

Accreditation Standards

Accrediting Organization

National Association of Landscape Professional Foundation appointed Accreditation Committee will be considered the Landscape Contracting Accreditation Board (LCAB).

Program Mission and Planning

The program shall have a clearly defined mission supported by educational objectives appropriate to the Landscape Contracting business community. The planning process shall demonstrate progress towards the attainment of the objectives.

Indicators -

- a. Mission reflects a broad perspective of the industry
- b. Mission is stated in terms of what students should be able to do when they graduate.
- c. Mission should address ethics, critical thinking and professionalism.
- d. Program is engaged in a continuous planning process to improve instruction.
- e. Academic mission, program objectives and continuous planning relate to the larger institutional mission, strengths and character.

Governance/Administration

The program shall have the authority and resources to achieve its educational goal.

Indicators -

- a. The number of faculty is adequate to achieve the program's mission and objectives.
- b. Funding is adequate to meet program objectives and provide for faculty development and student support such as conference attendance, computing equipment and technical support.
- c. The program has adequate personnel and support staff to accomplish its mission and objectives.

Faculty

The qualifications, academic position and professional activities of faculty and instructional personnel shall promote and enhance the academic mission and objectives of the program.

Indicators -

- a. Qualifications of the faculty and instructional personnel are appropriate to their roles.
- b. Faculty is continuously engaged in activities leading to their professional growth, the advancement of the contracting industry and the effectiveness of the program.
- c. Faculty is active in local, state, or national trade or professional organizations. Faculty pursues licensing or certification as is relevant to the program.
- d. Faculty engages in continuing education.
- e. Recommendation - those teaching design courses shall be Landscape Architects or credentialed landscape design professionals.

Students

Program shall demonstrate that students are being adequately prepared to pursue a career in the landscape contracting industry.

Indicators -

- a. Student work is evaluated by criteria related to program objectives, and the information gained from such evaluation is used to enhance curriculum, instruction and other program aspects.
- b. Students are encouraged to engage in activities that relate to the contracting industry and to participate in the enrichment of the larger community. Examples include membership in state and national organizations, student club activities, community service and outreach projects.
- c. Successful job placement.
- d. Positive internship evaluations by cooperating businesses.

Alumni

Program shall provide evidence of alumni's accomplishments and their involvement in advancing the program.

Indicators -

- a. Accomplishments include positions of responsibility in and service to the industry, professional awards, licensing, certification, etc.
- b. Program uses alumni as speakers, evaluators or advisory committee members.

Industry

Program shall provide evidence of interaction with industry representatives from a variety of businesses associated with landscape contracting.

Indicators -

- a. Career fairs for internships and employment.
- b. Lectures and presentations from industry representatives.
- c. Program receives support from regional or national organizations and businesses.

Advisory Committee

A fully functioning advisory committee made up of faculty, industry and student representatives shall be in place.

Relationship to the Overall Academic Institution and the Community

Program shall promote positive relationships with the overall academic institution and the community.

Indicators -

- a. Interdepartmental cooperation.
- b. Community service projects.
- c. Lectures and seminars by non-industry professionals.
- d. Outreach efforts for recruiting and enhancing the program's image.

Facilities, Equipment and Information Systems

Faculty, students and staff shall have access to facilities, equipment, library and other information systems necessary for a positive learning environment.

2 Year Degree Program

Objectives

1. Define the academic standards for programs in landscape contracting at two-year academic institutions. These standards establish expected areas of learning deemed relevant to the landscape contracting business community.
2. Allow flexibility to accommodate a variety of emphases in two-year academic programs.

Degree - Associate degree from an accredited academic institution.

Program Identification - Program title shall reflect the mission of the program. It is strongly suggested that the word “landscape” be incorporated into the title.

General Education

Accredited programs will provide students with a level general education considered appropriate for the two-year Associate degree. This includes English Composition, Speech or Communication, Mathematics (Applied or higher), Social Science, and humanities. A language course (ex. *Spanish for the Green Industry*) is recommended. The goal is to provide student competency in reading, writing, mathematics, economics, and human relations and understanding.

Areas of Competency

Accredited programs will provide students with real-world knowledge and skill through Student Learning Outcomes in 7 areas of competency. These learning outcomes reflect the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the landscape industry and have been approved by the industry. The 7 areas are:

Horticultural Science
Business Management
Landscape Design
Landscape Installation
Landscape Management
Computer Technology
Internship – see below for additional requirements.

Some Student Learning Outcomes in the areas of Horticultural Science, Business Management, and Computer Technology may be acquired through other programs in the College.

Internship is a formalized practical work experience acquired, preferably within an established landscape company. An internship may be called a cooperative education or practicum, but should include documented work experience, which is relevant to the landscape contracting

business community. Typically, 10-12 weeks of monitored, full-time work experience counts for 3 academic credits. Practical work experience programs must have some formal mechanism in place for evaluation and monitoring by both the cooperating business and the academic institution. In addition, students will complete the Student Learning Outcomes for Internship. For additional help in developing internships, faculty can refer to the Internship Guideline found on the NALP website, www.landscapeprofessionals.org.

Student Learning Outcome Standards:

To become fully accredited, programs will need to provide students with a minimum of 10% in any one category with a 70% overall of the Approved Student Learning Outcomes. Outcomes will be verified as to the class in which they are completed and the method of which they are assessed.

