



Latinos in Architecture
an **AIA Houston** Committee

Licensing Mentorship
Subcommittee

International Architect's Route to Licensure in the United States

First Steps: Becoming Eligible

Objective

The goal of this presentation is to help Foreign Architects educated abroad understand the different paths and requirements to become eligible for NCARB's Certification as one of the first steps in licensure process.

Glossary

Credential: Registration, license, or other official document that confirms ability to lawfully practice architecture for a specific region or country.

Credentialing Authority: Organization or entity that issues and regulates credential to lawfully practice architecture.

Jurisdiction: One of the 54 licensing/registration boards which includes the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands. These are entities that issue licenses to practice architecture in their region.

NCARB Certificate: A credential that indicates the Record holder meets the national standards for licensure.

NCARB Record: Detailed, verified account of the applicant's education, experience, and examination history.

Registration/license: Official document that confirms ability to lawfully practice architecture for a specific region or country.

Unlimited practice: Ability to provide any architectural services on any type of building in any state, province, territory, or other political subdivision within a country

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WHAT IS LICENSURE?

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To practice architecture in the United States, you must have a license in the US jurisdiction for which you are practicing architecture. The jurisdictions include the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Each jurisdiction is responsible for regulating the practice of architecture within its borders. [NCARB](#) recommends and encourages national requirements for licensure by developing standards for the 55 licensing boards, which then issue licenses to applicants who meet their specific registration requirements.

WHAT IS NCARB?

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The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) is a nonprofit organization made up of the architectural licensing boards of 55 U.S. states and territories. While each jurisdiction is responsible for regulating the practice of architecture within its borders, NCARB develops and administers national programs for candidates pursuing architectural licensure and helps architects expand their professional reach through the NCARB Certificate.

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WHY IS LICENSURE IMPORTANT?

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The reasons to earn a license to practice architecture are as varied and personal as the path to get there—here are just a few benefits of licensure:

- Title:** Once you've earned a license, you can officially call yourself an architect in the jurisdiction you hold that license to practice architecture.

- Trust:** Your license gives firms, clients, and the public confidence in your skills and ability to protect their health, safety, and welfare.

- Skills:** Completing your education, experience, and examination requirements helps guide you through continuing your professional growth and development.

- Advancement:** Having a license provides you with greater career opportunities.

