

**A VISION  
FOR TRAINING DESIGN PROGRAM  
AT  
AJMAN UNIVERSITY  
OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  
(Training as a Way of Teaching in Design Education)**

**Submitted  
By**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study looks into the training program, which is an integral part of the Interior Design Program at Ajman University of Science & Technology (AUST). The Department of Interior Design has established training cooperation with many local offices and a number of design related companies and organizations.

The training program is implemented in two parts, each with duration of 8 weeks. The 16 weeks training is considered as 4 Cr.Hrs.of a total of 134 hours of the program. The aim of the training is to expose the student to work environment and practice what is learnt in class and design studios. During training, the students will be able to:

Apply theoretical knowledge to solve real design problems.

Enhance active factors to give a hand in helping and improvement the aesthetic qualities of the environmental aspects.

Improve their practical skills.

Help them to develop his artistic abilities in design, and to gain aesthetic design experiences in factual life serving community needs.

Develop a strong foundation and help the students to achieve their full potential, and to develop a self-motive approach to perform work in a team.

Ajman University of Science & technology places strong emphasis on quality assurance and quality control. The same applies to the Department of Interior Design .The quality of the training program is assessed from different aspects. Evaluation and recommendations based on the assessment .The main goal of the assessment is to modify/ update the program on a continual basis to ensure that the graduates of this program are of high quality and have achieved the desire objectives. For this, feedbacks are sought from the sites companies, training advisors, academic advisors, training student's surveys, and Alumni.

Developments / actions are taken following, the recommendations from evaluation..

This study highlights the importance of training program in preparing students for a successfully professional practice.

**Key words:** Teaching Methods. Design Program. Ability and Motivation. Training. Evaluation and Feedback Assessments.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Training is an essential and an integral part of the curriculum of Interior Design program at Ajman University of Science & Technology . Student should spend a period of 4 months working in offices or related institutions in order to gain practical skills and to get an understanding of the work environment. The Department of Interior Design has established training cooperation with many local offices and number of design related companies and organizations.

The training period is 16 weeks taken during two summers (training1 & training2), each of 8 weeks duration. The training accounts for 4 credit hours and students receive grades based on their performance during both external training sessions.

A training manual is prepared to provide guidelines to students concerning their external training. The manual is made up of four parts:

- 1. Training Plan**
- 2. Guidelines for Trainee Students**
- 3. Guidelines for Practical Training**
- 4. Evaluation and Feedback Assessments.**

“ Kilmers (1992) stated Interior Design is one of the most stimulating and creative professions. As a mixture of art, science, and technology, an interior design manipulates space, form texture, colour, and light to improve the quality of human life”.

The purpose of the training is to equip the student with basic practical skills needed at design sites and to provide them with theoretical and practical information needed to help them take maximum benefit from their training.

Training gives the student new techniques and methods needed. Training is so necessary for development of material and plan. Capabilities that help them to achieve what they want on an own level. “Trevor Bentley stated (1992) stated learning is process which takes place as an interaction between learners and their environments”. Training provides students with knowledge to develop confidence, integrity, and enhance artistic abilities by giving them the necessary aesthetic design experience, and to prepare them to become more productive in providing services to the community, keeping in view its interests and needs.

## **TRAINING OBJECTIVES**

- There are specific objectives for practical training that must understood and appreciate to get maximum benefit from training sessions. Evaluation of training will be based on the level of achievement of the following objectives:
- The Correlation of theoretical knowledge with professional practice.
- The acquirement of an additional technical knowledge concerning the field of training.
- The improvement of communication skills both oral, and in writing.
- Showing the initiative and development of self-confidence in handling the assigned tasks in real-life.

