



ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Internship in Architecture Program | Supervising Architect and Mentor Guidelines

Overview: Internship in Architecture Program

The Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities maintains the architectural profession through 11 self-regulating licensing bodies to establish the process for granting registration as an architect in Canada. In each jurisdiction, the criteria for registration and licensing are based upon provincial or territorial government legislation.

Successful completion of three main elements form the basis for registration and licensing as an architect:

- Education;
- Experience, including professional development courses; and
- Examinations, including Oral Reviews.

After graduating from an accredited degree program and having his/her education certified by the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB), each graduate is eligible to apply for enrollment in the Internship in Architecture Program (IAP). As part of the program registration requirements, Intern Architects need to accumulate a minimum of 3720 experience hours in categories specified by the IAP Manual. All hours are logged in the Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB). Other program components include completion of professional development courses, exams and an oral review. For additional requirements specific to registration in British Columbia, refer to [Appendix B: Specific CALA Requirements](#) in the AIBC version of the IAP manual.

During their progression through the IAP, Intern Architects will rely on the guidance and support of a Supervising Architect and a Mentor to help them fulfill their path to registration. The purpose of this document is to define and describe both roles, as well as set expectations within the context of the IAP. Those taking on the commitment of a Supervising Architect or Mentor can help shape and strengthen the future of the profession by passing on valuable experience gained by working in the field of architecture to Intern Architects.

The AIBC extends a special thank you to all potential Supervising Architects and Mentors taking on this vital role.

The Role of the Supervising Architect

It is the responsibility of the Supervising Architect to assist the Intern Architect in accumulating the necessary range of practical architectural experience for registration and licensure.

Under their personal supervision and guidance within the same architectural firm, organization or practice, the Supervising Architect oversees the daily work of the Intern Architect and is expected to review the Intern Architect's logbooks periodically, as well as provide constructive feedback and advice.

Eligibility Requirements

- Registered in the same jurisdiction where the Intern Architect is gaining experience.
- Employed in the same architecture practice as the Intern Architect, and is able to personally supervise and direct the projects being completed.
- Is familiar with the requirements and objectives of the IAP, including having the ability to assess the quality of work performed by the Intern Architect.

Responsibilities

- Complies with responsibilities as set out in the [Supervising Architect Undertaking](#).
- Provides comments and constructive feedback in the Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB) about the Intern Architect's progress.
- Signs off on logbooks and timesheets to verify the submitted information as complete and accurate.
- Offers encouragement and assists the Intern Architect in gaining the necessary range of experience, opportunities and knowledge required to complete the IAP and achieve registration as an architect.

Supervising Architect and Intern Architect Meetings

Intern Architects are expected to schedule meetings at regular intervals during their internship to meet with their Supervising Architects to review completed work. These opportunities also allow Supervising Architects to help the Intern Architect gain a more comprehensive understanding of work expectations and objectives. A general guideline is to meet two to three times per year to review the Intern Architect's logbooks. These meetings should be open and honest discussions to assess and monitor the completed work and to strategize on future projects.

During these meetings, suggested topics of discussion may include:

- Whether the Intern Architect is gaining exposure to a wide variety of required experiences through different types of projects and focusing on areas as recommended by their Supervising Architect or Mentor.
- Expectations of the Intern Architect.
- Expectations of the employer/Supervising Architect. Strengths/weaknesses of the completed work.
- Other areas for improvement and how to address any other challenges in the workplace.

Supervising Architects are also expected to assist the Intern Architect in preparation for exams and the Oral Review (see [Appendix B: Specific CALA Requirements of the IAP](#)). Following the completion of these goals, additional meetings may focus on reviewing past successes and discussing other potential challenges.

The Role of the Mentor

One of the mandatory requirements for every Intern Architect enrolled in the IAP is to have a Mentor. The Mentor will be able to provide objective guidance and direction outside of the Intern Architect's workplace. A Mentor should be a positive and professional role model who is able to conduct regular reviews of the Intern Architect's progress and share discussions of overall career objectives within the field of architecture.