GETTING LICENSED

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THE ELIGIBILITY FORMULA

$$E = E + E + E$$

THE **ELIGIBILITY** FORMULA

ELGIBILITY = **E**DUPLICATION + **E**XPERIENCE + **E**XAMINATION

Foreign Architect Path

OR

EESA

OR

Standard Path



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STEP 1: APPLICANT CATEGORY

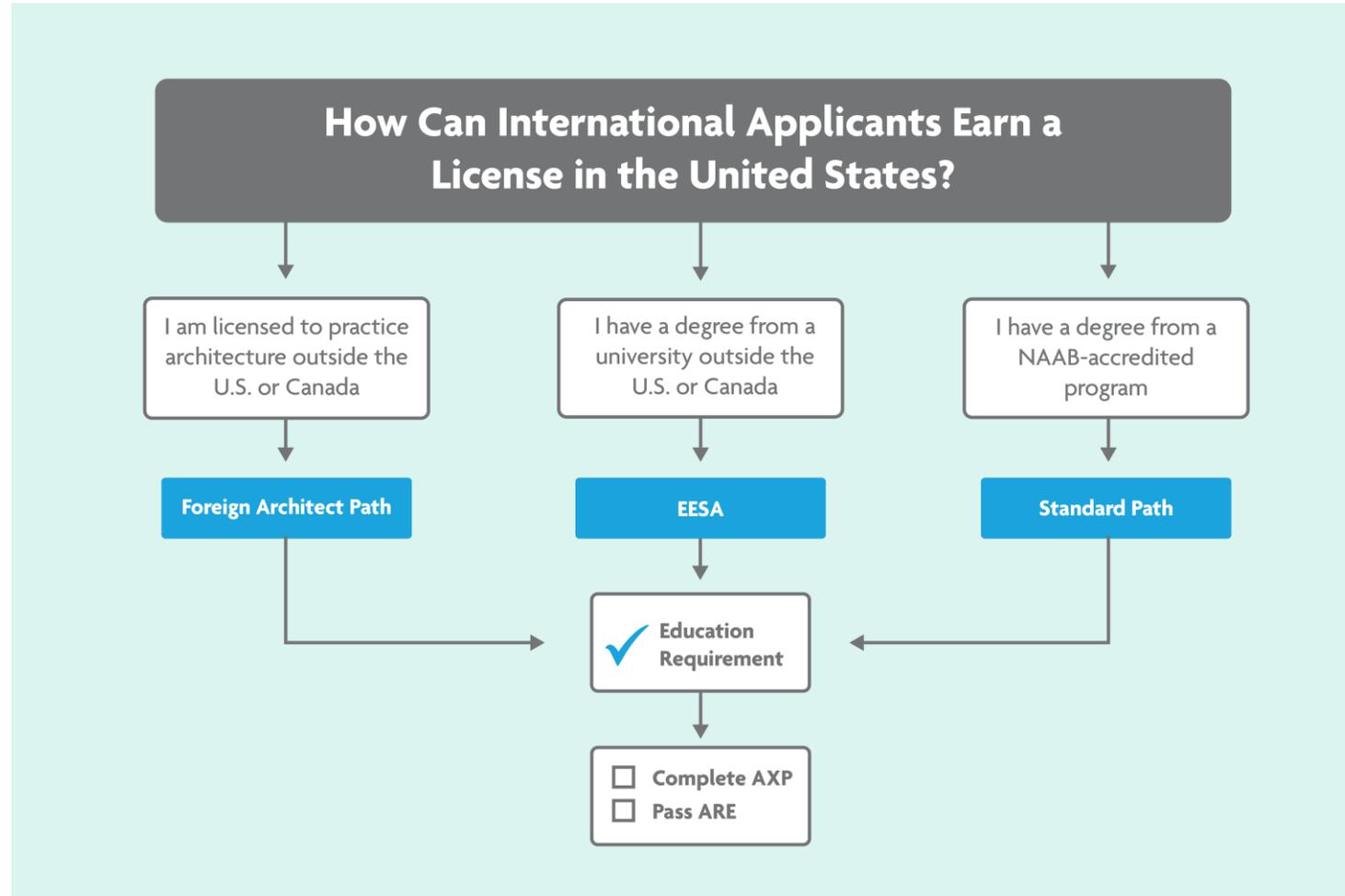


IMAGE SOURCE: WWW.NCARB.ORG

Foreign Architect Licensed or Educated abroad

For this applicants, the path to licensure in the United States will vary based on the individual jurisdiction's requirements and how far you have advanced in your home country's licensure process. To determine your applicant category see below:

You are a **Foreign Licensed Applicant** if:

- a. You currently hold a license to practice architecture in a country outside of the United States or Canada,
- b. Your foreign license has not expired, and
- c. You haven't been object of a disciplinary action by the foreign licensing authority

You are a **Foreign Educated Applicant** if:

You received an architecture degree outside of the United States or Canada but do not hold a license to practice architecture.

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STEP 2: GETTING ELIGIBILITY

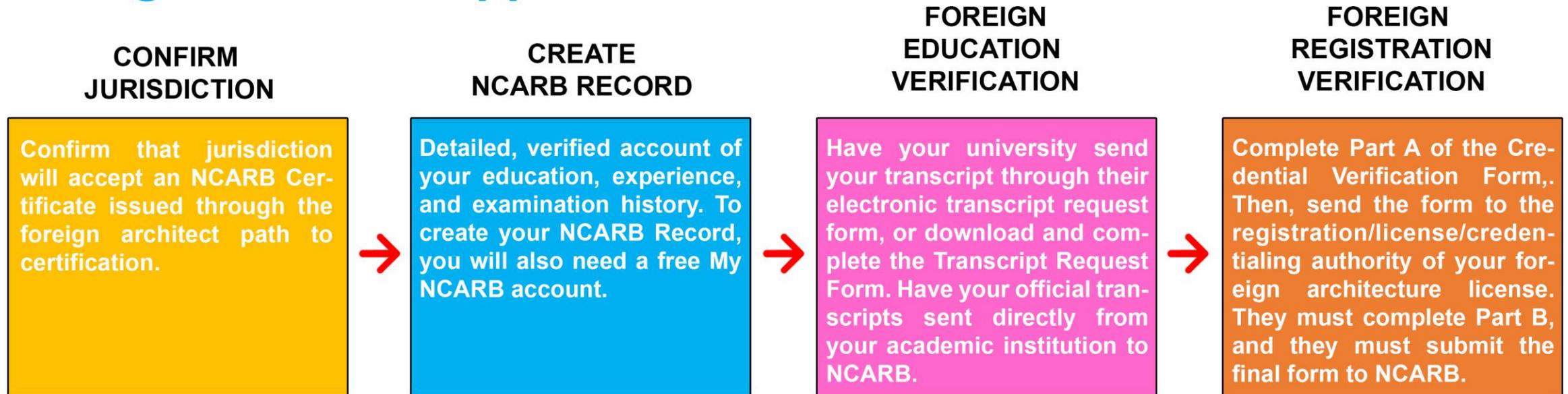
THE REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME **ELIGIBLE** FOR CERTIFICATION
WILL BE DETERMINED BY YOUR CONDITION OF EITHER:

