



BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

STEP-BY-STEP LICENSURE GUIDE FOR  
INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED PROFESSIONALS

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## SECTION 1 OVERVIEW

This guide is designed for internationally trained landscape architects or for those individuals who have been educated and registered as landscape architects in countries outside Canada and the USA. It provides information on how to become registered in BC. For information on the registration process please visit our [multi-lingual licensure page](#) which provides details in English, French, Chinese, Farsi, Korean and Spanish. This guide does not deal with immigration or detailed employment matters.

If you wish to become a BCSLA Registered Landscape Architect but do not hold a degree from a recognized post secondary learning institution, you should inquire about education opportunities at an accredited university. Visit <http://www.bcsla.org/education.htm> for details.

The large demand for landscape architects parallels the busy development industry in BC. This demand is also growing as the scope of work performed by landscape architects encompasses “green technology” that is in the forefront of today’s society. Most firms are experiencing challenges filling vacancies for qualified design professionals with varying degrees of experience and expertise. The aging demographic of baby boomers has resulted in senior practitioners stepping back or retiring from practice completely. Some employment opportunities are listed at [www.bcsla.org](http://www.bcsla.org) and follow the Market Place link. There is also a tool to post your own resume to the site.

### Architects (Landscape) Act

BCSLA is the regulatory body that grants individuals registration to landscape architects in BC. It is the duty of BCSLA to protect the public through regulation of the use of title by registered and intern landscape architects. According to Architects (Landscape) Act [RCBC 1996] section 12:

*(1) A person who is a member in good standing of the society is entitled to use the designation “Landscape Architect”.*

*(2) A person who is not a member in good standing of the society must not assume or use that designation in any manner or represent that the person is entitled to do so.*

### BCSLA Membership Categories

**Registered Landscape Architect:** a person admitted into the Society in accordance with the requirements of the BCSLA Bylaws and the Act, including qualification by education, examination and experience, payment of annual fees, and compliance with the requirements of professional conduct and standard.

**Landscape Architect:** (a) one who chooses to withdraw from active practice as a landscape architect, but wishes to retain professional status; or (b) full-time employee in the public sector or private industry, working in primarily management, policy, administrative or co-coordinating roles; or (c) a full-time faculty, lecturer or writer working primarily in teaching or research.

**Intern Landscape Architect:** An Intern must have: an academic requirement of a degree in landscape architecture that is approved by the Board.

**Associate Member:** An individual may apply for recognition as an Associate of the Society if he/she (a) has completed a degree in landscape architecture that is approved by the Board; or (b) has been employed for six (6) years in the field of Landscape Architecture to the approval of the Board; or (c) has an equivalent combination of degree and employment in an allied discipline.

**Student Membership:** An individual who is registered in an accredited post-secondary school Landscape Architecture program of study may apply for recognition as an Associate of the Society.

## Application Deadlines

Application deadlines: January 31 and June 30. Applications are reviewed by the Credentials Committee who makes their recommendation to the Board of Directors who final approval.

## Time Considerations

In order to be fair and impartial to all applicants, each application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. The time required for registration can vary significantly. If you meet the English fluency requirements and are ready to apply for registration, the time required to review your membership application will vary depending on how promptly all the supporting documents arrive and if they require translation or clarification. When all documents are received and complete, you will usually receive a letter from BCSLA within one or two months.

The length of time from membership application to registration will depend upon which requirements you are required to meet in addition to completing the Canadian employment requirements. If you are asked to write the Landscape Architectural Registration Examinations (LARE) this entire process could take from a minimum of one year or longer.

## Estimated Costs

The non-fundable application fee is \$31.50 (includes \$1.50 GST) and payable in Canadian funds. Other costs depend on:

- > whether you need to take the English exams and which ones you take
- > whether you need to take the examinations. Information on costs is available at <http://www.bcsla.org/>.
- > translation (if required) of your documents
- > notarization of documents
- > your cost of authorizing the transcripts and verifications sent to BCSLA
- > upon acceptance of your application annual member dues (pro-rated) will apply. Please check <http://www.bcsla.org/> for the current membership dues guide.

