



IFLA Charter for Landscape Architectural Education

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We, the landscape architects, concerned with the future development of our landscapes in a fast changing world, believe that everything, influencing the way in which the outdoor environment is created, used, and maintained is fundamental to sustainable development and human well-being. We, being responsible for the improvement of the education of future landscape architects to enable them to work for a sustainable environment within the context of our natural and cultural heritage, declare:

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Our modern world presents complex challenges with respect to ecological, social and functional degradation of human settlements and regional landscapes. This makes it essential for education and research conducted in academic institutions to formulate new solutions for the present and the future.

1. The ideals of landscape architecture including providing for the quality of the natural and built environments, the way landscape relates to buildings and infrastructure, and respect for our natural environmental and cultural heritage are matters of public concern.
2. It is in the public interest to ensure that landscape architects are able to understand and to give practical expression to the needs of individuals, communities and the private sector regarding spatial planning, design organization, construction of landscapes, as well as, conservation and enhancement of the built heritage, the protection of the natural balance and rational land use planning for the utilization of available resources.
3. Methods of education and training for landscape architects are varied and that this fact be recognized as a cultural richness which should be preserved.
4. We require a common ground for future action with the aim of achieving an appropriate elevated level by establishing criteria which permit countries, schools and professional organizations to evaluate and improve the education given to the future landscape architects.
5. The increasing mobility of landscape architects between the different countries calls for a mutual recognition or validation of individual diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification.
6. The mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates or other evidence of formal qualification to practice in the field of landscape architecture has to be founded on objective criteria, guaranteeing that holders of such qualifications have received and maintain the kind of training called for in this Charter.

7. The vision of the future world, cultivated in landscape architectural schools, should include the following goals:
 - a decent quality of life for all the inhabitants
 - an approach to landscape planning and design interventions which respects the social, cultural, physical and aesthetic needs of people
 - an ecologically balanced approach assuring sustainable development of the built environment
 - a public realm landscape which is valued and expressive of local culture.

II. EDUCATION AND OBJECTIVES

Since landscape architecture is an art and science, landscape architectural education should be regarded as the manifestation of the ability to conceptualize, coordinate and execute the idea of environmental design rooted in human tradition and the knowledge of natural systems.

1. Landscape architecture is an interdisciplinary field that comprises several major components: humanities, social and natural sciences, technology and the creative arts. Landscape architectural education is available at Universities, Polytechnics, Institutes and Academies. The education leading to formal qualifications and permitting professionals to practice in the field of landscape architecture is to be at university level with landscape architecture as the main subject.
2. The basic goal is to develop the landscape architect as a specialist able to resolve potential contradictions between different requirements, while giving form to the society's and the individual's environmental needs.
3. Landscape architectural education involves the acquisition of knowledge within the following broad areas:
 - 3.1 History of cultural form and an understanding of design as a social art
 - 3.2 Cultural and natural systems
 - 3.3 Plant material and horticultural applications
 - 3.4 Site engineering including materials, methods, technologies, construction documentation and administration, and applications
 - 3.5 Theory and methodologies in design and planning
 - 3.6 Landscape design, management, planning and science at all scales and applications
 - 3.7 Information technology and computer applications
 - 3.8 Public policy and regulation
 - 3.9 Communications and public facilitation
 - 3.10 Ethics and values related to the profession
4. The balanced acquisition of knowledge and skills outlined above requires a long period of maturation; the period of studies in landscape architecture should always be not less than four years of full-time (undergraduate) studies in a university or an equivalent institution, plus two years experience in a landscape architectural practice.
5. First professional degrees in landscape architecture may be offered at the undergraduate or the graduate levels. Entrance into graduate programmes will require an undergraduate

university degree in landscape architecture, architecture or other fields accepted by the institution. A graduate degree will normally require a minimum of two years of full time study. This diversity provides for local practice needs, research and/or specialization. Degrees in landscape architecture may also be offered at the PhD level.

6. In order to benefit from the wide variety of teaching methods, exchange programmes for teachers, and students at advanced level, will be desirable. Regional and international student design competitions, awards and exhibitions will be supported by schools and the profession.
7. Issues related to landscape architecture and the environment should be introduced as part of a general education, because an early awareness of environmental design is important to both future landscape architects and members of society at large.
8. Landscape architectural students should be made critically aware of the political and financial motivations behind clients' needs and regulations in order to foster an ethical framework for decision making within the built environment. Young landscape architects should be encouraged to assume the responsibilities as professionals within society.
9. Educational programs should promote landscape architectural design which considers the cost of future maintenance, life-cycle costing and project sustainability.
10. Systems for continuing education must be set up for landscape architects; landscape architectural education should never be considered as a closed process.

III. CRITERIA FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

In order to achieve the above mentioned goals, the following aspects should be taken into account:

1. Educational institutions are advised to create, with the support of the profession, accreditation systems for self-evaluation and peer-review conducted at regular intervals. Included in the review panel should be teachers from other schools, practicing landscape architects and others.
2. Each teaching institution must adjust the number of students according to its teaching capacity. Criteria for the selection of students shall be in relation to the aptitudes required for a successful training in landscape architecture and will be applied by means of an appropriate selection process organized by the schools at the point of entry in the programme.
3. Adequate studios, facilities for research, advanced studies, information and data exchange for new technologies should be provided at schools of landscape architecture. Computer technology and the development of specialized software should be incorporated into appropriate aspects of landscape architectural education.

4. The creation of a network, on a world-wide basis, for the exchange of information, teachers and students, is necessary in order to promote a common understanding and to raise the level of landscape architectural education.
5. Continuous interaction between practice and teaching of landscape architecture must be encouraged and protected.
6. Research should be regarded as an inherent activity of landscape architectural professors. Landscape architectural research may be founded on project work, methodologies, technologies, ecological and social issues, and other relevant topics. Peer-review is to be encouraged to evaluate landscape architectural research and publication.
7. Design project work must be a synthesis of acquired knowledge and skills. The landscape architectural curriculum should include the subjects referred to under the educational objectives of this Charter. Individual studio project work with direct teacher/student dialogue must form a substantial part of the learning period and occupy approximately half of the curriculum.

CONCLUSION

This Charter was created on the initiative of IFLA with the ability of being applied by any landscape architectural school on the international and national levels. It is our intent that this Charter will assist in the creation of a global network of landscape architectural education within which individual achievements can be shared by all.

This Charter, as a universal document, can help in the understanding that landscape architectural education constitutes both the socio-cultural, ecological and professional challenge of the contemporary world; and requires the guarantee of protection, development and urgent action.