



South African Council  
for the Architectural Profession

**REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL VISITING SACAP VALIDATION BOARD TO  
INSCAPE-CAPE TOWN EDUCATION GROUP**

**PURPOSE OF THE VALIDATION VISIT: VIRTUAL VISIT  
31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2021  
FINAL REPORT**



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP) validation board (VB), acting as Education and Training Qualifications Authority (ETQA) for the Council of Higher Education (CHE), physically visited the facilities and virtually visited the INSCAPE-Cape Town Education Group at the Cape Town Campus on the 04 August and 31 August 2021 respectively.

The validation visit served to assess the quality and relevance of the Higher Certificate in Architectural Technology qualification (NQF Level 5) which is offered through face-to-face and via distance mode. This report contains the findings of the VB.

A summary statement was presented to the department on the 06 September 2021.

The VB thanks the executive management, faculty and department for their assistance during the virtual visit.

## 2 LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALS	Architecture Learning Site
CA	Canberra Accord
CBE	Council for the Built Environment
CHE	Council for Higher Education
SACAP	South African Council for the Architectural Professions
VB	Validation Board
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority

## 3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Validation Board wishes to thank the following for their time, effort, arrangements and hospitality.

Campus Director: Mr Miguel de Figueiredo

Dean for the Built Environment: Ms Esther Martins

Academic Staff: Dr Sue Giloi and Mr Paul Gericke

The Staff, Students, Alumni, and Part-time lecturers represented at the virtual visit via zoom for making time available and sharing information.



## **4 PREAMBLE**

The SACAP has a mandate in terms of the Architectural Profession Act, 2000 (Act 44 of 2000) to assess the quality and relevance of qualifications leading to candidacy and eventual professional registration and practice. Its quality assurance mechanism comprises validation visits by the SACAP appointed validation boards to the architectural learning sites (ALSs) situated at South African institutions. These visits are conducted every five years to coincide with the five-year terms of SACAP councils.

The aim of a validation visit is to determine whether graduates who apply for registration as candidates in any of the SACAP's four professional categories – who hold qualifications from the ALS being visited – meet the minimum standards of competencies and skills associated with that category. A validated qualification enables graduates to register as Candidate Draughtspersons, Candidate Architectural Technologists, Candidate Senior Architectural Technologists and Candidate Architects with the SACAP.

## **5 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The executive summary for the INSCAPE Cape Town Campus describing the ethos and campus culture was impressive and gave context to the uniqueness of this campus.

The previous SACAP report related to the Pretoria Campus and not the Midrand, Cape Town and Durban Campus'. However as INSCAPE as a Group apply a common curriculum and methodology across all their Campus programs, the findings of the SACAP report related to the Pretoria Campus are referenced to the Midrand, Cape Town and Durban Campus'

This report was prepared by the Validation Board (VB) representing SACAP. The process involved the physical inspection of the facilities, with evaluation of subject contents and assignments, and interviews with staff and students, as well as a review of the module programmes' contributions to architectural education and research in general via a virtual visit.

### **4.2 Recommendations to SACAP**

The VB recommends to SACAP:

Unconditional Continued Validation, with recommendations of the following programme:

- Higher Certificate in Architectural Technology – Category of registration: Candidate Draughtsperson

#### 4.3 Recommendations:

- There needs to be a strategic Transformation plan for the Cape Town Campus in order to address changes in teaching and learning and ensure diversity of staff is maintained and established with procedures in place across the INSCAPE campuses.
- The VB recommends that external moderators should be subject matter experts in the module.
- The appointment of moderators should be according to the CHE regulations which recommends a three (3) year cyclical appointment.

## 6 VALIDATION PROCESS, AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Validation is an outcomes-based, peer-reviewed evaluation of courses in architecture. SACAP evaluates the evidence presented by the ALS and revealed by means of interviewing staff, students and external examiners. Accreditation, as conducted by the Council for Higher Education (CHE), focuses on procedures and processes, and although SACAP may comment on issues such as governance and administration, those are mainly the domain of the CHE. In addition, validation provides a benchmark of international standard as well as allowing mobility of students between the various programmes offered by validated ALSs.