Foreign **Licensed** Applicant or Foreign **Educated** Applicant

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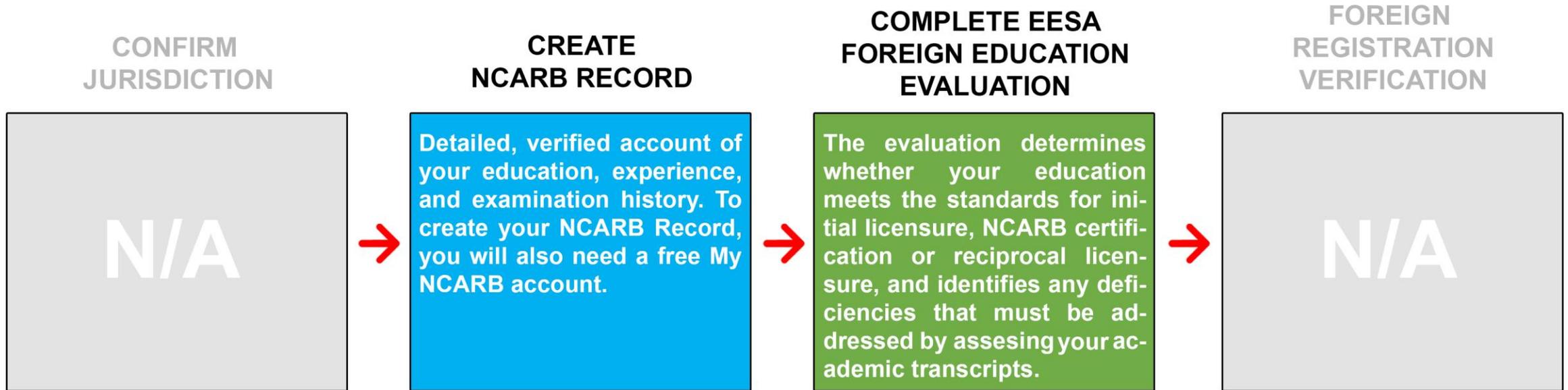
Foreign Licensed Applicant



To be eligible for this option, your foreign architecture license must meet certain requirements.

1. Your license must be currently active and remain active until you receive your NCARB Certificate.
2. Your license must allow unlimited practice—the design of all types and sizes of buildings.
3. Your country must have a system for tracking disciplinary action for architects.
4. You must have no record of disciplinary action.

Foreign Educated Applicant



To learn more about EESA and the fees associated with the program, download the [Education Guidelines](#) at www.ncarb.org and visit the NAAB's website www.naab.org

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CREDENTIAL VERIFICATION FORM

(Form must be completed/submitted in English)

NCARB

Foreign Architect Path to NCARB Certification Credential Verification Form

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) requires completion of this form in English to verify the applicant's current registration/licensure credential to practice architecture outside the United States and Canada. *Incomplete forms and/or forms submitted by applicants will not be accepted.*

Applicant
Please complete Part A. Then, ask the credentialing authority to complete Part B and to submit the completed form directly to NCARB.

A

Name (Last, First) _____ NCARB Record No. _____
Country in which credentialed: _____ Today's Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Credentialing Authority
Please complete Part B to verify the applicant's registration status and submit the completed form directly to NCARB.

