



South African Council
for the Architectural Profession

**REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL VISITING SACAP VALIDATION BOARD TO
INSCAPE EDUCATION GROUP (DURBAN CAMPUS)**

**PURPOSE OF THE VALIDATION VISIT: VIRTUAL VISIT
02 SEPTEMBER 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 Education Group at the Durban Campus on the 20 August and 02 September 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 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 Raymond Taylor

Dean for the Built Environment: Ms Esther Martins

Academic Staff: Dr Sue Giloi and Ms Jenni Mckenzie

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



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.

4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 Introduction

The executive summary for the INSCAPE Durban Campus describing the ethos and campus culture was impressive.

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, students and their external moderator, 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 Transformation strategic plan and procedure in place across the campuses. The



academic staff should be more diverse.

External Moderators should be subject matter experts in the module. The appointment of the moderator should be according to the CHE regulations which is based on a three (3) year contact.

5 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.

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6 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 members) 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 Kevin Bingham

7 OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

7.1 Intellectual Identity

The VB acknowledges the Management of INSCAPE Durban for their blended learning mode with a strong focus on developing work-based skills.

A reflection on the COVID-19 response: On the 14th April 2020, classes started online via the platform 'Teams' and the timetable continued online. All students were assisted with modem and data for their personal laptops where needed. INSCAPE- Durban made use of Office 365 and MS Teams as a virtual classroom together with their existing LMS platform (IN.CONNECT). Once Lockdown levels subsided the students could go on campus to make use of the specialised equipment, free WIFI or consult lecturing staff. Despite the COVID-19 challenges the students and staff still engaged in a culture of teaching & learning. There was an innovation in how Experiential Training was handled, the students were able to still benefit. The financial support given to the students regarding data supplied by INSCAPE- Durban is commended, the norm of "bring your own device", as a working tool, supported continuous learning, performance and student deliverables when face-to-face contact was unavailable.

There is also an advantage between having a balance of academia and lecturer with 'real-work' experience.

8 COMMENTARY

8.1 Documentation, Digital Presentation and Exhibition of Work

The documentation was succinct and well compiled within files sent through the virtual online platform. The information was further expanded on by the Dean of the Built Environment and the Campus Director. INSCAPE- Durban 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'

8.2 Meetings with Management



The INSCAPE-Durban campus staff is not diverse in race but does have a balanced ratio between male and female lecturers, INSCAPE- Durban would benefit from the knowledge and backgrounds of a diverse academic staff. Management was very committed and supportive of the school's vision and mission.

8.3 Comments Based on an Interview with the External Examiner

The External Examiner is the same person for all of INSCAPE's campuses. The External examiner was a former lecturer for INSCAPE and since 2020 has been the moderator moderating all of INSCAPE's campuses. The VB was concerned that there was no distinct review of each module as a unit and is rather overviewed as an overall programme.

Furthermore, the VB noted that External Examiner's expertise lies in Interior design and therefore meant that not all the modules were adequately reviewed in terms of the SACAP competencies for the Higher Certificate in Architecture

8.4 Comments Based on an Interview with Students

The student compliment is diverse and they are very happy with the facilities and the lecturers. The students commented that they felt safe on campus and that the security around campus is very good. The students do enjoy being on the campus, whether it is working or socialising. Students were satisfied with teaching and learning experiences and academic assistance received from lecturers.



Photo 2: Virtual meeting with the students

8.5 Comments Based on an Interview with Staff

The staff were very complimentary of their leadership and the initiatives to enhance the faculty and its offerings. The staff seemed to have a willingness to teach and be available for the students' needs. 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 leadership and lecturers are well commended on the support structures offered to the students and lecturers during the 2021 KZN unrest and looting.

