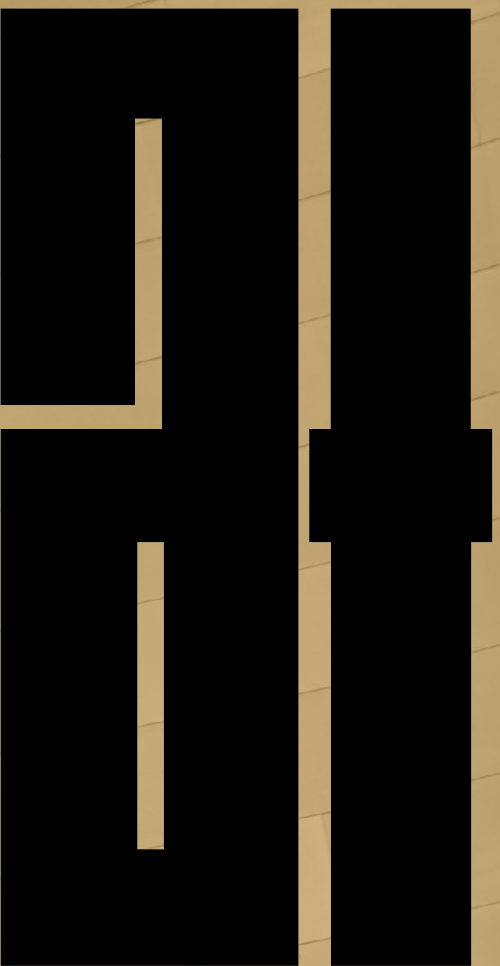# Accreditation Guidelines for Masters Degree Level Programmes for Educational Establishments with CIAT Accredited Honours Degrees