1. Name of the profession in which the applicant is credentialed: _____
2. Credential number, if any: _____ 3. Country/geographic area where credential is valid: _____
4. Does the applicant's credential legally allow the applicant to provide unlimited architectural services? YES NO
If no, briefly describe limitation:

B

5. Does the applicant's credential have a classification or rank? YES NO
If yes, briefly describe classification or rank:

6. Credential issue date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____
7. Credential expiration date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ There is no credential expiration date
8. Renewal fee expiration date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ There is no renewal fee or date
9. Current credential status: Active and in good standing Inactive Lapsed
 Revoked Other: _____

Form 263: Foreign Credential Verification Form — 2/19 Page 1

NCARB

Foreign Architect Path to NCARB Certification Credential Verification Form

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) requires completion of this form in English to verify the applicant's current registration/licensure credential to practice architecture outside the United States and Canada. *Incomplete forms and/or forms submitted by applicants will not be accepted.*

10. Is there a system in place for documentation of disciplinary actions? YES NO
11. If yes, is there record of any disciplinary action against the applicant's credential? YES NO
12. If yes, please explain the record of disciplinary action and current status:

13. Name, title, and email address of the person at the credentialing authority who completed Part B of this form as well as the credentialing authority's name and website address:
Name (Last, First) _____
Title: _____ Email: _____
B Name of organization: _____
Website: _____ Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Credentialing Authority: When you have completed this form, please submit it to:

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards
1401 H Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005 USA

Or email to:
foreignarchitect@ncarb.org

Form 263: Foreign Credential Verification Form — 3/19 Page 2

Form download at: [Form263_Foreign_Credential.pdf \(ncarb.org\)](#)

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TRANSCRIP REQUEST FORM

(Form must be completed/submitted in English)


National Council of Architectural Registration Boards | 1401 H Street NW, Suite 500 | Washington, DC 20005 | 202/679-0520 | www.ncarb.org

NOTE: NCARB WILL ONLY ACCEPT TRANSCRIPTS SENT DIRECTLY FROM THE ACADEMIC INSTITUTION.

Dear Registrar:

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards has been directed to prepare a record of the professional qualifications of the applicant whose name appears on the enclosed form.

The applicant has authorized the release of an official transcript to NCARB and has agreed to pay your office directly for any fee involved. We appreciate your completion and prompt return of this form along with an official transcript.

Very truly yours,



Roxanne Alston
Vice President, Customer Relations

Note to Applicant:

- To expedite this process, submit your transcript electronically by using your institution's transcript request form and having them send it to transcripts@ncarb.org. If available, include your NCARB Record number in the comment/notes section. If you send your transcript electronically, you do not need to fill out this form.
- If your education is from within the U.S. or Canada, have your transcript sent to NCARB directly from your college or university—either electronically or physically. NCARB cannot accept student-issued transcripts.
- If your post-secondary education is from outside the U.S. or Canada and we have asked that you have it evaluated by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), do not use this form and do not have your transcript(s) sent to NCARB. Contact NAAB. If you are an applicant for the foreign architect path, you do not need an EESA.
- You must arrange to have official translations submitted for all documents that are not in English. Official English translation must be obtained from the issuing authority or a lawyer, translation service, notary, or embassy and must be on official letterhead. Translations by applicants will not be accepted. Please include any other identifying information, such as school ID, for your university.

EDUCATION (Applicant must complete items 1-12.)

NOTE: NCARB WILL ONLY ACCEPT TRANSCRIPTS SENT DIRECTLY FROM THE ACADEMIC INSTITUTION.

- NCARB Record No: _____
- Name: _____
- Address: _____
- Daytime phone number: _____
- Date of birth: _____
- Social Security Number: _____
- College, university, technical school, or high school requested to furnish transcript: _____
- Dates of attendance: _____
- Degree(s) acquired: _____

TO THE REGISTRAR OF THE SCHOOL—FROM THE APPLICANT:

I hereby request that you send an official transcript of my academic record to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards.

10. I have marked an X on one of the two statements below regarding the transcript fee.

I am aware that a transcript fee is normally required by your office, and I have therefore enclosed a check in the amount of \$ _____.

If a transcript fee is required, please send an invoice to my address as shown above or call me regarding fees. Thank you for your prompt cooperation.

11. Signature: _____ 12. Date: _____

Note: Please provide a clearly legible transcript.
Mail to: NCARB, 1401 H Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005 or email transcripts@ncarb.org

For NCARB use only:				Page 1 of			
1st Frm	To	2nd Frm	To	1st Frm	To	2nd Frm	To
Deg Rec	Date Grad	Deg Rec	Date Grad	Deg Rec	Date Grad	Deg Rec	Date Grad
NAAB	Y N	EESA Eval	N C	NAAB	Y N	EESA Eval	N C
O Date	EESA Date	O Date	EESA Date	O Date	EESA Date	O Date	EESA Date
Rating	SH	Date Satfd	Rating	SH	Date Satfd	Rating	SH
EdCr	QH	SH Def	EdCr	QH	SH Def	EdCr	QH

Form 122 08/20

Form download at: [Form122 TranscriptForm.pdf \(ncarb.org\)](https://www.ncarb.org/Form122_TranscriptForm.pdf)

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Common Option to Licensure

Both the Credential Verification Form and official transcript must be completed/submitted in English. For a detailed outline of the application process, check out the Documentation Checklist at:

[Foreign Architect Path Documentation Checklist.pdf \(ncarb.org\)](#)

Please allow up to **60 business** days for documents to be reviewed and processed. The overview message stating that documents are required will remain visible in your NCARB Record until the review process is complete.

