



Examination for Architects in Canada
Examen des architectes du Canada

Preparation Guide for the ExAC 2011

LICENSING AUTHORITIES WHICH RECOGNIZE THE EXAC ARE THE:

- Alberta Association of Architects [AAA]
- Architects' Association of New Brunswick [AANB]
- Architects Association of Prince Edward Island [AAPEI]
- Manitoba Association of Architects [MAA]
- Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Architects [NLAA]
- Nova Scotia Association of Architects [NSAA]
- Ontario Association of Architects [OAA]
- Ordre des architectes du Québec [OAQ]
- Saskatchewan Association of Architects [SAA]
- Northwest Territories Association of Architects [NWTAA]

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1. Purpose of the ExAC

The ExAC has been developed to assess the Interns' competencies acquired during the Internship period, to ensure both public safety and the professional and skilled delivery of architectural services.

2. ExAC Based on International Standards

The first priority of the Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities (Licensing Authorities) was to create an examination, in English and French, which meets international standards for the development, administration, scoring and reporting of licensing examinations.

Development and validation teams of architects from the Licensing Authorities, guided by the test consultants developed the general and specific objectives as well as the table of specifications, wrote the items following strict metrological properties of all the items and the tests themselves. The Licensing Authorities' goals include the optimization of the quality and fairness of every aspect of the ExAC.

The Committee for the ExAC, with a mandate to oversee the management of the examination, is composed of representatives from the profession and from all regions of Canada who are members of the ExAC Agreement Protocol.

3. Content

The ExAC will be composed of four sections covering the following themes:

- Section 1**
- Programming
 - Site and Environmental Analysis
 - Cost Management
 - Coordinating Engineering Systems
 - Schematic Design
 - Design Development
- Section 2**
- Code Research

- Section 3**
- Final Project
- Section 4**
- Bidding and Contract Negotiations
 - Construction Phase – Office
 - Construction Phase – Site
 - Project Management

Note *Except for the Section 2 related to the National Building Code, the Intern will not be permitted to have any books, notes or reference material at the examination. For the National Building Code section, the Intern will be permitted to bring only a paper format of the National Building Code of Canada (2005 Edition) into the examination room. Interns who use any Building Code other than the specified National Building Code do so at their own risk.*

The principal sources of the examination content are the:

- Canadian Handbook of Practice for Architects (CHOP)
- Internship in Architecture Program (IAP)
- National Building Code of Canada (2005 Edition) (without the provincial adaptations)

Study Guide for the ExAC

At this time there are no approved study guide or study courses for the ExAC. The examination is an experience based examination in which the questions are generated using a set of General and Specific Objectives. It is suggested that candidates download this document and familiarize themselves with these objectives while preparing for the examination.

For a listing of texts, documents and Internet links that will assist the Intern in preparing for the ExAC, refer to References/Resources on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca.

4. Questions Types

The sections of the ExAC are composed of the following question types:

- Multiple Choice
- Pairing/Matching of components
- Placing steps/statements in order – sometimes combined with multiple choice
- Sentence Completion/Fill in the Blank
- Short Answer
- Extended Answer

Examples of question types are posted on the ExAC Web site located at www.exac.ca.

5. Language and Units of Measurement

Interns have the option of writing the ExAC in either English or French. Interns will receive the examination booklet in the language chosen on his/her registration form.

All units of measurement used are in metric (SI units).

6. Delivery

The ExAC is delivered once each year simultaneously across Canada.

The ExAC is delivered in four one-half day sessions over a period of two consecutive days. Dates are set out on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca.

The ExAC is a pencil and paper examination.

The ExAC will be administered in each province/territory of Canada listed on the ExAC Registration Form.

The ExAC may be offered in multiple locations in various provinces, subject to each Licensing Authority's specific requirements.

All Interns writing the ExAC **for the first time are required to register and take all four sections** over the period of two consecutive days, subject to any equivalency(s) being granted.

The Intern must register for the ExAC in the jurisdiction in which he/she is an Intern.

The Intern may write the ExAC in any location in Canada where a Licensing Authority offers the examination.

Note *An Intern located in British Columbia, Yukon, or Nunavut should contact one of the Licensing Authorities listed on the ExAC Registration Form.*

7. Eligibility

An Intern must be 'in good standing' with his/her Licensing Authority, i.e. hold current status as an Intern and not currently be the subject of a complaint or disciplinary proceeding.

and

An Intern must complete and submit to his/her Licensing Authority a minimum of **2800 hours of approved experience** recorded in the Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB) at the time of submission of the ExAC Registration Form or have submitted this prior to registration. If fewer than 2800 hours of experience are approved by the Licensing Authority, the Intern will not be permitted to register for the ExAC.