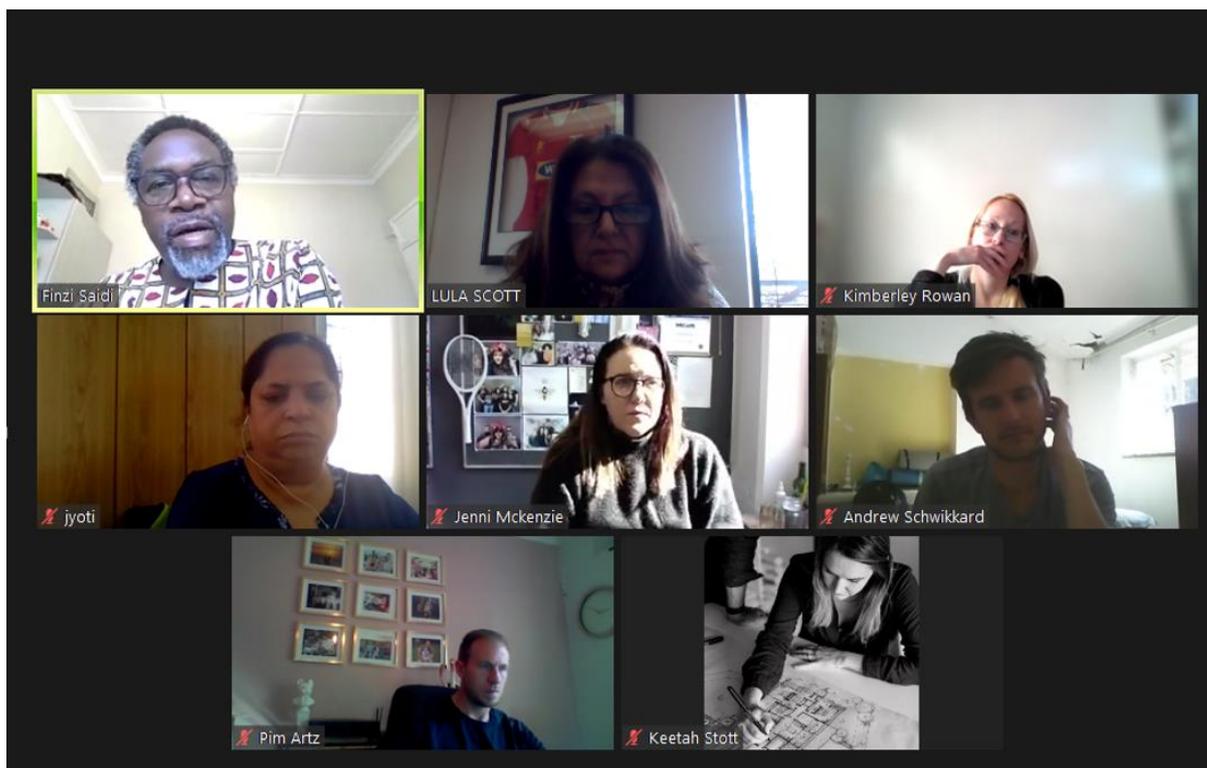


Photo 3: Virtual meeting with the staff

9 FACILITIES AND RESOURCING

9.1 INSCAPE- Durban **Facilities:**

The VB Member who visited the facilities was overall satisfied on the visit. The campus is easily accessible from all directions and lies at the intersection of 2 bus and mini-bus routes. The property comprises 2 main buildings, a taller office block occupied by other tenants, and a lower two and a half level building, with INSCAPE- Durban occupying the upper one and a half levels, with other tenants' below. The site is within secure fencing and has security guards at both the street entrance and the secondary street exit. There are well over 200 parking bays on the property and when visited, there were very many empty bays. The VB Member was well received, with representatives willing to share information. Adequate resources for studios, although the workshop seemed to not be organised. The staff indicated that there was a proper workshop across the campus, but this was not clearly depicted in the site report. The library houses materials samples, some reference materials, and a Photocopier/ scanner. There is sitting space for the students, and a full-time Librarian during office hours. While the students don't have access to the library after hours, they are provided with an Institutional link for the access of some reference materials. All students have online access to the ProQuest digital library consisting of electronic books, journal articles, thesis and magazines.

The students are able to store their materials in a locked store room with controlled access to the key via the administration. The students have access to free wi-fi while on campus and it

was understood that students generally have their own computers, and Inscape provides payment plans and software. There is a small unsupervised Workshop on the ground level in the adjacent building. Students have to make use of their own materials and tools. The studios are fitted with ceiling mounted projectors and each studio has a whiteboard. Some student work was displayed on the studio walls as well as some student models on the desks.

