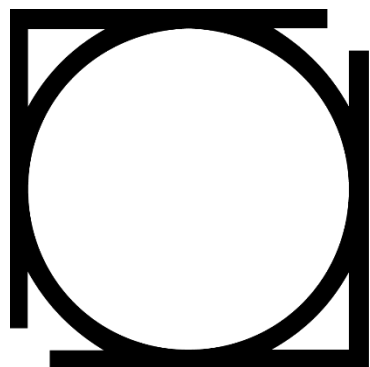


Mentorship Guide

Updated April 2024



A Special Note of Thanks

A special note of appreciation for all current, past, and future Supervising Architects and Mentors: Thank you for your interest and dedication to your profession by helping Intern Architects meet the requirements of the IAP! Your support of the future of the architectural profession in Canada is greatly appreciated.

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1. Introduction

There is a long tradition of mentoring in architecture, originating from the master builder teaching a chosen apprentice the skills required to one day succeed them. While architecture has evolved since those days, the profession still relies on this transfer of knowledge to move forward effectively.

With an ever-increasing reliance on technology and the incredible amount of information at our fingertips, it has become easy to find alternatives to mentorship. While these alternatives may indeed be helpful, mentorship remains an incredibly useful tool for navigating the increasingly complicated profession that is architecture, and benefits not only the mentee, but the mentor and architectural profession as well.

In Canada, the provincial and territorial self-regulating licensing bodies—collectively known as [Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada \(ROAC\)](#)—have a mandate to establish the criteria and process for granting licensure as an architect. Mentors and Supervising Architects play a critical role in the process of Intern Architects’ recording professional experience.

The [ROAC bodies](#) have determined that licensure can occur upon successful completion of several key elements:

Education	Experience	Examination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a professional degree/diploma in architecture from a post-secondary institution; or • the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) Professional Diploma in Architecture. <p><i>Professional degree/diploma must be certified by the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the prescribed experience requirements of 3,720 hours in 17 categories set out in the Internship in Architecture Program (IAP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC); or • the Architect Registration Examination (ARE).

In addition to these, each ROAC jurisdiction may have additional requirements that must be met prior to licensure. In Ontario, all Intern Architects must complete the OAA Admission Course, and may be subject to the Ontario Practice Competency self-assessment.

Additionally, if fewer than 940 hours of the required CERB experience is obtained on projects within Canada, the Intern Architect must familiarize themselves with Canadian practice by completing all four modules of the [Practice of Architecture in Canada](#) course offered by the [Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada](#) (ROAC) prior to application for licence.

In order to ensure the future of our profession and encourage the next generation of Architects, everyone must play a key role in the Intern Architect’s successful completion of the IAP. By engaging in and passing on years of valued experience, and with continued support and guidance, Architects can ensure that future generations of the profession will continue to learn and develop, carrying on this important role with expertise and dedication.

This guide seeks to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of the **Intern Architect/Student Associate**, the **Mentor**, the **Supervising Architect**, and the **Place of Employment**.



2. The Intern Architect and Student Associate

2.1. Eligibility

After graduating with either a professional degree in architecture or the RAIC Professional Diploma in Architecture, and having their education certified by the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB), each graduate is eligible to apply for Intern Architect status with the OAA. Once the application is approved, the new Intern Architect can then begin fulfilling the requirements of the Internship in Architecture Program (IAP).

It should be noted that prior to holding Intern Architect status, OAA Student Associates may also log a portion of hours toward the Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB) if certain requirements are met (including securing a Mentor and Supervising Architect). Refer to the [OAA Website](#) for more information on how to log hours as a Student Associate.

2.2. Responsibilities and Accommodations

As the program participants, Intern Architects and Student Associates bear full responsibility for completing all aspects of the IAP. (However, certain accommodations may be available, as detailed later in this section.)

IAP participants must:

- Become familiar with the IAP manual, appendices, and related documents;
- Become familiar with the *Architects Act*, Regulation 27, and OAA Bylaws, and other relevant legislative documents in Ontario;
- Adhere to regular CERB submissions to the OAA as outlined in the IAP, and be aware of the OAA's policy regarding CERB submissions, including deadlines and penalties for late submissions; and
- Keep their Place of Employment, Supervising Architect, and Mentor information current with the OAA. (Before changing their Place of Employment, Intern Architects and Student Associates should ensure their work experience will meet the requirements of the IAP. Further, they should obtain sign-off on hours *prior* to informing an employer of their intent to part ways—it can be very difficult to get sign-off after departing a previous Place of Employment.)

Intern Architects may be eligible to record experience gained in an international jurisdiction, but should confirm with the OAA before claiming this experience to ensure it satisfies the requirements of the IAP.

