



**ALGONQUIN** | School of  
COLLEGE | Media & Design

# Bachelor of Interior DESIGN

Algonquin College Bachelor of Interior Design program offers a 4 year degree, and is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA). Our students are taught to be creative strategic thinkers.

Algonquin Interior Design  
PROGRAM INFORMATION GUIDE

# Program Description

The emphasis of Algonquin College's four-year interior design degree program is upon becoming a professional interior designer, with a focus upon critical thinking and applied research.

Students take part in a 14-week paid co-op work term in the summer following their third year of study, and are trained to become leaders in the rapidly evolving field of interior design. Upon graduation, students are eligible to become registered members of **ARIDO (Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario)**, and are able to pursue graduate studies in interior design or allied fields.

The Interior Design profession is complex because it deals with three-dimensional design solutions for the spaces in which we live and work.

Designers create spaces which function for various groups and situations, conform with relevant life-safety laws and codes, and are aesthetically pleasing. Through a forward-thinking curriculum, specialization seminars, professional electives, and a focus on international and socially-responsible interior design, students learn to be exceptional problem-solvers and professionals who can think clearly and effectively to create solutions.

## Here's what employers say about our co-op students

"Kyle has a great attitude. Extremely polite and good natured. Super drawing skills. On the path towards a very successful future. Keep doing more of what you have been doing and you will go far!"

*Paul Rosen, Skypad*

"Dana is a conscientious hard working student. She shows initiative and can be relied upon to complete tasks assigned and asks if further work is required. She has a good skill set from the Interior Design Program at the college and has been a pleasure to work with."

*Joe Whitmore, Claridge Homes*

"Hilary is creative, diligent and dependable. She is a self-starter who completes work on time and is willing to do a range of tasks. She is extremely talented and we have made full use of her design skills. Hilary fit in well with the group and was easy to have on the team. It was a pleasure to work with Hilary."

*Maureen Farrington, Public Works and Government Services Canada*





## What is an Interior Designer?

An interior designer is a person who designs the myriad of spaces which make up the interior built environment. In essence, Interior Designers are part of a team which create the built spaces where we inhabit and occupy our lives. Other members of the team could include: architects, engineers, psychologists, trades people and landscape architects, etc. Interior Designers create spaces which function appropriately and are in conformity with relevant life safety laws. It is a multi-faceted profession in which solutions are created from both a creative and technical perspective.

Successful Interior Designers are problem solvers and creative thinkers.



