

Appendix B

VALIDATION BOARD

A Validation Board (VB) is a team of representatives drawn from the SACAP's Validation Panel and others nominated by relevant national authorities. This appendix provides detailed information about the roles, duties and responsibilities of a VB. This appendix also explains the evaluation approach, provides an evaluation matrix, presents a pre-meeting agenda and provides detail for communicating the validation visit findings.

Purpose and scope of the work of a VB

The purpose of a VB is to conduct a validation visit to an ALS for new or continued validation, including visits to assess the ALS after conditional validation or withdrawal of validation has been recommended. A VB reviews the evidence provided by the ALS to evaluate students' knowledge and skills against the SACAP competencies (**APPENDIX A**) and the SACAP's transformation objectives. A VB focusses on the evidence presented and not specifically on the process of teaching and learning, although the latter does however provide an important context against which the evidence is viewed. A VB must assess coursework and outcomes in terms of structure, credits, content, teaching and learning, practical and intellectual ability. A VB should accept the prerogative of an ALS to formulate the teaching and learning design, policies and procedures. A VB's role is not to instruct the ALS how to conduct its academic business. Its role is to stimulate critical self-analysis, to afford practical help and to aid an ALS in achieving their educational objectives.

Composition of a VB

In choosing representatives for a VB, it is essential to balance appropriate experience with representation of the various interests and needs of the ALS. International experience of a VB is encouraged. For the sake of succession and continuity, a VB should also comprise members representing a diversity of gender, identity, race, age, experience, disability status, level of qualification and registration in line with Section 217b of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Where possible:

- at least one of the VB members must be from the Education Committee or any other committee in SACAP with a specific education and transformation focus.
- at least one of the VB members must provide continuity from the previous visit to the specific ALS.
- members of a VB should be from the same geographical region as the ALS under validation, to save time and costs, although the geographical directive should not compromise the integrity of a VB.

VB's are nominated by the SACAP Education Committee from the members of the VP. The nominations are communicated to the head of an ALS. The head of an ALS must review and accept the proposal before selected members of a VB can be informed. VB members should be informed about their appointment no later than three months prior to a planned validation visit. A VB member should not be informed of the identity of an ALS under validation until membership of a VB has been confirmed. Any conflict of interest should be declared by selected VB members before a VB is finalised.

1. VB EVALUATION APPROACH

The ultimate task of a VB is to determine whether the graduates of the ALS meet the required professional standards set out by the SACAP competencies (**APPENDIX A**). A VB reviews an ALS's ability to deliver its qualification/s and maintain the standard of achievement of students, at the various categories of registration for candidature. To this end, the lowest standards of students qualifying for graduation are of greatest concern.

Although the alignment of an ALS's curriculum and outcomes with the SACAP competencies forms the core of the evaluation, an ALS provides additional contextual information and evidence. A VB therefore has an opportunity to comment on this additional information and evidence as part of a process of peer review, to facilitate reflection and growth of an ALS. A VB reviews and evaluates an ALS's report and the evidence presented during the validation visit. All parts of an ALS Report (detail in **APPENDIX C**) capture the period since the previous validation visit. However, evidence presented by an ALS (detail in **APPENDIX D**) during the validation visit of the curriculum content, student work and assessments are based on the academic year preceding the validation visit.

2. EVALUATION MATRIX (APPENDIX B.1)

The evaluation matrix (**APPENDIX B.1**) corresponds with an ALS report (**APPENDIX C**) and provides guidelines for evaluation. In addition, the SACAP competencies (**APPENDIX A**) and the subject review template (**APPENDIX B.2**) should be used as part of the evaluation approach and process. The evaluation matrix with comments must be included in the final validation report (format in **APPENDIX B.3**).

3. VALIDATION BOARD MEMBERS, ROLES, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. MEMBERS OF THE VB

For a validation visit, a VB will include a minimum of 5 members:

- Four professional members of which one will be selected as the Chair of a VB:
 - 2 academics of a standing equal to or above the highest professional category to be validated.
 - 2 practitioners of professional standing equal to or above the highest professional category to be validated.
- A specialized secretary from SACAP, where possible the SACAP Education Manager.

In addition, there may be the following observers:

- A post-graduate student representative of another region/ALS.
- An observer for training purposes who will not participate in the validation process.
- Representatives of the CBE or similar authorities.