For individuals wishing to utilize an alternate method to obtain licensure such as the RAIC Syllabus Program or the Broadly Experienced Foreign Architect Program (BEFA), please contact the IAP staff at iap@oaa.on.ca for specific requirements and additional details.

Certain accommodations may also be available to IAP participants through the OAA. The Association is committed to ensuring [accessibility](#) for people with disabilities, and is continually striving to improve the user experience for everyone, and applying the relevant accessibility standards. "[Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#)" has been identified as a theme of the OAA's five-year [Strategic Plan](#). As a provincial regulating authority, the OAA exists to protect the public interest, which includes ensuring the architecture profession reflects the diversity of the Ontarians it serves.

Additionally, with respect to [financial hardship](#), OAA Council has adopted a policy that Association fees may be waived or reduced for up to one year by the Executive Director for reasons of financial hardship for Intern Architects. The OAA also has a policy that a [leave of absence](#) may be granted for up to one year at a reduced fee for medical, maternity, or parental leave or on compassionate or other specified grounds.

Intern Architects are encouraged to contact the IAP staff at iap@oaa.on.ca directly for further information about these or other possible accommodations.

2.3. Selecting a Mentor

The mentoring relationship epitomizes the profession's historic apprenticeship system and emphasizes the continued, modern importance of relationships in a collaborative and collegial profession. Intern Architects and Student Associates should select a Mentor willing to commit to their professional growth, and it should be someone with whom they connect on multiple levels. IAP Mentors must be an architect or Retired Member with the OAA and independent from the Mentee's employment situation. Finding a Mentor early on in one's career (even as a student is not too early!) is recommended, as a Mentor has experience and advice that is immeasurably helpful to any Intern Architect.

Meeting potential Mentors can often be challenging, but there are a number of ways Intern Architects and Student Associates can search for one:

- Search through the [Mentor Directory](#), accessible by logging in through the OAA Website (this resource allows searches to be refined with various criteria to narrow down results to an ideal match);
- Use professional networks—including professors, peers, friends, family members, or colleagues; and
- Attend events hosted by a [Local Architectural Society](#), as well as other events, lectures, and conferences, as these are opportunities to further one's knowledge of architecture and to grow a professional network.

When choosing a Mentor, Intern Architects and Student Associates should take into consideration this individual's ability to provide confidential support and guidance beyond the workplace on a career scale, keeping in mind a successful Mentor/Mentee relationship may continue beyond licensure.

Other suggested criteria in selecting a Mentor include:

- **Individual Qualities:** A Mentor and an Intern Architect/Student Associate should have a good connection—an ideal Mentor will be an active listener and communicator, observe confidentiality, and be a patient, responsible, and encouraging role model committed to their Mentee's professional and personal success;
- **Availability:** Intern Architects and Student Associates should seek a Mentor who is able to provide the support needed—they should think about such factors as their current career demands, availability, approachability, other mentorship commitments, and physical distance; and
- **Professional Experience:** Intern Architects and Student Associates should consider the knowledge, experience, and networking opportunities offered by a Mentor and assess whether they would like to follow a career path similar and have similar challenges in front of them.

2.4. Selecting a Supervising Architect

While the provision of proper training and direction may fall down the list of priorities when pursuing employment for many Intern Architects, it should be addressed during the interview process. (Similarly, one may also consider asking whether or not a prospective employer covers professional fees, encourages professional development opportunities, facilitates networking, promotes cultural competence and diversity, and emphasizes professional liability and risk management.)

An employer that values knowledge and skill development is an employer that values their staff and the profession; everyone, regardless of age or experience, requires direction and guidance throughout their career.

2.5. Experience

While at their Place of Employment, Intern Architects accumulate hours of experience toward the required minimum of number of hours in specific categories as set out in the IAP Manual and detailed in the Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB). These hours must be completed under the personal supervision and direction of the Supervising Architect. The Supervising Architect is required to review, comment and affirm each of the Intern Architect's CERB submissions, which are subsequently reviewed by the Mentor. Appendix B on the [OAA Website](#) outlines additional requirements in Ontario.

All Intern Architects must complete a minimum of 3,720 hours of architectural experience as outlined in the IAP Manual. If fewer than 940 hours of that experience is obtained on projects within Canada, the Intern Architect must familiarize themselves with Canadian practice by completing all four modules of the [Practice of Architecture in Canada](#) course offered by the [Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada](#) (ROAC) prior to application for licence.

It is the Intern Architect's responsibility to be aware of their employer's commitment to their career growth. This means keeping their Employer and associated Supervising Architect aware of their needs in the context of their career progression and the IAP, and reminding them if they feel opportunities are not being provided.

If the Intern Architect experiences an employer who is either unable or unwilling to accommodate the requirements of the IAP, it is recommended they consult with their Mentor to help manage expectations for all parties involved.

