

Architects Sweden

Education policy

2018

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The purpose of the education policy

The foundation for a high competency level among architects is high quality architectural training which prepares for qualified and life-long learning within the broad field of architecture. The education policy of Architects Sweden aims to foster the best possible conditions for architectural academics and further professional development, as well as the maintenance and development of architects' knowledge.

The education policy is intended as a guide for those who educate architects – when changing programmes, starting a new architecture school or for undertaking any related education. The education policy should meet the needs of the students on clear objectives for the training, and form the basis for Architect Sweden's competency assessment in matters of membership and title.

Architects Sweden's education policy has existed since 2004 and has been revised several times. Architects Sweden's Education Committee has, during 2017-2018, in dialogue with educational institutions, updated the educational policy with the aim to strengthen the architect's role and better meet the Bologna process, increasing internationalisation and future challenges of the profession. This updated version of the education policy has been approved by the Board of Architects Sweden.

An education policy for a new era

The scope of Architects Sweden's education policy is to encompass what the education of architects needs to achieve now and in the future, as well as what resources are thus required. The policy should function as a support for providers of education, industry and students when discussing and making decisions on the quality of education, future development and resource allocations. Architects Sweden has had an educational policy since 2004 and it is revised every fifth year.

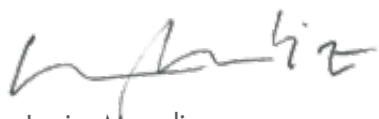
Societal development is becoming increasingly complex with ever more challenges to consider. Our designed living environments must live up to long-term global sustainability goals and at the same time create value for people in their day-to-day environments. In the face of these challenges, the demand for architectural expertise is increasing in municipalities and in architectural firms as well as in construction companies and in property development.

Architectural expertise in the design and planning stage can both alter and challenge our living environment. This is becoming more important in a world where one must be able to deal with uncertain scenarios and complex contexts, with demands on resource management and sustainability in the long-term perspective. Within the architect's fundamental expertise is the ability to consider many scales simultaneously – from the detail to the city and landscape context. A spatially designed solution must weigh a number of factors and requirements to solve a problem. This requires an ability to lead, to inspire and hold groups together in multi-disciplinary processes. It also requires an ability to reconcile opposing goals. The architect is trained to artistically, technically and practically create the qualities that are so important for environments where people live and work.

Architects are currently widening their operational field. Many will continue to work in a traditional role as designers and planners of our built environment. At the same time, architects are specialising in innovation within the design and production chain, in virtual environments, in research and development, in property development, in ecological processes and in management. The architect's core competencies will be an asset in several entirely new areas in the future.

Broadening and diversifying also has a geographical and cultural dimension. Architects today operate in an international arena to a far greater extent than before. New structures and networks are emerging and the synthesis of knowledge and values will generate entirely new solutions and challenges along the way.

An education that maintains a high standard is crucial for architects to be able to credibly and confidently take on and contribute to future development challenges in collaboration with other actors and users.



Louise Masreliez
Architect SAR/MSA
Chairperson Architects Sweden



Ulrika Karlsson
Landscape Architect MSA
Chairperson Architects Sweden
Education Committee

The foundation for architectural education

Architecture deals with landscapes, towns, places, buildings and interior spaces. In other words: our designed living environment in all scales.

Architects analyse, plan, design and develop our living environment. In this work the aim is to reach long-term sustainable quality, in terms of aesthetics, materials, construction, function and social values. To practice as a professional architect is to by way of a design process, realise ideas and aims in spatial design, and through a planning process to translate these to guidelines, programmes or policies, as well as to communicate and argue for decisions made. Architecture schools have a meaningful role to play in the development of the field of architecture and lay the foundation for architects' life-long learning.

Within architecture there are several professions that shares the same common foundation: architects, interior architects, landscape architects and planning architects. The decisive factor for an architectural education, irrespective of discipline, is first and foremost teaching based on concrete projects, so-called studioteaching, which with artistic, practical and critical approaches allow for synthesis, that is the ability to combine a variety of requirements, starting points and ideas in an independent spatial design.

Architectural education comprises at least 5 years of

fulltime study and can include a cohesive professional qualification, or a combination of a bachelor's and a master's degree. Education at the advanced level leads to a more thorough knowledge and builds on the basic level within one of the main disciplines specialisms of an architectural education. An architectural education can be provided by academic institutions with a technical-scientific, humanistic-social-scientific or an artistic learning environment.

