

# EDUCATION POLICY



Australian Institute  
of Landscape Architects

The AILA National Council reserves the right to vary its decisions on all policies and procedures based on a case by case assessment of situations that may develop, including circumstances not covered by published guidelines and policy documents.

All queries on National Policy and Procedures should be directed to the AILA's Executive Director.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Policy Context

As the professional body providing accreditation for Landscape Architectural University programs, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is committed to the importance of quality university education as being the essential pathway into the profession of Landscape Architecture.

The AILA's University Education and Accreditation Policy and Procedures provides the framework whereby the Australian Landscape Architecture profession evaluates, advocates for, and advances the quality of education through professionally recognised University programs.

The AILA through its accreditation processes aims to advance measurable levels of knowledge, skills and abilities sufficient for graduates to enter the Landscape Architecture profession ready to begin a period of internship through their employment.

The AILA has in place national and local committees to oversee and to inform the accreditation of Landscape Architecture and related University programs. A core feature of the accreditation framework is the Education Standards that have been developed to guide the evaluation of University programs.

## 1.2 AILA's University Education Policy, Standards and Accreditation Procedures

The AILA's University Education Policy, Standards and Accreditation Procedures outline the AILA's requirements for professional recognition of Landscape Architectural university education programs throughout Australia and comprise three documents to be read in conjunction with each other.

The University Education Policy document sets out the AILA's education aims with regard to University programs. The University Accreditation Standards document describes the specific standards expected by the AILA from accredited Landscape Architecture programs. The third document, the University Accreditation Procedures, outlines AILA's expectations for the programs in relation to the AILA accreditation panel reviews and visits.

The AILA, working with the profession and the accredited programs, regularly updates these Standards to ensure that they allow for a basis for flexible and innovative approaches to the delivery of education and to allow for the diversity and changing nature of the profession in Australia.

The AILA has committed to the accreditation processes for particular university programs because the AILA:

- Recognises that the future of the Landscape Architecture profession in Australia depends fundamentally on the quality of the university education programs available;
- Acknowledges the key role of educators within the Landscape Architecture profession in Australia;
- Works in partnership with the universities to achieve the shared goal of maintaining the highest possible standards of tertiary education for future landscape architects;
- Believes that accreditation of Landscape Architecture programs plays an important function in maintaining an appropriate standard of education for graduates of the programs while providing for diversity and innovation within the programs;
- Encourages and supports the university programs in the provision of a standard of education that effectively prepares students for the increasingly diverse profession of Landscape Architecture;
- Encourages links and partnerships across the spectrum of education and research activities that relate to the Landscape Architecture profession;
- Recognises that the Landscape Architecture profession gains by continually advancing standards of knowledge and competency and recognising innovation within program delivery.

### 1.3 Link between Standards and Procedures

Linked with the Education Policy and the Accreditation Standards documents are the 'Accreditation Procedures' document which sets out the required documentation and procedures for accreditation, re-accreditation and annual reporting of programs.

Accreditation of relevant programs offered by educational providers is the means by which graduates of those programs can successfully demonstrate that they have achieved the required minimum university education in Landscape Architecture as a first step on a pathway towards being recognised as an Australian Registered Landscape Architect.

The broader objective of maintaining the standard of Landscape Architecture education is to benefit the broader community through design solutions addressing the issues within the provision of sustainable settlements.

### 1.4 Key Documents

The AILA's has key policy documents which inform the Education Policy processes. These include:

- The AILA University Education Policy and Procedures
- The AILA Landscape Charter
- The Australian Landscape Principles
- Green Infrastructure
- Sustainable Settlement

Current documents are listed on the web site: [www.aila.org.au/policies](http://www.aila.org.au/policies)

Other Registration/Membership documents: [www.aila.org.au/membership](http://www.aila.org.au/membership)

Influencing documents - The International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA):

[www.iflaonline.org](http://www.iflaonline.org)

- IFLA Charter for landscape architectural education
- ICOMOS Guidelines on education and training in the conservation of monuments, ensembles and sites (1993)

## 2 Education Policy

### 2.1 AILA Professional Qualifications

The AILA recognises a university qualification as the standard educational requirement for entry to the profession of Landscape Architecture in Australia.