- Learning the significance of teamwork, and to act as a responsible member of the teamwork.
- Development the personality by learning about self-control punctuality, professional responsibility, and time management, etc.
- The Demonstration of a positive attitude of AUST student as a serious learner, and an ability of making contribution to the ongoing jobs at the training sites.
- Training Program is required to cover essential work-related skills, techniques and knowledge.
- To enhance skills and enable learning and personal development, which extends the range of development way outside the studio work skills and knowledge to create far more exciting, liberating, motivational opportunities.
- Understanding the peculiar problems facing the UAE society and needs.
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### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DESIGN CORRECULUM AT AJMAN UNIVERSITY**

“Badrul H. Khan (2001) stated training an important tool for improving knowledge and skill”. The centre of training and continuing education coordinates training program at Ajman University of Science & Technology. The program is required to cover essential work-related skills, techniques and knowledge, and deals with taking a positive progressive approach to this sort of professional practice (Training Centre, 2005).

Importantly however, the most effective way to develop students is to enhance skills training, which will enable learning and personal development. The students will have the opportunities to extend the range of their development outside the studio work into the real live work experiences environment; and with specialists with broad experiences to develop their abilities and concepts. “Mel Silberman (1990) stated they help participants to become more a ware of their feelings and reactions to certain issues and new ideas”. The students will be more aware and able to create far more exciting, liberating, motivational opportunities.

### **TTRAINING PLAN**

The purpose of the training is to equip the students with basic practical skills needed at design sites and to provide them theoretical and practical information needed to help them take maximum benefit from their training.

Training gives the students new techniques and methods needed, to be able to relate the learning to their own experiences and needs. Training is so necessary for development self-confidence and helps them to achieve what they want.

Training help to develop and enhance the artistic abilities by giving them necessary aesthetic design experience, and to prepare them to become more productive in providing services to the community, keeping in view its interests and needs.

Ajman University of Science & Technology considers practical training as a very important and a vital part of the design curriculum, and students are required to finish the training parts of the program requirements to have the bachelor in interior design. The Interior Design students are

required to complete 16 weeks of external training at interior design firms. The external training is taken during two summers (training1 & training2), each of eight weeks duration Therefore, Ajman University established a training policy to bridge the gap between academic and professional practice, in order to enhance the artistic and design abilities of the students, and give them the opportunity needed to apply them academic knowledge.

Training activities has to monitor the following lines:

### **Training 1:**

The training policy of the design program at Ajman University obligated the student to start his first part of training at the end of his completion of the studio course (interior design 5) at the program.

The training will last two months (eight weeks), seven days a week, with an average of eight hours a day in one of a chosen design office.

The training will focus on:

**Conceptual design procedures**

**Basics of working drawings**

**Site supervision**

**Presentation skills**

### **Training 2:**

The training policy of the design program at Ajman University obligated the student to continue this second part of training at the end of his completion of the final project presentation (Graduation 2) at the program.

The training will last two months (eight weeks), seven days a week, with an average of eight hours a day in one of a chosen design office.

The training will focus on:

**Site supervision**

**Working drawings & technical installations**

**Contracts**

**Specifications and quantities**

**Advanced presentation skills (e.g. 3d modelling)**

## **GUIDELINES FOR TRAINEE STUDENTS**

Practical training is an important part of design education. It will help students to relate the theoretical knowledge learned in classrooms to solutions of real-world problems, experience the working environment before graduation, and learn how to act responsibly and efficiently in carrying out assigned tasks, etc. Before starting the practical training, Trainee must attend the Training Preparation Meeting (TPM) with appointed Academic Supervisor. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure the fully understand of the training requirements in general and the training objectives in particular.

## **DUTIES OF TRAINEE STUDENTS**

A field supervisor will guide and supervise the duty at the site of practical training. Conveying tasks on a daily or weekly basis, evaluate performance accomplished. An Academic Supervisor from the faculty of design will direct the achievement of practical training, and will also monitor the progress. Providing guidance during the course of the training, to insure an effective presentation of the work, both orally and in writing. However, personal effort will play the most important role in this training program. Trainee student must fulfil a number of duties in the most effective manner. These duties must be taken very seriously to get the maximum benefit out of the practical training.

