
Introduction

The UIA Council established the Professional Practice Commission and approved its program in 1994. Following some 25 months of intensive activity by the Commission during the 1993-1996 triennium, the UIA Assembly unanimously adopted the first edition of the Proposed UIA Accord on Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice in Barcelona, Spain in July 1996. By this action of the UIA Assembly, the Accord was established as policy recommendations to guide the ongoing work of the UIA and the UIA Professional Practice Commission.

The first edition of the Accord was transmitted to all member sections of the UIA with the request for their comments and cooperation in the further development of the policy framework for presentation to the XXI UIA Assembly in Beijing, China, in 1999. The 1997-1999 Professional Practice program focused on responding to comments and recommendations received from Council members, UIA member sections, and members of the Commission on the Accord and its policies. The first edition of the Accord was modified in response to those comments and as a result of Commission debate of the policy issue guideline documents being developed to flesh out the bare bones policy framework of the Accord.

The Accord and guidelines recognize the sovereignty of each UIA member section, allow flexibility for principles of equivalency, and are structured to allow for the addition of requirements reflecting local conditions of a UIA member section.

It is not the intention of the Accord to establish obligatory standards set by negotiated agreements between competing interests. Rather, the Accord is the result of the co-operative endeavor of the international community of architects to objectively establish standards and practices that will best serve community interests. The Accord and Guideline documents are intended to define what is considered best practice for the architectural profession and the standards to which the profession aspires. These are living documents and will be subject to ongoing review and modification as the weight of opinion and experience dictates. Whilst respecting the sovereignty of UIA member sections, they are invited and encouraged to promote the adoption of the Accord and the Guidelines and, if appropriate, seek the modification of existing customs and laws.

It is intended that the Accord and guidelines will provide practical guidance for governments, negotiating entities, or other entities entering mutual recognition negotiations on architectural services. The Accord and guidelines will make it easier for parties to negotiate recognition agreements. The most common way to achieve recognition has been through bilateral agreements, recognized as permissible under Article VII of the GATS. There are differences in education and examination standards, experience requirements, regulatory influence etc., all of which make implementing recognition on a multilateral basis extremely difficult. Bilateral negotiations will facilitate focus on key issues relating to two specific environments. However, once achieved, bilateral reciprocal agreements should lead to others, which will ultimately extend mutual recognition more broadly.

The Accord begins with a statement of "Principles of Professionalism," followed by a series of policy issues. Each policy issue opens with a definition of the subject policy, followed by a statement of background and the policy.

The XXI UIA Assembly in Beijing, China unanimously adopted the Accord in June 1999. A copy of the Resolution of Adoption is attached as Appendix A.