- This report is aimed at providing an assessment for the validation of the Higher Certificate in Architectural Technology.

The broad aim of the validation system applied by such VB is the safeguarding of standards in architectural education by means of a recognition process.

The Assessment process, whilst the VB finds your process interesting, it is weak and needs to be independent, vigour and broad so that it gives effective feedback to the lecturers so as they can implement the recommendations. The moderators report is too generic. There is no transformation plan in place.

## 7 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The criteria applied are according to SACAP's Competencies for the Architectural Profession. The process is prescribed in SACAP's Validation Guidelines, referred to as The Validation Protocols. The architectural competencies prescribe a range of skills and knowledge fields for each of the four categories of architectural professional and are loosely aligned with the qualifications being validated. To allow for the diversity of philosophies and focus that exists at ALSs, it is accepted that some competencies will be more developed at some institutions than at others.

It is clear, therefore, that although the validation process is standardised for consistency and equality, the intrinsic diversity of learning programmes is accepted and celebrated. The ALS undergoing validation is expected to, very clearly articulate and explain how its programme is positioned vis-à-vis existing programmes at other ALSs. Unique characteristics of the programme, its niche, as well as similarities and distinctive differences must be highlighted.



The panel must assess subjects in terms of structure, credits, content, teaching and learning, and intellectual intensity in terms of the year offered. An ALS must also indicate how continuity and vertical progression are to be achieved in the transition between qualifications. Of specific importance are the requirements for, and envisaged format of, final year design theses and their examination procedures.

## **MEMBERS OF THE VALIDATION PANEL**

The panel consisted of Dr Finzi Saidi (VB Chairperson), Ms Lula Scott (VB member) and Ms Kimberley Rowan (SACAP Manager: Education and Accreditation). No conflicts of interest were reported. A detailed schedule of Board members and qualifications is appended (Annexure D). The physical inspection of the facilities was undertaken by Mr Richard Perfect.

## **8 OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK**

### **8.1 Intellectual Identity**

The main strength and vision of INSCAPE-Cape Town is to provide students with further access to further their studies and for students to gain entry level employment. The VB acknowledges the Management of INSCAPE- Cape Town for their blending learning mode with a strong focus on developing work-based skills. There is also an advantage between having a balance of academia and lecturer with 'real-work' experience. INSCAPE-Cape Town has sustainability in finances and teaching cohort of lecturers who are willing and excited to be teaching.

## **9 COMMENTARY**

### **9.1 Documentation, Digital Presentation and Exhibition of Work**

The documentation was succinct and well compiled within files sent digitally. The information was further expanded on by the Dean of the Built Environment. INSCAPE-Cape Town was effective in aligning the modules and documentation to the outcome competencies for a candidate draughtsperson.

The previous SACAP report related to the Pretoria Campus and not the Midrand, Cape Town and Durban Campus'. However as INSCAPE as a Group apply a common curriculum and methodology across all their Campus programs, the findings of the SACAP report related to the Pretoria Campus are referenced to the Midrand, Cape Town and Durban Campus'

## 9.2 Meetings with Management

The VB held constructive and transparent meetings with the Dean and other staff members who pointed out the challenges. Management seemed very committed and supportive of the school's vision and mission.

## 9.3 Comments Based on an Interview with Students

The students spoke highly of the assistance received from INSCAPE-Cape Town who still placed them in a host company, noting challenges around covid lockdowns limiting opportunity. The students spoke highly of their facilities at INSCAPE-Cape Town and lecturers together with the ongoing support and ongoing learning over the covid lockdown period. The change of lecturers, even though creating challenges, was managed well to avoid the gaps in learning. They enjoyed the common spaces they interacted in socially and whilst learning. The absence from this environment and the interaction due to Covid 19 was missed, as was peer discussions which supported their learning process. The students also identified that most lecturers are available as required. The Model Building studio has a fully equipped workshop but lacks adequate material resources. Students commented that they felt that when working remotely, their resources were lacking and it was difficult being off campus trying to complete projects. Students have access to the INSCAPE-ProQuest online library.