Once the Trainee start training program, a certain demands has to be followed:

- Should be regular and punctual and carry out all assigned tasks in the best possible manner.
- Must follow all safety instructions and other guidelines from the field supervisor.
- Elaborate and showing work to the academic supervisor during their visits to the training Site.
- Pay special attention to improving communication skills during the training period. The more practice the more confidence will develop.
- Acquire as much technical knowledge as possible about the type of work involved at the training site. For this, try all possible ways to get the needed technical information from the Internet, manuals, reports, etc., also should ask questions at the site to clarify and understanding of the subject matter. However, do not hesitate to communicate with the field supervisor by asking for information needed to improve your work.
- For each day of the week, enter a summary of the tasks which have performed in the weekly tasks report (WTR).
- Prepare a training notebook containing the daily notes about work at the training site. Any problems encountered and how they were solved must also be entered in the training notebook. It will prove quite useful when you start writing your training report at the completion of the training period. Information contained in the training notebook shall be transferred to the report in a professional manner.
- Attending the weekly meetings with academic supervisor at the university is required. The purpose of such meetings is to evaluate accomplishments.
- Get advantage of time at the training site. Whenever there is some free time, utilize it by reading a technical manual and observing how other designers at the site are performing different. And be sure that training supervisor has evaluated and signed the forms sent by the university.
- Prepare a training report as well as an oral presentation (using Power Point) at the end of the training session. A manual for preparing your reports is provided with these guidelines.
- At the end of practical training period, a given a grade will be based on performance at the site as reported by the field supervisor.
- Technical report writing and oral presentation about your training are required.

## **EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK ASSESSMENTS**

Ajman University of Science & technology places strong emphasis on quality assurance and quality control. The same applies to the Department of Interior Design. The quality of the program is assessed from different aspects (Interior Design program 2006). The main goal of the assessment is to modify/ update the program on a continual basis so as to ensure that the graduates of this program are of high quality and have achieved the desired objectives. For this, feedback which is sought from the sites companies (figure 1), training advisors (figure 2), academic advisors-Weekly Tasks Report- (figure 3), student's survey (figure 4).

Developments / actions are taken following the recommendations from evaluation. Evaluation and recommendations based on the assessment (figure 5).

These Surveys are presented to the Department council; a committee is formed and proposed a number of changes in the program plan that were then approved by the Council and referred to the faculty for final approval.

### **Method of Analysis:**

For each question six options were provided as Excellent, V. Good, Average, Fair, and Poor. These options were expected to provide the committee a flexibility to express their opinion with a wider choice. However, for the sake of analysis, the responses were divided into two categories by grouping the first three [Excellent, V. Good and Average] as "category A" and the last three [Fair, Poor e] as "category B". The sum of each category was calculated as a percentage of the total number of responses for each question.

## **GRADING**

At the end of practical training period, will be given a grade based on the following:

- Performance at the site as reported by field supervisor.
- Weekly meetings, with the Academic Supervisor, who will evaluate efforts to wards achieving specified objectives.
- **The main focus will be in technical knowledge gained and how would relate the theoretical classroom studies with practical applications in the field.**
- **Evaluation of skills and abilities that students gained to meet the required objectives in their trainings.**
- **Also, a technical report in writing and oral presentation about the training.**
- 

## **CONCLUSION**

The result of the training program is providing the skilfully practice to serve the students, to be aware of the needed environmental factors, in order to accommodate changes taking place in, regionally and globally, and to be familiar with various design styles, techniques and ways of dealing with the markets, and clients in general. Recognize that learning is a life-long process, and work as an efficient team member in multi-professional groups. The awareness of these factors not only helps the students in creating more realistic expectations from training sites, but also helps in designing, and setting ways of approaching methods of achievements.

