
Union Internationale des Architectes • International Union of Architects

Recommended Guidelines for the UIA Accord On Recommended International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice Policy on Ethics and Conduct

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Accord Policy on Ethics and Conduct

The existing UIA International Code of Ethics on Consulting Services remains in force. Member Sections of the UIA are encouraged to introduce into their own codes of ethics and conduct the recommended Accord Guidelines and a requirement that their members abide by the codes of ethics and conduct in force in the countries and jurisdictions in which they provide professional services, so long as they are not prohibited by international law or the laws of the architect's own country.

Recommended Guidelines for the Accord Policy on Ethics and Conduct

Introduction

At the meeting of the commission in Washington in December, 1998, there was broad agreement that the amended code evolving from the Barcelona meeting should be put to the Assembly in Beijing for adoption as the Accord Guidelines for Ethics and Conduct for subsequent adoption by member sections within their own codes.

The drafting panel, drawing on principles and policies articulated in the accord and the codes of ethics and conduct from member sections around the world, recommend to the council and assembly the following:

Preamble

Members of the architectural profession are dedicated to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and competence, and to the highest possible quality of their output, and thereby bring to society special and unique knowledge, skills, and aptitudes essential to the development of the built environment of their societies and cultures. The following are principles for the conduct of architects in fulfilling those obligations when undertaking a consulting service. They apply to all professional activities, wherever they occur. They address responsibilities to the public, which the profession serves and enriches; to the clients and users of architecture and the building industries, who help to shape the built environment; and to the art and science of architecture, that continuum of knowledge and creation which is the heritage and legacy of the profession and of society.

Principle 1 General Obligations

Architects possess a systematic body of knowledge and theory of the arts, science, and business of architecture developed through education, training, and experience. The process of architectural education, training, and examination is structured to assure the public that, when an architect is appointed to perform professional services, that architect has met acceptable standards enabling proper performance of those services. Architects have a general obligation to maintain and advance their knowledge of the art and science of architecture, respect the body of architectural Accomplishment and contribute to its growth, and give precedence to learned and uncompromised professional judgement over any other motive in the pursuit of the art, science, and business of architecture.

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- 1.1 **Standard:** Architects shall strive to continually improve their professional knowledge and skill in areas relevant to their practices.
 - 1.2 **Standard:** Architects shall continually seek to raise the standards of aesthetic excellence, architectural education, research, training, and practice.
 - 1.3 **Standard:** Architects shall, as appropriate, promote the allied arts and contribute to the knowledge and capability of the building industries.
 - 1.4 **Standard:** Architects shall ensure that their practices have appropriate and effective internal procedures, including monitoring and review procedures, and sufficient qualified and supervised staff such as to enable them to function efficiently.
 - 1.5 **Standard:** Where work is carried out on behalf of an architect by an employee or by anyone else acting under an architect's direct control, the architect is responsible for ensuring that that person is competent to perform the task and, if necessary, is adequately supervised.

Principle 2

Obligations to the Public

Architects have obligations to the public to embrace the spirit and letter of the laws governing their professional affairs, and should thoughtfully consider the social and environmental impact of their professional activities.

- 2.1 **Standard:** Architects shall respect and help conserve the systems of values and the natural and cultural heritage of the community in which they are creating architecture. They shall strive to improve the environment and the quality of the life and habitat within it in a sustainable manner, being fully mindful of the effect of their work on the widest interests of all those who may reasonably be expected to use or enjoy the product of their work.
- 2.2 **Standard:** Architects shall neither communicate nor promote themselves or their professional services in false, misleading or deceptive manners.
- 2.3 **Standard:** An architectural firm shall not represent itself in a misleading fashion.
- 2.4 **Standard:** Architects shall uphold the law in the conduct of their professional activities.
- 2.5 **Standard:** Architects shall abide by the codes of ethics and conduct and laws in force in the countries and jurisdictions in which they provide or intend to provide professional services.
- 2.6 **Standard:** Architects shall as appropriate involve themselves in civic activities, as citizens and professionals, and promote public awareness of architectural issues.

Principle 3

Obligations to the Client

Architects have obligations to their clients to carry out their professional work faithfully, conscientiously, competently, and in a professional manner, and should exercise unprejudiced and unbiased judgement with due regard to the relevant technical and professional standards when performing all professional services. Learned and professional judgement should take precedence over any other motive in the pursuit of the art, science, and business of architecture.

