

SACAP Validation Statement 25 March 2014

Higher Certificate in Architectural Technology Offered by the Inscape Education group

Validation Visiting Board members:

Maureen Gerrans (chair)
Mostert van Schoor
Yashaen Luckan
Jake de Villiers (Secretary)

Recommendation to SACAP Council

The deferred validation status terminates at the point of this visit. The purpose of this visit is to determine whether validation can be granted in terms of the body of work presented. The assessment of the Board is based on SACAP's "Guidelines for the validation of courses at private architectural learning sites (draft No. 2)".

The Visiting Board recommends to Council that the Qualification "Higher Certificate in Architectural Technology" (NQF 5) should not be awarded status of validation because, currently, evidence provided in the form of students work, falls below SACAP's benchmark standards.

2013 graduates will nevertheless be allowed to register as candidate architectural draughtspersons, in terms of the previous Validation statement (August 2013).

Observations

Material supplied in advance to the visit:

The material was delivered timeously and was of good quality. However, a number of items which would have been useful had not been included. These include a list of moderators, an indication of alignment of course material with SACAP's competencies and an explanation as to how the required 50% design contents were achieved in the curriculum.

Material on display:

Course guides were professional, very well presented and comprehensive.

The presented material consisted of two categories: course guides and student portfolios of mainly drawing work. Concerning the latter, the Board found that a number of items pertaining to the curriculum were not presented. These include sufficient sample of

student's CAD work; construction drawing showing evidence of problem solving on the part of students.

In addition to the above items, the Board needed to see written and theoretical work by students, actual models (instead of photographs of models) and in general, evidence that requirements are being adhered to.

Work was not arranged in the required categorise of lowest passes and highest passes etc., in fact in many instances no lowest passes were shown. This is critical as such work makes it possible to assess whether samples comply with benchmark standards as per the guidelines document.

The issue of the requirement that 50 % of the curriculum should focus on design teaching, needs special mention . The ALS fails to adhere to this requirement in three ways: design is lacking in the the subject structure; it is not evident in the student's work; most importantly, the work on display shows little or no evidence that graduates of this programme are capable of design work of a level expected of candidate professional draughtspersons.

Construction should be taught comprehensively. Work shown consisted largely of copies of construction drawings, which do not show an understanding of construction and detailing principles.

Introductory presentation

The presentation was adequate and comprehensive and answers were provided to the questions of Board members.

Student interviews

Interviews were honest and spontaneous. Students clearly valued the programme. They said that they considered this course to be a stepping stone to further qualifications.

Staff interviews

Staff were open and honest and prepared to readily answer all questions. It is of concern that each lecturer teaches the entire curriculum, each to their respective cohort.

SACAP's requirement that all staff should be registered as professionals is not being adhered to.

General

It was noted with concern that some Inscape lecturing staff do not hold architectural qualifications.

Students need to be able to interact with more staff members and with subject specialists.

The work of the 2013 cohort of students was not moderated by external moderators. This is unacceptable.

The work shown to the Board was inadequate in terms of quality, range and being sufficiently representative.

Advice to Inscape

The ALS is advised to consider the findings of the Board and to adjust the curriculum accordingly, especially in terms of design contents. Its teaching and learning strategies should be adjusted accordingly.

The ALS is strongly advised to comply with and study the contents of SACAP's guidelines document,

Conclusion

The Qualification "Higher Certificate in Architectural Technology" (NQF 5) should not be awarded status of validation.

The ALS is given 14 days to comment on matters of factual correctness.

Signed

Maureen Gerrans (chair)



Mostert van Schoor



Yashaen Luckan



Jake de Villiers (Secretary)