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### **Figure 1: Training Sites Survey Form**

Ajman University of Science & Technology  
Faculty of Engineering  
INTERIOR DESIGN DEPARTMENT

Training Sites' Survey Form

, we would greatly appreciate your help in filling out the following questionnaire.

Upon its completion, please return the questionnaire to the Interior Design Department at the following address: P.O. Box 346 Ajman, or by Fax to: 06-

In order for the Department of Interior Design at Ajman University of Science & Technology to evaluate its practical training courses and assess its students' level and performance

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

I - Training Activities:

1- Are you a

a- Governmental Organization Yes No

b- Private Engineering consulting firm Yes No

2- What is the major activity of your organization / company, and the specific department training interior design students?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Design               | <input type="checkbox"/> Furniture Design                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working Drawing Details       | <input type="checkbox"/> CAD Drafting                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specifications and Quantities | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Site Supervision        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project Management            | <input type="checkbox"/> Interior and / or Design development |

3- How many students from the Interior Design Department at Ajman University of Sciences & technology did your organization train during last summer?

# of Trainees ----- Duration: ----- Weeks

4- How do you rate the duration of the practical training?

1- Too Long  2- Adequate  3- Too short  Don't know

5- In your opinion what should be the total duration of the practical training?

1-20 Weeks  2- 16 Weeks  3- 12 Weeks  4- 8 Weeks

Why? -----

II - Trainees' Performance Assessment:

1- Following are a number of skills and abilities expected to be mastered by Interior Design Departments' advanced students. Please rate our students who were trained in your organization by ticking the appropriate box:

Aptitude	Excellent	V. Good	Average	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
1 - Solving Interior Design problems						
2- Preparing projects' working drawings, technical installations & details						
3- Preparing interior projects' specifications and quantities						
4- Site Supervision: Materials construction and execution						
5- Computer skills : presentation drawings / working details						
6- Communicating clearly orally						
7- Communicating effectively in writing						
8- Functioning well in multi - disciplinary teams						
9- Understanding the interior's professional and ethical responsibilities						
10- Learning state of the art techniques and modern tools						
11- Following new interior developments						

2- Based upon your evaluation of our students' performance during their training, please indicate, in descending order of importance, any missing information, skills, or techniques in our students' education:

- 1- .....
- 2- .....
- 3- .....

**III- Second - Practical Training Program for the INTERIOR department Students**

In your opinion, how important is the practical training for interior students in professional vacation?

organizations and offices during the summer

- 1- Very Important
- 2- Important
- 3- Average
- 4- Not Important
- 5- Not at all Important

What are your suggestions for developing a successful training program for interior students

during the summer vacation?

.....  
 .....

What is the possibility of future training for the interior students in your organization during the summer vacation:

1- In terms of the available type of training, i.e. design, working drawings, construction sites, etc..

.....  
 .....

2 - In terms of the number of students that you can accept for training in the future: .....

.....  
 .....

Thank you very much for your time and help

**Figure 2: Training Evaluation by Field Supervisor**

Ajman University of Science & Technology  
 Training & Continuing Education Centre  
 Training Evaluation  
 By Field Supervisor

Form (3)

The Method of Working in the Training Centre and Training Institutions

**SURVEY**

Please fill in this survey form by giving your judgment about clauses and statements for evaluating the training environment training to know the effectiveness of the training process ( training plan, academic supervision, field supervision, etc) and for the purpose of improving the training activity , from your valuable remarks that we cherish to achieve as Allah's willing .

We hopes to get your suggestions & opinions  
 As soon as convenient

With best regards

**General Information**

- Name of institution : .....
- Tel., Fax: P.O. Box & Mobile: .....
- Address : .....
- Date of Foundation.....
- Activity: .....
- Which type of institution?.

Governmental institution	Private institution	Holding Company	Joint Stock Co.	L.L.C.
1	2	3	4	5

Do you have other branches? .....