The minimum professional entry requirement recognised by the AILA is either

1. Four year Landscape Architecture accredited bachelor; or;
2. Three + two Masters - the three is AILA endorsed Bachelor plus two year accredited masters; or
3. Undergraduate in a non-Landscape Architecture + three year accredited masters.

### 2.2 Recognition of Entry Pathways in Accredited Masters Programs

Accreditation of a master's degree includes an appraisal of the entry pathways into the degree. Such pathways include prior qualification, evaluation of prior knowledge and competencies, or the provision of bridging courses.

The purpose of the appraisal is to provide a method of assurance that the graduates from the masters are at least commensurate with those from the four year bachelor degree.

The AILA relies on the programs to provide the assurance of appraisals and therefore the AILA has provided the following as guides across a range of possible pathways:

#### *Pre-requisites for two year AILA Accredited Masters*

A two year Masters may be offered to graduates of four year undergraduate Landscape Architecture bachelor degrees or graduates of an AILA endorsed three year degree (Design/Environment) as presently offered and/or being proposed by several programs.

#### **AILA Pathway Program** - *Recognition of three year undergraduate bachelor programs*

Graduates of an endorsed three year undergraduate program, part of the three plus two suite of programs, are recognised by the AILA as having the pre-requisites for entry into any AILA accredited two year Masters in Landscape Architecture.

Such three year undergraduate degrees are to be assessed by the AILA through the National Accreditation processes in order to be granted the status of an **AILA Pathway Program** for entry to any AILA accredited two year Masters in Landscape Architecture.

#### *Recognition of overseas student holding three year undergraduate bachelors*

Graduates of an overseas three year undergraduate Landscape Architecture program, part of the three plus two suite of Landscape Architecture programs, may be recognised as having the pre-requisites for entry into any AILA accredited two year Masters in Landscape Architecture. The AILA looks to the programs to make an assessment of these applicants and to equate them to the equivalent graduates from the endorsed AILA three year pathway programs.

#### **AILA Pathway Program** - *Recognition of bridging programs*

Universities may offer bridging programs, usually titled Graduate Diplomas, as bridging programs whereby graduates may then apply to enter the two year accredited Masters program, rather than undertake a three year Masters.

Such bridging programs are to be assessed by the AILA through the National Accreditation processes in order to be granted the status of an **AILA Pathway Program** for entry to any AILA accredited two year masters in Landscape Architecture.

#### *Articulation from other university programs*

While articulation into Landscape Architecture education must be in accordance with university standards, the course credit would equate to completion of areas of Landscape Architecture study that match content and outcomes in an accredited Landscape Architecture program.

### 2.3 Electives

The AILA encourages diversity within the programs for students to be encouraged to take opportunities to undertake electives in relevant and related fields.

The AILA is mindful that the taking of electives should not impinge on the student's ability to undertake core subject areas and satisfy the core standards for Landscape Architecture.

### 2.4 Double Degrees

The undergraduate components of Landscape Architecture within a double or dual degree need to be clearly equivalent to other accredited programs.

Where double degrees are offered in parallel with single degrees, separate accreditation is required for the Landscape Architecture degree.

### 2.5 Staffing of Accredited Programs

The AILA requires that the level of staffing stated as part of the accreditation submission and subsequent agreements must be maintained at all times as a minimum for the period of accreditation.

The AILA reserves the right to withdraw accreditation should there be significant reduction in resourcing to an accredited program.

### 2.6 Nomenclature

The preferred nomenclature for accredited programs in Landscape Architecture is:

*Bachelor of Landscape Architecture: BLA or BLArch*

*Master of Landscape Architecture: MLA or MLArch*

The AILA will give due consideration to accrediting programs that, while not necessarily having the words 'Landscape Architecture' as part of its main nomenclature, are able to demonstrate that they match the AILA policy accreditation requirements.

The AILA does not support the term 'Landscape Architecture' in the nomenclature of non-accredited programs. In particular the AILA does not support the use of the term 'Landscape Architecture' in reference to three year programs linked to a subsequent Masters program. The preferred nomenclature for any three year degree is the generic titles such as the Bachelor of Design or Bachelor of Environment.

The AILA is to be formally notified of any changes to the nomenclature of any accredited program.

The AILA reserves the right to not accept any changes to the nomenclature of an accredited program.