2.6. OAA Admission Course

The OAA Admission Course is a mandatory requirement for licensure for all Intern Architects in Ontario. It covers topics related to regulatory matters, legal issues, and information specific to the practice of architecture in Ontario. More information about the OAA Admission Course can be found on the [OAA Website](#).

2.7. Pre-licensure Self-Assessment

It is the OAA's position that local Ontario practice knowledge is critical to public health and safety and the provision of competent architectural services in Ontario. Historically, the OAA has relied on direct Ontario work experience to provide opportunity for Intern Architects to gain these competencies. With respect to the 2021–2023 amendments to the [Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act](#) (FARPACTA) related to licensure experience requirements, the OAA revised the process for Ontario. (To learn more, visit this page of the [OAA Website](#).)

As of January 1, 2025, the OAA will require Intern Architects who have gained all their Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB) experience while enrolled in the Internship in Architecture Program (IAP) to complete a self-assessment to demonstrate competency in specific areas of practice. (The remainder of 2024 will be a transition period toward this new process). The OAA no longer requires direct Ontario work experience, but rather the submission of an outcomes-based self-assessment. This is an efficient, accessible method for applicants to demonstrate their Ontario practice knowledge prior to becoming licensed.

2.8. Examination

After meeting the minimum experience requirements, Intern Architects may write the Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC). For more information on the exams, refer (early and often) to the ExAC website at <http://www.exac.ca>.

Any Intern who needs accommodation at the examination must obtain prior approval from the OAA or their licensing authority. This can be indicated on the ExAC Registration Form and by submitting a completed Accommodation Request form found in the ExAC registration package.

Alternatively, Intern Architects have the option of writing the Architect Registration Examinations (ARE). For more information on the ARE, visit www.ncarb.org, and click on “Pass the ARE”.

2.9. Licensure

Once an Intern Architect has successfully completed each element of the IAP (Education, Experience, Examination) inclusive of any jurisdictional Appendix B requirements, they are eligible to apply for licence and become an Architect in Ontario. Obtaining a licence is a huge achievement with several key advantages:

- Architects, under law, have a protected title and a protected scope of work that allows them to design specific types of buildings that no other person in Ontario can legally undertake. This protected scope of work is one of the key features of our legislation and is critical to ensuring Architects are responsible for the present and future of our built environment.
- Architects are able to contribute to the profession with a high level of credibility as they are well-respected by peers, clients, and members of the public.
- Employers may obtain more work if they have more licensed professionals on staff. Clients often expect an Architect to be heavily involved in their project, usually at the head of the team.
- Leadership and autonomy in many practices is often more readily obtainable by those with licences.
- While earning the title of Architect cannot guarantee an immediate increase in salary or promotion, it generally raises this ceiling.
- Obtaining a licence provides a distinct, competitive edge.

Only an architect can personally supervise and direct a practice of architecture.

2.10. Tips for Being a Successful Intern Architect/Student Associate

- It is important to know the categories that make up the CERB. These are the areas of experience an Intern Architect needs to complete to become an Architect, and knowledge of the categories allows one to take better advantage of their working experience. The 17 categories in the IAP 2020 (fourth edition) have been included and defined after careful and ongoing consideration by provincial and territorial licensing bodies. Please note that these evolve with the profession and may change during one's internship.
- It is good to remember that obtaining the required hours is not the most important thing about being an Intern Architect. Rather, the reason the IAP exists is to ensure Architects have the necessary competency to practice responsibly. This isn't a race!
- While it is important to find a Mentor early, it is more important to select someone appropriate with whom you can connect on a personal level and is genuinely interested and willing to help.
- An Intern Architect or Student Associate should never be afraid to ask. Architects never stop learning; know what you know, and know what you don't know. (Along these same lines, one should never hesitate to contact the OAA if there are any questions or concerns.)

The OAA can always be contacted if there are concerns or questions



3. The Mentor

A Mentor provides confidential professional guidance and advice to the Intern Architect or Student Associate's career development and goals, independent of the latter's Place of Employment. They proactively engage and encourage the Mentee throughout not just the IAP, but also through other career milestones and challenges.

For OAA members, up to 10 [Unstructured Learning hours](#) are available per cycle for the Continuing Education (ConEd) Program for performing the duties of a Mentor. This category includes mentoring for the IAP as well as the RAIC Syllabus Program, Internationally Trained Professionals program (ITP), or Broadly Experienced Foreign Architect (BEFA).

Contact the OAA Continuing Education staff at OAAConEd@oaa.on.ca for more details.

3.1. Eligibility

IAP Mentors must be an architect or Retired Member with the OAA and independent from the Mentee's employment situation.

