



**Qatar University
Department of Architecture and Urban Planning
College of Engineering**

Visiting Team Report: Visit Three Reevaluation

B. Arch. (160 credit hours)

The National Architectural Accrediting Board
Date of Visit: March 24–27, 2018
Date of Visit Three: 2015

Vision: The NAAB aspires to be the leader in establishing educational quality assurance standards to enhance the value, relevance, and effectiveness of the architectural profession.

Mission: The NAAB develops and maintains a system of accreditation in professional architecture education that is responsive to the needs of society and allows institutions with varying resources and circumstances to evolve according to their individual needs.

Contents

Summary of Visit	
1. Summary and Acknowledgments	1
2. Conditions Not Met	1
3. Causes of Concern	1
Educational Outcomes and Curriculum	2
Changes or Planned Changes in the Program Since the Previous Visit	5
Appendices	
1. Conditions Met with Distinction	6
2. SPC Matrix	7
3. Visiting Team	8
Team Signatures	9
Qatar University Response	10
Confidential Recommendation	14

I. Summary of Team Findings

1. Visit Summary and Acknowledgments

The 2018 visiting team members wish to thank President Hassan Al-Derham and Dean Khalifa Nasser Al-Khalifa for their hospitality, attentiveness, and dedication to cross-cultural, interdisciplinary discourse and academic exchange. We recognize their commitment to Qatar University's architecture program and commend the time, resources, planning, and self-assessment culminating in the 2018 visit.

Nowhere is the hospitality of Qatar University more evident than the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning. We owe special thanks to Dr. Fodil Fadli and his colleagues in DAUP for their preparation and courtesy. We would be remiss not to acknowledge the assistance of Abdulla Nasser Alnuaimi, whose guidance eased every task and transition. We are likewise grateful for the time and effort the faculty, staff, and students contributed to this process. We completed our visit with a deepened sense of common purpose and fellowship that respects but also transcends geographical and cultural diversity. Our experience in Doha made the world seem both smaller and larger. The team was impressed with developments within DAUP and the College of Engineering to strengthen the identity and agency of the architecture program, including increased support for the AIAS chapter; attention to extra-curricular programs that facilitate collaboration between engineering and architecture students; and new, well-funded initiatives creating opportunities for ongoing collaboration in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

The 2018 visiting team wishes to especially commend Dr. Fadli and the faculty for a well-prepared and well-organized schedule, team room, and assembly of academic evidence. In addition to the core purpose of the visit, our hosts ensured a meaningful introduction to the urban and architectural context of professional education in Qatar. We again extend our heartfelt thanks to Qatar University, the College of Engineering, and the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning for a memorable visit.

2. Conditions Not Met

B.5 Life Safety: Ability to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.

3. Causes of Concern

In their review of building projects from all studios, team members expressed concern over lackluster attention to the principles of accessibility, which derive from the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, a civil rights law at the heart of the NAAB student performance criterion B.2. Although the team found perfunctory details and dimensions that indicated the ability to accommodate people with disabilities in the composition of buildings and sites, closer inspection suggests the need for amplification of this principle as an essential requirement of integrative design.

II. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

Condition II.2.2 Professional Degrees and Curriculum: *For substantial equivalency, the NAAB requires degree programs in architecture to demonstrate that the program is comparable in all significant aspects to a program offered by a U.S. institution. This includes a curricular requirement that substantially equivalent degree programs must include general studies, professional studies, and electives.*

Curricular requirements are defined as follows:

- **General Studies.** *A professional degree program must include general studies in the arts, humanities, and sciences, either as an admission requirement or as part of the curriculum. It must ensure that students have the prerequisite general studies to undertake professional studies. The curriculum leading to the architecture degree must include a course of study comparable to 1.5 years of study or 30% of the total number of credits for an undergraduate degree. These courses must be outside architectural studies either as general studies or as electives with content other than architecture.*

This requirement must be met at the university or tertiary school level. Post-secondary education cannot be used to meet this requirement. At least 20% of the credits in the professional architecture degree must be outside architectural studies either as general studies or as electives with other than architectural content.

