



Association  
of Registered  
Interior Designers  
of Ontario

MAKE SPACE FOR GOOD DESIGN.

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## **ARIDO announces changes to education and experience requirements**

**Toronto, ON – December 1, 2009** – The Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario (ARIDO) Board of Management has approved changes to its membership requirements. The new rules affect the years of education and experience necessary to become a Registered member of the Association and will apply to all candidates who join ARIDO on or after January 1, 2010. These changes will bring the province in line with North American industry standards.

The changes are the result of a number of external influences. One was the announcement earlier this year by Canada's premiers that all professional regulators must provide full reciprocity among the provinces and territories. The announcement was part of an agreement on internal trade. In response, ARIDO held a number of meetings with interior design associations across the country to agree to common standards of education, experience and examination.

"ARIDO has always been seen to be a leader in establishing the benchmark for education and experience standards for the profession of interior design," says Deborah Rutherford, ARIDO president. "We are very proud of the fact that all provincial associations worked together this time to establish common standards coast to coast."

A second influence was the decision by the Council of Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) to require a four-year bachelor's degree as its minimum standard for accreditation, beginning in 2010. When CIDA first announced this move in 2004, ARIDO publicly stated that Ontario was not ready to follow. Since then, several interior design programs in Ontario have moved towards a higher standard of education and today six of 10 accredited schools offer four-year programs. As a result, ARIDO believes the industry is now ready to accept a bachelor's degree as the minimum standard in Ontario.

The final factor was the decision by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) in January 2008 to implement mandatory qualified work experience as a requirement to write its exam. Although work experience was made mandatory, NCIDQ did not mandate the Interior Design Experience Program (IDEP), which it administers, as a means to achieve qualified work experience. Since no other jurisdiction in North America currently mandates IDEP, ARIDO is concerned the program is no longer credible in the marketplace and therefore feels it can no longer require Intern members to complete it. ARIDO will instead require supervised experience without the need to log weekly hours with NCIDQ.

“ARIDO typically accepts approximately 125 new Intern members each year. As we evaluate these candidates, it is important to know that their qualifications and standards are evaluated based on standards that make sense for the profession. As interior design grows in prominence in the international marketplace, it becomes critically important for the Association to ensure its standards are at the right level in comparison to other countries and to other professions,” says Susan Wiggins, executive director of ARIDO.

The attached table clearly outlines the new standards established by ARIDO that will become effective January 1, 2010. These changes affect all new applicants. All existing Intern members will receive personal communications from ARIDO outlining their options going forward.

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**Attachment:** Education, Experience and Examination Requirements for Membership in ARIDO