8. Registration Period and Procedures

The ExAC registration period will open and close as noted on the ExAC website at www.exac.ca. ExAC Registration Form, attachments and payment must be received by the Licensing Authority location by 12 :00 (Noon) on the last day of the registration period. Within 30 days of receiving an intern's application the Licensing Authority will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement. At least two weeks prior the examination date Interns will received, by mail, a Letter of Authorization advising them of the date, time and location of the examination venue.

9. Fees

The cost for the four sections is set out on the ExAC Registration Form located on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca.

All fees must accompany the ExAC Registration Form and are payable to the Intern's Licensing Authority whether or not the ExAC administration is being hosted by another Licensing Authority. Methods of acceptable payments are at the discretion of the Intern's Licensing Authority. The ExAC Registration Form indicates a credit card payment option. It is recommended that Interns review the FAQ section on the ExAC website regarding acceptable methods of payment to their Licensing Authority.

10. Personal Identification at ExAC

At the examination location, Interns must provide valid official government photo identification (ID) with signatures. Acceptable ID includes a passport, driver's licence or Canadian citizenship card.

Note Interns will **not** be admitted to the examination room without the proper form of identification. Supervisor/Invigilator will visually verify if the person is the same as the one appearing on the ID photo. Visual identity verification may be conducted by a male or female Supervisor/Invigilator.

11. At the Examination

The Intern should arrive at the examination location at least **30 minutes** before the commencement of the examination to allow for administrative procedures.

Late arrivals will not be permitted entry to the examination room for at least the first 10 minutes while instructions are being given, but no additional time will be added to the examination. Entry will only be provided for 30 minutes after the examination begins.

The Intern must remain in his/her seat during the examination, except when authorized to leave by the Supervisor/Invigilator.

The Intern must bring his/her own **HB pencils**. **It is the Intern's responsibility to make sure to use HB pencils. HB pencil is the only one guaranteed to work on the Answer-Sheet.**

Scratch paper is provided by the Supervisor/Invigilator and may be replaced, upon request, as needed during the examination.

The Intern must raise his/her hand to notify Supervisor/Invigilator if he/she needs additional scratch paper or pencils or to take an unscheduled break.

All electronic devices, e.g. cell phones, pagers, BlackBerrys, iPods, PDAs, computers, etc. **must be turned off and placed** in the Intern's purse, briefcase, knapsack etc. None of these devices may be used during the examination, in the examination room or on any breaks (e.g. washroom).

Note At the conclusion of the examination, before each Intern is permitted to leave the room, the Supervisor/Invigilator will collect each Intern's Question Booklet, Answer Sheet(s), Appendix (if any), envelope and scratch paper.

12. Allowable Items at the ExAC

For all four sections of the ExAC:

- Calculator – Only a basic calculator that is non-programmable, non-communicating, and non-printing is allowed. It must not have preloaded formulas or have the capacity to store formulas, store and/or send or receive text. The Supervisor/Invigilator may note the type of calculator used.
- Wallets, purses, briefcases, knapsacks, and other personal items such as cell phones, pagers, iPods, PDAs, computers, etc. – These items may be brought into the examination room but must be stowed under the Intern's desk/table at which the examination is written and can only be accessed with the permission of the Supervisor/Invigilator. Any attempt by Interns to access books, study material, notes, etc. during the examination is prohibited. All electronic devices must be turned off and placed in the Intern's purse, briefcase, knapsack, etc. In the case of any unauthorized accessing or use of the items listed here, an Incident Report will be filed and may lead to the examination results being voided.
- Beverage – Only water is allowed in the examination room, except in the case of approvals granted through a Special Accommodation request.
- Paper tissues – Must be kept in a transparent package/ plastic bag.
- Watch or silent travel clock
- HB Pencils, eraser, small pencil sharpener – without pencil-case, except if it is transparent.

Note You **must** use an **HB** pencil. The use of another kind of pencil will **invalidate** the scoring of your examination.

