

For Foreign Applicants Outside Canada and USA Obtaining An Architectural Licence in Canada

The architectural profession in Canada is both self-governing and self-regulating.

Provincial legislation or "Architects Acts" have created eleven independent provincial/territorial architectural licensing authorities whose primary purpose is the licensing or registration of architects to ensure their competency and ability to provide proper professional services to the public.

Most architects in Canada are self-employed; however, many architectural firms, private corporations and governments employ architects. In order to become an architect in Canada, you must obtain a licence or registration from the Provincial/Territorial Architectural Association in the province/territory where you intend to work.

Note: In accordance with The Architects Act in the Province of Manitoba, you are not required to be a registered member of the Association to:

- perform certain activities that fall within the restricted scope of practice under the law, if you are employed in an entity that is authorized to practice architecture in the Province of Manitoba and you are acting under the direction and control of a registered member of the Association; or
 - offer services which involve the design of buildings which fall outside the restricted scope of practice under the law;
- provided that you do not represent yourself as an architect.

Further information regarding the scope of practice that is restricted in the Province of Manitoba is available from the website of the Manitoba Association of Architects (MAA): http://www.mbarchitects.org/buildings_requiring_an_architect.php

In Canada, there are three major requirements for an architectural licence or registration:

1. Educational Requirements

A professional degree or diploma in architecture is required. This degree or diploma must be certified by the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB) as meeting the Canadian Education Standard. A certificate from the CACB is not an architectural licence or registration nor a permit for immigration to Canada - it is only one part of a three-step process.

The CACB is the only body recognized by the architectural profession in Canada for the assessment of education qualifications or academic credentials.

2. Experience Requirements

All candidates must complete a period of internship to satisfy the Canadian Experience Standard. A minimum of 3720 hours of experience under the Internship in Architecture Program (which includes various mandatory professional activities) must be recorded in the Canadian Experience Record Book and accepted by the provincial/territorial architectural association. There may be a minimum amount of experience to be gained in the province/territory prior to licensure or registration. Experience gained outside Canada may be submitted for consideration.

3. Examination Requirements

All candidates must successfully complete one of the two registration examination systems in order to satisfy the examination requirement; either the Architect Registration Examination (ARE), which consists of seven parts or divisions OR the Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC) which is comprised of four components.

Steps to Obtain an Architectural Licence in Canada

The following steps must be undertaken to obtain an architectural licence in Canada:

Note: Information which is specific to the Province of Manitoba appears in boxed areas below.

STEP ONE- Process for Assessment of Academic Qualifications

Applicants must apply for certification of their academic qualifications through the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB). The following information must be submitted directly to the CACB:

- a completed application (see address below to obtain an application form);
- an official Transcript of Record, or notarized copy thereof, of all studies relevant to the architecture degree (and certified copies of translated transcripts, if the original is not in French or English);
- notarized copies of degrees or diplomas in the original language (and a notarized copy of translation of the degree or diploma, if the original is not in French or English);
- course descriptions of the program in architecture (or a translation of course descriptions, if the original is not in French or English);
- an academic portfolio of studio work; and
- an application fee of C\$1779.75 (included value added taxes) payable in Canadian funds only. Credit cards are not accepted.

An applicant may be required to attend an interview in English or French before a regional Committee of Examiners, for a detailed evaluation, as part of the assessment process by the CACB. If such an interview is required, the decision to grant a visa to the applicant is at the discretion of the Canadian immigration authorities.

The assessment process has the following possible outcomes:

- a CACB certificate may be issued if the academic qualifications meet the Canadian Education Standard;
- further clarification is required;
- the Assessment Committee is unable to complete the assessment based on the documentation submitted and an interview is required;
- the applicant may be required to eliminate deficiencies in particular subject areas by successfully completing courses recommended by the CACB; or
- the academic qualifications may be rejected.

STEP TWO – Internship

After an applicant has obtained CACB certification, he or she must find a Mentor and apply to enroll in the Internship in Architecture Program with one of the eleven provincial/territorial architectural associations. Membership as an Intern costs between C\$100 and C\$226 (plus tax) annually depending on the province/territory.

The Intern Program manual, which contains the Canadian Experience Record Book, must be obtained by each applicant. Each applicant must record work experience and satisfy the requirements of the Canadian Experience Record Book. The experience must be reviewed and accepted by the provincial/territorial architectural association. The applicant may submit experience gained outside Canada for consideration.

The following information is relevant to the Province of Manitoba:

- The cost of Intern membership is C\$157.50 (including value added tax);
- The application form (and Mentor and Employer form) can be downloaded from the website of the Manitoba Association of Architects (MAA):
http://www.mbarchitects.org/intern_member.php
- If a candidate is unable to find a suitable Mentor on their own, the MAA office can make a list of registered members who have agreed to serve as potential Mentors available;
- In accordance with The Architects Act in Manitoba, the intent of the experience requirement directly relates to **competency to practice architecture in the Province of Manitoba**. As such, this is and must be the guiding principle applied by the MAA, in reviewing any and all experience submissions from any and all Interns (including Canadian graduates). The extent of acceptable experience from outside Canada and the USA might be limited. It should also be noted that experience which has been gained in a jurisdiction where registration or licencing is not a requirement, will be considered on an even more restrictive case by case basis and the Intern may be required to provide further documentation and/or attend an interview, to clearly demonstrate its relevance to practice in Manitoba. In general, it is recommended that the submission of any past experience in another jurisdiction (which would have been completed prior to enrollment in the Internship in Architecture Program) be deferred until the examination requirements have been satisfied by an internationally educated individual, since the experience requirements are generally satisfied with Canadian employment by that time, in most cases. Further information concerning parameters for submission are included in the Canadian Experience Record Book.