Eligibility Requirements

- An Architect AIBC or Retired Architect from the same jurisdiction in which the Intern Architect is gaining experience who is not employed at the same architectural firm, organization, or practice, as the Intern Architect.

Selecting a Mentor

Intern Architects should select a Mentor willing to commit to their professional growth. The mentoring relationship personifies the architectural profession's historic apprenticeship system. Mentors are expected to be knowledgeable about the IAP's objectives and experience requirements. When choosing a Mentor, Intern Architects should take into consideration the ability for this individual to provide confidential support and guidance beyond the workplace. Other suggested criteria in selecting a Mentor include:

- **Individual Qualities:** A Mentor and an Intern Architect should have a good connection. An ideal Mentor will be an active listener and communicator, have an excellent work ethic, observe confidentiality, be patient, responsible and an encouraging role model committed to the Intern Architect's professional and personal success.
- **Personal Availability:** Intern Architects should seek a Mentor who is able to provide the support they need – when approaching a potential Mentor, think about factors such as their current career demands, other mentorship commitments and physical distance.
- **Professional Experience:** Consider the knowledge, experience and networking opportunities they can offer. Intern Architects should assess if they would like to follow a similar career path as their potential Mentor and if this individual has experienced and overcome similar challenges, allowing them to share beneficial advice.

Establishing a rewarding Mentor-Intern Architect relationship is a collaborative effort. In order to achieve success, Intern Architects should be pro-active, receptive to feedback and appreciative. Through regular meetings, the Mentor can support the Intern Architect and offer valuable benefits in the following ways:

- Share technical and organizational knowledge.
- Provide career guidance and discussions of broader issues relating to the architectural profession. Allow a safe place to discuss concerns and challenges faced in the workplace.

- Offer guidance in finding solutions to professional/personal challenges. Help prepare for future career objectives.
- Provide general support and encouragement to the Intern Architect's progression through the IAP.

Meeting Guidelines with Mentors

In an effective mentoring relationship, an Intern Architect will learn from the leadership and support of their Mentor. Mentoring can occur in a variety of ways. At a minimum, the Mentor must meet with the Intern Architect prior to each submission of their CERB. Usually this is scheduled when the Intern Architect has accumulated 900–1000 hours (approximately six months) of architectural experience, or during a change of employment.

More frequent meetings are highly recommended to provide a better understanding of the Intern Architect's goals and work experience during their IAP progress. If an Intern Architect is facing concerns relating to their required experience in the workplace, the Mentor should assist in facilitating a productive solution and provide career guidance. Regular contact between logbook submissions will offer more opportunities for Mentors to take on a positive and influential role in the Intern Architect's development as an architect.

When making plans to connect with a Mentor, consider the meeting type or location and topics of discussion. In-person sessions are recommended, but if this is not possible due to conflicting schedules or location restraints, then meetings over phone calls are encouraged. In-person meetings can take place at a variety of places including libraries, cafes, or offices. Regardless of the selected location, it is important to ensure the setting is quiet and private enough to facilitate a meeting for productive and open conversation.

Topics of Discussion

It is important for Intern Architects to actively engage with their Mentor by preparing for each meeting and creating an agenda with topics and questions for discussion. During the first meetings between an Intern Architect and their Mentor, discussions can begin with an introduction to each other's backgrounds and with developing a framework regarding how the Mentor can provide assistance and support during the Intern Architect's progress in the IAP. Subsequent meetings can concentrate on reviewing current progress, obstacles and meeting goals within the targeted timeframes. The following are some recommended topics to guide both initial and subsequent meetings between Intern Architects and their Mentors.

First Meetings – Establishing Goals and Plans

Internship/Registration:

- Review the program requirements in the IAP.
- What obstacles did your Mentor experience during their path to registration and how did he/she overcome them?
- When and how was your Mentor registered? How many years did it take to become registered? What strategies did your Mentor find useful in completing his/her architectural internship?
- Who was your Mentor's mentor? What did they learn from him/her? Did your Mentor write EXAC, NCARB ARE or other exams?