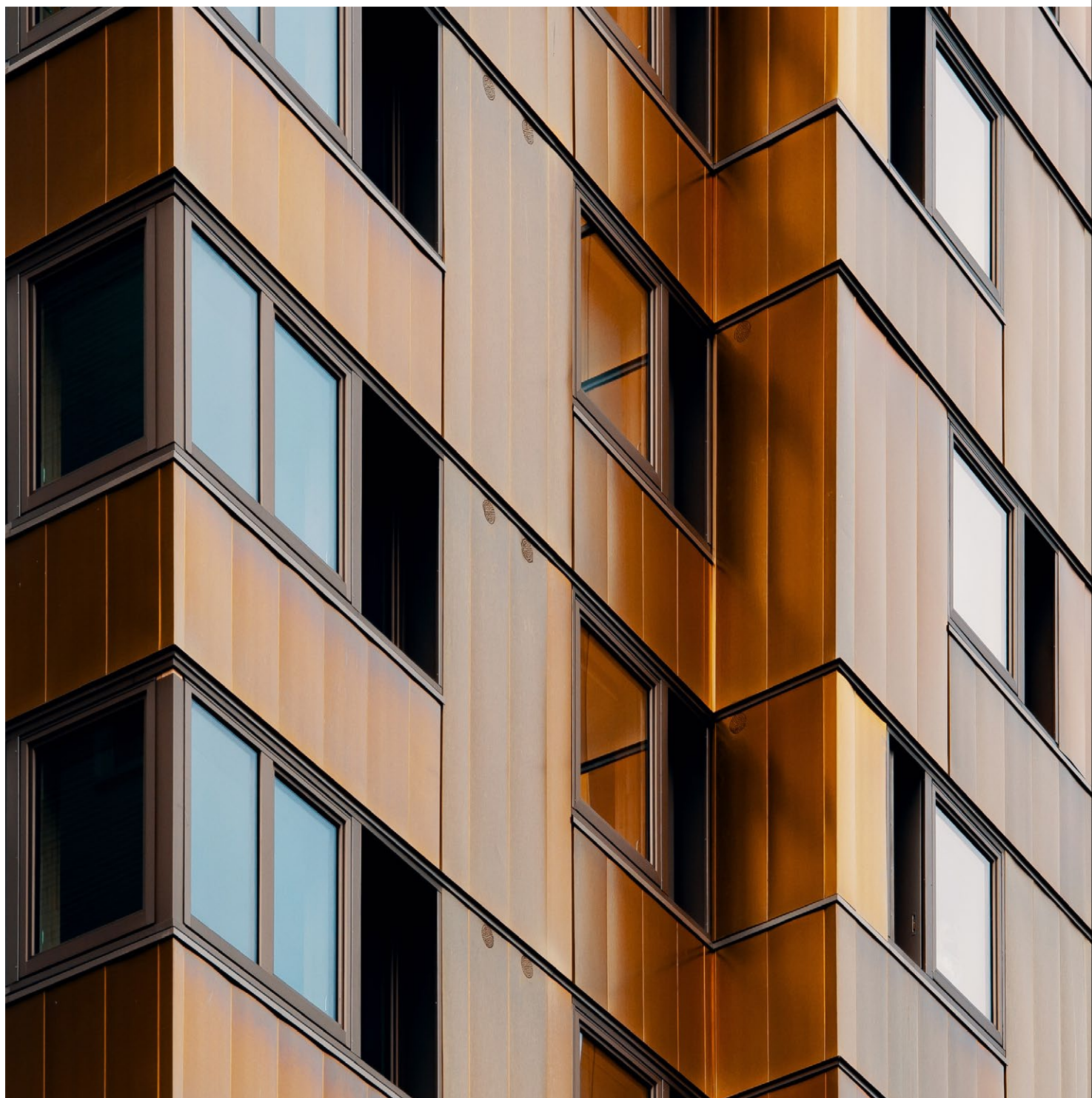CIAT

Contents

01. Introduction

This document should be used by educational establishments seeking CIAT Accreditation of their Masters degree programme and already offer a CIAT Accredited Honours degree programme.

The Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) is a dynamic, forward-thinking and inclusive global membership qualifying body for Architectural Technology. It represents those practising and studying within the discipline and profession. CIAT qualifies Chartered Architectural Technologists and has the authority to Approve and Accredit educational programmes in Architectural Technology or related disciplines.

CIAT's primary aims are to:

1. promote, for the benefit of society, the science and practice of Architectural Technology;

2. facilitate the development and integration of technology into architecture and the wider construction industry to continually improve standards of service for the benefit of industry and of society;

3. uphold and advance the standards of education, competence, practice and conduct of members of the Institute thereby promoting the interests, standing and recognition of Chartered Members within the industry and the wider society.
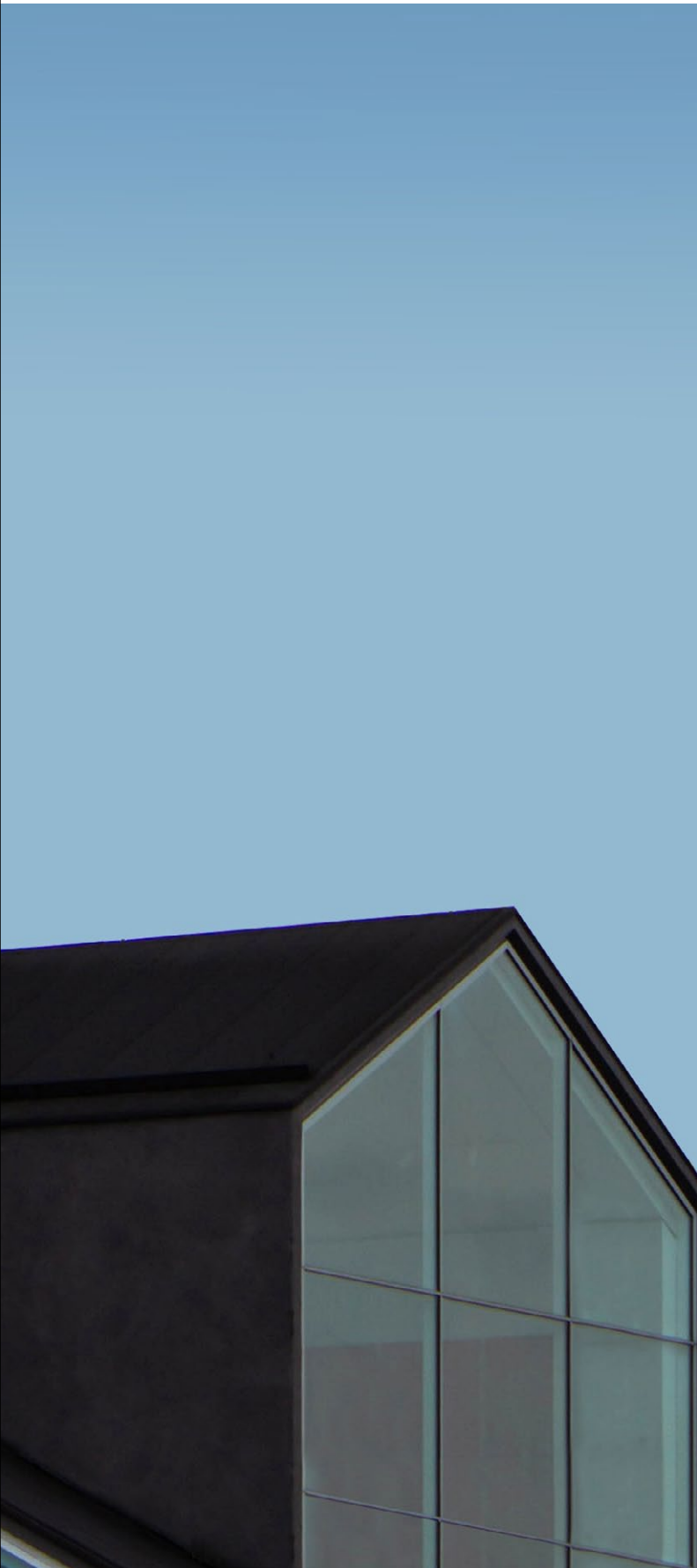
Masters Accreditation may apply to qualifications in Architectural Technology or related subjects that meet the specified CIAT criteria and the *Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology*. CIAT will Accredit formal qualifications at the level of a UK Masters degree programme [and which equate to 30-120 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System points (ECTS) on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)].