When delegated representatives of other authorities, such as the CBE, accompany a VB as observers, the particular authority will carry the expenses. Representatives of such authorities are subject to prior SACAP approval. The extent to which observers may participate in the process, will be at the discretion of a VB Chairperson.

b. FOR AN ADVISORY VISIT PANEL 3 ACADEMICS OF ACADEMIC STANDING EQUAL TO OR ABOVE THE HIGHEST PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY TO BE VALIDATED IS RECOMMENDED. SELECTION AND DUTIES OF THE VB MEMBERS

While the validation process is intended to be as transparent as possible, a VB is prohibited from discussing the details of the validation visit with anyone until the final validation report (FVR) is released.

The Chair

The chair of a VB is selected by the SACAP Education Committee. The Chair is the ultimate authority during the validation visit. The Chair may, for example, cancel the visit if the evidence is not available. The duties of the Chair include:

- convening an information and coordination meeting a day prior to the validation visit and ensuring that all members are on time and in attendance;
- facilitating the introduction of the VB members;
- explaining the purpose of the visit and the proceedings;
- apportioning tasks and responsibilities to be undertaken during the visit to the VB members;
- determining the extent to which observers may participate in the validation process;
- chairing all meetings;
- supporting the Secretary and the Validation Visit Manager in timekeeping for the sake of order and discipline;
- dealing with any appeals should either the ALS or the VB act unprofessionally, for reasons including inter alia, non-attendance, distracting behaviour or observers having undue influence during the visit;
- calling for representations, presentations, etc.;
- presenting points arising from meetings and discussions when meeting with representatives of management and the executive;
- presenting the recommendation in an initial validation statement to the ALS;
- ensuring that the validation report is completed and delivered timeously.

The VB Secretary

Should the Secretary not be the SACAP Education manager, the Secretary will be appointed by the SACAP Education Committee. The Secretary oversees the organisational aspects of the validation visit. The duties of the Secretary include:

- managing arrangements with the head of the ALS;
- keepings records and minutes of meetings;
- collecting and collating information received from the validation visit manager;
- preparing the interim report statement to be signed off and issued at the completion of the visit;
- circulating draft reports for comment to the VB members, and ensuring that a record is kept of all comments;
- completing a validation report conforming to the SACAP approved format within eight weeks of the completion of the validation.

Validation Visit Manager

The validation visit manager is selected from the members of a VB during the pre-meeting. The duties of the Validation Visit Manager are:

- ensuring that all VB members are aware of the sequence of events;
- keeping all attendance registers of each meeting;
- timekeeping off all meetings and events;
- collecting and collating information from the VB members at the end of each day.

Validation Board Members

The duties of the VB members include:

- studying the Validation Protocol prior to arrival for the validation visit, with specific reference to the SACAP competencies (APPENDIX A) and the evaluation approach (APPENDIX B);
- studying the current and previous ALS Report prior to arrival for the validation visit;
- being timeous for all meeting and validation events;
- attending and participating in all meetings;
- engaging with and assessing the ALS report and presented evidence;
- completing subject review forms and reflective notes and submitting this to the validation visit manager at the end of each day;
- providing meaningful, substantive and timeous input for the preparation and completion of the validation report.

- ensuring that all arrangements for travel, including airport transfers, are organised well in advance by SACAP.

Validation Board Observers

The VB Observers ordinarily do not actively participate but may, with the discretion of and in consultation with the Chair, participate beyond observation. Observers should not influence the validation visit outcome as they are not selected for their competencies directly related to the outcome required in the visit. There needs to be a avoidance of vested interests potentially being promoted.

C. PRE-MEETING ORGANISATION AND AGENDA

The pre-meeting takes place prior to the VB's first arrival at the ALS. The meeting is intended to review and identify matters to be clarified and investigated during the validation visit and to identify areas of interest and expertise of the validation board members so as to allocate tasks accordingly. If a VB consists of experienced members, the pre-meeting can conceivably be concluded in an hour or less. If some members are inexperienced, the meeting can take as much as three hours, since each section of both the Validation Protocols and the SACAP Competencies for the Architectural Profession must be discussed.