- **Professional Studies.** *The core of a professional degree program consists of the required courses that satisfy the NAAB Student Performance Criteria (SPC). The professional degree program has the discretion to require additional courses including electives to address its mission or institutional context.*
- **Electives.** *A professional degree program must allow students to pursue their special interests. The curriculum must be flexible enough to allow students to complete minors or develop areas of concentration, inside or outside the program.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. The curriculum has 28.75% (46 credit hours) of the total credits (160 credit hours) in General Studies, making it 2 credits short in meeting the requirement.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: The program now meets the 30 percent requirement for General Studies.

B.2 Accessibility: *Ability to design sites, facilities, and systems to provide independent and integrated use by individuals with physical (including mobility), sensory, and cognitive disabilities.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. Evidence of understanding was found in ARCT 320 Design Methods and Theories, but there was not consistent evidence of ability in studio work.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Team members found evidence of ability in a combination of documented course work from ARCT 333, Construction Drawing and Detailing, and in studio work issuing from two design studios--ARCT 410 Design Studio 5 - Community, and ARCT 510 Comprehensive Design Studio. The team notes stronger evidence of accessibility in site design more so than in building design.

B.4 Site Design: *Ability to respond to site characteristics such as soil, topography, vegetation, and watershed in the development of a project design.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. While Site Design is not yet demonstrated at the ability level, progress has been made since the previous visit to create opportunities. Acknowledging that Qatar is a relatively flat terrain, the faculty has introduced projects in different countries and regions that expose students to different climates, site conditions, and topographies. Such projects have been introduced in ARCT 212, ARCT 310, and ARCT 311 Design Studios, which show evidence of more complex site analysis. However, site design at the ability level has not yet percolated up to the ARCT 510 Comprehensive Design Studio and ARCT Senior Project. Continued focus by faculty on providing a variety of site types early in the program will allow future demonstration of comprehensive analysis and synthesis of site design elements into projects at all levels.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Team members found evidence of this ability in course work and studio work in Comprehensive Design Studio ARCT 510 and ARCT 511--Senior Project Preparation and Programming (Thesis Research). Team members wish to note significant improvement since the last visit.

B.5 Life Safety: *Ability to apply the basic principles of life-safety systems with an emphasis on egress.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. Progress has been made and evidence of an understanding was found in ARCT 332 but there was still a lack of consistent evidence of ability in studio work.

[X] Not Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: While team members found evidence that the curriculum delivers life safety design principles and criteria in required lecture and seminar courses—e.g., ARCT 330, Materials and Methods of Building Construction (2); studio projects in ARCT 411, Architectural Design Studio 6 (Sustainability); and ARCT 510, Comprehensive Design Studio—student work still lacks clear demonstrations of the ability to apply these criteria in the design of building circulation, egress, the design and number of fire stairs, and the design and location of exit doors and door swings.

B.6 Comprehensive Design: *Ability to produce a comprehensive architectural project that demonstrates each student's capacity to make design decisions across scales while integrating the following SPC:*

A.2 Design Thinking Skills	A.9 Historical Traditions and Global Culture	B.5 Life Safety
A.4 Technical Documentation	B.2 Accessibility	B.7 Environmental Systems
A.5 Investigative Skills	B.3 Sustainability	B.9 Structural Systems
A.8 Ordering Systems	B.4 Site Design	

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. Progress has been made since Visit Two; however, there was still not consistent evidence of ability in ARCT 510 Comprehensive Design Studio, specifically in Life Safety, Accessibility, Site Design, or Structural Systems.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Team members found evidence in course work and studio projects issuing from ARCT 510, Comprehensive Design Studio, with the exception of life safety, as explained in the annotation for B.5. The team deliberated at length about this deficit and unanimously agreed to accept this criterion as met in view of demonstrable improvements across all other criteria incorporated under the Comprehensive Design requirement.

