



Acreditadora
Nacional de
Programas de
Arquitectura y
Disciplinas del
Espacio
Habitable A.C.

Acreditadora Nacional de Programas de Arquitectura y Disciplinas del Espacio Habitable A.C.

NATIONAL ACCREDITING BOARD OF ARCHITECTURE AND DISCIPLINES OF THE HABITABLE SPACE

ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES FOR VISITING TEAMS

Translation and editing

José J. Jiménez

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Antigua Academia de San Carlos, Emiliano Zapata 37, Centro Histórico,
Cd.México, C.P. 06000, Tel/Fax 55 42 66 05, www.anpadeh.org.mx



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Preface

This document is intended to establish a common ground for the understanding of the accreditation process and the activities related to it, particularly the on site evaluation to be carried out by ANPADEH's evaluators. It is oriented for the evaluators and authorities responsible of the accreditation of an Academic Program in Architecture and Disciplines of the Habitable Space.

1. Introduction

The process of accreditation of academic programs for the formation of Architects in Mexico is composed by several sets of activities. One of these, very important, is the on site evaluation visit by a team of academic and professional evaluators, who on behalf of the ANPADEH, carry out the evaluation on the conditions that the education of future Architects requires. This activity is of paramount importance and should be carried out on a precise agenda of activities to develop in a time frame of four days. This visit consist of three stages: a) preparation, b) on site visit and c) follow up.

Prior to the visit the team of evaluators check on the Self Study Instrument (IAE) sent previously (at least 45 days) to ANPADEH's facilities by the officials of the program to be evaluated. This instrument reflects synthetically, the characteristics and conditions upon which the program develops. This Self Study is revised by the ANPADEH's Technical Committee under the criteria stated in the General Manual for the Accrediting Process. The results of this analysis can be:

- Accept the document (IAE) and proceed to the visit of the evaluation team;
- Accept the IAE and proceed to visit but requiring additional information available at the time of the visit;
- Require missing or additional documentation prior to proceeding with the visit, or;
- Reject the IAE.

2. The site visit

The purpose of the visit is to evaluate the conditions on which the program develops. The team of evaluators gathers impressions about the quality of academic training process based on the General Manual for the Accreditation Processes of ANPADEH and writes down a report on the situation of the institution being evaluated. This report allows the ANPADEH to have a comprehensive, thorough and independent evaluation that is the basis for deciding on its accreditation and also to advise the institution on those aspects related to the program that can still be improved and/or corrected to comply with ANPADEH's criteria of quality and to include them in a Continuous Improvement Program. The on site evaluation is pivoted by the Self Study Instrument.



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The visiting team examines the academic program based on the criteria previously established by the ANPADEH but considering the educational model and the objectives and philosophy of the institution. Allows, in turn, examine the student's work both a process of learning and as a final product. There is a dialogue with all actors in the education process, including those carrying out complementary tasks as of management and support staff for the operation of the program.

To the extent that the visiting team achieves more clear and comprehensive results, linking the evaluation criteria with the essential components of the academic program, the greater the certainty with which the ANPADEH proceeds towards accreditation. To the extent that the institution has been able to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities, it will be possible for the team to recognize those aspects that support the program and their implications for the quality of the students' formation.

The visit of the evaluation team seeks, through the assessment for accreditation, to advise the institution on those aspects related to its continuous improvement and in achieving its mission, vision and institutional objectives. In this sense, the evaluation should be considered as an aid towards institutional improvement and not as a punitive action. In addition. The report of the visit is the main input for the evaluation of the Technical Committee which should determine if the program is accredited or not and what observations and recommendation should be sent to the institution to comply with the quality criteria.

3. The selection of the visiting team

The team is integrated by five evaluators, three of which three are academics coming from accredited institutions and form part of the ANPADEH's National Pull of Evaluators (registered in COPAES). These should reside outside the geographical region of the institution whose academic program is being evaluated. One of the team members comes from the College of Architects of the region and one from the recent graduated students of the program, preferably with no more than five years of egress. Both of them unconnected currently with the institution to be evaluated. The institution has the right to object one of the academics if it considers that there are conflicts of interest.

This team will be headed by one of the academic representatives appointed by the ANPADEH, who is a member of the Technical Committee and is responsible for the overall process of the visit.

To avoid conflict of interest of evaluators must comply with the following:

- None of the academic members should come from the same geographical entity where the Academic Program is located,
- No member will record to suggest bias in favor or against the institution,
- No member shall maintain current labor relationship with the institution,



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- The members of the College of Professionals and the student representative of the graduates, should be recognized in the community for his professional work.

To exercise its disagreement on the integration the visiting team, the institution must submit the relevant evidence to establish, without doubt, the potential conflict of interests.

At the invitation of the ANPADEH an observer, national or foreign, can participate in the process of evaluation. This observer cannot interfere with the activities planned by the visiting team or participate in the decisions.

4. Integration of the visiting team

The ANPADEH requires that all members and observers participate in a session of integration before facing the evaluation activities. This session should be carried out on the first day of the visit. During this session there should be an orientation of activities, under the criteria marked in the General Manual for the Accreditation Process and the Code of Ethics (which must be signed by each one the team members). Also there should be discussed the generals of the Self Study of the Academic Program to be evaluated. In this session the team will review and clarify its role, scope of work and character of the visit.