## Member Benefits

Benefits of Membership include, but are not limited to: continuing education opportunities and mobile tours, reduces fees for our annual conference and publications, a listing in our Annual Membership Roster and on our website, a subscription to our weekly broadcast email and newsletter access to the Members-Only website and invitations to special events.

## Checklist

### 1. Are You Ready to Apply?

- ✓ Determine which membership category you are qualified for
- ✓ Had your credentials evaluated from the International Credentials Evaluation Service. Visit [www.bcit.ca/ices/](http://www.bcit.ca/ices/) for details.
- ✓ Completed your English fluency.

### 2. Application

Download the application form from the BCSLA website. Complete the form and submit it to BCSLA.

### 3. Pre-Assessment

BCSLA conducts an initial review of the information. If it is complete the application is forwarded for review to the Credentials Committee to proceed with the assessment. BCSLA will send you a letter to inform you if information is incomplete or missing.

### 4. Assessment

The Credentials Committee reviews your application once all documents are received. The recommendations are made to the BCSLA Board of Directors who will have the final approval. The BCSLA office will send you a letter informing you of the results of your application review.

- > If you meet the membership criteria you may be invited to appear before the Board of Examiners.
- > If you do not meet the membership criteria the you may:
  - a) need to meet outstanding requirements **or**
  - b) be eligible to apply to write the LARE as a BCSLA Intern Member.

## 5. Writing the Landscape Architectural Registration Examinations (LARE)

The LARE tests Intern Members for the knowledge and skill that is required to practice those aspects of landscape architecture that impact the health, safety and welfare of the public. The LARE consists of five test sections. Each section is independent of the others and includes:

- Section A Project and Construction
- Section B Inventory Analysis and Program Development
- Section C Site Design
- Section D Design and Construction Documentation
- Section E Grading, Drainage and Stormwater Management

## 6. LARE Scores

After you have written the exam the BCSLA office will send your scores to you by mail approximately six to ten weeks after exam administration. Unofficial scores are available online two weeks sooner.

## 7. Minimum Experience Requirements

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 the intern process.

## 8. Board of Examiners

The role of the Board of Examiners is to set and administer the examination necessary for the registration of members in the BCSLA and to review the applicants qualifications and determine acceptability.

## 9: Registration

If you pass the Board of Examiners and have met the Canadian employment requirements, you will be issued a registration number, a BCSLA Membership Certificate, a Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Membership certificate and a professional stamp. This excludes the Landscape Architect Member category where no stamp is issued. Contact the BCSLA office for details.

## SECTION 2 STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

The following is a detailed description of each step of the process required to become registered landscape architect in BC. It outlines what you do, what BCSLA does and what steps can be completed outside of Canada. This is the companion document to the [Bridge to Licensure Flow Chart](#)

Applicants must satisfy all membership requirements as defined in the BCSLA Bylaws. Visit <http://www.bcsla.org/pdf.htm/Bylaws2008ADP.pdf> and see Section 2. **Please do not submit any documentation until you are ready to apply.**

### Step 1

#### Education (Applicant)

You must have a degree in landscape architecture from a post-secondary learning institution in order to be considered for registration by the BCSLA. International Credentials Evaluation Service (ICES) evaluates formal for-credit educational programs of study for people who have studied in other provinces or countries and determines comparable levels in BC and Canadian terms. You must request that ICES submit evaluation results directly to the BCSLA at the same time as your application for registration.. Applicants are responsible for payment in full of all fees, including investigation fees for an extra-jurisdictional review, admission fees, and other reasonable assessments. This can be done outside of Canada. Visit <http://www.bcit.ca/ices/>.

### Step 2

#### English Proficiency (Applicant)

If English is not your first language; you must submit passing scores from a test of English proficiency by an agency recognized by the BCSLA with your application for registration. This can be done outside of Canada as most of the tests are offered internationally. When you apply for the test(s) you should arrange to have your test scores sent directly to BCSLA. Your test scores must be no more than one year old at the time of application. If you need to reapply for registration, you may need to repeat the English fluency test. Test preparation is strongly recommended since taking the tests can be expensive and can delay your eligibility to apply for registration. You can use exam preparation materials or enroll in preparation classes before taking the English proficiency tests. Visit [http://www.ares.ubc.ca/LPI/03\\_LPI\\_Test.html](http://www.ares.ubc.ca/LPI/03_LPI_Test.html).