As commissions become more diverse and comprehensive, additional distinct specialisations may be developed in the future, and architects will develop expertise within new areas. Today ab education is, for the most part, similar for architects within the same main field of study, but in order to meet the challenges of society, there should be an increased diversity, particularly in the master's programmes.

Previously a coherent course of study within one programme at one specific academic institution was the norm. Today the situation is different, and many architectural students shape their education with elements from different academic institutions, disciplines or countries. This is basically a positive development that should be supported by the architecture schools. Architects with many different profiles and insights will be needed in the future. This means that diversity and individual choice must be encouraged and facilitated.



PHOTO: ÅKE E. SON I INDIVAN

Skissernas museum, Lund, prizewinner of the Kasper Salin-award 2017. Elding Oscarson.



PHOTO: Ulf CEANDER

Flatåspark, Göteborg, nominated to the landscape award, the Senapriz 2017. 02 Landskap.

Architectural students must, to a greater extent, be able to get their acquisition of qualification merits credited when they move between different architectural educations, and more easily get a professional qualification where the option exists. Architects Sweden, which has an architectural qualification as a basic criterion for membership, currently grants membership and professional title to graduates with architectural educations from academic institutions of different disciplines, for example a bachelor in landscape architecture and a master in architecture. Architectural schools which only offer a bachelor's degree should, where possible, ensure that their students are in a position to complete their education with a master's degree from another academic institution.

Architectural education spans a wide spectrum of knowledge within several fields which must be fostered through practical and artistic training in viable projects. Contact between architecture schools and practitioners is therefore essential. Complementing academic training with professional experience in different phases and to different extents is important. Traineeship is an invaluable source of insight into an architect's work and profession, as well as leading to personal development. Traineeship also enriches education as a whole, where this experience can be used for the in-depth study that the architectural student takes on in his/her master's degree.

It is of great importance that architects who come to Sweden are offered the specific education needed for their valuable expertise to be utilised. In the international and multi-cultural world in which we live today, many different skills and specialisms are required for the architectural industry to meet the needs of society.

The growing needs of society and architects for increasingly specialised expert knowledge and in-depth study in architecture should be supported by facilitating professional development for architects. Research as well as interdisciplinary post-graduate education for practitioners, should be developed and encouraged.

Architects Sweden's basic principles for architectural education are:

1. The field of architecture comprises several professional disciplines such as architect, interior architect, landscape architect and planning architect.
2. Architectural education requires a minimum of 5 years of fulltime study.
3. Architectural education can comprise a cohesive professional qualification or a combination of a bachelor's degree and a master's degree.
4. An architect's education at master's level leads to a deeper understanding and should be built on the bachelor's level in any of the main specialisms.
5. Architecture schools should credit a bachelor's degree from one architecture school, when the student is admitted to a master's course at a different architecture school.
6. Architectural education which offers only a bachelor's degree, should, as far as possible, ensure that their students have an opportunity to complete their education with a master's degree at another architecture school.
7. Students should be encouraged to get work experience during their studies.
8. Architects with qualifications from other countries who live in Sweden, should be offered professional development if needed so that their architectural expertise can be utilised.
9. The growing need in society and of architects for specialised expertise in parallel with inter-disciplinary skills, should be supported by facilitating professional development for architects.

Goals for architectural education

The goals formulated here by Architects Sweden are based on the international and national goals existing for architectural education, and are divided into three areas:

- the architect's skills and abilities
- the architect's judgement and approach
- the architect's knowledge and understanding

Several of the architect's skills and abilities are fundamental and common to architectural education, regardless of which discipline is the focus of the education. To a large extent judgement and professional approach also conform

between the different professional disciplines. Skills and analysis can be practised in different scales and in different processes and projects. These two areas are crucial in assessing architectural education and are established in the first three years. A large part of the theoretical knowledge and understanding is also common to all architectural education, but variations exist, and changes occur over time, depending on the needs of society.

The students need to be prepared for continuous knowledge development and research work within the core areas of architecture during their education.

A. The architect's skills and ability

The working methods of architects can be described as a process, where the goal is defined step by step, in a continual development between proposals for a comprehensive approach and different sub-issues, with the aim to reconcile a diversity of different requirements for a designed spatial whole. During the education the architect should develop the ability to independently and creatively formulate new questions and contribute to knowledge development, solve more advanced problems, develop new and personal expressions as well as critically reflecting on personal approaches and those of others, within the main area of the education. The working methods include assessments of quality, analysis and design, both in part and wholly based on man's needs and circumstances and in consideration of the environment and function, law, context, resource use, technical solutions and expression. The skills include being able to collaborate and lead processes in groups with many varying competencies and points of departure. Developing working methods and techniques, physical as well as computerised, training in the ability to translate an idea into design, formulate briefs as well as an ability to communicate processes and proposals in images, word and model or other techniques suited to the task.

