

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.

4 Year Degree Program

Objectives

1. Define the academic standards for programs in landscape contracting at four-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 four-year academic programs.

Degree - leading to a Bachelor's 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.

Areas of Competency

CREDIT NUMBERS GIVEN ARE SEMESTER HOURS. EQUIVALENT QUARTER CREDITS ARE REQUIRED FOR SCHOOLS USING THE QUARTER SYSTEM.

Business and Communication - minimum 18 credits

Suggested topics:

Composition	Business or technical writing
Public Speaking	Interpersonal Communications
Economics	Language (Spanish recommended)
Accounting	Marketing and Sales
Contracts	Management Fundamentals
Personnel Management	Finance
Business & Government Regulations	
Small Business Startup and Management	
Estimating and Bidding (landscape construction and maintenance)	

Horticulture and Related Sciences - minimum 15 credits

Suggested topics:

Chemistry	Soil Science and Soil Fertility
Woody Plant Material	Horticulture, Botany or Plant Science
Herbaceous Plant Material	Turf Grasses and Weeds
Interior Plant Material	Plant Propagation

Computing and Technology Applications - minimum 9 credits

Some, or all of these credits, may be satisfied within courses counted for other categories. For example, a 3 credit estimating class with one third of the course dedicated to using a computer estimating software program would satisfy 3 credits in business and 1 credit in computing applications.

Suggested topics:

Introduction to computers or basic computing concepts	
Computer estimating	Business computing applications
Digital imaging techniques	Computer-aided design and drafting
Other technology	

Internship - minimum 3 credits; maximum 9 credits

Formalized practical work experience, preferably within an established landscape company. An internship may be called a co-op or practicum, but should include documented work experience, which is relevant to the landscape contracting business community. Typically, 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. Refer to the Internship Guideline found on the NALP website, www.landscapeprofessionals.org.

Landscape Contracting Specialty Credits

A minimum of 33 credits in any combination of A, B, C and D.

At least 6 credits are required from each of Emphasis A, B, and C.

Defined emphases

A. Landscape Design – minimum 6 credits

Suggested topics:

Basic principles of design or design appreciation

Computer aided design and drafting

Grading and drainage design

Irrigation design

Advanced design issues (design sales, client relations, site inventory techniques, complex site design problems, health and safety etc.)

Graphic communication

Planting design

Interior Landscape design

B. Landscape Installation and Implementation – minimum 6 credits

Suggested topics:

Land surveying

Construction materials and methods

Scheduling and project management

Interior Plantscaping

Safety in the landscape

Landscape structures

Installation equipment use and safety

Plant material installation

Irrigation installation techniques

C. Landscape Management – minimum 6 credits

Suggested topics:

Arboriculture and urban plant management

Landscape management principles

Plant pathology

Interior plantscape management

Small engine repair and maintenance

Turf grass management

Entomology

Integrated pest management

Irrigation trouble-shooting and repair

Maintenance equipment use and safety

D. Institution defined 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 in, “Environmental Contracting” with possible topic areas of:

Ecology

Re-vegetation of disturbed lands

Erosion control systems

Wetland construction and restoration

Permaculture and sustainable development

Landscaping for energy and water conservation

Landscape waste management and recycling



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