The Mentor's role is typically less structured than the Supervising Architect's, and is expected to evolve during both the Mentor's and Mentee's careers. The Mentor can discuss with the Intern Architect/Student Associate their workplace concerns, their career choices and objectives, and other issues related to the profession, without the prescribed restrictions or responsibilities of a Supervising Architect. The Mentor acts as an independent advocate, and provides information and a perspective that is separate from the role of the Supervising Architect. Essentially, they act as a career advisor.

3.2. Responsibilities

A successful and effective Mentor:

- Fosters a safe place to discuss concerns and challenges faced in the workplace;
- Offers guidance in finding solutions to professional challenges;
- Meets with the Mentee to review their CERB prior to each submission (this includes reviewing progress that the requirements and objectives of the IAP are being met—more frequent meetings are encouraged to review progress toward identified career goals and objectives, work experiences, understanding of professional practice responsibilities, and to ultimately foster a healthy and professionally supportive relationship;
- Advises the Mentee on items related to obtaining the required experience in the subject areas of the CERB (if there are concerns, the Mentor should contact IAP staff at iap@oaa.on.ca as contacting the Supervising Architect or Place of Employment directly may not be appropriate);
- Includes insights/concerns/recommendations about the Intern Architect or Student Associate within the CERB submission for review by the OAA;

- Discusses career objectives and broader issues related to the profession;
- Remains sufficiently aware of the Mentee's responsibilities, experience, and progress; and
- Invites the Intern Architect or Student Associate to their office or to see their projects, where possible and practical.

In the event the Mentor can no longer fulfill their role, they must notify the Intern Architect or Student Associate in a timely manner and assist them in finding a new Mentor if possible.

3.3. Mentor and Intern Architect/Student Associate Meetings

In order to assist the Mentor in understanding the importance of their role and what is expected when they meet with the Intern Architect or Student Associate, template Agendas have been developed (Appendix 1) for initial and follow-up meetings.

In an effective mentoring relationship, an Intern Architect or Student Associate 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 (or if unable, converse) with the Mentee prior to each submission of their CERB. Refer to the IAP for more information on CERB submissions.

More frequent meetings are highly recommended to provide a better understanding of the Intern Architect or Student Associate's goals and work experience during their IAP progress. If a Mentee 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 CERB submissions will offer more opportunities for Mentors to take on a positive and influential role in the Mentee's development.

When the Intern Architect or Student Associate and Mentor are planning to connect, thought should be put into the meeting type/location and topics of discussion. In-person sessions are recommended, but if this is not possible, then virtual mentoring is an alternative.

In-person meetings can occur in a variety of settings, including libraries, cafés, 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, open, and safe conversation.

3.4. Topics of Discussion

It is important for Intern Architects or Student Associates and Mentors to actively engage each other by preparing for each meeting with topics and questions ready for discussion. During the initial meetings, discussion can begin with an introduction to each other's backgrounds and with developing a framework for how the Mentor can provide assistance and support during those initial steps in the IAP and a career in architecture. As the professional learning curve can be quite formidable, it is expected that the conversation will delve into employment-based challenges and helpful advice.

Subsequent meetings can concentrate on reviewing current progress, obstacles, and meeting goals within the targeted timeframes. Appendix 1 lists suggested topics to guide both initial and subsequent meetings between Intern Architects and their Mentors.

3.5. Tips for Being a Successful Mentor

- Don't stop at just one mentee. Intern Architects need all the good Mentors they can get!
- Don't be afraid to say no. If you're not a good match for your mentee, or you have already taken on all that you can handle, then someone else will be better. This is a long-term relationship and a terrific opportunity for both parties.
- Be responsive. There are many demands on an Architect's time, but how you respond to your mentee may be more important than you think. If you can be difficult to reach, then work out a system with your mentee on how to circumnavigate your full voicemail and cluttered inbox.
- Be open-minded—you might be surprised at what Intern Architects can teach you.

- **Reflect on your experience becoming an Architect and any significant or specific challenges you may have faced—sharing these experiences with an Intern Architect with a similar background or path to licensure can be invaluable to their success in the IAP and beyond.**
- Don't hesitate to broaden the conversation to include topics on the periphery of the profession. Maintaining a healthy work/life balance, starting a business, and raising a family are all topics that can help shape an Intern Architect's career and deserve to be discussed.
- Familiarize yourself with Ontario's *Employment Standards Act*, and what rights those working in the profession of architecture have (or don't!).
- Be aware that the OAA adheres to the Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19, s. 6 'Vocational Associations'—see the Ontario Human Rights Commission (<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en>) for more info.
- Don't hesitate to contact the OAA and/or the Intern Architect's Supervising Architect if necessary. Intern Architects may not be aware that the OAA is there to assist, or who they can reach out to if they run into problems. Contacting the Supervising Architect is always an option, but this may take some finesse and may not necessarily be a good idea depending on the issue on hand.