The range of programmes will include (among others), Post Graduate certificates, Post Graduate diplomas and Masters degrees. The Institute will consider full-time, sandwich, part-time, multi-mode and distance learning programmes of varying duration for Accreditation from both the UK and overseas.

CIAT Accreditation implies that an educational establishment's Masters degree level programme has been assessed in terms of content, structure and resources and has met the required standards. It also provides assurances that students will be able to develop their academic, analytical, communication and employability skills. Typical programme content will be based around the educational standards found in the *CIAT Professional Standards Competency Framework* for Chartered Architectural Technologists, (the full document can be viewed here: **https://architecturaltechnology.com/resource/psf.html**) although this is not intended to be prescriptive. See Appendix 1 for the educational standards extracted from the *CIAT Professional Standards Competency Framework*.

By maintaining an Accredited Honours degree programme, the educational establishment has demonstrated that it has met the Institute's requirements in terms of facilities and resources. The educational establishment and the faculty/school will also be known to the Education Department.
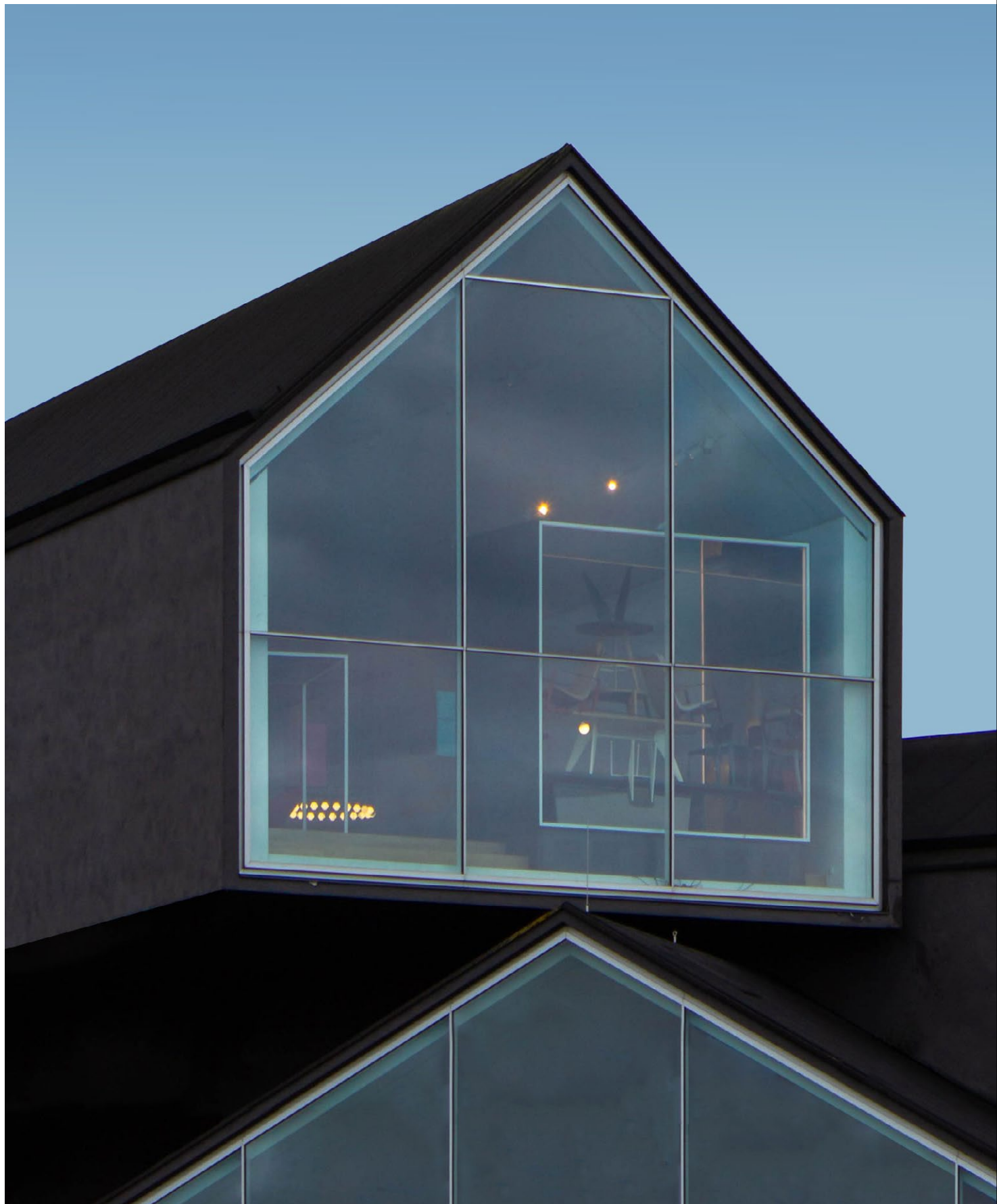
Each educational establishment is free to decide on the content, nature and organisation of its programmes or modules. Therefore, qualifications offered by individual establishments will have their own particular characteristics based upon the strengths and interests of its academic staff. When developing programmes, educational establishments should make direct reference to Section 4.7 of the *QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology*; the Benchmark Standards for Masters degrees, replicated in Appendix 2.