Other Areas of Competency

Institutional-define Emphasis:

Landscape contracting may have special expressions beyond the previous defined emphases. Category D allows and encourages academic institutions to initiate and respond to changes in the landscape contracting industry by offering courses to suit these specialized needs.

For example, a defined emphasis titled, “Environmental Contracting” with topics of:

Landscaping for energy and water conservation

Ecology

Wetland construction and restoration

Erosion control systems

Permaculture and sustainable development

Re-vegetation of disturbed lands

Landscape waste management and recycling

For these areas, the institution should submit, as part of their application, the Student Learning outcomes and their assessment methods that accompany those courses. A blank form is available for this purpose.

Accreditation Procedures

1. **Preliminary Review.** It is recommended to have the catalog and course descriptions reviewed by the Site Team Coordinator prior to making an official application to National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) for a Site Visit. There is no charge for this preliminary review. The information should be sent to the NALP offices and will be distributed to the Site Team Coordinator.
2. **Application.** After a favorable Preliminary Review, a site visit will be scheduled and NALP will invoice for the \$2,500 fee. At this time, programs should submit the completed application to:
Accreditation Coordinator
National Association of Landscape Professionals
12500 Fair Lakes Circle – Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22033
3. **Self Study.** Thirty (30) days prior to site visit date mutually agreed on, distribute the Self-Study documents to Site Team members. The team is generally composed of a local landscape contractor, a non-local landscape contractor, an administrator or professor from an accredited school and site team chair.
 - a. College catalog containing course descriptions
 - b. Organization of school with names of administration and organizational chart
 - c. History of program
 - d. List of program faculty with qualifications and course responsibilities
 - e. Names and businesses of advisory committee members
 - f. Mission statement of program
 - g. Program activities and accomplishments
 - h. Profile of students
 - i. Course outlines relevant to the standards excluding General Education
 - j. Textbook lists and teaching resources relevant to the standards excluding General Education
 - k. Other patterns of evidence of general standards
4. **Site Visit Agenda**
 - a. Meet with President/Provost/Academic Vice President
 - b. Meet with the college dean and department chairman
 - c. Meet with key faculty
 - d. Meet with students
 - e. Meet with alumni and employers
 - f. Meet members of advisory committee
 - g. Tour campus and facilities
 - h. Observe classes
 - i. Review current student project samples
 - j. Concluding Review and Assessment Meeting
5. **Notification Procedure.** The school administration and program coordinator will be notified of accreditation status within sixty days after the site visit.

6. **Accreditation Committee Actions**

The Accreditation Committee can take the following actions after the initial site visit:

- a. **Initial Accreditation** - Granted on a first review when the standards are met with deficiencies. Requirements to satisfy deficiencies will be listed. Granted for three years. "Initial" status does not signify non-accreditation.
- b. **Full Accreditation** - Granted when all standards are met. Granted for seven (7) years inclusive of Initial term.
- c. **Accreditation Denied** - The result of standards not met.

7. **Additional Accreditation Requirements**

- a. Upon receiving Initial and/or Full Accreditation status, the program coordinator or other designated faculty will join NALP as an affiliate member and the program will maintain a NALP student chapter membership.
- b. Within first year of receiving Initial and/or Full Accreditation status and each year after, a faculty member shall attend at least one state, regional, or national NALP workshop, seminar, symposium or annual meeting.
- c. Regardless of Accreditation status (Initial, Full or Provisional), the Annual Report will be submitted to LCAB. Form will be provided upon request.
- d. For at least 5 out of the 7 years prior to re-evaluation, the faculty shall lead a student delegation to the NALP National Collegiate Landscape Competition.

8. **Reaccreditation Procedures**

During the 6th-year of the accreditation term, schools must apply for a reaccreditation visit in the 7th year. The submission requirements and procedure followed is identical to the procedures outlined in Section 3.

Accreditation Committee Actions

The Accreditation Committee can take the following actions after a reaccreditation visit:

- a. **Full Accreditation** - Granted when all standards are met. Granted for seven (7) years inclusive of Provisional term.
- b. **Provisional Accreditation** - Granted when a previously accredited program applies for reaccreditation and the standards are met with deficiencies. Requirements to satisfy deficiencies will be listed. Granted for three years. "Provisional" status does not signify suspension or withdrawal of accreditation.
- c. **Accreditation Denied** - The result of standards not met.

For additional information about the NALP Accreditation program, call Jenn Myers at 703.456.4215.



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
LANDSCAPE
PROFESSIONALS

ACCREDITED
DEGREE
PROGRAM

ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT APPLICATION

Initial Visit (\$2500 fee)

Reaccreditation Visit (\$500 annually for 7 years)

Note – your fees will be paid in full by your next accreditation site visit

NALP will invoice after the site visit is scheduled. Fee: \$2,500.00.

School Name: _____

Faculty Contact: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Website: _____

Four Year Degree Offered

Two Year Degree Offered

The site visit will be scheduled for a time that is mutually acceptable to the evaluation team and to the school. Indicate the date agreed on or the preference for the time if not yet established.

Visit Scheduled _____

Visit Not Scheduled – Preferred Date(s) _____

The Site Team Coordinator will provide you with the names and addresses of the members of the team. Each team member should receive a set of the information required 30 days prior to the visit.

Return this form as an attachment to e-mail to accreditation@landscapeprofessionals.org, or fax to 703-322-2066. For any questions, please call 703-736-9666.

mail to: Accreditation Program
National Association of Landscape Professionals
12500 Fair Lakes Circle, Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22033