

**BOARD FOR ARCHITECTS, PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS, LAND SURVEYORS,
CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNERS AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
(APELSCIDLA)**

AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING

**Tuesday, July 8, 2025 –10:00 a.m.
First Floor Training Room**

**Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
9960 Mayland Drive
Richmond, Virginia 23233**

Mission: Our mission is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public by licensing qualified individuals and businesses enforcing standards of professional conduct for professions and occupations as designated by statute.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD *FIVE MINUTE PUBLIC COMMENT, PER PERSON*

IV. ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY TO A NAAB ACCREDITED DEGREE

- a. HB 2154 *(Page 2)*
- b. Public Comment *(Page 3)*
- c. Alternative Pathway Draft *(Page 4)*

V. OTHER BUSINESS

VI. COMPLETE CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORM AND TRAVEL VOUCHER

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ Agenda materials made available to the public do not include disciplinary case files or application files pursuant to §54.1-108 of the Code of Virginia.
- ❖ Five-minute public comment, per person, with the exception of any open disciplinary or application file.
- ❖ Persons desiring to participate in the meeting and requiring special accommodations or interpretative services should contact the Department at (804) 367-2785 at least ten days prior to the meeting so that suitable arrangements can be made for an appropriate accommodation. The Department fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2025 SESSION

CHAPTER 534

An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 54.1-406.1, relating to professions and occupations; alternative to education requirement for licensure of architects.

[H 2154]

Approved March 24, 2025

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

- 1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 54.1-406.1 as follows:
§ 54.1-406.1. *Alternative to education requirement for licensure of architects.***

A. The Board shall adopt regulations establishing work and education experience equivalencies that shall provide an alternative to the requirement of a professional degree in architecture from a program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) pursuant to 18VAC10-20-110. In establishing an alternative pathway to a NAAB-accredited degree, the Board shall require a minimum of 10 years of qualifying work experience, education experience, or combination of work and education experience.

B. In establishing qualifying work and education experience under this section, the Board shall adopt regulations establishing a credit system to account for varying degrees of work and education experience and such credit system shall be based on the applicability of such work or education experience to the practice of architecture.

C. The Board shall develop requirements for applicants seeking licensure to certify work and education experience on an annual basis.

- 2. That, notwithstanding any annual reporting requirement developed by the Board for Architects, Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, Certified Interior Designers and Landscape Architects (the Board), the Board shall evaluate any past work or education experience of any applicant in meeting the requirements of the first enactment of this act.**

- 3. That the second enactment of this act shall expire on July 1, 2028.**

DRAFT AGENDA PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION
Materials contained in this agenda are proposed for discussion
And are not to be construed as regulations
DRAFT AGENDA PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION



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Agency

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

Board

Board for Architects, Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, Certified Interior Designers, and Landscape Architects

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Commenter: Chloe Hellerman, Westwood Professional Services

5/20/25 2:16 pm

Cost-conscious licensure for hands-on learners

I graduated from UVA's 4-year undergraduate architecture program in 2023. Instead of going straight into grad school to meet the professional degree requirement for licensure, I chose to enter the workforce to determine whether I actually wanted to pursue architecture as a career before taking on the expense of additional education. Since starting my job at Westwood (formerly Balzer & Associates) almost two years ago, I've learned more from my on-the-job training than I did in the entirety of my architecture education! My learning style is best suited to hands-on, tactile experience, something that is hard to come by in academia - particularly in a virtual program, which I would require in order to continue working my current job while fulfilling the education requirement for licensure in Virginia. In my case, a professional degree is both an unnecessary expense and a limited value-add. Supplementing my job experience with hands-on trainings and field work is a more effective use of my time, money, and energy and will help me to become a well-rounded designer with real-world knowledge.

CommentID: **235947**

Materials contained in this draft are for discussion purposes only and are not to be construed as an official board position

18VAC10-20-105. Qualifications for licensure as an architect.

A. Upon completing the requirements of this section, applicants may apply for licensure with the board.

B. Education. Applicants must submit documentation acceptable to the board verifying one of the following educational qualifications has been met:

1. **[NAAB Method]** The applicant hold a professional degree in architecture from a program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). The degree program must have been accredited by NAAB no later than two years after the date of the applicant's graduation from the program.

2. **[Non-NAAB pure education method]** Applicants seeking credit for a degree or coursework that is not NAAB-accredited, whether foreign or domestic, must establish a National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) record and have that degree or coursework evaluated for equivalency to a NAAB- accredited professional degree in architecture through NAAB's evaluation service. The board reserves the right to reject any evaluation submitted. Any costs attributable to evaluation will be borne by the applicant.

3. Combination Education and Experience.

a. Applicant may substitute completed education with 10 years of experience.

b. Applicants may combine experience and education in the following methods.

Education -	Experience Credited	Work Experience Remaining
BA/BS Architecture, including Arch. Design BFA	4 years	6 years
Other Related Bachelor's Degree (BS Engineering, Building Construction, BFA [create/include list of all acceptable related degrees])	3 years	7 years
Non-related Bachelor's Degree	2 years	8 years
Associate's Degree	1 year	9 years
Related Graduate Degree	6 months for each successfully completed full-time equivalent academic year	
NAAB Professional Program, without degree	1 year or each successfully completed full-time equivalent academic year	Varies [, at least five years]
High school diploma, GED or		10 years

equivalent		
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These methods may not be combined.

c. Experience gained must include the following areas:

Experience Types
Programming
Site and Env. Analysis
Schematic Design
Construction Cost Analysis
Code Research
Design Development
Construction Documents
Specs and Materials Research
Doc Checking and Coordination
Bidding Procedures
Construction Phase – Office
Construction Phase – Observation
Project Management
Office Management

d. Substitute Experience under this subsection may not be combined with experience under subsection C of this section.

[e. Applicants under this subsection must certify work and education experience annually. Any experience gained under this program should be reported to the board on the board designated form no later than January 31st for the preceeding year's experience.]

[1. If you gain experience out of state, here is the method to obtain credit for that]

[f. Educational credit methods may be combined, however, the same coursework cannot be counted toward multiple methods.] OR [Credit for an associates degree cannot be combined with credit towards a bachelor's degree.]

4. Pure experience substitute for education.

G. Work Experience gained must be under the direct supervision of a licensed architect.

C. Experience.

1. Applicants for original licensure must successfully complete the NCARB administered architectural experience program, which satisfies the experience requirement outlined in 18VAC10-20-35.

2. Applicants with an NAAB-accredited degree or who are actively participating in or who have completed the NCARB-accepted integrated path to architectural licensure option are required to document their experience or training in architecture before licensure.

D. Examination. The board is a member board of NCARB and applicants for original licensure are required to pass the NCARB-prepared exam.