

## Policy on Internship Program

In 1997 the CSLA component organizations agreed to use a consistent method to document the accumulation of specific skills and knowledge, relative to the profession of Landscape Architecture. Requirements for membership are set by each individual CSLA component organization.

The BCSLA Policy on Internship Program was endorsed by the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects at its Annual General Meeting on February 28, 1998. To address the concerns of those involved and meet the requirements of the Society's Bylaws and policies an updated policy was approved by the Board of Directors on March 26, 2019. Further revisions will be necessary as the BCSLA's experience with this program continues.

The following process was devised to assist qualified BCSLA Interns who complete their formal education in one area of the country, start work in another area and apply for full membership status in yet another area and is one of the requirements for full membership in the BCSLA.

This document includes the definitions, an explanation of the mandatory experience, the reporting requirements, a discussion of the experience records and summaries and an outline of the minimum experience. Monthly Experience Record and Three-Month Experience Summary forms are available on the BCSLA website at [www.bcsla.org](http://www.bcsla.org).

## DEFINITIONS

**BCSLA Intern:** In accordance with BCSLA Bylaw 2.20 (b):

An Intern is an Associate who has been accepted by the Board into the admission program for Membership in the Society, and on such acceptance the applicant is entitled to use the designation "BCSLA Intern".

**Qualified Mentor:** A Registered Landscape Architect or a person who is qualified for reciprocity membership or is a Qualified Mentor in the BCSLA, who is committed to providing the BCSLA Intern with:

- a regular review of work experience;
- instruction on technical skills;
- and support in their endeavors.

In accordance with BCSLA Bylaws 3.86:

*"Qualified Mentor" means a Registered Landscape Architect, Landscape Architect, or other allied professional with experience, qualifications and knowledge in the area they are mentoring. [Amended: May 3, 2008]*

*"Principal" means a Registered Landscape Architect, Landscape Architect, or other professional approved by the Credentials Committee to supervise the professional experience of an Associate;*

**Employer:** An individual or firm for whom the BCSLA Intern is employed undertaking work related to landscape architecture.

## MANDATORY EXPERIENCE

Generally, work experience is obtained in an office under the direct supervision of a qualified mentor. Work experience must be obtained to provide sufficient experience to meet the generally accepted standards of practical skill and an appropriate level of competence required to engage in the practice of the profession of landscape architecture. It is the responsibility of the BCSLA Intern to seek employment that will provide the required scope of experience.

## **Policy on Internship Program (cont.)**

When an Intern is not able to find employment under direct supervision of a qualified mentor, they will require the endorsement signatures from both their employer and an outside qualified mentor on the Monthly Experience Record and Three-Month Experience Summary forms.

Experience is required in a minimum of five of the following eight areas:

**1. Design Development (minimum 300 hours)**

This shall include Site Inventory / Survey / Base Info, Legislative / Code / By-law Review, Programming and Conceptual Design.

**2. Detail Design (minimum 225 hours)**

This shall include Preliminary Site Plan, Rendering / Photography / Models, and Client / Public Presentations.

**3. Contract Documents (minimum 1275 hours)**

This shall include the assembling and preparation of Grading / Drainage Plans, Irrigation Plans, Planting Plans, Plant Lists, Planting Details, Fence / Trellis / Shelter Details, Retaining Wall / Stair / Ramp Details, Specification Writing, Cost Estimating / Control Tender Admin. and Contract Award related to projects for which the Intern is responsible. Edition of National Master Specifications or office masters to comply with project requirements is acceptable.

**4. Contract Administration (minimum 5 Projects)**

This shall include Site Meetings, Site Inspection / Reports, Site Instruction / Change Orders and Payment / Completion Certificates.

**5. Office Practice (minimum 3 Projects)**

This shall include participation in the preparation of Proposals / Fee Calculating, Firm Brochure and Proposal Graphics, Correspondence, Meetings, Project Management Coordination, Budgeting / Costing and Office Management.

