



Council Policy

Policy Name **Exemption Requests to Council – Submission Guidelines**

Issue Date **September 19, 2025**

Revision Dates **N/A**

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, consistent guidance on the types and volume of documents that may be submitted by applicants seeking an exemption under Sections 13 or 13.1 of the *Architects Act* (the Act) or Section 33 of Regulation 27 (the regulations). This policy is intended to avoid duplication of materials already reviewed by statutory committees such as the Experience Requirements Committee (ERC) and promote administrative efficiency in decision-making. The suggested limits set out in this policy are intended to assist applicants in presenting a focused and well-organized submission, encouraging them to highlight the most relevant and compelling information. This approach helps ensure OAA Council receives clear, concise submissions that directly support their decision-making process.

Rationale

This policy establishes a framework to guide applicants on the type and scope of documentation that may be most useful to support their request, with the goal of promoting fairness and clarity in the process. It is intended to support all applicants—regardless of their access to professional resources—by encouraging a focused approach to submissions and avoiding the inclusion of excessive or extraneous material that may dilute the relevance of the core information.

One of the objectives of this guidance is to support efficiency and focus. Council's role is to determine whether an exemption is appropriate in the public interest, as authorized by legislation. To perform this function effectively, it is important Council is provided with concise, relevant, and non-redundant information. This framework is intended to help applicants tailor their submissions accordingly and to support consistent and streamlined decision-making.

For exemption requests related to experience, the Council places significant weight on the recommendation of the Experience Requirements Committee (ERC), which has the expertise and tools to assess the quality, scope, and sufficiency of architectural experience. The ERC conducts these assessments using standardized evaluation templates, structured interviews, and trained assessors to ensure fair, consistent, and well-documented evaluations across all applicants.

While the ERC's recommendation is a key input into the process and provides an objective, competency-based foundation, the decision on the applicant's request for exemption is made by OAA Council. In reaching its decision, the Council considers the ERC's recommendation together with the applicant's submissions, its statutory mandate, and its public interest obligations, ensuring decisions are well-informed, appropriately balanced, and aligned with the regulatory framework. Each decision reflects the submitted application, circumstances, and information before Council at that time.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals submitting an exemption request to Council under the *Architects Act* and its regulations. It encompasses both academic or examination-based exemptions and those related to experience, along with any supporting documentation. Applicants are encouraged to review the *Statutory Framework for Exemption Requests to Council* to understand the principles and considerations that guide Council's decision-making. This document provides important context for how exemption requests are assessed and decided.

General Document Guidelines (All Submissions)

Applicants may submit the following in support of their exemption request:

- written submission to Council as outlined in the exemption request procedures (maximum three pages);
- current curriculum vitae (maximum two pages);
- up to four letters of support or endorsement from a current/former supervisor or professional reference (maximum two pages each).

Academic or Examination Exemption Requests

Applicants seeking an exemption from the academic requirements must provide:

- for licence applicants, a letter from the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB) confirming the academic qualifications cannot be certified under its current processes; and
- concise written rationale (maximum two pages) explaining why the applicant believes their academic background constitutes an acceptable alternative to the academic requirements under the *Architects Act*.

Applicants seeking an exemption from the examination requirements may submit a concise written rationale (maximum two pages) that either:

- explains why the applicant believes their examination background constitutes an acceptable alternative to the examination requirements under the *Architects Act*; or
- describes how their knowledge, skills, and experience are equivalent to what is assessed through the prescribed examinations.

Applicants are not required to resubmit documentation that has already been reviewed by the CACB or examination authorities as part of their standard assessment processes. No additional academic materials—such as course outlines, institutional brochures, or copies of diplomas—need be submitted unless requested by Council.

Experience-Based Exemption Requests

Experience-based requests are first reviewed by the ERC in advance of being considered and decided upon by Council. The Committee has specific processes, tools, and expertise to evaluate professional experience. It does not exercise its statutory powers under 13(3)(b) or 13.1(3) of the Act but rather provides a recommendation to Council for its consideration. This recommendation is shared with the applicant in advance of its submission to Council, providing the applicant an opportunity to respond or submit additional context. Suggested documentation includes:

- bulleted summary (maximum three pages) outlining key project experience or applicant's roles;
- recommendation from the ERC; and
- applicant response to ERC recommendation (maximum two pages).



Applicants should not submit to Council:

- full project portfolios;
- drawings or specifications;
- detailed project reports;
- employer performance appraisals; or
- photos, diagrams, or ancillary project materials.

OAA Council may decline to consider documentation that exceeds the suggested limits outlined above. Exceptions may be granted with prior written approval from the Executive Committee, as communicated by the Registrar. Applicants are encouraged to be concise and focused in their submissions, highlighting the most relevant information to support their request. Submitting excessive or unfocused material may detract from the strength of the application and, more importantly, Council may limit its review to what falls within the established framework to ensure a fair and consistent decision-making process.