### Step 3

#### Intern Application (Applicant)

This can be done outside of Canada. Download an application form from [www.bcsla.org](http://www.bcsla.org). You may also request an application form by contacting the BCSLA office. Complete the application form and:



- Include a photograph (passport size);
- If you have been registered in more than one state, province, or country, request that the organization provide a certificate of standing from each body regulating the profession of landscape architecture in each jurisdiction in which the applicant has been a member;
- if you have not been registered everywhere you have worked, you will need to provide a declaration from a Registered Landscape Architect Principal who satisfies the standards required by the Credentials Committee, describing the experience of the applicant; employment contract and job description that includes projects that you have worked on. These references can be from other countries and if they need to be translated, you will be asked to arrange for the translation.
- A copy of your resume;
- payment in full of all fees, including investigation fees for an extra-jurisdictional review, admission fees, and other reasonable assessments; and
- any other information and documents requested by the Credentials Committee.

If you meet the above requirements, you are ready to apply for Membership

→ if you qualify for Registered Membership proceed to Step 6

→ If you qualify for Intern Member proceed to Step 3

## Step 4

### Pre-Assessment (BCSLA)

- > The BCSLA office does an initial check of the information received. If it is complete, BCSLA proceeds with the assessment. BCSLA will send you a letter if information is incomplete. To commence the assessment, it may be necessary to wait until all documentation is received.
- > The Credentials Committee meets to assess your application once all the documents are received. Each person is assessed individually. Your education and work experience are taken into account. The Committee will make recommendations to the Board of Directors who have final approval.
- > Once your assessment is complete you will:
  - a) be invited to continue pursuing Membership. Please go to **Step 6**
  - or
  - b) notify you when you are eligible to take the Examinations. Please go to **Step 5**.

## Step 5

### Notification of Eligibility for LARE (BCSLA)

#### 5a

#### Writing the Landscape Architectural Registration Examinations (Applicant)

Sections A, B and D are multiple-choice sections that are administered on computer in March and September of each year at selected Canadian and US locations. Sections C and E consist of 11"x17" vignette problems that require a drafted solution and are administered in June and December.

Candidates may register for the multiple choice sections on the internet. The vignette sections must be ordered and administered by the BCSLA office. The examination costs are priced by section and administration fees may apply. Current information is available at [www.clarb.org](http://www.clarb.org).

- > BCSLA provides you with information about where and when you can write the exam. The exams are scheduled twice a year.
- > You must order the exams at least two months in advance of the exam administration.
- > It is strongly recommended that you use preparatory material prior to writing the exam. Practice vignettes and sample questions can be ordered from <http://www.clarb.org/>.
- > BCSLA volunteers who recently passed the exams organize preparatory workshops.
- > After you have written the exam, BCSLA will notify you of your results.
- > If you pass the exam, you will be invited to appear before the Board of Examiners
- > If you are not successful on the exam on the first try, you will need to write the exam again. An Intern must pass all sections of the registration examinations within five (5) consecutive years from the date of his/her enrolment in the BCSLA Admissions Program.

#### 5b

#### Two-Year Mandatory Experience (PDF) (Applicant)

Generally, work experience is obtained in an office under the direct supervision of a qualified advisor. 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 Intern Landscape Architect to seek employment that will provide the required scope of experience.

