeding **three to five** years and shall lapse at the expiry thereof. *Accreditation period*
- 4.6 The Board is empowered to require institutions to provide information on the accredited programme or programmes and to visit the institutions as and when necessary. *Power to Withdraw*
- 4.7 When there are minimal shortcomings to the programme during the visit, the Board may grant conditional accreditation during which time the institution must take necessary corrective measures to address the shortcoming, within a period of up to two years failing which the accreditation shall be withdrawn. *Conditional Accreditation*
- 4.8 Interior Design education should ensure that all graduates have knowledge and ability in interior design, including technology, technical systems and its requirements as well as consideration for environmental, health, and safety factors. They should understand the cultural, intellectual, historical, social, economic, management and environmental context for interior design. They should be able to comprehend thoroughly the interior designers' roles and responsibilities in society, which depend on a cultivated, analytical and creative mind. The programme of study should address the various issues outlined in **APPENDIX A**. *Learning Outcome*
- 4.9 The duration of interior design programme shall be as follows:- *Duration*
- 4.9.1 The programme shall be of no less than **three and a half (3½) years** duration after Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) or the equivalent, delivered **on a full time basis**, inclusive of practical training of six (6) months.
- 4.9.2 Any programme delivered on any other mode must show evidence of equivalency as stated in paragraphs 4.9.1 and will be examined on case to case basis.
- 4.10 The minimum credit requirement for an academic programme in interior design is 120 credits and the distribution is as follows:- *Course content*
- a) Interior design core courses : minimum-70%
- b) Interior design related studies : 10 - 20%
- c) Others : 10 - 20%
- For details please see **APPENDIX A**.
- 4.11 Major changes in syllabus and curriculum of accredited programmes have to be presented to the Council for advice. These refer to changes involving the following aspects:- *Changes to accredited programme or curriculum*

- Underlying philosophy of programme
 - More than 40% of programme content
 - Location and mode of delivery
 - Name and duration of award
- 4.12 The students' admission system must ensure that only qualified candidates are admitted into the programme. For details please see **APPENDIX B**. *Entry requirements*
- 4.13 The teaching staff must be sufficient in number and capability to ensure the quality of the programme. For details please see **APPENDIX C**. *Staff*
- 4.14 There must be dedicated work space for each student in a studio with an allocation of 2.5 sq.m per student. Inability to provide this requirement, the institutions has to substantiate with evidence showing occurrence of sharing and peer learning. Apart from dedicated studio space, institutions should also provide spaces for presentation and exhibition of students' works. *Facilities*
- 4.15 There must also be other related facilities such as libraries, resource centre, laboratories, model making workshop, building technology workshop, repository of students' works, facilities for research, advanced studies, information and data exchange for new technologies to support effective learning environment.
- 4.16 The programme must have adequate access to institutional support and financial resources to ensure the ongoing viability of the programme. *Finance*

5.0 ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

- 5.1 Schools of Interior Design seeking accreditation from the Board shall apply to:

Honorary Secretary
Council of Accreditation and Architectural Education Malaysia
c/o Board of Architects Malaysia
17th Floor, Block F, JKR Headquarters
Jalan Sultan Salahuddin
50582 Kuala Lumpur

- 5.2 Preliminary Visit:

Newly established schools are advised to consider requesting for a preliminary visit by the CAAEM Panel to advise the implementation of the programme. Such visits can be requested as early as in final semester of the second year.

- 5.3 Application for accreditation shall be submitted to the CAAEM before the first cycle of the programme is completed i.e when the first batch of students are in their final semester. Such application shall be submitted at least **one (1) month** before the intended accreditation visit.
- 5.4 Accreditation Visit:
A Panel from CAAEM would visit the School to assess the standard of interior design education at the end of the programme to be accredited.
- 5.5 The documentation of information as prescribed in **APPENDIX D** shall be submitted to the Council **one month** prior to the visit of the CAAEM Panel.
- 5.6 The application for continuing the accreditation shall be submitted at least **six (6) months** before the expiry of the original accreditation period. The submission of documentation to the Council shall be made at least **one (1) month** before the visit. Additional documents submitted thereafter may not be taken into consideration by the Panel in assessing the programme.
- 5.7 To prepare for the visit of the Panel, the School shall make ready items as described in **APPENDIX E**.
- 5.8 Where Conditional Accreditation has been awarded (Paragraph 4.7 refers), interim visits may be necessary and/or the School may be required to furnish information as prescribed by the Panel.
- 5.9 Where conditional accreditation has been awarded, to require the School to submit the following information annually until full accreditation has been granted.
- 5.9.1 Change in staff structure and qualification of new staff;
 - 5.9.2 Student data (breakdown by course and year of study): population, number, age, type and fees payable;
 - 5.9.3 Changes in curriculum;
 - 5.9.4 New acquisition of equipment;
 - 5.9.5 New extension in accommodation;
 - 5.9.6 Any special work undertaken by staff during past years; works of staff doing private practice, etc;
 - 5.9.7 Any implementation of the recommendations made by the previous Visiting Panel;

5.9.8 Any research or postgraduate work.

5.10 The preparation for the visits and the expenses incurred by the Board shall be borne by the School, the particulars of which shall be determined by the CAAEM.