Further, in order to successfully apply for Accreditation, educational establishments are required to demonstrate that the programme relates to the educational standards found in the CIAT Professional Standards Competency Framework for Chartered Architectural Technologists (See Appendix One).

All programmes will need to demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Chartered Architectural Technologist both in practice and as part of the wider construction team. CIAT strongly recommends that programmes have at least one External Examiner with a current background in Architectural Technology.

In addition to these requirements, international programmes must meet the relevant quality assurance or validation standards required in the country in which the qualification is being offered.

There may be areas of overlap in terms of CIAT's Accreditation of programmes, the requirements and quality assurance procedures of the funding bodies and the QAA for Higher Education. As far as possible, CIAT will seek to avoid the duplication of work already carried out at the request of such bodies and will be looking for subject-specific evidence.

02. Application for Accreditation

Accreditation is a paper-based exercise and is granted on the review of documentation which provides details of the aims and objectives of the programme, student/ graduate outputs*, the expected student experience and the employability of the graduates from this programme.

Education establishments are encouraged to register their intention to seek Accreditation for a programme as soon as possible so that the submission can be reviewed and submitted to the Education Board. Ideally, a first application for Accreditation is submitted within the first year of running the programme, after the first cohort of students has been enrolled. Please note that visits to educational establishments are generally not required.

In order to satisfy CIAT that the programme meets the educational establishment's own academic requirements, applications for Accreditation can only be considered once internal validation or equivalent process has been achieved. Members of CIAT should be involved in the internal validation process. Please contact the Education Department for this purpose via **education@ciat.global.**

Documentation must be submitted electronically to the Education Department and complete Appendix 4 Quality Assurance confirmation.

*student/graduate output should only be included in the submission if the programme has been running for two or more years. The work should include a selection of top, middle and low scoring samples to support the submission. If it is a newer programme, student/graduate output will not be necessary until the next Accreditation cycle.

Documentation must be accompanied by a covering letter from the Dean of Faculty/Head of Department, or equivalent, who must authorise the submission of the documents to CIAT and verify that the Faculty believes the documentation complies with general regulations and academic policies of the educational establishment.

Please see https://architecturaltechnology.com/learning/ educational-establishments/masters-accredited.html for current Accreditation fees.

Please see pages 16-17 for what is required in an Accreditation submission.

Outcome of application

Educational establishments will be notified of the outcome within eight weeks of submission. All decisions are final and correspondence regarding the outcome of the Accreditation application will not be entered into, however CIAT will support the educational establishment where possible and if appropriate, the level of support will be decided by the Institute.

The Institute's Education Board will decide upon one of two options:
1. to grant the educational establishment Accreditation for five years with or without conditions or recommendations, or
2. to encourage the educational establishment to re-apply for Accreditation at a later date if all requirements have not been met.

The educational establishment must also maintain its Accredited Honours degree to fulfil the criteria.

It will be a condition for all Accredited Programmes to annually submit the number of student intakes and how many students graduated. The Education Department will send a form.

03. Accreditation Review

This represents an opportunity for the educational establishment to reflect on the structure and delivery of its programme and to encourage its further development. The educational establishment will also demonstrate how this appraisal has influenced forthcoming changes and improvements to the programme, although any proposed changes must be communicated to CIAT prior to implementation.

Documentation must be submitted electronically to the Education Department along with a sample of student/graduate work to support the submission. Additionally, Appendix 4 Quality Assurance confirmation is to be signed by the Head of Department/Dean or equivalent.

Documentation must be accompanied by a covering letter from the Dean of Faculty/Head of Department, or equivalent, who must authorise the submission of the documents to CIAT and verify that the Faculty believes the documentation complies with general regulations and academic policies of the educational establishment.

Please see https://architecturaltechnology.com/learning/educational-establishments/masters-accredited.html for current Accreditation fees.

N.B. CIAT is at liberty to request copies of any quality assurance procedures.

Please see pages 16 and 17 for what is required in an Accreditation Review submission.

Outcome of application

Educational establishments will be notified of the outcome within eight weeks of the submission.
The Panel will report its findings to the Institute's Education Board recommending one of four options:
- To grant the programme Accreditation for a further five years.
- To grant the programme Accreditation subject to certain time bound conditions or recommendations.
- To defer Accreditation until certain conditions have been met.
- To remove Accredited status in extreme circumstances.

All decisions are final and correspondence regarding the outcome of the Accreditation application will not be entered into, however CIAT will support the educational establishment where possible and if appropriate. The level of support will be decided by the Institute.

The educational establishment will be required to maintain Accredited status of both its Honours and Masters degrees.