STEP THREE – Examination

Applicants must also successfully complete one of the two examination systems that are now available in most jurisdictions in Canada:

- a) The Architect Registration Examination (ARE).

Examinations are administered exclusively on computers at a network of testing centres across Canada and the USA. The cost to take all nine divisions of the ARE is USD\$1,470 (plus applicable value added taxes in Canada). Applicants may begin taking the examinations after obtaining CACB certification and enrolling as an Intern with one of the provincial/territorial architectural associations in Canada.

- b) The Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC)

Effective 2013, examinations are administered by all eleven provincial/territorial associations in Canada. The cost to take all four components of the ExAC is C\$850 (plus value added taxes in some jurisdictions). Applicants must have a minimum of 2,800 hours logged and approved by a provincial/territorial association in Canada, to be eligible to sit for the ExAC.

The following information is relevant to the Province of Manitoba:

- The cost of both examination systems are subject to the 5% value added tax;
- The MAA maintains a library for its Intern members, which includes certain study material relevant to both the ARE and the ExAC (only Intern members may borrow the study material and there is no cost to do so, provided that the individual complies with the library policy).

Provincial/Territorial Associations Requirements

Applicants may also be required to comply with certain other requirements (such as ongoing continuing education requirements, an oral examination, an admission course, etc.) in order to maintain Intern membership or to become licensed or registered in certain provincial/territorial architectural associations. In order to practice architecture in a province/territory, it may be necessary to obtain a Certificate of Practice or its equivalent. Specific requirements may be obtained from the provincial/territorial architectural association.

Once the requirements for education, experience and examination have been satisfied (together with any additional requirements that might apply within a specific province/territory), an individual will be eligible to apply for licence or registration with the provincial/territorial architectural association. Membership costs between C\$600 and C\$931 (plus tax) annually depending on the province/territory.

The following information is relevant to the Province of Manitoba:

- Both Registered and Intern members of the MAA must comply with mandatory continuing education requirements. Further information regarding the current requirements is available on the MAA website: http://www.mbarchitects.org/mandatory_continuing_education.php
- There is no admissions course or oral examination administered as part of the registration process in the Province of Manitoba at this time. However, when making application for registered membership in the MAA, all individuals are required to swear a declaration that they have obtained detailed knowledge of the current Architects Act, MAA By-Laws, Code of Ethics, Builders Lien Act and Manitoba Building Code and Regulations;
- It is necessary to also register a practice in Manitoba, if a registered member wishes to offer services (and is not employed in a registered entity). Further information concerning the types of entities that can be authorized to practice architecture is available on the MAA website: http://www.mbarchitects.org/register_a_practice.php; and
- The cost of registered membership is C\$840.00 (including value added tax).

The fees, documentation and assessment process outlined above were in place as at January, 2013 are subject to change without notice.

More detailed information may be obtained from the provincial/territorial architectural association.

Applications for certification of academic qualifications may be obtained from:

The Canadian Architectural Certification Board
1 Nicholas Street, Suite 710
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7, Canada
E-mail: info@cacb.ca
Website: www.cacb-ccca.ca

Additional Information

Broadly Experienced Foreign Architect (BEFA) Program

In September, 2012, the provincial/territorial associations in Canada introduced a streamlined assessment process for foreign-trained architects who have a minimum of seven (7) years post registration/licensure experience, together with a minimum of six months local experience in the relevant Canadian jurisdiction.

Further information concerning the alternate registration process is available on the CACB website: http://www.cacb-ccca.ca/index.cfm?M=3943&Repertoire_No=660386109&Voir=menu

The following general information is relevant to the Province of Manitoba:

Overall Cost/Timeframe:

- The registration process for the profession of architecture provides a multitude of options with respect to each step involved (education, experience and examination) and enables every individual, including every Canadian graduate, to follow their own unique path. Accordingly, the full range of costs and/or timeframe involved for each individual to become licenced, will be determined by their own unique circumstances (and all of the decisions and choices that have or will be made along the way).

Additional Support available through MAA:

- The MAA schedules an information session once every two to three months (depending on demand), to provide an overview of the licencing process for internationally educated graduates (based on the information available on its website). Those individuals who might be interested in participating should contact the MAA office.
- Although the MAA is not an employment agency, it does provide the opportunity for firms to post employment positions that might be of interest to members of the MAA (including architects, interns and architectural students). This information is readily available to everyone: <http://www.mbarchitects.org/employment.php>
- There is also a complete listing of any and all entities that are authorized to practice architecture in the Province of Manitoba, posted on the MAA's website, and firms have been provided with the opportunity to include a limited firm profile and/or a link to their own website: http://www.mbarchitects.org/firm_search.php

Additional Support available through Government:

- The support provided by the MAA (and other architectural organizations in Canada) does not extend to the offer of any financial assistance towards the licencing process. However, the provincial government in Manitoba does, from time to time, offer some form of financial assistance. It is recommended that individuals visit the provincial government website, to determine what assistance might be available, depending on their individual circumstances:
 - a) Recognition Counts! (new micro loan program):
<http://seedwinnipeg.ca/programs/detail/recognition-counts>
 - b) Employment Manitoba (see specifically, Professional Immigrant Pilot (PIP) program):
http://www.gov.mb.ca/employment/jobs_careers.html
 - c) Manitoba Student Aid:
http://www.gov.mb.ca/educate/sfa/pages/sfaFrontDoor_en.html