The VB recommends that students all register with the SACAP under the "student category" to enable early entry and understanding of the "professional environment".

There is also an effective Student Representative Committee, The past students interviewed (pre-covid) indicated that graduates were well received locally by the industry.

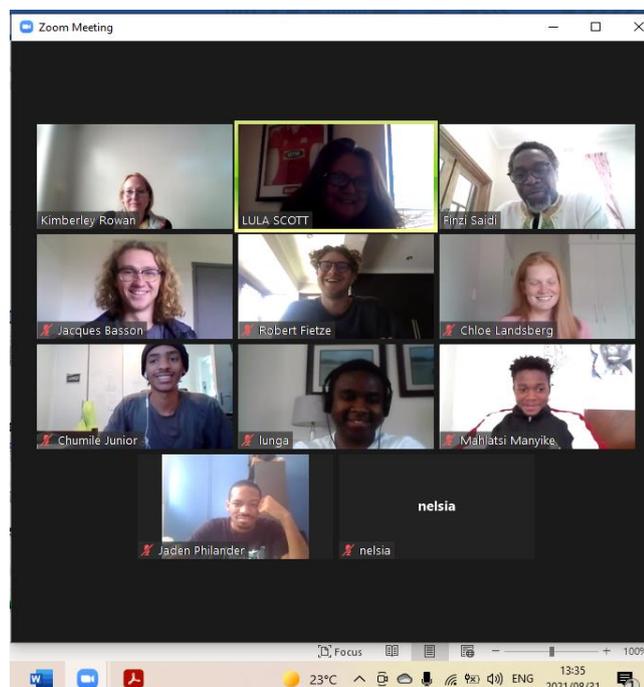


Photo 1: The VB meets with the students of INSCAPE CAPE TOWN



#### 9.4 Comments Based on an Interview with Staff

There is adequately qualified staff, most of whom are practitioners. The staff raised the concern of the moderation reports being an issue. Although the moderator's report had been received by the Dean of the school, the lecturers had not seen the report and therefore had not incorporated the recommendation in time. The staff also commented that they felt a single year-end moderation was not sufficient.

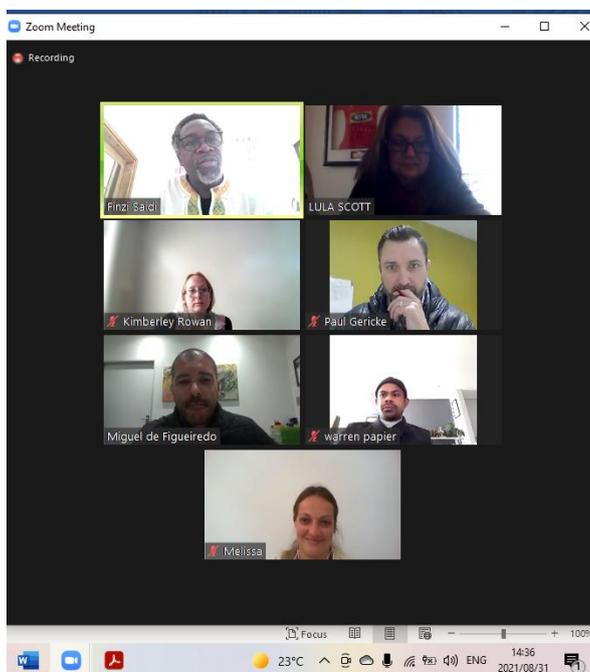


Photo 2: The VB meets with the staff of INSCAPE Cape Town

## 10 FACILITIES AND RESOURCING

### 10.1 INSCAPE-CAPE TOWN Facilities:

The campus is situated in a converted mid-century industrial building situated off street, down a secure private side street with good security at the street interface and biometric access control to the building. The relatively dense urban environment is typical of Cape Town city environment, the mixed use creating a vibrant, activated, and dense urban environment. The institute is ideally situated in terms of access to public transport, both in terms of the Golden Arrow bus service and the My Citi (the station situated at the campus entrance) and PRASA rail services (station 1400m distance, 18min walk). There is a good quality safe student accommodation within easy walking distance of the institution. The campus has limited parking with 28 undercover basement and secure off-street parking is available, however there is also an ample supply of safe street parking. It seems that most students use public transport, and “Mom’s taxi”. The immediate area is monitored by an Armed Response company with monitoring by the Salt River CID (City Improvement District) patrols.