The students' understanding of the meaning of communication plus the ability to articulate to their work are important as well as being able to argue for their design decisions and to contextualise their work.

B. The architect's judgement and approach

The professional approach deals, to a great extent, with the responsibility that the architect must take in his/her profession, and is based on an understanding of the importance of the architecture for society, ecology and the people who will live and operate in the designed living environment that the architect contributes to creating.

Architects need to be able to put the change processes in which they participate in larger societal perspectives and be able to assess them. Here the knowledge of architecture's history is of central importance in the practical design work. Architects should have the ability to judge and weigh new additions and changes against the existing context, from a cultural, historical, aesthetic, economic, functional, legal and technical perspective.

It is about understanding how the designed living environment and its spatial context affects man's physical, social, emotional and intellectual need, as well as respect for man's integrity and social relationships. An architect must be able to handle conflicts of interests and goals in the formative and democratic processes. A long-term ecological, economic and social resource perspective on the designed living environment comprising production, operation and recycling, are of importance in the architect's practice.

C. The architect's knowledge and understanding

The architect's knowledge must cover a wide field and range from a comprehension of art, science and the humanities through social sciences, practice-based and artistic processes to technology and ecology. Architectural education can be provided in different academic environments, which support different types of architectural education and a variety of architects with diverse specialties. Regardless of in which academic environment the education is provided, knowledge and understanding should be communicated within the wide field that architects need to master. The different professional specialisms can contain specific knowledge within the relevant area.

Architecture is always created in a context and environment in which the design solution, regardless of scale, inevitably has a context. It is therefore important that the architect can understand and analyse this from an artistic, economic, technical, ecological and legal as well as a social and historical perspective.

Architects need knowledge and understanding on legislation and other regulations as well as economy and the decision-making process. An understanding of how these processes function is essential in order that an architect can contribute professionally with core skills and competencies of the architect.

The architect must understand and be able to work in processes involving and controlled by many other actors and interests, which means that knowledge within process methodology and process management are important in the education.

The result of the architect's work will often involve being carried out in a built or landscaped form, which is why knowledge of biological and physical conditions as well as technical principles for the implementation of planned changes in the living environment, construction and climate protection, is necessary.

Architecture is created for the people who will live and work in the designed living environment. Therefore, knowledge of the interaction between people, the landscape and the built living environment is necessary, as is how it is affected by spatial organisation and design, both inside and between buildings.

Architects Sweden

strives for the architecture schools to:

1. Communicate training and development of working methods and techniques, analogue as well as computerised, training to be able to translate an idea into design, formulate briefs and put words to this work and training to be able to argue for decisions and to contextualise the work.
2. Prepare the students for the society, the regulations and the changing professional life in which prospective architects will work, as well as how the architect's competence can be used and developed within different areas of activity.
3. Develop students' understanding of the importance of communication so that they can critically reflect and articulate their work.

Architectural education and the outside world

Architectural education has an important task in equipping the students for work commissions of the future. The foundation for a high level of competence among architects, is that architectural education prepares students for a qualified professional practice and life-long learning within architecture's broad field of operation.

Architects' roles are gradually changing as society develops. This demands that the education continually ensures that it is relevant and current, for example by analysis of the development of society with close links to, and insights into, the development of both the research field and business, nationally as well as internationally.

It is important that the architecture schools are at the forefront and prepare the students for a professional life in adaptation. By providing knowledge on the societal processes in which the professional will be working they can lead future development in the best way possible.

Education must be conducted in close connection with advanced and relevant research environments, where students have the opportunity to both assimilate current knowledge and be prepared for the knowledge acquisition and research activities which increasingly exist in the profession. The need of collaboration with other disciplines and professions must be met, while the architect's

contribution in multi-disciplinary processes and the architectural professionals' specific knowledge needs to be developed and strengthened to be fully effective.

It is of great value if the composition of students at architecture schools mirror the diversity found in society and that the architectural education is inclusive, open and accessible for students regardless of their socio-economic background. Architecture schools should actively work for students to be recruited from many different backgrounds, for example by enabling admission to education with both grades and work experience or other proficiency tests.

Gender issues should have high priority. This applies both to quantitative questions, such as the gender balance of students and staff groups but also to qualitative aspects such as, the content of the education, treatment issues, informal networks and systems.