It will be a condition for all Accredited Programmes to annually submit the number of student intakes and how many students graduated. The Education Department will send a form.

04. Apprenticeships

For educational establishments seeking Accreditation of an academic programme which forms part of an Apprenticeship and which is clearly based upon an existing Accredited Programme, it is advised that the Section 6 – Alterations should be used when compiling the submission for Accreditation.

If the apprenticeship is not based on an existing Accredited programme, please refer to Section 2 Accreditation.

The Accreditation status and subsequent review of apprenticeship programmes will be aligned with that of the first Accredited Programme.

Please contact education@ciat.global for more information on the process.

Please see https://architecturaltechnology.com/learning/educational-establishments/masters-accredited.html for current Accreditation fees.

05. Partnered educational establishments

CIAT Accreditation is only applicable to individual educational establishments. When an educational establishment with an Accredited programme is working in partnership with another educational establishment, a separate application for Accreditation must be made by the partnered organisation regardless of the fact that the programme content and structure may be the same. Partnered establishments should apply for Accreditation at this stage.

Please see https://architecturaltechnology.com/learning/educational-establishments/masters-accredited.html for current fees.

The host educational establishment may offer support to the partnered institute with regard to the submitted documentation as it is expected that much of the submission will be duplicated. Once the Panel has deemed the submission

to be satisfactory, the Institute will pay a condensed visit to the partnered establishment at a mutually convenient time as soon as possible after the review of the submission. The visit will determine whether the Accreditation status of the programme offered by the partnered organisation should be aligned to that of the host establishment.

Should CIAT incur any expenses, the educational establishment must reimburse these.

06. Alteration of programmes post Accreditation

In order for the Institute to properly monitor standards, educational establishments altering or amending an Accredited programme are asked to notify CIAT about programme changes in writing to the Education Department. This must be submitted electronically.

A formal re-submission, however, is only necessary should a programme require an internal revalidation or equivalent process from its academic board. CIAT will review programme amendments and is at liberty to formally approve the changes, make recommendations or withdraw Accredited status. Relevant changes include amendments to the programme structure and content. The amended programme must be mapped to the educational standards found in *CIAT's Professional Standards Competency Framework* and if necessary, the educational establishment must submit revised mapping.

Documentation must be accompanied by a covering letter from the Dean of Faculty/Head of Department, or equivalent, who must authorise the submission of the documents to CIAT and verify that the Faculty believes the documentation complies with general regulations and academic policies of the educational establishment.

Please see *https://architecturaltechnology.com/learning/educational-establishments/masters-accredited.html* for current Accreditation fees.

Normally changes are approved by CIAT's Education Board but if changes are substantial, the Board may recommend that the programme undergoes an Accreditation Review.

The submission should include:
1. The proposed changes to the programme.
2. A rationale supporting the proposed changes.
3. Timescales; e.g. the date from when the proposed changes are effective.
4. Effect on current students.
5. External Examiner's input.
6. Professional input.
7. Mapping/or direct reference to Section 4.7 of the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology and to the educational standards found in CIAT's Professional Standards Competency Framework for Chartered Architectural Technologists.

07. Lapsing Accreditation status

Students enrolling onto a programme whose Accreditation status has lapsed will no longer gain exemptions when undertaking the Professional Assessment for Chartered Membership status. Students enrolled on the programme prior to the programme being allowed to lapse and who remain on the programme until completion will have their exemptions honoured when progressing to Chartered Membership as if they had graduated from an Accredited programme.

Lapsed educational establishments will have an obligation to:

