



PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE: QUALIFICATIONS FOR LICENSURE (2002, R2018, R2023)

Policy Statement

The American Society of Landscape Architects endorses three critical standards to qualify candidates for licensure: education, experience, and examination. Collectively, education, experience, and examination are necessary and complementary measures that ensure an individual meets an established minimum professional competency and knowledge critical to protecting public health, safety, and welfare.

Education

ASLA endorses a professional degree in landscape architecture from a program accredited by the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) or Landscape Architecture Accreditation Council (LAAC). For candidates without an accredited LAAB or LAAC degree, ASLA supports alternative equivalent educational paths that provide the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill state licensure education requirements. ASLA supports the education requirements established in the 2022 Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards' (CLARB) Uniform Standard for Landscape Architecture Licensure.

Experience

ASLA endorses practical experience under the supervision of a licensed landscape architect as a necessary real-world application of skills learned through a formal or informal education. ASLA favors state statutes and regulations that require all practical experience to be gained under the direct supervision of a licensed landscape architect. However, at a minimum, ASLA supports a candidate obtaining up to half of their required experience under the direct supervision of a licensed landscape architect, with the balance coming under the direct supervision of a licensed allied design professional. ASLA supports the experience years established in the 2022 CLARB Uniform Standard for Landscape Architecture Licensure.

Examination

ASLA endorses examination as a standardized measure of a candidate's knowledge and skills necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare. In addition, to reduce barriers to examination, ASLA believes state licensing boards and their governing jurisdictions should allow for direct registration of the Landscape Architecture Registration Examination (L.A.R.E.) and allow candidates to begin taking the L.A.R.E. immediately following graduation from an LAAB or LAAC accredited program.

Justification

Education, experience, and examination are used as the criteria for state licensure of most professions, providing a standardized, objective, and defensible way to measure an individual's knowledge and skills in a specific field. State assessment of landscape architect candidacy qualifications ensures each candidate meets a minimum standard of knowledge and skill required to practice safely and effectively.

Allowing candidates with an LAAB or LAAC accredited degree to register directly for the L.A.R.E. through CLARB—without pre-approval from a state licensing board—reduces administrative burdens for licensing boards, increases accessibility to the examination process, and streamlines the registration process for candidates. Additionally, direct



registration empowers qualified candidates to take the examination when the individual feels prepared.

Issue

Education

Landscape architectural education provides exposure to a foundation of practical and professional knowledge that is difficult to duplicate by other means. An accredited landscape architecture degree provides education in design principles, natural and physical sciences, environmental studies, engineering, urban planning and design, and more.

Alternative educational paths may also provide the requisite educational knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill state licensure education requirements. Alternative educational pathways provide additional opportunities for individuals who may be unable to pursue a formal degree from an accredited program but may otherwise aspire to enter the profession.

Experience

While a professional education provides a landscape architecture candidate with a solid knowledge base for practice, there are many aspects of the profession that cannot be taught in the classroom or studio environment. Therefore, a minimum level of professional experience under the direct supervision of a licensed landscape architect is necessary for a candidate's exposure to the demands of practice.

CLARB, as determined by their Job Task Analysis, has identified experience in the following practice domains:

1. Inventory and Analysis—includes site inventory, physical analysis, and contextual analysis;
2. Design—includes stakeholder process, master planning, and site design;
3. Grading, Drainage, and Construction Documentation—includes site preparation plans, general plans and details, specialty plans, and specifications;
4. Project and Construction Management—includes pre-project management, project management, bidding, construction, and maintenance

Examination

The nationally administered Landscape Architect Registration Examination (L.A.R.E.) is a multi-part examination that tests a candidate's ability to apply their knowledge and skills to theoretical health, safety, and welfare problems frequently encountered in the profession. Several states also prescribe supplementary requirements for licensure to address unique state environments and climates.

Note

This policy is one of an integrated group of policies on licensing issues.