The education should have clear syllabi and learning objectives that are based on a current analysis of the development of society as well as references to literature and research, which define and develop the objectives. The architecture schools should maintain networks with other providers of education, both regionally and internationally as well as with business, and create conditions for international contacts for students and teachers.



The local student board at Blekinge Institute of Technology on a study visit to Wanås sculpture park.



The Planning program for Södra Skanstull, Stockholm, winner of the Planning Prize 2017 Stockholms stads stadsbyggnadskontor.

It is important that what is expected of the students is clear. For this reason the education should provide clear assessment criteria and processes for examination. The education should manifest the learning outcomes in the project work produced, which demonstrates acquired abilities, nuanced knowledge base and an ability to formulate perspectives.

The quality of architectural education and the students' results should, in a structured way, be regularly tested against the learning objectives, institutional resources and performance goals. In this process it is important that the students and representatives from other academic institutions who provide architectural education take part. That representatives from professional practice also take part in this evaluation, is important in giving an holistic perspective and a depth to the evaluations.

The architecture schools have responsibility to provide a good working environment, not just for teachers and researchers, but also for students. To support good study results, and that students feel secure in their future professional roles, it is of great importance that architecture schools support both the students' knowledge and competencies, as well as personal development and maturity.

Architects Sweden strives for architecture schools to:

1. Be based on the life-long learning perspective, and support the architect's advancement during a entire professional life, by offering undergraduate education, post-graduate education and research education.
2. Have the possibility to take on a diversity of students through versatile recruiting, for example through both grades and work experience or other proficiency tests.
3. Have clear educational programmes and learning objectives based on a current analysis of the development of society such as references to literature and research, which define and develop the learning objectives.
4. Conduct research and development which deepens and introduces new knowledge to the education.
5. Maintain networks with other education providers, both regionally and internationally, as well as with business, and create conditions for international contacts for students and teachers.
6. Provide clear evaluation criteria and processes for examination.
7. Manifest learning outcomes in the project work produced, which demonstrate acquired abilities, nuanced knowledge base and ability to formulate perspectives.
8. Have a system of self-evaluation, and perform regular external assessments with teachers from other architectural courses and professional architects.
9. Have Swedish Higher Education Authority's evaluation of architectural education take place in context and include learning objectives, institutional resources and learning outcomes. A representative proposed by Architects Sweden should be included in the evaluation panel.
10. Permit representatives of the profession and the students to be included in the education committees or equivalent content-relevant governing bodies.
11. Offer a good working environment for students as well as teachers and researchers.



PHOTO: ÅKE ESON LINDMAN

Alma, Stockholm, winner of the interior award, the Golden Chair 2017. Tham & Videgård Arkitekter.

Architectural education's resources

Societal development is becoming more complex which puts higher demands than ever on architects and other actors involved in societal and urban development processes.

The demand for architects in Sweden has been high these past ten years. Even so, the need for architects will increase further. Above all, too few interior architects are being educated in Sweden today and the number of professionals is decreasing. The skills of interior architects are sought by clients and developers, and architectural practices that offer a professional interior design service are generally very successful. There is a growing market ahead if there is competency to meet the demand.

An overview of architectural education needs to be undertaken, with the purpose of increasing educational places within all professional disciplines while ensuring the quality of the education. Parliament, government and academic institutions must secure long-term sustainable basic funding for architectural education.

Architects should be educated in an environment that promotes experimentation, innovation and critical thinking, to communicate spatial expression, to be able to challenge and to translate ideas into a concrete material design and to formulate ideas in programmes.

In order to successfully conduct architectural education of high quality, sufficient viable resources are required, in the form of financial funding, physical premises, a strong research climate and teacher resources. The biggest threat to high quality education is that these resources are gradually diminishing.

Beyond the basic funding, certain architecture schools only get a minor part of the so-called design funding, which is far from sufficient. A strengthened resource allocation has been required for a long time which has meant that colleges have had difficulty getting teachers, premises and resources to suffice for the students. Higher and more long-term sustainable basic funding of all education and research within architecture is needed to meet the quality requirements placed on the resource-intensive architectural education.

The education must have resources in order to adapt the number of teachers on each course to the number of students, their existing knowledge and the chosen pedagogy. For this, teachers from practical backgrounds are required as well as teachers who conduct research, innovation and publicity activities and make their practical experience and research available to the students. Architectural teachers possess a combination of academic knowledge, professional knowledge (acquired as practising architects or through research), pedagogy and the ability to help students to progress in their work. It must be possible to employ teachers with professional merits, especially for senior posts. Artistic qualifications, i.e. qualifications that build on professional expertise, should be valued similarly to academic qualifications, and thus it will be possible to permanently employ teachers on artistic qualifications, i.e. qualified practitioners.