Yes	No
Are they inside the country? .....	Abroad? .....

Please mention the names of branches: .....

1.....2.....  
 .....3.....4.....

The number of students/..: .....

Your institution has the potential to train/.. Student

The Period of Training/

From/ää..... To/.

Does your institution want to cooperate with the University

Yes		No
<b>Specify the type of relationship?</b>		
Agreements	Participation in the Financing Conference	Training

Please tick one box

<b>Q.(1): Is there opportunity for Univ. students to undergo training in your institution?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	1	2

<b>Q.(2): The Suitable Training is</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
	<i>First Semester</i>	<i>Second Semester</i>	<i>Summer course</i>	<i>Between the semesters</i>	<i>Any time</i>
	October, November, and part of December	March, & April	On the mid of June & July & the mid of August	January & February	
	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Q.(3): Training is for?</b>	<b>citizens only</b>	<b>Citizens &amp; expatriates</b>
	1	2

<b>Q.(4): Trainees gender:</b>	Training male only	Training female only	Both Sexes
	1	2	3

<b>Q.(5):? Are there Students from other universities?</b>	There are	Just the student of Ajman University
	1	2

<b>Q.(6):Regular work Hours in the Institution:</b>	<b>One Time</b>		<b>Shift</b>
	6 hours	8 hours	
	1	2	3

<b>Q.(7): Free movement inside the department of institution?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	1	2

<b>Q.(8): Links with the public</b>	<b>Available</b>	<b>Not available</b>
	1	2

<b>Q.(9):Areas of training inside the institution?</b>			
<b>S</b>	<b>Specializations</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>.</b>
1	Computer	IT	
2		IS	
3		CS	

4		C Eng.	
5	Management	Marketing	
6		Accounting	
7		Finance	
8		Business Administration	
9	Translation & Languages		
10	Engineering	Electronic Eng.	
11		Communications Eng.	
12		Medical Equipment Eng.	
13	Media	Mass Communication	
14		Public Relations	
15	Law		

- Field supervisor name: .....
- How many students can he supervise? ..... Student

Does the institution allow the academic supervisor to visit?	Yes	No
	1	2

If the answer (No) please mention the reasons :

.....  
 .....

**Training Plan**

Q.(13): Is there a training plan for institution?	Yes	No
	1	2
Q.(14): Has it been applied	1	2
Q.(15) :Identical with faculty plan	1	2
Q.(16):Identical to the student major?	1	2

He training objectives:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....

**Training Fees**

Q.(17): you feel that you should be paid?	No	Yes		
		<i>Appreciation certificates of</i>	<i>Cashing</i>	
		Certificates & or participation in AUSTN conferences celebrations	Amount of money per group	Amount of money per head
	1	2	3 DHS	4 DHS

**General Evaluation**

Q.(18): The level of students ?	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Weak
	1	2	3	4

Q.(19 ):Has the student benefited from the training?	Yes	No
	1	2
Q.(20):Do you feel that training is necessary?	1	2
Q.(21): Was institution's potential identical with the training carried out there?	1	2
Q.(22):Are There enough field supervisors?	1	2

Do you have any suggestions regarding improving the training procedures in general? (If yes, please list them)

.....  
 .....

Date: ...../.../...Ç

Name: .....

Signature: .....

**Figure 3: Academic advisors-Weekly Tasks Report (WTR)**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Training Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Field Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Week #: \_\_\_\_\_ From: / / to / /

DAY #1: \_\_\_\_\_

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**DAY #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**DAY #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**DAY #4:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**DAY #5:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Student's Signatures \_\_\_\_\_ Field Supervisor's Signatures \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 4: Training Student's Survey Form**

Ajman university of Science & Technology  
 Faculty of Engineering  
 INTERIOR DESIGN DEPARTMENT  
 Training Students' Survey Form

Dear Trainee,

In its effort to evaluate and improve the professional training plan of its students, the Department of Interior Design at Ajman University of Science & Technology has designed the following questionnaire to obtain your feedback, comments and suggestions.