4. The Supervising Architect

The Supervising Architect provides detailed and frequent direction and guidance to the work and learning experience of the Intern Architect or Student Associate, at the Place of Employment, which is typically an architectural practice. The Supervising Architect is an architect who recognizes the value in licensure and supports the Intern Architect or Student Associate throughout the IAP. They respond to the requirements of the IAP, providing the Intern Architect/Student Associate with the opportunities to complete the prescribed hours in a timely manner, and understand that investing in a well-trained Intern Architect will benefit the company. Recent graduates may not always see the value in licensure, and the Supervising Architect is well-positioned to illustrate the benefits.

4.1 Eligibility

Intern Architects and Student Associates accumulate IAP experience hours under the personal supervision and direction of the Supervising Architect, in either an architectural practice or other eligible architectural employment situations. Pre-approval by the OAA may be required for “other” eligible employment situations.

4.2 Responsibilities

Among their responsibilities, the Supervising Architect:

- Guides the Intern Architect to develop an understanding of the profession and the practice of architecture by providing opportunities, work assignments, and experiences fulfilling the requirements of the IAP;
- Remains familiar with the IAP’s objectives, experience requirements, and documentation processes;
- Provides detailed comments on the Intern Architect’s CERB prior to submission (since the Supervising Architect has first-hand knowledge about the work of the Intern Architect, they ensure the information submitted is accurate—written comments from the Supervising Architect provide insight on the Intern Architect’s progress to the OAA);
- Reviews the CERB submission in a timely manner, certifying that the Intern Architect has completed the hours submitted;
- Reviews and validates the Intern Architect’s Ontario practice competency self-assessment submissions in a timely manner;
- Assists the Intern Architect, when necessary, in responding to questions from the OAA;
- Reviews, with the Intern Architect, the Periodic Assessment Form (PAF) the OAA provides after each CERB submission has been reviewed and approved;
- Assists the Intern Architect in understanding the practice of architecture in the context of their Place of Employment and current projects; and

- Provides guidance to the Intern Architect about resources to increase skill and knowledge.

4.3 Supervising Architect and Intern Architect/Student Associate Meetings

Intern Architects and Student Associates are expected to schedule meetings at regular intervals with their Supervising Architect to review completed work in the context of the IAP. At the same time, it is the Supervising Architect's responsibility to respond to, attend, and be of reasonable assistance in these meetings.

These opportunities provide Supervising Architects with an opportunity to help the Intern Architect or Student Associate gain a more comprehensive understanding of professional expectations and objectives. A recommended goal is to meet every three to four months to review progress. These meetings should be open and honest discussions to assess completed work and to strategize on future direction.

4.4 Topics of Discussion

Topics of discussion at these meetings can include:

- Expectations of the Intern Architect and Student Associate;
- Expectations of the Employer and Supervising Architect;
- Strengths/weaknesses of the completed work;
- Areas for improvement for both parties;
- Workplace challenges;
- Expected opportunities and responsibilities for the Intern that may arise as projects evolve/change;
- Sufficient tasking and direction for the Intern Architect or Student Associate, ensuring they gain the necessary exposure and opportunities to fulfil their required hours;
- Anticipated timeline/strategy to complete all sections of the CERB; and

Employer and Supervising Architect's timeline of current projects and what the Intern Architect or Student Associate's role will likely be.

4.5 Tips for Being a Successful Supervising Architect

To be successful, a Supervising Architect should:

- Ensure their Place of Employment has dedicated resources to support the Intern Architect(s) or Student Associates(s) they are supervising;
- Communicate clearly and often—if an Intern Architect's career choices are leading them down a different path, make sure it is a deliberate choice and not due to lack of guidance;
- Provide direction and exposure to experience categories required by the CERB (if an Intern Architect is struggling to complete the hours they need, discuss the issue with management);
- Challenge Intern Architects to be their best, while offering support and guidance;
- Use their own experiences to help them empathize and guide, providing resources wherever possible (What did you find most helpful when you were an Intern Architect? What was an effective way to study for your licensing exams? What has helped you over the years to get to your current position?); and
- Be a role model—lead by example and demonstrate professionalism, integrity, and ethical conduct in your own work. Show the Intern Architect what it means to be a successful architect by modeling good practices and conduct.

The OAA can be contacted if there are any concerns or questions.



5. The Place of Employment

The Place of Employment is an important part of mentorship, but it is often overlooked as it is not specifically mentioned in the IAP, and mentorship can fall off the list of priorities in some companies. Many in the industry feel that the Place of Employment is where the mentoring culture fails most noticeably as the investment of time and resources may not yield immediate returns. A forward-thinking employer should be aware of the general requirements and commitment required of the IAP, and should encourage its staff to pursue licensure.