B.10 Building Envelope Systems: *Understanding of the basic principles involved in the appropriate application of building envelope systems and associated assemblies relative to fundamental performance, aesthetics, moisture transfer, durability, and energy and material resources.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. Consistent evidence of an understanding could not be found in either class work or studio work of the basic principles of multiple envelope systems and assemblies.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Team members found evidence in course work and projects issuing from ARCT 330, Materials and Methods of Building Construction (2), and ARCT 411, Architectural Design Studio 6 (Sustainability).

C.1 Collaboration: *Ability to work in collaboration with others and in multi-disciplinary teams to successfully complete design projects.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. Strong evidence is shown that collaboration occurs within and between batches, however, evidence is not shown and student conversations indicate that multi-disciplinary collaboration does not occur. The students expressed a strong desire for this type of interaction.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Team members found evidence in course work and projects issuing from ARCT 410, Architectural Design Studio 5 (Community) and ARCT 530, Construction and Project Management. In addition, the team notes significant investment in interdisciplinary initiatives at the college level, which bring architecture students together with engineering students around innovation and entrepreneurship, and the 2018 U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon Middle East competition.

C.6 Leadership: *Understanding of the techniques and skills architects use to work collaboratively in the building design and construction process and on environmental, social, and aesthetic issues in their communities.*

2015 Visiting Team Assessment:

Not Met. Evidence was found of an understanding of leadership in the building design and construction process but there was little evidence of leadership in environmental, social and aesthetic issues in their communities.

[X] Met

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: Team members found ample evidence demonstrating understanding of this criterion in course work and projects issuing from ARCT 410, Architectural Design Studio 5 (Community); ARCT 511, Senior Project Preparation and Programming; ARCT 512, the Senior Project; ARCT 530, Construction and Project Management; and ARCT 531, Ethics and Professional Practice.

III. Changes or Planned Changes to the Program Since the 2015 Visit: *The program must provide information on the following issues:*

- *Faculty retirement/succession planning*
- *Changes in administration (e.g., dean, department chair, provost)*
- *Changes in enrollment (e.g., increases, decreases, new external pressures)*
- *New opportunities for collaboration*
- *Changes in financial resources (increases, decreases, external pressures)*
- *Significant changes in educational approach or philosophy (e.g., new provost = new approach)*
- *Changes in physical resources (e.g., deferred maintenance, new building, cancelled new building)*

[X] The program provided the information.

2018 Visiting Team Assessment: *The program provided ample evidence of ongoing improvements, curricular refinement, and external self-assessment, utilizing both local and international reviewers.*

IV. Appendices

1. Conditions Met with Distinction (limited to Conditions and SPC evaluated by the 2018 visiting team):

C.6 Leadership: Understanding of the techniques and skills architects use to work collaboratively in the building design and construction process and on environmental, social, and aesthetic issues in their communities.

Team members wish to commend the faculty and students on a culture that promotes leadership and self-determination, especially in the organization and activities of the QU AIAS chapter, and as exhibited in course work and projects issuing from ARCT 511, Senior Project Preparation and Programming; ARCT 512, Senior Project; ARCT 530, Construction and Project Management; and ARCT 531, Ethics and Professional Practice.

3. The Visiting Team

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V. Signatures of the Visiting Team

Respectfully submitted,



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Response to Visiting Team Report for Visit 3 Reevaluation

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June 21, 2018

Judith A. Kinnard, FAIA
President
National Architectural Accrediting Board, Inc.

Ref: QU-DAUP Response / NAAB Substantial Equivalency - VTR Visit Three Reevaluation

Dear Ms. Judith A. Kinnard,

On behalf of Qatar University Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, students, faculty and staff, I would like to express our deepest gratitude and thanks to the NAAB visiting team [Prof. Daniel Friedman, Mr. Brad Schulz and Dr. Marika Snider] for their thoughtful review of the progress made by the department in the development of the Bachelor of Architecture Program.

We appreciate the thorough and detailed feedback in the Visiting Team Report [VTR] pertaining to the NAAB Substantial Equivalency designation process, during their 24-27 March 2018 visit.