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APPENDIX A

The following aspects of interior design knowledge and skills are for inclusion in the programme of study :

In delivering the learning activities within the outcomes prescribed below, institutions are expected to ensure the progression of the scope and complexity of learning is in accordance to the levels of studies.

1.0 Design, Creative work by research method

Student will be able to show clear and logical interior designs that integrate knowledge of :

- 1.1 Philosophy, sociology, aesthetics, theory of Design;
- 1.2 the ways that analysis, research, context, budget, preparation and development of a brief design proposal; Information input and briefing, design analysis, design exploration, design solutions submitted in a visual form;
- 1.3 the regulatory frameworks, the needs of the disabled and health & safety considerations that guide design and building construction;
- 1.4 architectural and design history and theory, physical, artistic and cultural contexts, and their use in forming the design process;
- 1.5 the ability to work as part of a team.

2.0 Knowledge of Material, Visual Research

Students will show within clear and logical interior designs and academic portfolio, the ability to integrate knowledge of :

- 2.1 the principles of building technologies, environmental design and construction methods, in relation to :-
 - human well-being
 - the welfare of future generations
 - the natural world
 - consideration of a sustainable environment
 - use of materials inclusive of wood, metal, plastic, fabric, etc.
 - process of assembly
 - colour, light, form, texture;

- 2.2 the impact on design of legislation, codes of practice and health and safety both during the construction and occupation of a project.

3.0 People and the Environment

Students will show within clear and logical interior design and academic portfolio :-

- 3.1 The awareness of the influences on the contemporary built environment;
- 3.2 The knowledge of the histories and theories of architecture and design (History of Art and Architecture, Interiors, Furniture), the history of ideas, and the related disciplines of art and cultural studies;
- 3.3 ability to form considered judgements about the spatial, aesthetic, technical and social qualities of a design within the scope and scale of a wider environment;
- 3.4 Human ergonomic, anthropometric studies, people in space and design evaluation;
- 3.5 ability to reflect upon, and relate their ideas to, a design and to the work of others.

4.0 Visual Communication

Students will show within clear and logical interior designs and academic portfolio ability to :

- 4.1 use the visual, verbal and written communication methods and appropriate media (including sketching, modeling, digital and electronic techniques) to clearly and effectively convey and critically appraise design ideas and proposals;
- 4.2 use the conventions of architectural presentations from two-dimensional and three-dimensional graphics to computer generated and physical models;
- 4.3 understanding of the contribution of other professionals in the design process showing an appropriate use of team working skills, recognising the importance of current methods in the construction industry;
- 4.4 produce documentation and reports which are clear, analytical and logical covering a range of interior design issues of culture, theory and design;
- 4.5 listen and critically respond to the views of others;

- 4.6 Objective and interpretative drawing, freehand perspective drawing, use of colour media, photography and model making.

5.0 Professional Practice

Students will show within an academic portfolio an awareness of :

- 5.1 Verbal communication techniques, office organization and practice, legislation affecting the designer, visiting projects in the course of being made or built;
- 5.2 the basic principles of business management and factors related to running an interior design practice and how designer organise, administer and manage an interior project, recognising current and emerging trends in the construction industry;
- 5.3 a knowledge of how buildings are designed and built in the context of architecture, interior and professional practice and the framework of the construction industry cost control mechanisms operate within the development of an interior project. The ability to manage and appraise their own working practices, whether working independently or collaboratively;
- 5.4 understanding of the inter-relationships of individuals and organisations involved in the procurement and delivery of interior projects, and how these are defined and effected through a variety of contractual and organisational structures;
- 5.5 the fundamental legal, professional and statutory requirements as they are relevant to interior design and practice, with particular reference to matters relating to health and safety and universal design for access;
- 5.6 the professional duties and responsibilities of interior designers, as defined and described in the Acts, Codes and Standards relating to their professional practice. The ability to identify and manage individual learning needs so as to prepare for and maintain professional standards commensurate with qualification.