The investment into licensure and a strong mentoring culture is beneficial to all parties involved, and the profession at large. An increased and shared knowledge base speaks to overall competency, culture, design, and document quality.

A better studio culture and quality of design and documentation will be its own return on investment and will likely generate more work and repeat clients. The future of a practice relies on the time and investment it commits to its studio culture.

5.1. Eligibility

Every architectural firm has the capacity and responsibility to foster a healthy mentoring culture. Any architectural studio practising under a Certificate of Practice with the OAA is eligible to be a Place of Employment for the IAP.

If pre-approved by the OAA, architectural employment may also be acceptable when gained in the employ of a government agency, crown corporation, or institution having a department or office that deals primarily with architectural design and construction as an 'owner' and is certified by an architect who is employed in the same entity and who personally supervised and directed the architectural experience. (Contact the OAA to discuss employment situations and their eligibility for the IAP.)

IAP mentorship requires a Supervising Architect who is an Architect licensed in the jurisdiction in which the Intern Architect or Student Associate is gaining the architectural experience, and not every employment situation is eligible. Questions about the eligibility of employment situations should be directed to the OAA's IAP staff in the Office of the Registrar.

5.2 Responsibilities

An ideal Place of Employment:

- Provides Supervising Architects with the time and resource allowances to effectively guide and assist Intern Architects;
- Communicates with Supervising Architects to ensure they understand the importance of their role in the growth of all staff;
- Offers opportunities for Intern Architects to gain experience in the many categories of the IAP, both in the office and on site;
- Fosters a supportive environment by creating a positive and supportive work environment for the Intern Architect/Student Associate, where they feel comfortable asking questions, seeking guidance, and sharing their ideas; and

- Encourages an inclusive and diverse workplace that values different perspectives and backgrounds and allows everyone to feel respected, heard, and included.

5.3 Reasons for Encouraging Licensure

A strong mentorship culture can be a terrific selling feature when it comes to staff acquisition and retention. Here are some other reasons for encouraging licensure:

- Architects typically are eligible for a higher salary than Intern Architects;
- There is a level of proficiency that peers and clients expect of an Architect; and
- Employers may obtain more work if they have more licensed professionals on staff—clients often expect an Architect to be heavily involved in their project, usually at the head of a team.

5.4 Tips for Fostering a Supportive Work Environment

Tips for fostering a supportive work environment include:

- Maintaining a resource library that should include content for ExAC preparation;
- Being familiar with the requirements of the IAP to better gauge the capabilities and progress of Intern Architects or Student Associates;
- Encouraging staff to pursue a professional architectural degree if they are undecided (and would make a good Architect)—if the traditional route of obtaining the professional degree in Canada is not feasible, there are other options, such as the RAIC's Syllabus program;
- Providing, if possible, incentives for career advancement (e.g., exam fee remuneration, IAP milestone bonuses, etc.);

Striving to ensure opportunities are available for Intern Architects to complete the more challenging requirements of the IAP;

- Communicating regularly with Mentees to determine how to help manage the steep learning curve that is the path to licensure (in many cases, small amounts of effort can have a big impact if strategically implemented); and
- Covering professional fees for Intern Architects and Architects, whenever possible.

The OAA can be contacted with any concerns or questions.



6. FAQs

Q: What if I have questions about the internship process or the IAP?

If at any time you have questions regarding your internship or the IAP, the best place to start your query is with the person(s) at the OAA responsible for the IAP. Contact the Association's IAP staff at iap@oaa.on.ca.

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, professors, colleagues, or former Supervising Architects. Ideally, you should find a Mentor with whom you can establish a positive and supportive connection.

Those who are new to Ontario, or have difficulty finding a Mentor, can access the Association's [Mentor Directory](#) on the OAA Website.

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

Yes. The Intern Architect must notify their local jurisdiction by submitting a confirmation of employment or mentor letter. Sample templates are available on the OAA Website.

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

Yes. Intern Architects and their Mentors are still expected to keep in touch regularly to review the CERB submissions 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: Who can be a Mentor?

Any Architect or anyone with retired member status with the OAA in Ontario can be a Mentor, but they cannot be employed at the same place of employment as the Intern Architect or Student Associate.

Q: Can a Mentor be a Supervising Architect?

Not simultaneously for the same Intern Architect or Student Associate. A Mentor cannot be someone at your Place of Employment, but they can be a former Supervising Architect.

Q: Can Mentors have more than one mentee?

Yes. Mentors can assume this role for more than one Intern Architect or Student Associate 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. Please refer to the [OAA Website](#) for more information.