- 3.1 **Standard:** Architects shall only undertake professional work where they can ensure that they possess adequate knowledge and abilities and where adequate financial and technical resources will be provided in order to fulfil their commitments in every respect to their clients, for any one commission.
- 3.2 **Standard:** Architects shall perform their professional work with due skill care and diligence.
- 3.3 **Standard:** Architects shall carry out their professional work without undue delay and, so far as it is within their powers, within an agreed reasonable time limit.
- 3.4 **Standard:** Architects shall keep their client informed of the progress of work undertaken on the client's behalf and of any issues that may affect its quality or cost.
- 3.5 **Standard:** Architects shall accept responsibility for the independent advice provided by them to their clients, and undertake to perform professional services only when they, together with those whom they may engage as consultants, are qualified by education, training, or experience in the specific areas involved.
- 3.6 **Standard:** Architects shall not undertake professional work unless the parties have clearly agreed in writing to the terms of the appointment, notably:
 - Scope of work;
 - Allocation of responsibilities;
 - Any limitation of responsibilities;
 - Fee or method of calculating it;
 - Any provision for termination.
- 3.7 **Standard:** Architects shall be remunerated solely by the fees and benefits specified in the written agreement of engagement or employment.
- 3.8 **Standard:** Architects shall not offer any inducements to procure an appointment.
- 3.9 **Standard:** Architects shall observe the confidentiality of their client's affairs and should not disclose confidential information without the prior consent of the client or other lawful authority; for example, when disclosure is required by order of a court of law.
- 3.10 **Standard:** Architects shall disclose to clients, owners, or contractors significant circumstances known to them that could be construed as creating a conflict of interest, and should ensure that such conflict does not compromise the legitimate interests of such persons or interfere with the architect's duty to render impartial judgement of contract performance by others.

Principle 4

Obligations to the Profession

Architects have an obligation to uphold the integrity and dignity of the profession, and shall in every circumstance conduct themselves in a manner that respects the legitimate rights and interests of others.

- 4.1 **Standard:** Architects shall pursue their professional activities with honesty and fairness.
- 4.2 **Standard:** An architect shall not take as a partner and shall not act as a co-director with an unsuitable person, such as a person whose name has been removed from any register of architects otherwise than at his own request or a person disqualified from membership of a recognised body of architects.
- 4.3 **Standard:** Architects shall strive, through their actions, to promote the dignity and integrity of the profession, and to ensure that their representatives and employees conform their conduct to this standard, so that no action or conduct is likely to undermine the confidence of those for and with whom they work and so that members of the public dealing with architects are protected against misrepresentation, fraud, and deceit.
- 4.4 **Standard:** Architects shall, to the best of their ability, strive to contribute to the development of architectural knowledge, culture, and education.

Principle 5

Obligations to Colleagues

Architects should respect their rights and acknowledge the professional aspirations and contributions of their colleagues and the contribution made to their works by others.

- 5.1 **Standard:** Architects shall not discriminate on grounds of race, religion, disability, marital status, or gender.
- 5.2 **Standard:** Architects shall not appropriate the intellectual property of nor unduly take advantage of the ideas of another architect without express authority from the originating architect.
- 5.3 **Standard:** Architects shall not, when offering services as independent consultants, quote a fee without receiving an invitation to do so. They must have sufficient information on the nature and the scope of the project to enable a fee proposal to be prepared that clearly indicates the service covered by the fee in order to protect the client and society from unscrupulous under-resourcing by an architect.
- 5.4 **Standard:** Architects shall not, when offering services as independent consultants, revise a fee quotation to take account of the fee quoted by another architect for the same service in order to protect the client and society from unscrupulous under-resourcing by an architect.

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- 5.5 **Standard:** The architect shall not attempt to supplant another architect from an appointment.
- 5.6 **Standard:** Architects shall not enter any architectural competitions that the UIA or their member sections have declared to be unacceptable.
- 5.7 **Standard:** Architects shall not when appointed as competition assessors subsequently act in any other capacity for the work.
- 5.8 **Standard:** Architects shall not maliciously or unfairly criticise or attempt to discredit another architect's work.
- 5.9 **Standard:** The architect shall, on being approached to undertake a project or other professional work upon which he/she knows or can ascertain by reasonable inquiry that another architect has a current appointment with the same client for the same project or professional work, notify the other architect.
- 5.10 **Standard:** Architects shall, when appointed to give an opinion on the work of another architect, notify the other architect, unless it can be shown to be prejudicial to prospective or actual litigation to do so.
- 5.11 **Standard:** Architects shall provide their associates and employees with a suitable working environment, compensate them fairly, and facilitate their professional development.
- 5.12 **Standard:** Architects shall ensure that their personal and professional finances are managed legally and prudently.
- 5.13 **Standard:** Architects shall build their professional reputation on the merits of their own service and performance and should recognise and give credit to others for professional work performed.