- remove all references to Accreditation by CIAT on publicity material (e.g. website, handbook and prospectuses) with immediate effect;
- recall or issue errata for existing printed material; and
- advise current and potential/future students about the action and its implications for them.
- Lapsed educational establishments may no longer be able to:
- attend the annual Accredited programme leaders meeting;
- participate in other Accredited programme leader community activities;
- contribute to the CIAT Accreditation process for other educational establishments; and
- be actively promoted by CIAT.
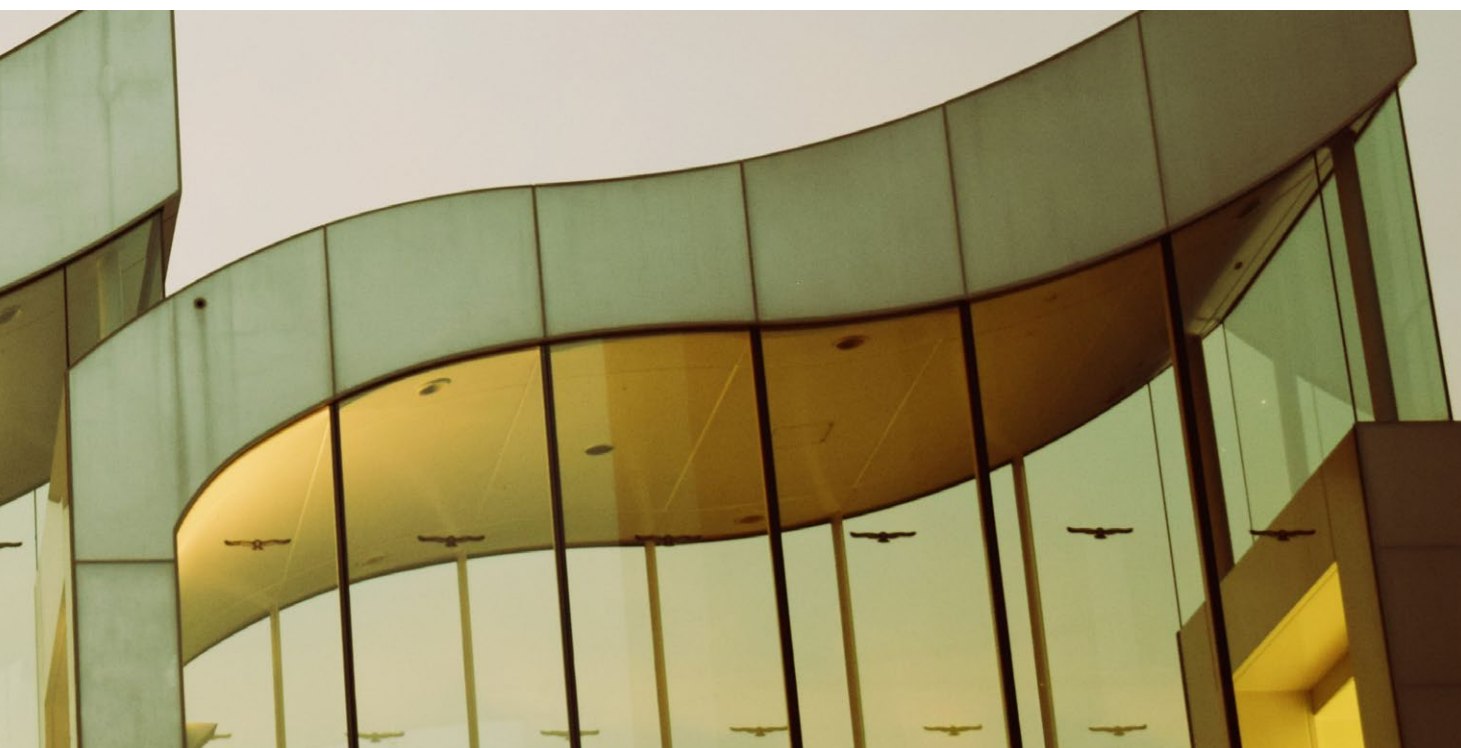
08. Sanctions or withdrawal of Accreditation status

Sanctions will be imposed on Accredited Programme providers if they:

- do not share information with CIAT, such as requests for information or re-mapping curricula against updated standards;
- are not meeting Accreditation requirements;
- do not comply with the Institute's requirements for membership (i.e. a member of Programme team being an Associate member or affiliate when seeking Accreditation in Principle and being a Chartered Architectural Technologist when applying for Accreditation or Accreditation Review).

The Institute will advise on the sanction as appropriate.

Students enrolling onto a programme whose Accreditation status has been removed will no longer gain exemptions when undertaking the Professional Assessment for Chartered Membership status.

The removal of Accredited status will be invoked if:
- the programme is found to no longer align with CIAT's Professional Standards Competency Framework for Chartered Architectural Technologists;
- the programme is found to no longer meet other CIAT requirements (such as technical, Code of Conduct etc.) within an agreed timeframe set by the Institute;
- validated feedback highlights areas of concern about teaching staff, resources, support or other aspect of the learning experience;
- the profession or discipline are (potentially) undermined by the formal link; and
- the Institute needs to protect itself and/or its members.

A Panel will be formed to investigate the above issues and the outcome of the investigation will be passed to the Institute's Education Board.

The Institute's Education Board has the authority to:
- seek a written undertaking that the actions/conditions requested will be complied with and if necessary to provide confirmation that these actions have been taken; and
- remove Accredited status and impose time limits and/or other conditions before a fresh application can be made.

The educational establishment will have an obligation to:
- remove all references to Accreditation by CIAT on publicity material (e.g. website, handbook and prospectuses) with immediate effect;
- recall or issue errata for existing printed material; and
- advise current and potential/future students about the action and its implications for them.

The educational establishment may no longer be able to:
- nominate students for the CIAT Award for Outstanding Graduating Student;
- attend the annual Accredited programme leaders meeting;
- participate in other Accredited programme leader community activities;
- contribute to the CIAT Accreditation process for other educational establishments; and
- be actively promoted by CIAT.

In the case that the educational establishment has not responded to a condition within the required timeframe, CIAT is at liberty to require a visit* and/or annual reports until the next Accreditation is due.

CIAT will remove Accreditation status if after eight weeks from the date of the letter, the educational establishment has not fulfilled any requirements set by the Panel or notified the Institute as to why it will not be able to fulfil them. Under exceptional circumstances, the Institute will allow for additional time before Accreditation is removed. In addition to the removal of Accredited status, letters addressed to both the educational establishment's Head of School/Department and Vice-Chancellor will be sent informing them of the programme's withdrawal; this will also be publicised to students.

