

# Canberra Accord on Architectural Education

## **RECOGNITION OF SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCY BETWEEN ACCREDITATION/VALIDATION SYSTEMS IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION**

9 April 2008

Subject to ratification by signatories:

Commonwealth Association of Architects	CAA
Canadian Architectural Certification Board Conseil canadien de certification en architecture	CACB CCCA
Consejo Mexicano de Acreditación de Enseñanza de la Arquitectura Comité Mexicano para la Práctica Internacional de la Arquitectura	COMAEA COMPIAR
Korea Architectural Accrediting Board	KAAB
National Architectural Accrediting Board	NAAB
The National Board of Architectural Accreditation of China	NBAA
The Royal Australian Institute of Architects	RAIA
Royal Institute of British Architects	RIBA

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### ***Preamble***

*This multilateral Accord has been initiated by organisations which have in common established systems for the accreditation/validation of architectural education that have been agreed are substantially equivalent.*

*The Accord is founded on confidence in the substantial equivalence of their accreditation/validation systems verified by a process of collaborative, comparative analysis that acknowledges diversity.*

*Accord conditions, rules and procedures will be developed by which the founding and future signatories are evaluated. The Accord is intended to embrace any number of new signatories that can demonstrate substantial equivalency of their accreditation/validation systems.*

*It is anticipated that the Accord will facilitate international mobility of graduates in architecture and contribute to improving the quality of architectural education through benchmarking.*

*The Accord is a transparent (peer review) system for determining substantial equivalence of architecture degree program/mes. It is considered to be reflective of the core principles of the UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education (Revised Version 2005) and the relevant sections of the UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards on Professionalism in Architectural Practice (Revised Version 2005).*

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### **Introduction**

Architectural accreditation/validation signifies that an academic qualification in architecture has been evaluated by an accreditation/validation body and deemed to meet established academic standards. Notwithstanding the differences between their accreditation/validation systems, the signatories to this Accord agree that their systems are substantially equivalent. This being the case, academic qualifications in architecture accredited/validated by one of the signatories should be accepted as having substantial equivalency and recommended for recognition by all signatories, subject to additional requirements imposed by local regulations.

### **Definition of Substantial Equivalency**

The term 'substantial equivalency' identifies a program/me as comparable in educational outcomes in all significant aspects, and indicates that it provides an educational experience meeting acceptable standards, even though such a program/me may differ in format or method of delivery. Substantial equivalency is not accreditation or validation.

### **AGREEMENT:**

Having exchanged information on, and examined their respective criteria and procedures for accrediting/validating academic qualifications in architecture, the signatories have concluded that their systems are substantially equivalent. Through the Canberra Accord, which comprises this Agreement and the Rules and Procedures (hereunder referred to as 'the Accord' or 'the Agreement'), the signatories recognize the substantial equivalence of their systems in terms of accrediting/validating the academic requirements for the practice of architecture at the professional level.

1. Signatories to the Accord **agree** that:

- the criteria, policies and procedures used by the signatories in accrediting/validating professional degree-granting program/mes in architecture are substantially equivalent;
- the accreditation/validation decisions rendered by one signatory are acceptable to the other signatories, and to signify this acceptance, signatories will publish appropriate statements to that effect;
- qualifications/program/mes in architecture accredited/validated by one signatory are recommended for recognition by all signatories, subject to the limits set by local or national regulations;
- periodically, best practices will be identified by the Secretariat in dialogue with the signatories and their adoption encouraged for the academic preparation of architects;
- mutual monitoring and information exchange will continue by whatever means are considered most appropriate, including regular communication and sharing of information concerning their accreditation/validation criteria, systems, procedures, manuals, publications and lists of accredited/validated qualifications and programs/mes; and invitations to observe accreditation/validation visits and meetings of bodies responsible for implementing key aspects of the accreditation/validation process.

2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, each signatory will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the bodies responsible for the **registration/licensure of architects** to practice in its country or territory, or the countries or territories of its members (in the case of multi-national organizations), recognize the substantial equivalency of both the accreditation/validation systems of the signatories and the academic qualifications accredited/validated by the signatories.

3. The agreement will apply only to those academic qualifications accredited/validated by signatories to the agreement. Each signatory will be required to keep the Secretariat informed of all the academic qualifications it currently accredits/validates, so that a **comprehensive and up-to-date list** can be published and maintained, showing all the academic qualifications in architecture that are recognized by the signatories to this Accord as being substantially equivalent.