There is a large comfortable internal open plan Student Lounge with easy chairs, stools and tables. Interestingly this area has a suspended ceiling covering the 2 large south-light windows situated in the roof above this area. The studios #7 and #8 can be divided by a sliding-folding door, and can be utilised as a Crit-room. This is an internal space with no access to external natural lighting. The campus has a “Quiet Room” for private consultation where necessary. The campus has an IT technician on hand. There are 6 full-time Staff Members including the Receptionist and the Librarian. There are 149 registered Students across the various programmes.

The Staff offices for full-time Staff look comfortable, while the part-time Staff also have a sitting area and work area with a photocopier. There is also a Staff Storeroom.

The workshop area is located separate from the main building

In general the campus is well suited for its task but there is a concern about universal access for students globally.



Photo 4: Student work displayed in the foyer

10 COMMENTARY ON THE MODULES PRESENTED:

10.1 TECHNICAL DRAWING PRACTICES (TEC 135)

General Comments

The VB members commends the technology teaching staff for comprehensive study guides for semester one and two that gives the student a clear plan of what is expected of them and how to achieve it. The top performing students produced high competent technical portfolios.

The development planning documents were evident. A student's work was presented but this could have been presented using the SACAP guidelines for Validation protocols. The construction documents could be related to Durban's (area specific) context that reflects the

influence of the climate and materials of the local context rather than a general type of building prescribed by INSCAPE. The quality of final portfolios need needs to address to be in line with outputs from other INSACPE sites.

10.2 DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS (CRE 136)

General Comments:

The module is well planned with exemplified study guides and assignments that document competencies and expected outcomes on completion. There is clear documentation of assignments and the criterion for assessment is as standard in all INSCAPE sites. 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 presentation of the students work was not to the SACAP standards set out on the validation protocols. It was difficult to assess if the high, middle and low mark allocation were in reference to an assignment or a whole portfolio of work- which is important especially for the Design module as an integration module. The sketching folders provided were empty, so one could not ascertain the level of competency achieved by the student.

Some of the students work was missing which made it difficult to make effective comparison between the high, middle, and low performances.

The teaching and learning methods are adequate but there is room to include Durban specific knowledge that will enable student to appreciate local materials and ways of making buildings that responds to climate and culture of Durban.

10.3 GREEN AND SUSTAINABILITY TECHNOLOGY (TEC 137)

General Comments:

The module appears to be well planned and supported by study guides and assignments. The competencies and expected outcomes on completion of the module were well defined. There are numerous graphic examples which enhanced the study material. There is also a holistic approach and overview of the subject matter. The presentation and documentation of the assignments and assessment criteria are well defined and the content aligns to the 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 and low marks. Generally, there appears to be a good understanding of the principles required; however, the lower range showed a lack of detail by the students suggesting subject matter is not fully understood. What appears to be “copy paste” of material

that is researched should be discouraged in the portfolio content of the students. As certain portfolios were not reviewed due them not being available and due to a change of lecturers, there should be a procedural hand-over for new lecturers to ensure no student work is lost. (this not being module specific but recommended across all modules and the various INSCAPE Campus)

Some portfolio content was submitted in the students' handwriting. The Durban campus is applauded for recognising students challenge and accepting format of submission.

An extensive interaction with current systems and methods used in other countries is evident which leaned on existing expertise and working systems of which one may learn from and apply locally. However the 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. Noting the above, lecturer interviews clarified that the basic principles and vernacular is covered in their teaching and this is explored and incorporated further by INSCAPE.

The quality of the technical drawings supporting the subject matter was not consistent and lacked evidence of application of necessary town planning criteria in the case studies.

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 the student's interaction with the various calculations, one may need to apply in a rational design and/or to confirm compliance to Sans XA Regulations and Energy Efficiency Regulations.

A greater approach is encouraged to understand the basic principles of environmental factors with the students finding their own solutions exploring historic and vernacular methods. (This rather than leaning heavily on current working systems).