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STEP 3: EXPERIENCE AND EXAMINATION

After you've created your Record, submitted your supporting documents to EESA or NCARB and eligibility has been confirmed. You will then need to satisfy NCARB's [Experience](#) and [Examination](#) requirements for certification.

STEP 3: EXPERIENCE AND EXAMINATION

NCARB allows applicants to complete experience and examination requirements both **consecutively** or **simultaneously** through:



Architectural
Experience
Program



Architect
Registration
Examination

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Developed by NCARB and required by most U.S. licensing boards, the AXP provides a framework to guide you through earning and reporting your professional experience.

To complete the AXP, you'll need to demonstrate and document competent performance of the tasks identified in each experience area—a total of **3,740** hours across the six areas. Keep in mind, around half of your experience must be earned in an architectural practice under the supervision of an architect licensed in the United States or Canada.

Download the **AXP Guidelines** for a detailed look at the program's requirements and expectations visiting www.ncarb.org/gain-axp-experience/start-axp

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Some of your foreign experience (up to 1,860 hours) may count toward the AXP requirement. Additional required hours working for an Architect outside the United States will only count if you are working under an architect who is licensed in the U.S. or Canada. Depending upon what path you are on, you may need to submit your qualifying experience in a timely manner. Please review the reporting requirement for further details.

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The current version of the exam, ARE 5.0, is developed by NCARB and features **six divisions**. Completing ARE 5.0 by passing all six divisions is required by all U.S. jurisdictions as a key step on the path to earning a license.

The ARE focuses specifically on areas that affect the integrity, soundness, and health impact of a building, as well as an architect's responsibilities within firms, such as managing projects and coordinating the work of other professionals. To understand what is covered on the exams and access practice questions, refer to the ARE Handbook visiting <https://www.ncarb.org/sites/default/files/ARE5-Handbook.pdf> and detailed explanations of all ARE 5.0 policies can be found in the ARE 5.0 Guidelines visiting www.ncarb.org/pass-the-are/start

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Architect
Registration
Examination

You can begin scheduling ARE divisions after NCARB has verified your transcript and foreign credential and you have paid your Certification application fee. Check current fees visiting www.ncarb.org/fees

Emerging Professionals Committee coordinates study sessions and make resources available for candidates preparing to take the ARE. Learn about their next upcoming event at:

<https://aiahouston.org/v/event-detail/ARE-Pub-Quiz-Project-Development-Documentation/1rg/>

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STEP 4: MEET LOCATION-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Some boards require additional experience or a location-specific supplemental exam before licensure. Based on that fact you must:

- A. Meet any **extra** jurisdictional requirements
- B. Have your NCARB Record **transmitted** to the jurisdiction where you would like to be licensed.

PLEASE NOTE: The supplemental exams are typically quizzes about local laws and regulations. They are often given as open book and through a fillable PDF. California has a more advanced version that you need to take in a testing center.

Notes and Clarifications

- There is no national license to practice architecture in the United States. The 55 U.S. licensing boards regulate architecture and issue licenses specific to their jurisdiction.
- Effective English communication is highly recommended. Written and oral communication skills are defined as effective using the conventions of Standard English as taught in English-speaking countries.
- Sometimes the state board will require stricter requirements than NCARB.
- Every State has its own definition of what “practicing architecture” involves.
- Many schools offer architecture programs that have not been accredited by the NAAB. Graduates of these non-accredited programs will be limited in terms of where they can practice, as well as have additional requirements to earn an architecture license and NCARB Certificate.
- Possible mutual recognition arrangements like the Camberra Accord should be explored before engaging in certification process.

Additional Information

To learn more about applying for the NCARB Certificate, download the Certification Guidelines visiting www.ncarb.org/sites/default/files/Certification_Guidelines.pdf

Also, be sure to reference the *Foreign Architect Path to NCARB Certification Documentation Checklist*.

For more general information about Architectural Licensure, contact us:



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