**6. Open Space Planning (minimum 1 Project)**

This may include participation in Process Development, Documentary Research, Site Inventory, Public Meetings /Workshops, Analysis / Synthesis, and Report Writing / Editing.

**7. Regulatory Review (minimum 5 Projects)**

This may include DP Review and Correspondence, BP Review and Correspondence, and / or Landscape Installation Review.

**8. Other (minimum 1 Project)**

This can include Teaching, Publishing/Writing, Volunteer or other activities approved by the Membership Committee.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The internship period must offer the BCSLA Intern adequate exposure to the various aspects of the practice of landscape architecture to ensure a level of professional competence.

Landscape Architects are encouraged to provide every opportunity possible for Interns to gain a variety of work experiences. This may include having the Interns accompany the Registered Landscape Architect as an observer until the Intern is able to carry out the task on their own. The Intern may be encouraged to prepare "parallel" documents to those being prepared by their supervisor and to submit these to the Employer and Mentor for review.

## **Policy on Internship Program (cont.)**

### **Qualified Mentor Guidelines**

1. Act as the Intern member's professional advisor by conducting regular meetings with the Intern to review experience and performance and offer constructive criticism. Contact with the Intern's employer is also encouraged (if mentor and employer are not one and the same).
2. Advise the Intern with respect to their professional conduct and philosophy.
3. Counsel the Intern with respect to a proper approach to technical problems.
4. Review and assess the Intern's work experience record and advise of any deficiencies, recommending changes of focus if necessary.
5. Certify all aspects of the Intern pre-registration experience under their review.

### **Experience Record & Experience Summary**

The Monthly Experience Record details the Intern's experience gained during the pre-registration period. It provides for recording the time spent within the eight areas of mandatory experience on a weekly occurrence. The record should be used as the basis of discussions between the Mentor and the Intern at their regular meetings. The Three-Month Experience Summary allows the Intern, Mentor, Employer and Society to keep track of the Intern's progress and to provide support when needed.

Specific instructions for the completion and submission of the Monthly Experience Record and Three-Month Summary are as follows:

- The Monthly Work Experience Record forms must be recorded online at <http://bcsla.org/user/login> (please see "Recording Monthly Experience Online" for instructions). Although it is not required to send Monthly Work Experience Record forms to the BCSLA, please keep a hard copy of your Records with your Qualified Mentor's stamp and signature as Interns may be asked to provide their Monthly Work Experience Records to the BCSLA upon request. Your employer must initial any alterations to the form after it is signed.
- Some work experience tasks can be completed as "Observer" where there is reluctance on the part of the employer to fully delegate certain work to inexperienced Interns.
- The online system will automatically generate the Three-Month Experience Summaries. Please see "Reviewing Three-Month Summary" for instructions. The Mentor and Intern should all sign off on the applicable reports and summaries.
- For each project completed, Interns use a separate sheet of paper to indicate the name of the project, date completed and experience obtained, along with the stamp and signature of their Mentor.
- It is advised that Interns keep a copy for their own records, as the BCSLA assumes no responsibility for lost Experience Summary sheets.

### **MINIMUM EXPERIENCE**

The Intern is required to document a minimum of two years (3,600 hours) of work experience distributed adequately over a minimum five of the eight different mandatory work experience areas and is encouraged to complete this within five years of the beginning of the intern process.

### **BACKDATING EXPERIENCE**

If an individual applies as a BCSLA Intern and has completed either a BLA or MLA, he or she may request a Reduction in Mandatory Experience for the time worked after completion of the degree and prior to becoming a BCSLA Intern. He or she would need to provide the original BCSLA Three-Month Experience Summary and have his or her 'Qualified Mentor' sign and seal the form. The Qualified Mentor must also provide a letter of recommendation.

The BCSLA Intern may request up to a one month reduction for every two months worked. There is a maximum reduction of 12 months allowable.

*In BC the title "landscape architect" is regulated in order that members of collateral professions, the construction industry, government and the general public are assured that an individual has completed an accredited professional degree, followed by documented experience.*