*the educational establishment will be required to pay for expenses.

09. Refusals and referrals

It is CIAT's policy, where possible, to support programmes referred or refused Accreditation and the level of support will be decided by the Institute's Education Board. All decisions are final and correspondence regarding the outcome of the Accreditation will not be entered into.

10. Programme closure/cessation

Should an educational establishment wish to close their Accredited Masters programme, the Education Department must receive written notification from a member of the Senior Management Team of this as soon as programme cessation/closure is confirmed. Notification must outline the reason for the cessation/ closure and inform the Education Department when the last cohort is expected to graduate.

11. Fees

Fees (including expenses) must be paid once the Institute's Education Board has conveyed its decision. Please note that fees are non-refundable.

Current Accreditation fees can be found at https://architecturaltechnology.com/learning/ educational-establishments/masters-accredited.html

12. Further information

If you would like further information or are seeking clarification on any part of this document then please contact the Education Department on, **education@ciat.global.**

Application requirements checklist

All programmes will need to demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Chartered Architectural Technologist both in practice and as part of the wider construction team. CIAT strongly recommends that programmes have at least one External Examiner with a current background in Architectural Technology.

In addition to these requirements, international programmes must meet the relevant quality assurance or validation standards required in the country in which the qualification is being offered.

There may be areas of overlap in terms of CIAT's Accreditation of programmes, the requirements and quality assurance procedures of the funding bodies and the QAA for Higher Education. As far as possible, CIAT will seek to avoid the duplication of work already carried out at the request of such bodies and will be looking for subject-specific evidence.

At least one member of the Architectural Technology programme team must be an affiliate or Associate member, ACIAT, and by the following stage of the Accreditation process (i.e. Accreditation Review) there must be at least one Chartered Architectural Technologist.

It is a requirement of CIAT Accreditation that all graduating students meet the mandatory threshold standards by achieving the corresponding learning outcomes.

Additionally, the following cross-cutting themes must also be addressed within the curriculum and submission:
- equality, diversity, inclusion, access/accessibility;
- education for sustainable development, and;
- employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Accreditation documents

Accreditation documents are considered private and confidential between CIAT, the reviewing Accreditation Panel and the educational establishment. They are not available for general use or referenced in the public domain. The Education Department will retain a copy of the Accreditation documents, any subsequent amendments and additional information in a secure file for a minimum period of five years and/or until after the next review has been completed.

The educational establishment submitting Accreditation documentation, which includes staff and their profiles along with confirmation that the educational establishment has received consent from all staff listed in the documents and that it complies with their own GDPR requirements.

If this option is to be invoked, the educational establishment must make this clear at the time of submission.

Submitting Accreditation documents

Accreditation documents should be submitted electronically through email, OneDrive or WeTransfer.

If sending through OneDrive, access should be given to CIAT staff as well as the Panel (their contact details will be provided closer to the submission deadline)

If you are sending the submission via email or WeTransfer, the documents can be shared with **education@ciat.global**

Accreditation documentation must comprise of:

	Accreditation	
1.	Programme rationale, position within the educational establishment and relationship to other programmes	
2.	Detailed programme description including module levels, objectives, content, weighting and assessment methods	
3.	Mapping/or direct reference to Section 4.7 of the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology and CIAT Professional Standards Competency Framework (Appendices 1 and 2)	
4.	Involvement of profession/industry and if appropriate statements from employers about the Architectural Technology students' abilities	
5.	Areas of specific strength and weakness	
6.	Links to quality assurance policy and regulations	
7.	Facilities and resources including special equipment and staffing	
8.	Staff profiles (please use Appendix 3)	
9.	Typical cohort description (including entry requirements and cohort analysis)	
10.	Most recent External Examiners' reports (preferably three)	
11.	Signed copy of Quality Assurance confirmation (Appendix 4)	
12.	Covering letter from Dean of Faculty/Head of Department, or equivalent, authorising the submission of the documents to CIAT	
13.	If the programme has been running for two or more years a student work and most recent graduate work, including project briefs, for each module. Should include two high-, two mid-scoring and two low-scoring outputs per module	
14.	At least one member of the programme team must be an affiliate or Associate member, ACIAT.	

	Accreditation Review	
1.	Programme development since previous Accreditation (including evolution of the programme and plans for future development)	
2.	Detailed programme description including module levels, objectives, content, weighting and assessment methods	
3.	Mapping/or direct reference to Section 4.7 of the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology and CIAT Professional Standards Competency Framework (Appendices 1 and 2)	
4.	Typical cohort description (including entry requirements and cohort analysis)	
5.	Graduate profiles including first employment destination of graduates of previous academic year	
6.	Areas of specific strength and weakness	
7.	Involvement of profession/industry and if appropriate statements from employers about the Architectural Technology students' abilities	
8.	Links to quality assurance policy and regulations	
9.	Facilities and resources including special equipment and staffing	
10.	Staff profiles (please use Appendix 3)	
11.	Most recent External Examiners' reports (preferably three)	
12.	Signed copy of Quality Assurance confirmation (Appendix 4)	
13.	Covering letter from Dean of Faculty/Head of Department, or equivalent, authorising the submission of the documents to CIAT	
14.	*Sample of student work and most recent graduate work, including project briefs, for each module. Should include two high-, two mid-scoring and two low-scoring outputs per module	
15.	At least one member of the programme team must be a Chartered Architectural Technologist.	