** Adapted from the International Federation of Interior Design / Interior Architect (IFI), ARB Criteria, and Policy and Procedure for accreditation of Architectural Program. Board of Architects Malaysia*

THE PROGRAMME

1. The programme must provide clear, complete and accurate information to the public.
2. The term “interior design core courses” generally refers to courses or subjects in 6 major aspects which relate to the practice of the profession.

Examples of content of studies will include matters on :-

i) Design, Creative work by research method

- *Interior Design, Furniture Design ,Graphic & Communication Design, Theory of Design, Fundamental of Design Philosophy, sociology, aesthetics, theory of Design*

ii) Knowledge of Material, Visual Research

- *Building Material and Construction, Building Services, Visual Research, Basic Knowledge of Material*

iii) People and the Environment

- *History of Architecture and Design, Environmental Psychology,*

iv) Visual Communication

- *Architectural Drawing/Drafting, Visual Communication, Computer Aided Design, Project Report*

v) Professional Practices

- *Facilities Management, Contract Management , Project Management , Professional Practice , Specification, Practical Training/ Internship*

vi) Electives

- *MultiMedia Design, Other relevant subjects*

3. Credit Hours

One credit hour is what a typical student is expected to learn in one week (40-45 hours including class time and preparation) of full-time study. One (1) credit hour of full time study is defined as one (1) hour of lecture and two (2) hours of self-study or 2-3 hours of studios per week.

4. Exposure to professional interior design practice must be integrated into the curriculum.

APPENDIX B

1.0 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

1.1 Entry Requirements

Entry requirements shall be instituted to ensure that only candidates with no less than the minimum required quality are accepted into the programme.

1.1.1 The entry requirements shall comply with the minimum entry standards to higher learning institution set out under the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) and the Ministry of Higher Education.

1.1.2 Details of the entry requirements must be clearly spelt out and published in the School's Programme Prospectus and Handbook.

1.2 Advanced Standing

'Advanced Standing' means an admission of candidate to a programme at an appropriate semester in accordance to MQA's requirement.

1.2.1 There must be explicit criteria for admission of students with a particular standing, by transfer from other institutions or from other background or discipline, and policies on evaluating works undertaken elsewhere for credit transfer wherever is appropriate towards the qualification, provided the requirement under paragraph 4.9.1 is met.

1.2.2 A remedial process or corrective measure must also be in place to address differing standards of candidates admitted from a non-accredited programme.

APPENDIX C

2.0 STAFF REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Academic staff

Academic staff to student ratio shall be maintained within 1 : 8 to 1 : 15. Academic staff teaching interior design courses shall be appropriately qualified in Interior Design, Architecture and related field.

2.2 Part time academic staff

Apart from the full-time academic staff, interior design schools are strongly encouraged to engage part-time academic staff from amongst practising professionals in interior design, architecture and related fields. Apart from the academic administrator, studio master and subject coordinators must be from full time academic staff.

2.3 Studio Teaching and Learning

Individual project works with direct staff-student tutorial or dialogue shall form the basis of the student learning. Staff to student ratio shall be within 1:15.

2.4 External Examiners

The programme shall be formalised with an examination by independent external examiners at the end of every graduating year. For this purpose, the external examiners shall include experienced practising interior designers, architects and senior academician from other schools.

The External Examiner's reports shall be included in the documentation to be submitted for accreditation.

2.5 Support staff

There shall also be sufficient qualified and experienced members of technical and administrative staff to provide adequate support to the educational programme.

APPENDIX D

**DOCUMENTATION PRESCRIBED HEREUNDER
SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL
ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE VISIT**

1. Administration

A brief description of the organisational structure of the School in relation to the Faculty/College /University.

2. Work of The School

2.1 A statement outlining the mission and vision of the School and its general philosophy or approach towards architectural education and its method of teaching.

2.2 Copies of the School prospectus.

2.3 A brief summary or chart describing the course in each year showing clearly the distribution of credit hours and duration.

2.4 Information on the programme's learning outcome should be included.

2.5 The course outline for each year and some indication of the method used to integrate these with design projects. A lecture time-table should be included.

2.6 A brief statement on the School's research policy outlining the main lines of research undertaken in the School including details of group research.

2.7 Details of research work by post-graduate students or lecturers.

2.8 Information on the contribution of other departments and faculties to the work of the School and of the School's to these departments. Such details might cover subjects such as art, social science, technology, planning management and be concerned with both teaching and research.

2.9 Future Developments

If the School is planning any significant changes in the near future, information about them should be added, e.g. changes in the course, staff research, size of intake, premises.