Incorporating the basic environmental principles and methods in the model building assignment (under different module) is encouraged.

A single external examiner across all modules does not offer sufficient expertise on the subject matter to interrogate specifics of each module. There is a heavy weighting on interior design expertise in the moderators and the lecturers. A greater architectural expertise is necessary and specialists in the field to do the moderation and serve as external examiners. An interim assessment is required per term rather than only at the end of the year, and to be on a total student base and not only conducted on a sample of the students.

10.4 BUSINESS AND PRACTICE MANAGEMENT BUS (138)

General Comments:

The module appears to be well planned and supported by study guides and assignments. The



learning process 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 and examples are presented with enhanced the study material.

Generally, the content aligned to the anticipated competencies of a draughtsperson, however there was a strong emphasis on project management and contract managements, the VB felt this was too advanced on the expected competency level.

There is too much focus on the JBCC detail with insufficient focus on an 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. The Professional Appointment contracts were not adequately addressed and there is not enough focus on office practise and local authorities and the need for compliance in how documentation is presented in the latter.

The portfolio that was presented was 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. The low showed an absence of sufficient knowledge in the subject – two students seem to have challenges across all subjects.

A greater understanding of the key role players within the Built Environment and aligned professions which is relevant to the students and graduates is required, as it is not always correctly understood by lecturers (and as it is taught). The context and role of the CPA on the Built Environment and aligned professions is not adequately explained. There is a focus on interior design components noted in the project plans. A greater focus on architectural technology is encouraged.

What appears to be a "Copy paste" tendency by some students in the portfolio presented should be discouraged with greater emphasis on explaining in the students' own words. There was a major concern on the low standard of two of the students' work which was identified as generally problematic across all subjects with the Durban campus and extending to INSCAPE as a Group, INSCAPE should review their Course Entry Criteria.

10.5 SOFTWARE APPLICATION FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (SOF 135)

General Comments:

The module introduces students to software applications ATUCAD and REVIT. The module has a clear outlined study guide that details the competences, and the assignments are designed to assist students with learning. It is commendable that INSCAPE provides students with LinkedIn training to enhance their software training.



There is integration of software learning with the technology and design modules by devising integrated assignments i.e. 'Technical Drawing Practices- TEC135' class and BRIEF TEC1356: Commercial Working Drawings. The student whose work was provided in the files showed that the two output plans and 3D renderings used this software. The students have access to LinkedIn Learning which is a valuable resource to have for AUTOCAD training.

10.6 EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING (BUS 026)

General Comments:

The 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.

In 2020 with all its Covid Challenges there were limited host company opportunities and INSCAPE- Durban is commended for their approach to create "real life scenarios" for students to partake in and thus not be compromised. Shortcomings in content/experience were taken up by Distance Learning offering further opportunities to support the student.

Noting the 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 be explored. The Experiential Learning modules was managed well under the 2020's COVID pandemic constraints, and the fact that students are encouraged to do a presentation and voice over is excellent. The students are challenged to step out of their 'comfort' zone and face 'real-life' scenarios and enhance their presentation skills with opportunity to present personal interpretation of subject matter.

The high, medium, and low portfolios were presented. The high portfolios had good research components whilst the low portfolios lacked depth and understanding.

With regards to the office opportunities, a 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 and 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 this module was well defined and examples are presented enhancing the study material.

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 the student is effectively incorporated into the various work scenarios.

Furthermore, ongoing liaison (formal and informal) by INSCAPE- Durban with the 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 there is a need to enhance this programme. Same ongoing liaison is to be apply with student.

11 CONCLUSIONS

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 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:14 Oct 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"> • Pre-meeting of the validation board via zoom • SACAP panel to discuss the inspection of the architecture program (chairperson appointed by the SACAP to preside) 	SACAP Board
Day one: Thursday 02 September 2021		
08h00– 08h30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of board members by the validation board chairperson and of staff members by the Dr Sue Giloi 	Dr Sue Giloi Ms Esther Martins Mr Raymond Taylor
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 DURBAN	

Annexure D: Validation Board Members

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