If at any time a signatory ceases to accredit/validate an academic qualification listed by the Accord, the signatory responsible shall inform the Secretariat immediately so that the list can be amended appropriately.

4. Signatories to the Accord will be identified as specific and **named organizations** responsible for a system for accrediting/validating qualifications in architectural education, rather than by the geographical context within which they operate.

It is the academic qualifications accredited/validated by the named signatories that are covered by the Accord, not the territories within which the signatories are based or operate.

If a signatory accredits/validates in countries or territories beyond its own national boundaries this does not bestow upon those countries or territories any kind of status under the Accord.

Membership of a multi-national organization that is a signatory to this Accord does not bestow upon that member, by extension, any type of membership of the Accord.

Any organization that has its own accreditation/validation system and is not a signatory to the Accord but is a member of a multi-national organization that is a signatory, does not, by extension gain recognition under the Accord for the qualifications recognized by that organization; only individual qualifications accredited/validated directly by the signatories are covered by, and listed, under the Accord.

5. Although the Accord describes arrangements for signatories to the Accord with provisional status, the benefits of recognition of accreditation/validation systems covered by the agreement relate only to signatories.

6. The admission of **new signatories** to the Accord will require ratification by existing signatories, and will be preceded by a prescribed period of provisional status, during which the accreditation/validation criteria and procedures established by the applicant, and the manner in which those procedures and criteria are implemented, will be subject to comprehensive examination.

7. Appropriate **Rules and Procedures** will be established by the signatories to ensure that the Agreement can be implemented in a satisfactory and expeditious manner. The adoption of, or amendment to, the Rules and Procedures, will require ratification by the signatories.

8. **General Meetings** of the representatives of the signatories will normally be held at least every two years to review the Rules and Procedures, effect such amendments as may be considered necessary, and consider applications for provisional status, and for admission to the Accord. Such meetings may be held by teleconference by agreement of the signatories.

9. The administration of the Accord will be facilitated by the **Secretariat**, established and operated in accordance with the Rules and Procedures made under the provisions of the agreement.


10. The Accord will remain in effect for as long as is acceptable and desirable to the signatories. Any signatory wishing to withdraw from this agreement will give

at least one year's notice to the Secretariat. Removal of a signatory for cause will require ratification by the signatories.

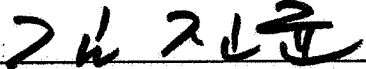
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 Héctor García Escorza  
 Consejo Mexicano de Acreditación de Enseñanza de la Arquitectura (COMAEA)

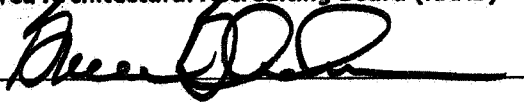
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 Fernando Mora Mora  
 Comité Mexicano para la Práctica Internacional de la Arquitectura (COMPIAR)

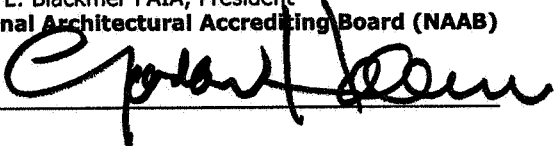
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 Jin Kyoon Kim, President  
 Korea Architectural Accrediting Board (KAAB)

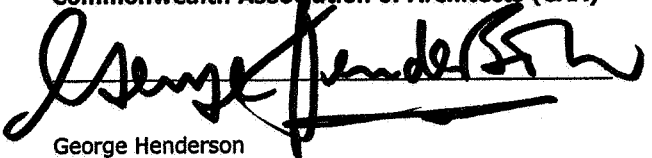
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 Bruce E. Blackmer FAIA, President  
 National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)

Date: 9. April. 2008

  
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 Gordon Holden, President  
 Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA)


Date: 09 April 2008.

  
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 George Henderson  
 Royal Institution of British Architects (RIBA)


Date: 09. iv. 08

  
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 Qin Youguo, Chairman  
 The National Board of Architectural Accreditation of China (NBAA)

Date: 09.04.08

  
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 Claudio Brun del Re, President  
 Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB)  
 Conseil canadien de certification en architecture (CCCA)

Date: 09.07.08

  
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 David Parken LFRAIA, Chief Executive Officer  
 The Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA)

Date: 9th April, 2008.