7 ■ Key Terms & Suggested Reference Material

Appendix B – This document, specific to each Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada (ROAC) jurisdiction, outlines the specific ROAC requirements of each jurisdiction that is different due to the respective governing legislations.

Architect – The holder of a licence to practise architecture.

Architect Registration Examination (ARE) – The U.S. Licensing Exam is the ARE and is accepted in lieu of ExAC in Ontario. It is important to note that the individual ROAC jurisdictions agree to recognize the ARE under the MRA, and that some ROAC jurisdictions DO NOT accept the ARE for licensure for domestic individuals.

Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB) – CACB is the primary organization for architectural certification and accreditation in Canada.

Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB) – The purpose of the CERB is to provide the Intern Architect with a tool to record the mandated architectural experience, and to enable the ROAC jurisdiction to verify and assess this experience. The Intern Architect is responsible for maintaining a record of the required architectural experience in the CERB. This record has several functions, including identifying areas where architectural experience is being gained and where deficiencies exist. The Intern Architect can also use the CERB as a tool in discussions with the employer to ensure they are getting suitable work experience in each of the required categories. For the Supervising Architect, it is an assessment and personnel management tool.

Certificate of Practice – This means a Certificate of Practice to engage in the practice of architecture as set out in the *Architects Act*.

The Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC) – The ExAC was developed to test the minimum standards of competency acquired by an Intern Architect during the internship period, to ensure both public safety and the professional and skilled delivery of architectural services.

Intern Architect – The Intern Architect status reflects enrolment in the Internship in Architecture Program (IAP)—a national program that provides a pathway for Intern Architects to become licensed as Architects. The Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada (ROAC) in each province and territory have statutory obligations to set and maintain standards of education, experience, and examination for entry to the profession of architecture, with the OAA overseeing the IAP in Ontario.

Internship in Architecture Program (IAP) – The Internship in Architecture Program (IAP) is one of the paths to licensure for an architect becoming licensed in Ontario. The IAP has been established by the licensing authorities (ROAC) to continue to maintain a program of architectural licensing in Canada that is both meaningful and effective. Licensing requirements are set out in the legislation that governs each jurisdiction, and within that framework, the ROAC created a national program to support mobility and facilitate licensure. To become licensed in Canada, a person must demonstrate competency and qualifications as set out in the respective Legislation and Regulations to provide architectural services to the public.

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) – NCARB administers the ARE and the Architectural Experience Program (the U.S. approximate equivalent of ROAC's IAP).

Periodic Assessment Forms (PAF) – Each ROAC jurisdiction will provide a summary or approve a summary of the total hours approved to date on a PAF and may make comments or suggestions it believes will benefit the Intern Architect. These comments should serve to reinforce the advice already given to the Intern by the Supervising Architect and Mentor.

Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada (ROAC) – ROAC represents nationally the architectural regulators in Canada. These provincial and territorial self-regulatory bodies are responsible for setting the standards for entry into the profession and for issuing licences to those who meet established standards of qualifications and practice. The regulators govern the practice of architecture in order that the public interest is served and protected within their respective province or territory. Through ROAC, the Canadian architectural regulators work collectively to develop and adopt nationally recognized standards and programs that help to meet their regulatory responsibilities as well as the needs of the architectural profession.

7.1 Suggested Reference Material

[IAP Manual](#)

[Appendix B](#)

[Schedule A](#)

[Canadian Handbook of Practice \(CHOP\)](#)

[The Ontario Building Code \(OBC\)](#)

[Architects Act and OAA Bylaws](#)

[Practice Advisory Knowledge Base](#)

The measurable outcome criteria required for [Broadly Experienced Foreign Architect \(BEFA\)](#) candidates

[OAA Website](#)

[Examination for Architects in Canada \(ExAC\)](#) website

[Regulatory Organizations of Architecture in Canada \(ROAC\)](#) website
(including the [Canadian Standard of Competency for Architects](#))

8. Appendix 1: Proposed Template Agendas for Mentor – Intern Architect/Student Associate Meetings

8.1 Proposed Template Agenda – 1st Meeting

i. Personal Introduction:

1. Why have you connected? Why is this a good match?
2. Who was the Mentor's mentor?
3. What did they learn from them?
4. Did the Mentor write ExAC, NCARB ARE, or other exams?
5. How did the Intern Architect/Student Associate meet the education requirements? Have they been completed, or are they still in progress?

ii. Career Direction:

1. Why does the Intern Architect/Student Associate want to become licensed?
2. Why did the Mentor originally want to become licensed?
 - o Did that change, and if so, why?
3. Does the Mentor recommend licensure? Why or why not?
4. What different kinds of practices exist?
 - o Are there local examples?
 - o What are other career paths an Architect can pursue?
 - o In what kind of practice does the Intern Architect/Student Associate see themselves after licensure?
 - o What kinds of practices have the Mentor been involved in?
5. What strategies did the Mentor find useful in completing their architectural internship?
6. What obstacles did the Mentor experience during their path to licensure and how did they overcome them?
7. When and how was the Mentor licensed?