The first impression of the campus is of a mid-century industrial building at the end of a secure



lane. The facility is well maintained and presented. The campus is essentially a design school and the new students in the programme share the facility interacting closely with students of other design disciplines offered. The interior space is bright and fresh, modern, simple and pragmatic in the use of materials and furnishings. The campus is spread over two levels, access, parking and reception on the ground level with the teaching spaces on the 1st floor.

The Main Hub is a large general open plan exhibition/crit space and a student lounge (with spectacular inspiring views of the mountain). This space is surrounded by studios and an AV room. The studio learning spaces are mostly isolated by means of glass and dry wall partitions. The Library Hub provides for a small open plan library space with a small collection of books, technical literature, and samples in wall cabinets. Worktables are provided as workspace.

This space has an inspiring 'urban roof top' north view from a long narrow balcony providing a safe and secure outdoor chill area which also has a smoking section. Considering the tight urban context of the facility most social interaction would take place indoors however access to the long narrow balcony provides a welcome outdoor social space on beautiful day. The general spatial layout is conceptually arranged to promote and facilitate social interaction with a variety of social spaces which can be used to socially engage and/or chill.

There is also a dedicated social area on the ground floor off the access lane which also provides a space for social gatherings and even the odd barbeque event. This area also doubles a larger smoking zone further removed from the academic space.

On date of the visit, the school was closed due to current Covid protocol, with distance learning taking place. The school was uninhabited other than by staff, and thus difficult to get a sense of how the design facilitates the social and learning interactions.

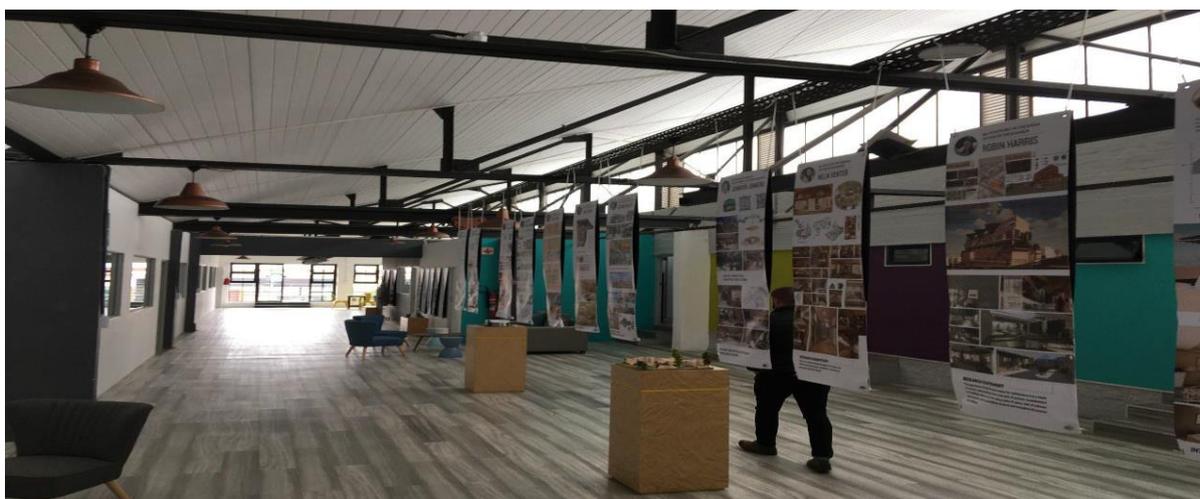


Photo 3: Main Exhibition Space at INSCAPE-CAPE TOWN Cape Town

## **11 COMMENTARY ON THE MODULES PRESENTED:**

### **11.1 TECHNICAL DRAWING PRACTICES (TEC 135)**

#### **General Comments:**

Comprehensive study guide has been for the modules that is helpful for the student.

