



CHARTER

UNESCO /
UIA
FOR ARCHITECTURAL
EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS



PREAMBLE



We, the architects, concerned for the future qualitative development of the built environment in a fast changing world, believe that architecture involves everything that influences the way in which the built environment is planned, designed, made, used, furnished, landscaped and maintained. We feel responsible for the improvement of the education and training of future architects to enable them to meet the expectations of XXIst Century societies worldwide for sustainable human settlements in every cultural heritage.

We are aware of the fact that, in spite of many outstanding and sometimes spectacular contributions of our profession, there is a surprisingly small percentage of the built environment which is actually conceived and realised by architects and planners. There is still room for the development of new tasks for the profession when architects become aware of the increasing needs identified and possibilities offered in areas which have not, up to now, been of major concern to the profession. Still greater diversity is therefore needed in professional practice and, as a consequence, in architectural education and training. The basic goal of education is to develop the architect as a « generalist ».

This is particularly true for those who are working in a developing context, where the architects could accept the role of an «enabler», rather than that of a «provider», and where the profession can meet new challenges. There is no doubt that the architect's capacity to solve problems, can greatly contribute to tasks such as community development, self-help programmes, educational facilities, etc., and thus make a significant contribution to the improvement of the quality of life of those who are not accepted as citizens in their full right and who cannot be counted among the architect's usual clients.



0. AIMS



The aims of this Charter are that it be used, in the first instance, for the creation of a global network of architectural education within which individual achievements can be shared by all and that it will enhance the understanding that architectural education constitutes some of the most significant environmental and professional challenges of the contemporary world.

We therefore declare:

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS



- 0 That the educators must prepare architects to formulate new solutions for the present and the future as the new era will bring with it grave and complex challenges with respect to social and functional degradation of many human settlements. These challenges may include global urbanisation and the consequent depletion of existing environments, a severe shortage of housing, urban services and social infrastructure, and the increasing exclusion of architects from built environment projects.
- 1 That architecture, the quality of buildings and the way they relate to their surroundings, respect for the natural and built environment as well as the collective and individual cultural heritage are matters of public concern.
- 2 That it is in the public interest to ensure that architects are able to understand regional characteristics and to give practical expression to the needs, expectations and improvement to the quality of life of individuals, social groups, communities and human settlements.
- 3 That methods of education and training for architects are varied in order to develop a cultural richness and allow for flexibility in the development of the curriculum to respond to the changing demands and requirements (including methods of project delivery) of the client, the users, the construction industry and the architectural profession, whilst being aware of the political and financial motivations behind such changes.
- 4 That, subject to recognition of the importance of regional and cultural customs and practices and the need for differences in curriculum to accommodate these variations, a common ground exists within the pedagogical methods used, and by establishing capabilities, this will enable countries, architecture schools and professional organizations to evaluate and improve the education given to future architects.
- 5 That the increasing mobility of architects between different countries calls for mutual recognition or validation of individual degrees, diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification.
- 6 That the mutual recognition of degrees, diplomas, certificates or other evidence of formal qualification to practise in the field of architecture has to be based on objective criteria, guaranteeing that holders of such qualifications have received and continue to maintain the kind of education and training called for in this Charter.

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS



- 7 That the vision of the future world, cultivated in architecture schools, should include the following goals :
 - a decent quality of life for all the inhabitants of human settlements.
 - a technological application which respects the social, cultural and aesthetic needs of people and is aware of the appropriate use of materials in architecture and their initial and future maintenance costs.
 - an ecologically balanced and sustainable development of the built and natural environment including the rational utilisation of available resources.
 - an architecture which is valued as the property and responsibility of everyone.
- 8 That issues related to architecture and the environment should be introduced as part of the general education at primary and secondary schools, because an early awareness of the built environment is important to both future architects, clients and users of buildings.
- 9 That systems for continuing professional development should be set up for architects as architectural education should never be considered a closed process but one in which life-long learning occurs.
- 10 That architectural heritage education is essential to:
 - understanding sustainability, the social context and sense of place in building design, and
 - transforming the professional architectural mentality so that its creative methods are part of a continuous and harmonious cultural process (Refer to Appendix X, UIA paper on Heritage Education, of UIA Education Commission Reflection Group 7, on Heritage Education, Torino 2008)
- 11 That cultural diversity, which is as necessary for human kind as biodiversity is for nature, is the common heritage of all humanity, and should be recognized and understood, for the benefit of present and future generations. (Refer to the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of November 2001, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>).



III. CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL >>>>>>

In order to achieve the above mentioned Objectives, the following conditions and requirements should be taken into account:

1. That adequate studios, laboratories, facilities for research, advanced studies, libraries, information and data exchanges for new technologies should be provided at schools of architecture.
2. That in order to promote a common understanding and to raise the level of architectural education, the creation of a network, on a worldwide basis for the exchange of information, teachers and senior students is as necessary as a regional network to promote an understanding of diverse climate, materials, vernacular practices and culture. The use of external examiners is a recognised method of achieving and maintaining comparable national and global standards.
3. That each teaching institution must adjust the number of students according to its teaching capacity and the selection of students shall be in relation to the aptitudes required for a successful education in architecture, and this will be applied by means of an appropriate selection process at the point of entry into each academic programme.
4. That teacher/student numbers must reflect the design studio teaching methodology required to obtain the above capabilities as studio teaching should be a major part of the learning process.
5. That individual project work with direct teacher/student dialogue should form the basis of the learning period, continuous interaction between the practice and teaching of architecture must be encouraged and protected and design project work must be a synthesis of acquired knowledge and accompanying skills.
6. That the development of conventional drawing skills is still a requirement of the educational programme and modern personalised computer technology and the development of specialised software makes it imperative to teach the use of computers in all aspects of architectural education.
7. That research and publication should be regarded as an inherent activity of architectural educators and may encompass applied methods and experiences in architectural practice, project work and construction methods, as well as academic disciplines.
8. That education establishments should create systems for self-evaluation and peer review conducted at regular intervals including in the review panel, appropriately experienced educators from other schools or other countries and practising architects, or participate in the approved UNESCO-UIA Validation System or a recognized, equivalent system.
9. That education should be formalised by an individual's demonstration of capabilities by the end of the programme of studies, the principal part being a presentation of an architectural project demonstrating the acquired knowledge and concomitant skills. For this purpose, juries should constitute an interdisciplinary team, including examiners external to the school who may be practitioners or academics from other schools or countries but who must have experience and expertise in the assessment process at that level.
10. That in order to benefit from the wide variety of teaching methods, including distance learning, exchange programmes for teachers, and students at advanced levels are desirable. Final projects could be shared among architecture schools as a means of facilitating comparison between results and self-evaluation of teaching establishments, through a system of international awards, exhibitions and publications on the internet web site.

IV. CONCLUSION



This Charter was created on the initiative of UNESCO and the UIA to be applied internationally to architectural education and needs the guarantee of protection, development and urgent action.

The Charter constitutes a framework providing direction and guidance to students and teachers of all establishments involved in education and training in architecture and planning. It is conceived as a «dynamic» document that will be revised regularly, thus taking into consideration new orientations, needs and developments in professional practice, as well as in education systems.

Beyond all aesthetic, technical and financial aspects of the professional responsibilities, the major concerns, expressed by the Charter, are the social commitment of the profession, i.e. the awareness of the role and responsibility of the architect in his or her respective society, as well as the improvement of the quality of life through sustainable human settlements.





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Louise Cox (Australia), UIA President, Fernando Ramos Galino (Spain) and Sungjung Chough (R. of Korea), co-Directors of the UIA Education Commission, Wolf Tochtermann (Germany), Co-President of UNESCO-UIA Validation Council of architectural education representing UNESCO, Roland Schweitzer (France), Alain Viaro (Switzerland) Alexandre Koudryavtsev (Russia), Vladimir Slapeta (Czech Republic), Patricia Mora Morales (Costa Rica), Kate Schwennsen (USA), Nobuaki Furuya (Japan), Rodney Harber (South Africa), Zakia Shafie (Egypt), in collaboration with the following members of the Reflection Groups of the UIA Education Commission: Jörg Joppien (Germany), Giorgio Cirilli (Italy), Nana Kutateladze (Georgia), James Scheeler (USA), Hector Garcia Escorza (Mexico), George Kunihiro (Japan), Magda Mostafa (Egypt), Seif A. Alnaga (Egypt).



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS / UIA

TOUR MAINE MONTPARNASSE

33, AVENUE DU MAINE

BP 158

75755 PARIS CEDEX 15 FRANCE

TEL: +33 1 4524 3688 FAX: + 33 1 4524 0278

E-MAIL: UIA@UIA-ARCHITECTES.ORG