For the National Building Code section of the ExAC:

For the National Building Code section only, Interns are permitted to bring only a paper format of the National Building Code of Canada (2005 Edition) (without the provincial adaptations) into the examination room for use in answering the questions. Only a paper format of the National Building Code may be used. It can be a photocopy or a CD-Rom Printing. The Intern **must make sure that this copy does not contravene** the Canadian Copyright Act. The paper format of the National Building Code brought into the examination room may contain hand-written annotations and be tabbed. Interns are not to **add** pages to their National Building Code: no additional references, indexes, matrixes or notes may be added by additional pages to the National Building Code. If the additional pages are found during the administration of the examination they will be confiscated by the test Supervisor/Invigilator. **While in the examination room, however, an Intern may not make any hand-written notations or markings of any kind in his/her copy of the National Building Code.** Interns who use any Building Code other than the specified National Building Code do so at their own risk.

13. Prohibited Items at the ExAC

- A dictionary of any type, i.e. language translation
- Scratch paper (it will be supplied by the Supervisor/Invigilator)
- Headphones
- Food/candy, except in the case of approvals granted through a Special Accommodation request

Examination Supervisors/Invigilators reserve the right to confiscate any materials/aids not in compliance with the Preparation Guide for the ExAC.

14. Special Accommodation at the ExAC

Any Intern who requires Special Accommodation at the examination must obtain prior approval from his/her Licensing Authority. Please indicate this requirement on the ExAC Registration Form.

The Intern must provide a specific diagnosis by an appropriately licensed professional that includes a description of the accommodations that are appropriate to the Intern's condition.

If an Intern arrives at the examination location and has not received such approval from his/her Licensing Authority, he/she will not be admitted as an Intern requiring Special Accommodation.

15. Cancellation of Registration

All requests for cancellation of registration must be in writing. If a written request is received:

- Within twenty-one days prior to the examination there will be no refund.
- More than twenty-one days prior to the examination the Intern will receive a refund of 75 % of examination fees paid.

Where it is determined that an Intern is unable to write all or a portion of the four sections of the ExAC as a result of Exceptional Circumstances, details must be provided in writing within 30 days after the examination session to the Intern's local ExAC Administrator. Should the ExAC Administrator concur with the Exceptional Circumstances, the Intern will be provided a refund of 75% for the section(s) not taken and the overall time within which the ExAC must be completed will be extended by one additional writing of the ExAC (see Section 18).

Exceptional Circumstances may include death in family, personal illness or unforeseeable difficulty, i.e. air, rail, auto, etc. Work related scheduling issues will not be accepted as Exceptional Circumstances.

The examination will proceed as scheduled regardless of weather conditions. Interns are responsible to make arrangements to arrive at test sites as the scheduled dates and time. Refunds will not be issued to those failing to attend the examination on the dates and time indicated because of weather conditions.

16. Reporting Results

The examination results will be mailed to the Interns by mid-February 2012 in the form of an ExAC Transcript issued by his/her Licensing Authority. The results for each section of the ExAC will be identified as pass or fail. The examinee will not receive a score or a percentage. In the case of a fail score, a brief feedback is given to the examinee on which General Objectives he/she may need to focus on as his/her results indicate he/she may be weak in these areas. No further details will be provided to examinees.

Note A cut score is used to identify pass/fail results and is determined by a panel of Architects with the examination consultants after the administration of the examination. The consultants employ various statistical models, designs and analyses for the determination of cut scores and to ensure that it is valid and reliable. The cut score is not published. For additional information refer to the FAQ section of ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca.

17. Request for Review

For Interns who do not successfully complete any section of the ExAC a formal review procedure is available. On receipt of a formal Request for Review, the Committee for the ExAC will review the examination and advise the Intern of the results. The decision of the review is final.

A Review Fee will apply to any Intern wishing his/her examination reviewed. If successful, the Review Fee will be refunded.

An Intern may make a Request for Review of a failed examination provided that the request is:

- In writing.
- Accompanied by the required \$300 fee.
- Submitted to his/her home Licensing Authority.
- Received by his/her home Licensing Authority within 45 days of the mailing of notification (the ExAC Transcript) to the Intern.

In situations where there were circumstances or factors negatively impacting on the Intern's performance which were not reported at the time of the examination or concerns raised were not resolved to the satisfaction of the Intern a formal Request for Review may also be submitted. In the two weeks following the examination session, the Intern must write a letter to his/her Licensing Authority with explanations about the circumstances.