No.	AGENDA ITEM	NOTES & COMMENTS
1.	Welcome	Introductions
2.	Confirmations	Conflicts of interest Confidentiality agreement Contact information, qualifications & affiliations Authority and roles Honoraria Agreement on completion of report
3.	Administrative & logistical arrangements	Travel home Accommodation Local travel Punctuality After hour arrangements
4.	Background and orientation	Act No. 44 of 2000 Review of previous validation report Review of the ALS report Validation timetable Time management
5.	The need for a holistic approach to assessment	Validation versus accreditation Diversity of curriculum and teaching approaches
6.	Clarification of purpose and potentiality validation recommendations	An advisory visit Unconditional validation Conditional validation Withdrawal of validation Candidate qualification for recognition Deferred recognition Deferred validation Appeals process

7.	Recapping the process	Validation protocols Competencies for the Architectural Profession
8.	Essential elements	Focus on the lowest pass Head of ALS and staff briefing Interviews & group discussions extremely valuable Exhibitions Portfolios Nothing to be taken for granted Credible evidence-based findings important Do not make substantial findings based off isolated comment without verification
9.	Collating commentary	Allocation of responsibilities Capturing of information Compiling the interim and final validation reports
10.	Interim report on departure	Verbal Validation statement and an Interim report regarding recommendation List conditions and/or recommendations All VB members to sign off
11.	Additional matters, questions and closure	

d. DECIDING ON AN OUTCOME

The possible validation outcomes are available in the MAIN DOCUMENT of the Validation Protocols. Conditional validation should be granted with great circumspection. In the past, VBs have granted conditional validation assuming that ALSs would benefit from the supposed leverage. However, conditional validation has generally not only failed to elicit the higher education institution's support hoped for but has compromised the reputation of the ALSs. Conditional validation should therefore only be recommended when it is clearly demonstrated that the graduates of the learning site under validation lack the skills and competencies required for registration as a candidate in a professional category. In the case of a validation re-visit, new issues are not allowed to be raised. The focus must be on the issues highlighted in the validation report.

e. PROCESS FOR COMMUNICATING VALIDATION FINDINGS

The validation visit findings are communicated to the ALS in various stages. The timeline for those stages is set out below.

Timeline

Before departure from the ALS	Make a verbal validation statement (VVS) to the ALS.	
Before departing for home	Complete and sign off the Interim Validation Report (IVR) .	
1 week	Submit the Written Validation Statement (WVS) to the Head of the ALS.	
2 weeks	Circulate Draft Validation Report (DVR) to the VB for comments.	VB Secretary
	Sign-off DVR report.	Chair
	Send DVR to the Head of the ALS.	VB Secretary

3 weeks	Check first DVR for facts and send back to the SACAP within 7 days.	HoD
	Make and modify comments on the first DVR, no new issues may be introduced.	All VB members
4 weeks	Consolidate comments from the VB members and the HoD, incorporate the HoD's letter and prepare the Final Validation Report (FVR) that must be professionally edited.	VB Secretary
	Submit FVR to the SACAP Education Committee for approval.	VB Secretary
5 weeks	The SACAP Education Committee reviews and requests the SACAP Education & Accreditation Manager to submit the FVR and the committee's written response to the SACAP Council for ratification.	The SACAP Education Committee
	Submit the FVR and the committee's written response to the SACAP Council for ratification	The SACAP Education & Accreditation Manager
6 weeks	Circulate the FVR to the VB.	The SACAP Education & Accreditation Manager
8 weeks	The VB to do a final check of the FVR.	VB members
8 weeks	Send the FVR to the HoD and the CHE.	The SACAP Education & Accreditation Manager

f. CONTENT AND FORMAT FOR VERBAL AND WRITTEN VALIDATION STATEMENTS AND DRAFT AND FINAL VALIDATION REPORTS

Verbal Validation Statement

The Verbal Validation Statement (VVS) is presented to the ALS at the end of the validation visit (as there is usually not time to write the detailed report before the meeting with the Dean) and must contain an executive summary of the conclusions, i.e. which degrees get which type of evaluation, and areas of excellence and concern.

Written Validation Statement

The Written Validation Statement (WVS) is sent to the Head of an ALS no later than one week after the conclusion of the validation visit should contain in writing the verbal validation statement content.

Draft Validation Report

The Draft Validation Report (DVR) is sent to the Head of the ALS for comments no later than 8 weeks after the conclusion of the validation visit. The DVR should contain the essential decision regarding validation, as well as the most pertinent strengths and weaknesses of an ALS. These form the framework for the subsequent final validation report and should include all the pertinent recommendations.

Final Validation Report

The Final Validation Report (FVR) is the culmination of the validation visit. Once comments are received on the draft validation report (DVR), they are considered and incorporated, and the FVR will then be presented at the next Education Committee meeting for approval and the next Council meeting for ratification. The FVR may not introduce new issues. The FVR is sent to the Head of the ALS no later than 6 weeks after the conclusion of the validation visit. The FVR should follow the format provided in **APPENDIX B.3**.