8. How many years did it take to become licensed?
9. Intern Architect and Mentor discussion:
 - o Intern Architect/Student Associate's current work experience, professional practice, issues arising
 - o Mentor to provide feedback and guidance

iii. IAP:

1. Review the program requirements in the IAP, identifying areas that may be challenging to complete
2. Intern Architect/Student Associate to identify short and intermediate term goals and develop a plan
 - o Identify possible obstacles for completing plan and intended schedule
 - o Include goals, specific CERB experience categories
 - o Goal for written examinations
 - o Goal for other components of the IAP
 - o Consider together priority and logistics
 - o Discuss how the Mentor can assist, support, and encourage development of goals
3. Intern Architect/Student Associate to establish long-term goals, including completion of IAP
 - o Identify time frame
 - o Discuss how the Mentor can provide assistance and support to encourage development of goals

iv. Accumulating Knowledge:

1. Are there any books, websites, or reading materials either the Intern Architect/Student Associate or Mentor recommends?
2. Which connections are important to establish early in one's career (e.g., trusted accountant for personal finances, banker for a line of credit/business loans, professional references for changes in employment, etc.)?
3. Are there specific Continuing Education courses that either party feels would be beneficial to the other?

4. Which organizations can either party join outside of the office (RAIC, Local Architectural Societies, alumni groups, etc.)?
 - o Are there some groups outside of architecture that the Mentor would recommend? A healthy work/life balance is important.
5. What inspires both of you about architecture?
 - o Which Architects?
 - o Which types of projects?
 - o Which specific projects?
 - o Are there recommended resources for learning more?
6. Is there a particular focus area either Mentor/Intern Architect/Student Associate would like to learn more about? Which resources are available for pursuing?

8.2 Proposed Template Agenda – Subsequent Meetings

i. IAP:

1. Review the most recent CERB submission and the type of work completed.
 - o Has the Intern Architect/Student Associate progressed in the manner as expected?
 - o What advice does the Mentor have with respect to current progress?
 - o Review the range of project types, sizes, and occupancies.
 - o Is the Intern Architect/Student Associate able to gain experience in the required areas? Are there any that are tricky?
 - o What advice can the Mentor provide in obtaining experience in challenging areas? What is their professional experience in these areas?
 - o If the required experience is not being obtained, what steps can the Intern Architect/Student Associate take?
 - o Identify the Intern Architect/Student Associate's strengths and areas for improvement.
 - o Review where emphasis should be focused on for the next work period.

2. Review, together, the PAF for the last CERB submission.
 - Has the Intern Architect/Student Associate responded to the comments in the current CERB submission?
 - If not, what strategy can be implemented to address any concerns?
3. How often does the Intern Architect/Student Associate speak with their Supervising Architect?
 - Discuss, together, strategies for requesting new types of experience from Employers/Supervising Architect.
 - What should an Intern do if assigned with a task in which they do not feel comfortable (lack of knowledge/ experience, etc.)?
4. Are there any personal challenges the Intern Architect/Student Associate is facing in or out of the workplace where the Mentor can provide advice or suggestions?
5. Review progress of short and intermediate-term goals; adjusting as necessary.
6. Review progress toward long-term goals, adjusting as necessary.

ii. Areas of Practice:

1. What is a professional (or personal) challenge that occurred recently? How is/was it being met? (This could be for either Mentor or Intern Architect/Student Associate)
2. What advice does the Mentor have in respect to working effectively and efficiently?
 - What is the difference between working harder and working smarter? How is this practised in the Intern Architect/Student Associate's office? How is this practised in the Mentor's office?
3. What advice does the Mentor have with respect to salary/benefits?
4. How does the Mentor balance "design integrity" with a client's requirements?
 - How is design integrity defined?
 - How is the role of "design" viewed in the Intern Architect/Student Associate's firm?
 - How does the Mentor view the role of "design" in business?

5. How should an Architect deal with clients?
 - o What are different types of clients?
 - o Does the Mentor's firm focus on a particular type of client?
 - o Does the Intern Architect/Student Associate's firm focus on a particular type of client?
6. How does the Mentor (or the Mentor's firm) pursue new work?
 - o What are important things to know about business development?
7. Who does which job(s) in the Mentor's firm?
 - o How does a construction document set get produced? Who writes specifications? Who develops details?
 - o Would the Mentor feel comfortable with taking the Intern Architect/Student Associate to their own firm to observe how certain projects are dealt with and to include their staff in that discussion?