Perhaps this can be backed by South African references to construction books by: H Wegelen; R Fischer; S Smit et al etc. The student work shows evidence of knowledge of the planning laws of Cape Town - with completed application forms, comprehensive for competency for all levels of categories. The generic moderator's report is inadequate as feedback for a core competency module such as technical drawing practices which is essential for a higher certificate programme.

The VB members were satisfied with the module and form of assessment methods.

### **11.2 DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS (CRE 136)**

#### **General Comments:**

The module is well planned with exemplified by study guides and assignments that document competencies and expected outcomes on completion. There is clear documentation of the assignments and the criteria for assessment is satisfactory. The content demonstrates adequate complexity for a draughtsperson consisting of history and theory of architecture; architectural principles: sketching, trends, and latest technological and layout/presentation techniques.

The high, middle and low marks should be arranged for the whole module rather than in sections i.e., VB members do not want to know the highest performer in the sketching section. What is needed is to show the highest /mid/lowest overall performer in the entire 11 sections of CRE 136. The file for Sketching Exercises1361 was found to be empty and therefore no conclusions could be made. The module for Design resume had no lowest performer to evaluate.

The Sketching competencies in most of the students presented were below acceptable standards and needs to be addressed by the design staff.

### **11.3 GREEN AND SUSTAINABILITY TECHNOLOGY (TEC 137)**

#### **General Comments:**

The module appears to be well planned supported by study guides and assignments. The competencies and expected outcomes on completion of the module were well defined. There are numerous graphic examples that are presented enhancing the study material. There is a holistic approach and overview to the subject matter. The presentation and documentation of

assignments and the assessment criteria are well defined and the content aligns to anticipated competencies of a draughtsperson.

There appears to be an interaction of the knowledge across other modules carried through to this model thus subject matter is not viewed in isolation. The portfolio presented identified a range of high, medium, but no low range. Generally, there appears to be a good understanding of the principles required in the high and medium range; it would have been beneficial to view the low range.

There appears to be “copy paste” ethos of material researched which should be discouraged in portfolio content. The quality of the technical drawings supporting the subject matter was found not to be consistent. Portfolios lacked evidence of application of the necessary town planning criteria in the case studies.

There is an extensive interaction with current systems and methods which are used in other countries, leaning on existing expertise and working systems on which one may learn from and apply locally. However subject matter presented did not show adequate focus on basic principles and vernacular examples (local and international, and historic methods) and examples of current applications within the South African context and environment - this should be explored and incorporated further by INSCAPE-Cape Town. However, in the lecturer interviews the staff clarified that the basic principles and vernacular is covered in their teaching with local examples.

There is evidence of continuous formative project-based assessment, against defined learning outcomes, resulting in marks per assignment and includes a combination of lecturer, group discussion and critique plus peer assessment. A summative portfolio-based exhibition is externally moderated at end of the programme. This is based on a sample of portfolios. A review of the total student portfolio base would serve the students better and interim moderation during the year is encouraged. Specific briefs are internally moderated during the academic year. Although the students present their projects to their lecturers in the year, it might be beneficial for students to present their portfolios to the moderators at the end of the year and at interim moderation during the year (currently not available but encouraged).

There is a healthy practice of internal peer teacher evaluation of the modules. Written subject reports are helpful feedback for lecturers as they contain detailed reports on which to improve teaching. The panel commended the practice within INSCAPE – Cape Town.

The context of the Sans XA Regulations and Energy Efficiency calculations is not adequately touched on. A rational design may not necessarily fall within the required competencies, however greater evidence is required of students interaction with the various calculations- one may need to apply these in a rational design and/or to confirm compliance to Sans XA Regulations and Energy Efficiency Regulations.