Please take the time to answer the following questions and return the form to the Interior Design Department's Chair or your campus' coordinator. All information will be kept confidential and will only be used to improve and develop the professional training course.

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

I- Training information:

As you know, the professional training course of the Interior Design Department comprises two 8 weeks periods of practical training taking place in the last two years of your study in the department. Please indicate:

1- where did you work during your last professional training period?

a) Governmental organization:  b-) Private organization:

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

2- How did you spend the entire period?

1- Working in one department / one job only  2- Working in more than one department / more than one job

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

3- What was your main responsibility during the training period?

Design Development  Working drawings, details

Construction Site Supervision  Construction Documents

Schematic Design  Model Making

CAD Drafting  Planning, Landscape Design  Graphics,  Web Design  Other

**4- How do you rate the duration of the practical training?**

Too Long  Adequate  Too short  Don't know

5- In your opinion what should be the total duration of the practical training?

20 Weeks  12 Weeks

16 Weeks  8 Weeks

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

II- Training Course Evaluation:

The purpose of the following questions is to evaluate the role of practical training in your educational and professional development:

1- How good was your technical background when you started the training?

Excellent  V. Good  Good  Fair  Poor

2- How good were your communication skills when you started the training?

Excellent  V. Good  Good  Fair  Poor

3- Was theoretical knowledge learned in the classes helpful in your training?

Very helpful  Helpful  Not helpful  Not at all  Don't know

4- How useful were your design studios at AUST in your training work?

Very useful  Useful  Not useful  Not at all  Don't know

5- How useful were your computer courses at AUST in your training work?

Very useful  Useful  Not useful  Not at all  Don't know

6- How useful were your technical courses (building, working drawings) at AUST in your training work?

Very useful  Useful  Not useful  Not at all  Don't know

7- How important is it to have a good command of English language for working as an Architect after graduation?  
 Very Important  Important  Not Important  Not at all  Don't know

8- How was the level of your English language for properly doing your job at the training site?  
 Excellent  V. Good  Good  Fair  Poor

9- Did the practical professional training help you to improve your communication skills in English?  
 Yes, a lot  Yes, some  Yes, a little  Not at all  Don't know

10- Do you feel that the training helped you to improve your personality and team work ability?  
 Yes, a lot  Yes, some  Yes, a little  Not at all  Don't know

11- How much technical knowledge did you gain during your training?  
 A lot  Some  A little  Not at all  Don't know

12- How important is the role of practical training in your design program?  
 Very Important  Important  Not Important  Not at all  Don't know

13- How much were you satisfied with the role of your Field Supervisor in your training?  
 Very Important  Important  Not Important  Not at all  Don't know

14- How much were you satisfied with the role of your Academic Supervisor in your training?  
 Very Important  Important  Not Important  Not at all  Don't know

In the space below, please mention any suggestions that will help the department to improve the practical training of Interior Design students in the future.

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Thank you very much for your time and help.

**Figure 5: Evaluation of skills and abilities that department's student gained in their trainings**

Excellent	V. Good	Average	Fair	Poor
				Identifying, formulating and solving Interior Design problems
				Proposing concept design solutions.
				Solving layout design / planning schemes.
				Preparing projects' working drawings and details.
				Designing project's details.
				Preparing interior projects' specifications and quantities.
				Project's cost analysis and calculations.
				Preparing finishing legal documents.
				Site Supervision: Design execution.
				Projects management.
				Computer skills: presentation drawings / working details.
				Organizational skills.
				Communicating clearly orally.
				Communicating effectively in writing.
				Functioning well in multi - disciplinary teams.
				Understanding interior's professional and ethical responsibilities.
				Continuously learning state of the art techniques and modern tools.
				Constantly following new interior developments.
				Understanding the peculiar problems facing the UAE society.