We would like to offer responses to the following points:

- 1- Not Met SPC [B.5. Life Safety]
- 2- Cause of Concern related to Met SPC [B.2. Accessibility]
- 3- Met with Distinction SPC [B.6. Leadership]
- 4- Adopting the 2014 NAAB SE conditions: Perspectives and development strategies

1. Not Met SPC [B.5. Life Safety]

The diverse international background of our faculty, staff and students means that their experience as users, scholars and designers of the built environment include a large variety of practices from regions across the globe. We are very proud of this diversity. It enhances the quality of our department in general, and the B.Arch. program in particular.

Since QU students and faculty are accustomed to a variety of egress system configurations, including practices that are different from U.S. standards, we teach our local code, the Qatar National Civil Defense Department [QNCCD], and the US. National Fire Protection Association [NFPA] Specification. Students learn requirements from both standards and the faculty use a blended checklist of Life Safety standards to conduct peer reviews of studio projects that provide all students with consistent feedback. This has increased our faculty's familiarity with U.S. standards and improved student performance related to this SPC. Although we are confident that our students understand principles of life safety, we recognize the

need to develop more consistent student performance, especially in advanced studios where increased programmatic complexity requires resolution of irregular configurations. We are currently conducting a systematic study of recent design studio projects and revising our curriculum to take a more integrative approach that provides students with more opportunities to practice design for Life Safety. Part of this effort will include changes to design representation that will make Life Safety elements more readily visible to teachers, students and peer reviewers.

2. Cause of Concern related to Met SPC [B.2. Accessibility]

Our approach to strengthening our students' ability to integrate considerations of SPC B.2 Accessibility in architectural design parallels the approach described previously for teaching Life Safety. We agree with the Visiting Team that students have achieved the ability to include elements of accessible pathways into projects, especially in site design, but would benefit from developing a more holistic approach to integrating considerations of accessibility over all design stages. We are emphasizing on considerations of accessibility in our assessment of student learning outcomes and in our approach to curricular revisions.

3. Met with Distinction SPC [B.6. Leadership]

We are especially proud of this distinctive achievement. It is the result of a successful collaboration among several faculty to find innovative ways to include the theory and praxis of architect's leadership roles in technical as well as design courses. It culminates in senior design studios [preparation and project] where students' responses to the leadership assignment informed their thinking about how architects apply leadership to engage and serve communities. We would also like to take this opportunity to commend our student leaders for their success in launching and developing our new QU-AIAS Chapter.

4. Adopting the 2014 NAAB SE Conditions: Perspectives and development strategies

As we anticipate the next version of the NAAB Substantial Equivalency Conditions, we are remapping our existing matrix and curriculum to the 2014 Conditions and are revising the curriculum to further integrative design and enhance our students' uses of computing technologies and digital tools to aid 3D design thinking skills, visualization and communications. Our ongoing attention to continuous improvement will use the following development strategies:

a. Review of the Architecture Program

A regular process of periodic review will focus on student performance outcomes in individual courses and holistically across the curriculum. This process will inform a fine-tuned alignment of courses with NAAB SPCs and other outcomes aligned with our local context and the multi-cultural approach.

b. Strengthening Instructional Materials

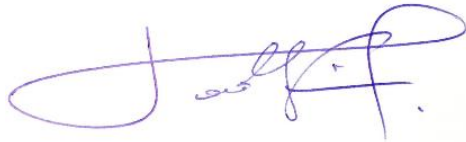
The review of the Architecture Program will inform a thorough review of instructional materials. This will improve alignment with standards and practices that reflect international, regional and local practices relevant to NAAB Substantial Equivalency designation.

c. Focus on Integrative Design processes

The program review and instructional materials improvements will be complemented by a continuing focus on integrative design. We will ensure that all 300 to 500 level studios include activities that help students learn to integrate specific systems, yet that are also comprehensive and responsive to the multi-dimensional nature of architectural design.

To conclude we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the NAAB staff and the many volunteer members of visiting teams who lent their expertise. Thank you for helping us develop our Bachelor of Architecture program at Qatar University.

Yours sincerely,



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