The VB encourages INSCAPE- Cape Town to teach the basic principles of environmental factors with the students instead of them finding their own solutions and exploring their own historic and vernacular methods. Incorporating the basic environmental principles and methods in the model building assignment (under different module) is encouraged.

#### **11.4 BUSINESS AND PRACTICE MANAGEMENT BUS (138)**

##### **General Comments:**

The module appears to be well planned supported by study guides and assignments. Learning is guided by written briefs which define the subject matter as well as the depth and breadth of the learning to be evidenced by the student. The competencies and the expected outcomes on completion of the module seem well defined. Examples are presented enhancing the study material. Generally, content aligns to anticipated competencies of a draughtsperson, however strong emphasis on project management and contract managements, the VB felt this was too advanced on expected competency. There is also too much focus on JBCC detail with insufficient focus on the overview of other market related contracts. Even though the Courseware is too heavily weighted to the JBCC contract for the Higher Certificate, it was encouraging that portfolios' presented students' interpretations of principle applications of a contract. Professional Appointment contracts are not adequately addressed and not enough focus in office practise and local authorities and the need for compliance in how documentation is presented to the latter.

The portfolio presented did not always identify a range of high, medium, and low. Generally, there appears to be a good understanding of the principles required; the high range showed a good knowledge of project planning and the principles of business practice. There was no low portfolio presented.

A greater understanding of the role players within the Built Environment and aligned professions with relevance to the student and graduate is required, as not always correctly understood by lecturers (and as taught). The context and role of CPA on the Built Environment and aligned professions is not adequately explained.

There is focus on interior design components noted in the project plan but was explained that this explained was first project for students and thus applied simple project, without construction methods to explain principles of project planning. A greater focus on architectural technology is encouraged.

Student base- noted 7 students last year but in current year has doubled.

#### **11.5 SOFTWARE APPLICATION FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (SOF 135)**

##### **General Comments:**

Two programmes are taught, AutoCAD and REVIT as industry standard software packages.



Most student adequately demonstrate competence in the use of the computer drawing programmes but were missing drawings in their portfolios which made it hard to confirm and compare the grading or the quality of achievement between the students. Only two assignments (drawings) - a 3D and a plan were reflected in the SOF 135 portfolio and that made assessment of the students work difficult in that progression was hard to identify. Some student projects were not in the folder which also made it difficult to evaluate if all students acquired the needed competencies. The external moderation should be improved by having a subject matter expert. The teaching and learning online method (due to COVID) seems to be an effective method.

## 11.6 EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING (BUS 026)

### General Comments:

Students undertake a period of 240 hours/30 days full-time experiential training (in-service training or work integrated learning) in an architectural practice or similar. Learning is experiential with students becoming fully involved with the activities of the host company in a typical architectural practice or related environment. The training should include exposure to all facets of architectural drawing, from sourcing work, meeting with clients, interpreting the brief, design process, final application, site meetings and general administration tasks. The training must include analysis of good examples of existing design work and exposure to the management of a project. The work should be completed under the supervision of a registered industry practitioner / professional.

With the Covid Challenges of 2020 there were limited host company opportunities and INSCAPE-Cape Town is commended for their approach to create “real life scenarios” for students to partake in and thus not be compromised. The shortcomings in content/experience were taken up by Distance Learning offering further opportunities to support the student.

Noting above in the absence of opportunity to undertake in office experiential training and site visits, the campus is to be commended on their approach for students to develop a presentation with research component to cover various aspects within an experiential environment. Therefore allowing for presentation skills and research tools to thus be explored. However, marks were too high for content presented with a copy paste tendency noted in some presentations, this is to be discouraged and rather the student presenting understands their own words.

With respect to office opportunities, documented procedure of the entire process must be recorded, both written and visual by submitting a log signed by the supervisor confirming work has been completed by the student. A portfolio of evidence of the work undertaken during the Experiential Training is needed. An exit interview completed by the supervisor indicates the industry readiness of the student to be well planned supported by study guides and



assignments. Learning is guided by written briefs which define the subject matter as well as the depth and breadth of the learning to be evidenced by the student. Competencies and expected outcomes on completion of module were well defined. The examples presented in the study material enhances the learning experience of the student.