## SECTION 2 STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

### Step 6

#### Application for Registered Membership (Applicant)

- > applicant makes application to the Board of Directors to become a Member. Include a photograph (passport size);
- > send your transcript request to the post secondary learning institution that you graduated from. It must be sent by your learning institution directly to BCSLA. If the transcript is not in English, BCSLA will send it to you and you will be responsible for having it translated;
- > if you have been registered in more than one state, province, or country, request that the organization provide a certificate of standing from each body regulating the profession of landscape architecture in each jurisdiction in which the applicant has been a member;
- > if you have not been registered everywhere you have worked, you will need to provide a declaration from a Registered Landscape Architect Principal who satisfies the standards required by the Credentials Committee, describing the experience of the applicant; employment contract and job description that includes projects that you have worked on. (References can be from other countries. If they need to be translated, you will be asked to arrange and pay for the translation.)
- > certificate of character references;
- > reference letter from a business professional person;
- > payment in full of all fees, including investigation fees for an extra-jurisdictional review, admission fees, and other reasonable assessments; and
- > any other information and documents requested by the Credentials Committee.

### Step 7

#### Acceptance of Application (BCSLA)

Credentials Committee recommends Applicant to the Board of Directors for oral exams

### Step 8

#### Board of Examiners (BCSLA)

All successful Applicants are invited to appear before the Board of Examiners. A summary of each Applicant is sent to the Board of Examiners two weeks in advance of the sitting.

### Step 9

#### Oral Exams (Applicant)

Applicants will be expected to review experience, provide a small portfolio of two to three varied projects and answer any questions related to the professional practice of landscape architecture. The Applicant must also discuss the reason(s) for registration and involvement with BCSLA. At a minimum the Applicant must be prepared to demonstrate a working knowledge of the following:

- 1) Builder's Lien Act
- 2) Contract Administration
- 3) BCSLA Standards of Professional Conduct and Practice
- 4) BCSLA Bylaws & Procedures
- 5) Insurance

If you do not pass the exams the correspondence will detail your weaknesses and provide advice on how to enhance your skills. You will be invited to a future exam administration. The Board of Examiners is held in the Spring and Fall each year.

If you have passed the Board of Examiners congratulations you are now a BCSLA Registered Landscape Architect or Landscape Architect Member. The confirmation letter may include recommendations on how to continue to enhance your skills.

### Step 10

#### Registration (BCSLA)

If you pass the oral exam we will automatically add your name to the Roster. You will be issued a registration number, a BCSLA Membership Certificate, a Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Membership certificate and a professional stamp. You will be invoiced for membership dues.

## Possible Reasons for a Delay of Your Application

- Incomplete application is submitted.
- Incorrect documents are submitted for the application.
- The right fees are not paid.
- Your learning institution did not send your transcripts quickly or sent incomplete information.
- Proof from the regulatory body in the country (or countries) where you have been registered, is not received or is slow in coming.
- Your employers have not provided references, or they are incomplete or unsatisfactory.
- Your transcripts, the proof of registration from your regulatory body, or your employer references are not in English and need to be sent back to you for translation.
- You have, or have had disciplinary issues with your registration in a previous jurisdiction.
- You have been out of practice for over 10 years and your application for registration must be reviewed by the Credentials Committee.

*Once your application has been assessed, you may take longer to be fully registered if:*

- You do not pass the Landscape Architectural Registration Examinations
- You have not satisfactorily completed your Canadian employment requirement.

*What can you do to speed up the process of registration?*

The registration process for licensure in BC does take time, but there are some things that you can do to speed up the process:

- Ensure you have submitted your English fluency test scores.
- Provide all required information at each stage of the process and have it properly completed.
- Include appropriate fees with each step.
- Submit your application before you come to Canada.
- Ask your previous employer to submit the declaration in English as quickly as possible.
- Ask all relevant regulatory bodies to submit their certificate in English as soon as possible.
- Have your transcripts evaluated and request that they be sent to BCSLA in a timely fashion
- Prepare well for the required tests. It is well worth the time and money to invest in practice exams and attend workshops or study groups for the Landscape Architectural Registration Exams.

For immigration questions contact the Canadian Consulate in your country, or Citizenship and Immigration Canada /BC phone number: 604-666-2171/ [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca).

For employment information and links to community services organizations that assist with settlement please visit our multi-lingual licensure website at <http://www.bcsla.org/licensure/>.

## For more information about BCSLA and the registration process contact:

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