5. Pre visit activities

At least one week in advance, each team member will receive a copy of the Self Study Instrument sent by the program officials to ANPADEH's office, also other information should be available to the evaluators as follows:

- The General Manual for the Accreditation Process of the ANPADEH
- The Code of Ethics
- The Accreditation procedures for Visiting Teams
- Report formats
- List of the members of the visiting team and criteria for the ordering and management of the visiting activities
- The proposed agenda
- Contact data of the facilitator or liaison person designated by the institution

The ANPADEH propose a preliminary time table with the activities to carry out. This agenda should be defined on the first meeting with the authorities of the institution. The details of each visit should respond to the specific characteristics of each academic program. It is the responsibility of the Team leader that this agenda is fulfilled and that the institution provides what is necessary means to reach the objectives of the visit.

6. Visit



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For optimal performance of the visiting team, the institution will provide convenient facilities to the team work (physical space, equipment, materials, documentation, etc.). The place must be under control of the team coordinator.

During the visit, they will be developed, at least, the following activities:

- Orientation and agreements between the school and the visiting team
- An exhibition of academic works developed by the students that include all semesters and course subjects
- Guided tour to all the facilities available for use by students and faculty of the Academic Program
- Interviews with representatives of the academic staff (teachers and researchers), administrative, educational groups, collegial bodies, students, alumni and employees
- Visit to design studios and workshops and dialogue with students in class
- Review of the documentation made available to certify the reports on the Self Study
- Preparation of the report

The team coordinator is responsible that the final report complies with ANPADEH's format. It should be clear and concise, attached to the regulations of the ANPADEH. This report will include the recommendations of the visiting team. These recommendations by any means, direct or indirect, will not be revealed to the institution until the final evaluation and accreditation decision is done by the Technical Committee.

7. Costs of visit

The expenses of the visit will be covered by the ANPADEH, however the institution should attend the transportation and mobility requirements of the visiting team.

8. The report of the Visiting Team

The report should express the direct impressions on the quality of the Academic Program and the student performance. It should provide to the Technical Committee an objective assessment of the characteristics of the Academic Program for the formation of Architects. In particular it should allow a comparison of the characteristics of the Academic Program with other programs considering the 10 categories of parameters included in the General Manual for the Accreditation Processes of the ANPADEH.

The visiting team examines the academic program based on the criteria established by the ANPADEH within the educational purpose of the institution, its context and academic vision. Any difference between them, are subject to be notified on the recommendations of the Technical Committee to the officials. The clearer their findings on the components of the Academic Program, the better the opinions and recommendations to improve the quality of





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the program. Therefore it is important that the visiting team not be limited to the obvious documents, but should seize the opportunity to confront the faculty, students and authorities to fully understand the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and pitfalls of the Academic Program; most important is to detect the academic environment and the attitude of permanent change versus the feeling of conformism and stagnation.

The result of the visit will be poured into the appropriate forms with any attachments and missing information and complementary opinions. It must be signed by all the members of the visiting team. The complete file will be inserted into an envelope that will be sealed with signatures of the Team Coordinator and the representative of the institution whose academic program has been evaluated. The visitor team coordinator will be responsible to submit this report to the Technical Committee of the ANPADEH as soon as possible.

9. Criteria for carrying out the evaluation visit efficiently and effectively

The accreditation process of study programs conducted by the National Accrediting Board of Architecture and Disciplines of the Habitable Space, ANPADEH, is based on the collegiate work of distinguished professionals. The fundamental task of the evaluation team is to corroborate by means of evidences what the institution stated in the Self Study document sent to ANPADEH.

In order to guide the process, they are some criteria set out below under which the visiting team will be guided as follows:

- a) Facilitator. It is requested that there must be an institutional representative assigned to fulfill the requirements of the team during the visit. For the convenient operation of the visit, it is essential to maintain a smooth and efficient communication between this facilitator and the Coordinator of the visiting team.
- b) Professional collegiate Architect and a Graduated from the program to be evaluated. Both figures should ensure their committed participation during the duration of the visit. None of them must have labor relationship with institution.
- c) Exclusive work space. It is essential to have a working space for the team work with the necessary computer equipment, office supplies, documentation, etc. It also requires exclusivity and privacy.
- d) Documented evidences. It is required to have in the workplace of the team the files with supporting documents on the 10 categories of indicators reported in the self-study. This documentation may be registered in electronic media or physical files. Among others there should be documentation on theses, books, periodicals, research and other documents.
- e) Interviews. Interviews with students, faculty, alumni, and administrative authorities are targeted. So actors who do not belong to the group being interviewed should not participate (e.g. teachers with administrative staff, graduates with institutional duties). With regard to



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teachers and students the sample should include each subgroup considering all semesters. Similarly, graduates must belong to different generations of preference.

f) Exhibition of student work. The sample of work must contain the recent final exercises of all educational levels and learning course units. Also, the presence of students is required without accompanying teachers or authorities. A presentation sheet should be used to show the evaluation criteria for issuing the grades in the evaluation.

g) First day of work. It involves a meeting of the visiting team with the facilitator and, if applicable, with the authorities of the institution. In this situation, the purpose of the meeting is to clarify the program of the visit and discuss some conditions to carry out the planned activities. If additional issues arise these will be resolved between the parties.

In order to achieve the success of the process, the open and committed attitude of the community of the institution being visited is very important. The visiting team requires openness and collaborative attitude of the various actors. A fundamental principle of the evaluation is to contribute through the observations of the evaluators to the quality improvement of the academic program. The on site evaluation is an opportunity to have an external opinion on the way the institution carries out its commitment to quality education. To the extent this is achieved, the accreditation process of the ANPADEH has its reason to be.

Attentively

The Directive Council

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