3. Finance

Details on financial allocation other than staff salaries. If the School has special funds for research, scholarship, or travel grants for staff or students, the amount should be stated, together with a brief account of how they are used.

4. Staff

Details on the composition of staff, their range of interests in relation to teaching and research, the use of non-architect/ interior design staff and outside practitioners.

4.1 Academic Staff

4.1.1 Full-Time Academic Staff

For each member of the full-time academic staff please give details as follows :-

- Name and date of appointment
- Professional Registration
- Qualification
- Nature of responsibility or subjects taught in School
- Brief description of nature of practice, consultancy and/or research.

4.1.2 Part-Time Academic Staff

For each member of the part-time academic staff please state:-

- Name and date of appointment
- Professional Registration
- Qualifications
- Nature of responsibility or subjects taught in School
- Brief description of nature of practice, consultancy and/or research.

4.1.3 Any other category e.g. visiting professors.

4.2 Administrative and Secretarial Staff

Please give numbers, categories of administrative and secretarial staff, and to whom each is directly responsible.

4.3 Teaching arrangements

4.3.1 State the school's policy on the ratio of staff to students

4.3.2 State the number of hours normally expected of full-time staff in the School.

- (a) per week during academic session
- (b) per week during vacation

4.3.3 State the number of weeks in the academic year

4.4 Please provide the Academic Calendar.

5. Students

5.1 To provide a break-down of undergraduate students (in the programme which leads to professional qualification) by year of study for the current year.

5.2 To provide similar figures for the three previous years.

6. Accommodation Facilities and Equipment

Please provide details, including area or capacity usage, ownership (dedicated or shared) of studios, laboratories, workshops, lecture rooms, libraries, computer rooms, etc.

7. External Examiners

Clarify on the system of examination. Give the names and particulars of External Examiners for the past three years including the current year.

8. Examination

8.1 A list of examinations for each year together with the relevant question papers.

8.2 An account of the methods of assessing students' work and the School's examination policy.

9. Others

Any other document or requirement as stipulated by the Board.

APPENDIX E

ARRANGEMENT FOR THE VISIT

1. Preamble

The Visiting Panel would prefer to see each School as it usually is in everyday use, with as many of the studios and lectures as possible operating in their normal way.

2. Course Work Exhibition

- 2.1 To display a complete range of studio works with programmes attached to each course in all years of the programme to be arranged chronologically so as to show the development of the curriculum throughout the entire programme. As far as is practicable the sequence of work shown should follow the sequence of the programme.
- 2.2 Works shall be displayed separately and consecutively with the exception of large sets of drawings, which are best overlapped.
- 2.3 For graduating students, the final years' works shall be displayed individually together with a portfolio of the previous years' works.
- 2.4 The line of demarcation between the works of each year shall be clear.
- 2.5 Examples of written thesis, reports and dissertations should also be made available.
- 2.6 In selecting the works for the exhibition, the School is required to display a cross-section of the students' works rather than just the works of the best students.
- 2.7 The School is required to arrange for a member of the staff to explain briefly the works of each year. The Panel is interested in the philosophy or main objectives of each year and their relation with the preceding and following year.
- 2.8 Portfolio of five (5) students who achieved the highest, average and lowest pass should be made available for each year of the programme. The basis of selection – highest, average and lowest - is made clear on the portfolio. The preparatory material as well as the final drawings shall also be included in the portfolios so as to reveal the students' approach to projects.

- 2.9 For schools seeking new accreditation, the portfolios shall include works which the graduating students have done in preceding years so as to build up a total picture of their progress. For example the portfolio of a Third Year student should contain his First and Second Year works.
- 2.10 For established schools seeking continuing accreditation, it is sufficient to show cross-section samples of students' portfolios for each semester/year. However for graduating batches, all students must display their current works. The previous years' works shall also be made available for the Panel's inspection.
- 2.11 Dissertations and other written works such as reports or essays shall be made available for the Panel's inspection.

3. Examinations

To provide information on the following :

- 3.1 The system of examinations used in the School including information on the subjects examined, timing of examinations, feedback to students and staff.
- 3.2 The School's method of assessing design works and the level of performance which students are expected to maintain.
- 3.3 Copies of all current examination question papers together with samples of students' answer scripts and mark sheets. The examination papers should be grouped in sets of related subjects and clearly marked in years. Two examples of answer scripts on the border of pass and fail shall be clearly marked so as to enable members of the Panel to check the minimum standard quickly. The usual mark sheets should be attached to each set of papers.

4. Meeting With Staff and Students

The Panel would like to meet as many of the staff as is practicable especially the subject and studio coordinators.

The Panel would also like to have meeting with all the students of the programme.