A crucial part of architectural education's pedagogy is based on active learning through project teaching, where students individually or in smaller groups carry out a project, that is to say, examine, compile and give form to and design for, a particular assignment. This teaching includes elements of critical review of the students' individual or group presentations. It is therefore important that all teachers' pedagogic competence is secured. All teachers should be offered a pedagogic course and the schools should ensure that the permanent teaching staff is sufficiently comprehensive and experienced in order to lead long-term pedagogic development work.

Artistic and practical training requires more space in the form of studios with work spaces for all students. Studios are the architecture school's laboratories and are necessary for artistic and practical development work in different forms. Premises are also needed for wood and metal workshops, digital fabrication labs and well equipped computer facilities. In order to present, communicate and make the educational operation accessible, flexible exhibition and lecture halls are required. Facilitation of supervision and meetings between students and teachers should be possible in all these spaces. Also crucial to an education environment of high quality is access to a well-stocked library for acquisition of information. This educational environment requires a good infrastructure as well as continuous maintenance.

Architecture schools require good educational environments where the students can be stimulated and learn from each other, and get the support of their teachers in different ways. Places and spaces for informal meetings are also required, as well as cafés or smaller restaurants, lobbies and spaces to meet both inside and out. Architectural colleges must be able to provide these for the students.

It is important that the education should make activities and knowledge development accessible through exhibitions, critiques, seminars, and through official lectures. But it is also important that the education organises study trips, where students and teachers together study and experience architecture, meet businesses, decision makers and users in situ.

Architects Sweden strives for architectural education to:

1. Be given higher and more long-term sustainable basic funding for all education and research within architecture.
2. Be given resources so that more architects can be educated.
3. Be able to ensure that the number of teachers for every course is adequate for the number of students and the chosen pedagogy.
4. Have teachers who conduct research, innovation and publicity events, as well as providing research for students.
5. Have practising architects involved in the teaching.
6. Employ teachers with artistic and practical qualifications on the same terms as teachers with academic qualifications.
7. Be able to offer all teachers a foundational pedagogic course, and ensure that the permanent staff is sufficiently comprehensive and experienced to lead long-term pedagogic development work.
8. Be able to provide infrastructure in the form of studios, lab premises, workshops, venues for exhibitions, education and research as well as library and computers.

The Education Committee has, during work on this education policy, comprised chairperson, landscape architect MSA Ulrika Karlsson, and the members, landscape architect LAR/MSA Sofia Sandqvist, architect MSA Tor Lindstrand, architect SAR/MSA Fredrik Nilsson, architect SAR/MSA Erik Stenberg, architect MSA Ulla Bergström and architect SAR/MSA Ebba Högström. The Committee has had the following co-opted members: Martin Törnqvist, student, UMA, Umeå (through 2017); Lina Sandberg, student, BTH, Karlskrona; Fanny Skräder, student, HDK (from and including the meeting of 09/03/2018). In the policy work, architect SAR/MSA Anders Johansson has been retained.

From the Architects Sweden office, Katarina O Cofaigh, Margareta Wilhelmsson and Nina Maanmies have participated.

About Architects Sweden

Architects Sweden is a Trade Union and industry organisation for all Sweden's architects and architectural students. We work on behalf of our members to create the best possible conditions for the architect's professional practice and for architecture in society.

Architects Sweden has a broad agenda: in addition to union work and industry development, we work with advocacy and professional and architectural issues. Architects Sweden's overall goal is to make a difference for the architect and architecture in the society.

Members of Architects Sweden are architects, interior design architects, landscape architects and spatial planning architects. These are the main specialisms for architectural education as Architects Sweden has long recognised. For membership and the right to use the members title MSA, Medlem av Sveriges Arkitekter [Member of Architects Sweden], at least a bachelor's degree is required. For the right to use the professional title architect SAR/MSA, landscape architect LAR/MSA, architect SIR/MSA or planning architect FPR/MSA, a five-year professional degree or equivalent bachelor's plus master's degree and at least two year's additional professional work is required. Those who can provide equivalent qualifications through certified professional practice, but with different further education or incomplete education, can with an acceptance of trust, and with special examination of the applicant's individual competency, attain the right to hold a professional title.

Architects Sweden
Storgatan 41
Box 5027
S-102 41 Stockholm
Sweden
Phone
+46-8 505 577 00

 @sverigesarkitekter
 @sveriges_arkitekter
 @SvArkitekter

www.arkitekt.se