Internal assessment of the internship is outcomes based, the students submit and present a detailed report documenting their experiences, both written and orally. Format and extent of the report produced complies with a pre-determined brief. The presentation includes visual and documentary evidence of work completed. The formal summative assessment is a verbal and visual presentation.

External assessment is the student's Experiential Training host submits a report on the student's performance. The report indicates the extent of the student's industry-readiness and any remedies required before graduation.

It is recommended however that expected responsibilities and intended outcomes by both mentor/host company and student must be clearly outlined to ensure ongoing growth and that student is effectively incorporated into the various work scenarios.

Furthermore, ongoing liaison (formal and informal) by INSCAPE- Cape Town with mentor/host company should be applied throughout process (and not at end only) to identify challenges or shortcomings to enhance both the student's development and where required to inform enhancements to the INSCAPE-Cape Town programme. Same ongoing liaison to apply with student, INSCAPE should liaise with the student to ensure that their needs are met.

## **12 CONCLUSION**

The VB thanks the Campus Director, Dean of the Built Environment and Departmental staff for their hospitality and assistance during the virtual visit. Having spent the day scrutinising and interrogating the many facets of the INSCAPE- Cape Town Education Group, the VB trusts that the interaction, comments and recommendations outlined will assist the ALS in continuing to play its role as a major contributor to the architectural profession and the built environment.

Ms Esther Martins (Dean for the Built Environment)	Dr Finzi Saidi (VB Chairperson)
Date: 12 October 2021	Date: 12 October 2021
Signature: p.p. 	Signature: 

### **Annexure A: Competencies used**

The competencies were aligned with the envisaged Identification of Work Matrix. That matrix is based on the complexity of the project, and the sensitivity of the context and site, whether natural or constructed.

		SITE SENSITIVITY		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
PROJECT COMPLEXITY	LOW	PrArchDraught		
		PrArchT		
		PrSArchT		
		PrArch		
	MEDIUM	PrArchT		
		PrSArchT		
		PrArch		
	HIGH	PrSArchT		

### **Annexure B: Curriculum Overview**

CODE	YEAR	MODULE
TEC135	1	Technical Drawing Practices
CRE 136	1	Design Fundamentals
TEC 137	1	Green and Sustainability Technology
BUS138	1	Business and Practice Management

SOF183	1	Software Application for the Built Environment
BUS026	1	Experiential Training

### **Annexure C: Validation Board Schedule**

Tuesday 03 August 2021		
10h00 - 12h00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-meeting of the validation board via zoom</li> <li>SACAP panel to discuss the inspection of the architecture program (chairperson appointed by the SACAP to preside)</li> </ul>	SACAP Board
Day one: Tuesday 31 August 2021		
08h00– 08h30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of board members by the validation board chairperson and of staff members by the Dr Sue Giloi</li> </ul>	Dr Sue Giloi Ms Esther Martins Mr Miguel de Figueiredo
08h30- 12h30	Members of the VB divide their time between inspection of the work and portfolios	
12h30 - 13h30	Lunch	
13h30 – 14h30	The VB meets with students and graduates via zoom.	
14h30- 15h30	The VB meets with full time and part time staff	
15h30	Break	
16h00- 17h00	The VB meet with the senior staff of INSCAPE-CAPE TOWN CAPE TOWN	

### **Annexure D: Validation Board Members**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Dr Finzi Saidi (Phd: Architecture)	Chairperson	082 765 1552	<a href="mailto:finzis@uj.ac.za">finzis@uj.ac.za</a>
Ms Lula Scott (HNDiploma: Architecture/PSAT)	Practitioner	083 264 1056	<a href="mailto:lulaw@iafrica.com">lulaw@iafrica.com</a>
Ms Kimberley Rowan (PGDEM)	SACAP Manager: Education	+27 11 479 5000	<a href="mailto:Kimberley.Rowan@sacapsa.com">Kimberley.Rowan@sacapsa.com</a>