Appendix 1

Educational Standards (extracted from CIAT's *Professional Standards Competency Framework* for Chartered Architectural Technologists)

Mandatory threshold education standards

The following standards are extracted from the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology, for graduates of Honours and Masters degrees. These criteria form the mandatory threshold education standards that all Chartered Architectural Technologists must be able to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of:

- Local, social, technological, environmental, historical, contemporary, economic, political, legal and ethical factors that inform and influence the discipline and practice of Architectural Technology.

- Client, user and stakeholder needs through the analysis and interpretation of the nature of a project, including the evaluation of context to determine a project scope.

- Holistic building design in a range of typologies informed by current practice within the discipline to generate resilient, sustainable and inclusive design solutions.

- Architectural and technological principles of structure, fabric and service systems to create concepts and develop design solutions in complex contexts when working independently or as part of a team.

- Science and engineering of construction and environmental performance including building physics, fire engineering and pathology relating to the analysis, evaluation and application of appropriate methodologies when designing or working on new and existing buildings. The latter can include conservation, maintenance, retrofit, renovation and/or change of use projects.

- Health and safety requirements when generating design solutions to ensure welfare, safety and security of all stakeholders during the life cycles of buildings, including legal requirements.

- Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements such as health and safety including fire safety, as well as the use of advances in construction and sustainable technologies to design holistically from first principles, for production, sustainability, performance, quality of life and social wellbeing.

- Designing building elements and components, the use of materials, methods and their assembly, used in the construction and adaptation of different building typologies to critically and correctly detail and specify effectively and efficiently functioning buildings in accordance with applicable regulatory and technical standards.

- Current technological practices to make data-driven decisions in a collaborative working environment based on and through the application of processes and technologies for modelling, production, management and communication of information.

- Procurement methods and contract administration, architectural practice, design leadership, management roles and functions (including, principal/lead designer, design management, project management, information management, compliance plan management, etc.) and professional behaviours, conduct and ethics.

- Continual learning to maintain currency and awareness with existing and emerging topics, technologies and practices that inform the discipline. This includes specialisation relating to new and emerging professional and industry trends and continuing professional development, in a range of roles and functions, to maintain competency.

The educational standards required of a Chartered Architectural Technologist as illustrated above are based upon the requirements for CIAT Accreditation of Honours and Masters Degrees in Architectural Technology and as such holders of these awards are recognised as having achieved the necessary standards through study.

Appendix 2

Mapping template for threshold standards for Masters level Programmes extracted from *QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology*

Mandatory Threshold Standards	Module Title
1. critical awareness of the historical and contemporary context, and the underpinning social, technological, environmental, economic, political, legal and ethical theories that inform and influence the practice of architectural technology	
2. systematic understanding and critical awareness of current and emerging trends in architectural technology such as, but not limited to, digital construction	
3. evaluation of appropriate methodologies for dealing with complex problems	
4. completion of a major piece of design work, or substantial research project, informed by thorough understandings of the discipline.	
5. independent analysis of complex concepts applied in the generation of critical discussion by working with some originality	
equality, diversity, inclusion, access/accessibility	
education for sustainable development	
employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship	

Appendix 3

Staff profile

Name: ....

School/Faculty: ....

Current position: ....

Other academic responsibilities: ....

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Qualifications: ....

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Previous relevant experience: ....

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Recent CPD activity (including research and publications): ....

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Appendix 4

Quality Assurance confirmation

I confirm on behalf of _name of institution_ and _programme title_ that:

1. The Accreditation submission complies with our Quality Assurance policies and procedures.

2. The Accreditation submission is in accordance with GDPR requirements and CIAT's Guidelines.

3. The Accreditation submission was prepared for the specific purpose of Accreditation in accordance with CIAT's procedures.

4. The Accreditation submission complies with the UK QAA Subject Benchmark Statement or national equivalent for Architectural Technology and CIAT's Professional Standards Competency Framework.

5. The programme was internally validated/reviewed and approved on _date of approval_ which is valid until _date of next review_ in accordance with institutional and programme specific regulations*.

6. CIAT will be informed in writing of any changes to the Quality Assurance policies and procedures of the educational establishment that will/may affect the Accredited programme.

7. CIAT will be informed in writing of any changes to the Accredited programme in terms of title, content and delivery for their consideration and approval by CIAT's Education Board.

....

**N.B. This must be signed by the Dean of Faculty/**   **Date**
**Head of School, or equivalent**

*In the case that an internal programme review or validation was not successful prior to this submission, information on this has been appended to this proforma outlining what action was taken.

CIAT