18. Retaking the ExAC

Interns are given three consecutive attempts to achieve to pass all four sections of the ExAC. During the initial attempt if an Intern does not successfully pass all the sections of the examination he/she must register and rewrite **all** the failed section(s) at the next session of the ExAC. If he/she fails to succeed at this first retaking, he/she will be offered a **final attempt** to complete all the remaining failed section(s) at the next session of the ExAC. If the Intern fails to achieve a pass on all sections of the examination at this final attempt, he/she will be considered as a new candidate for the examination and he/she will therefore have to rewrite all the sections of the examination as a First Time Applicant.

Note *For an Intern who is registered but is absent at an examination, that section is considered a fail.*

19. Security/Examinee Protocol at the ExAC

To ensure the integrity of the ExAC, specific security measures are enforced during the examination.

- No portion of the ExAC can be copied or removed from the examination location.
- The contents of the ExAC Envelope which includes the:
 - **Question Booklet**
 - **Appendix (if any)**
 - **Answer Sheet** and
 - **Short Answer Booklet (if any)**

Note *At the conclusion of the examination, before each Intern is permitted to leave the room, the Supervisor/Invigilator will collect each Intern's Question Booklet, Appendix (if any) and Answer Sheet) in addition to the ExAC envelope containing scrap paper.*

An Intern will not be permitted to leave the examination room within the **final 30 minutes** of the examination until all ExAC material has been collected from all Interns.

No electronic devices, e.g. cell phones, pagers, iPods, PDAs, computers, etc. are permitted to be used while the Intern is in the examination room or during any breaks.

An Intern will not be permitted to leave the examination room for any purpose other than for a washroom break or illness during which he/she will be accompanied by a Supervisor/Invigilator.

20. Conduct

This is a professional examination and Interns are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at the examination.

Supervisors/Invigilators are authorized to observe and monitor Interns' behaviour during the examination.

If Interns are observed communicating in any way or viewing another Intern's paper during the examination, they will be permitted to complete the examination but they will be advised that the Supervisors/Invigilators will file an Incident Report with the Committee for the ExAC.

Any alleged cheating and/or attempts to disclose the substance of the ExAC items or content before, during and/or following the examination will be dealt with by the Committee for the ExAC. Such action may include:

- Suspension of future ExAC privileges pending resolution of the matter.
- All examination results invalidated
- Legal procedures

21. Confidentiality Agreement

Each Intern will be required to sign the following Confidentiality Agreement as part of the ExAC Registration Form.

Confidentiality Agreement & Compliance Requirement

I understand that the content of each section of the Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC) is confidential and subject to Canadian copyright laws.

I agree that I will not divulge any question with respect to the ExAC to any individual or entity.

I understand that the unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of any examination materials, including the nature or content of the examination questions, before, during, or after the examination by any method is in violation of law and this Confidentiality Agreement.

A violation of this Agreement can result in civil liability and/or action by the ExAC Committee

I agree that, in the event that I violate this Confidentiality Agreement, the ExAC Committee may suspend my examination taking privileges, cancel my examination scores, and seek recovery in a court of law for costs and civil damages.

This Agreement does not prevent me from disclosing information related to the ExAC to my Licensing Authority.

I declare that I have read and will adhere to the conditions as set out in the ExAC Preparation Guide.

Intern Signature _____ Date _____

22. Equivalency/Transition

The Table of Equivalencies located on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca indicates the ARE 3.1 divisions for which ExAC equivalency is granted.

You must ask for equivalency when you register for the ExAC.

The Committee of the ExAC will not recognize equivalencies for any of the ARE 4.0 divisions.

23. Registration Form for the ExAC

The Registration Form is located on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca. The ExAC registration period closes at 12 :00 (noon) on the last day of the registration period. For further information refer to Section 8 of this guide book and the ExAC website.

24. General and Specific Objectives

The General and Specific Objectives are located on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca. The ExAC is based upon General and Specific Objectives which define the areas and levels of knowledge of the architectural profession which are measured to determine competency of the Intern. In preparation for the ExAC Interns are encouraged to download the General and Specific Objectives from the ExAC website and use it as a study guide.

25. Reference/Resources

The References/Resources can be located on the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca. The list of documents and Internet links will assist you in preparing for the ExAC. The ExAC committee does not guarantee the availability of all cited references and resources.

26. Questions and Answers

If you have questions related to the ExAC visit the ExAC Web site at www.exac.ca for Frequently Asked Questions or contact the ExAC Administrator at your Licensing Authority.