- In what kind of practice does the Intern Architect see him or herself after registration?

Career Goals:

- What kinds of practices has your Mentor been involved in?
- What are the kinds of practices that exist? Are there local examples? Why does the Intern Architect want to become registered?
- Why did your Mentor originally want to become registered? Did that change, and if so, why? What inspires both of you about architecture?

Accumulating Knowledge:

- Are there any books or reading material the Mentor recommends?
- Are there works by other architects that inspire both of you?

Subsequent Meetings – Revisiting Discussions from the First Meetings and Progress

Internship/Registration:

- What advice can the Mentor provide in obtaining experience in challenging areas?
- Has the Intern Architect progressed in the manner as expected? Does the Mentor have any advice with respect to the current progress?
- Review the most recent CERB submission and the type of work completed.
- Review the range of project types, sizes and occupancies – are there any gaps? Can the Mentor provide any insight into their experiences with identified gaps?
- Are there any personal challenges the Intern Architect is facing in or out of the workplace where the Mentor can provide advice or suggestions?
- Identify the Intern Architect's strengths and areas for improvement. Review where emphasis should be focused on for the next work period.
- If the required experience is not being obtained, what steps can the Intern Architect take?

Areas of Practice:

- What advice does the Mentor have in respect to client interactions?
- What advice does the Mentor have in respect to balancing design integrity and client requirements and budget?
- What advice does the Mentor have in respect to working effectively and efficiently?

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I am applying to the Internship in Architecture program. How do I find a Mentor?

If you are a potential Intern Architect, you should first try to find a Mentor through your own personal networks. This can include friends, relatives, colleagues or former supervising architects. Ideally, you should find a Mentor with who you can establish a positive and supportive connection.

Those who are new to British Columbia, or have difficulty finding a Mentor, can contact the AIBC Admissions Coordinator to obtain a list of volunteer mentors.

Q: What else does an Intern Architect have to accomplish in the IAP?

As part of the Internship in Architecture program, all Intern Architects will need to log a minimum of 3720 experience hours, complete professional development courses, pass exams and an oral review. Visit the AIBC Internship in Architecture website for a more detailed overview of the IAP and its requirements.

Q: Can an Intern Architect change their Supervising Architect or Mentor anytime during their internship?

Yes. The Intern Architect must notify the AIBC by submitting a confirmation of employment or mentor letter. Sample templates are available on the Intern Architect section of the AIBC website.

Q: If I am an Intern Architect temporarily working outside of British Columbia, can my Mentor remain the same?

Yes. Intern Architects and their Mentors are still expected to keep in touch regularly to review the CERB logbooks within the usual submission guidelines. Intern Architects can set up these meetings through phone, email, or video calls if they are unable to meet in-person.

Q: Can Mentors take on this role for more than one Intern Architect?

Yes. Mentors can assume this role for more than one Intern Architect as long as they are able to allocate the required level of commitment and attention to each.

Q: Can Mentors earn Continuing Education System learning units for their participation?

Yes. Refer to [Bulletin 80: Mandatory Continuing Education System \(CES\) Rules and Guidelines](#) for details.

Q: Who can I contact for more information about the Internship in Architecture Program or becoming a Supervising Architect/Mentor?

Please contact the Admissions Coordinator or visit aibc.ca/iap.

Additional Resources

- [AIBC Internship in Architecture section of AIBC website](#)
- [AIBC website](#)
- [Internship in Architecture Manual](#)
- [IAP Manual Appendix B: Specific CALA Jurisdiction Requirements](#) (information about AIBC specific regulations)
- [Regulatory requirement documents in B.C.](#) (i.e.: the *Architects Act*, Bylaws, Practice Bulletins)
- [Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities website](#)