

**CIDA's Board of Directors adopted candidacy status policy and procedure, effective January 1, 2007.**

**What does candidacy mean?**

Candidacy status is public recognition of the quality of academic programs in development. CIDA's Accreditation Commission awards candidacy status to programs to signify that the Commission has determined the program is progressing towards CIDA accreditation and has the potential to achieve compliance with CIDA Standards within five years. Candidacy status does not indicate that a program is accredited, nor does it guarantee eventual accreditation of that program by CIDA.

**What is the difference between candidacy and accreditation?**

Candidacy is a pre-accreditation status signifying that a program has the potential to achieve compliance with CIDA Standards within five years. Accreditation signifies that a program has demonstrated compliance with CIDA Standards.

**Does candidacy assure accreditation?**

No. CIDA's Accreditation Commission will not grant candidacy to a program unless strong evidence exists that the program is progressing towards CIDA accreditation and has the potential to achieve compliance with CIDA Standards within five years. However, attainment of candidacy status does not guarantee eventual accreditation of that program by CIDA.

**What's involved in the candidacy process?**

Similar to the accreditation process, the candidacy process begins with a comprehensive self-study by the program, followed by a series of evaluations and reviews by a CIDA visiting team, a small group of trained site visitors, and finally the Accreditation Commission. The Commission makes the final decision to award or deny candidacy. All CIDA evaluators are interior design practitioners and educators.

**How long does the candidacy process take?**

A program must submit an application and demonstrate that eligibility requirements have been met before a CIDA candidacy visit. Once the application has been submitted and accepted, a visiting team is assigned and the candidacy visit is scheduled. The program must also submit a self-study report prior to the candidacy visit. The time frame for the entire process can vary in length from one to two years.

**As a student, how do I benefit from attending a candidate program?**

Enrolling in a candidate interior design program means that you can be confident that the program is progressing towards CIDA accreditation and has the potential to achieve compliance with CIDA Standards. A candidate program has voluntarily placed itself before the scrutiny of the profession and invested time, energy, and money to ensure that the program is a viable candidate for achieving accreditation.

**Is candidacy status recognized by state licensing bodies?**

Candidacy status is most typical in accrediting agencies for professions that require licensure, registration, or certification in order to practice. Offering such a status supports legislative efforts and the formation of new programs in states that have strict licensure requirements. Additionally, candidacy status can form a mechanism for graduates of programs that are in development to gain access to registration and licensure.