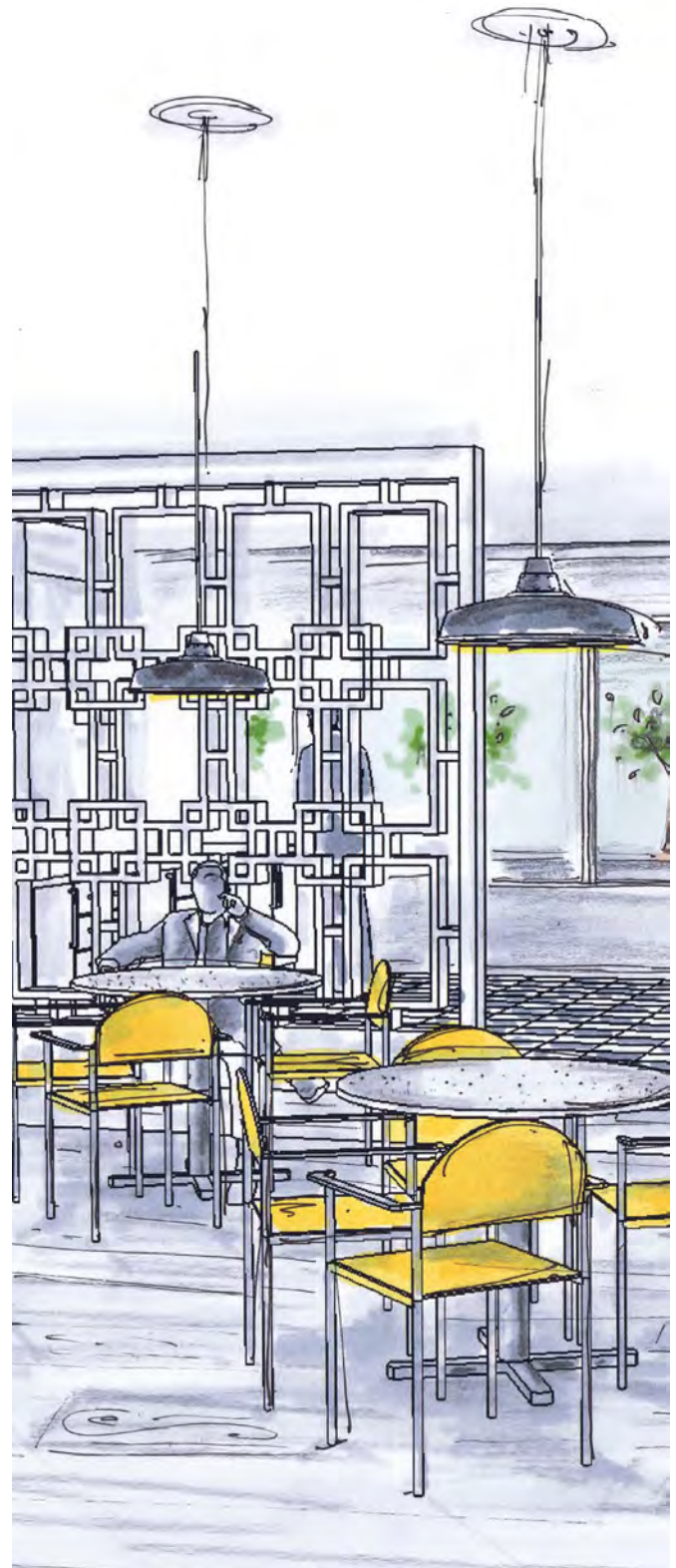
## What is the difference between an Interior Decorator and an Interior Designer?

An Interior Designer is “a professional who identifies, researches and creatively solves problems to interpret the function and quality of interior environment. A designer is responsible for performing services relative to interior spaces, including programming, design analysis, space planning and aesthetics, using specialized knowledge of interior construction, building codes, equipment, materials and furnishings. Designers are formally trained to prepare drawings and documents relative to the design of interior spaces in order to enhance and protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.”  
(Source: NCIDQ website).

In Ontario, the title “Interior Designer” is protected under a provincial Titles Act. This means that it is illegal to call yourself an Interior Designer unless you have successfully completed your education at a recognized school, have passed a series of professional exams, and are a registered member of the Association of Interior Designers of Ontario (ARIDO).

The practice of Interior Design encompasses a much broader scope of reference and responsibility than that of an Interior Decorator. Interior Decoration is the application of decorative finishes such as wallpaper, fabrics, furniture, etc. Interior Decorators generally work in residential situations.

PLEASE NOTE: Credits received from the Interior Decorating program cannot be transferred to the Interior Design program.



“...a professional who identifies, researches and creatively solves problems...”

## What are the highlights of the program at Algonquin College?

Our program is focused on training students to become responsible, ethical and responsive designers within the Interior Design profession.

We offer students a strong design foundation in the first year of study, followed by three years of study in specific design specialties such as corporate, health care, residential, retail and hospitality design. At the end of their education, graduates will have a strong foundation in all aspects of design as well as an understanding of which area of specialization appeals to each specific graduate. Because we are a degree, we teach students technical skills as well as theory. As confirmed by principals of leading interior design firms, our graduates are ready to “hit the ground running,” and are able to contribute in their place of employment immediately.



## Is the Interior Design program at Algonquin College accredited?

The Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) only accredits those programs which have met rigorous standards with regard to professional Interior Design education. More information about the Council can be found at: <http://www.accredit-id.org/>

We are one of three CIDA accredited programs in Ontario.

## Why should I come to a College rather than a University to complete a degree?

In addition to offering a degree since 2004, we have been in the business of preparing highly qualified graduates for over 25 years. We know what skills our industry expects and we have the faculty to deliver it.

## Some other specific reasons to complete a degree in Interior Design at Algonquin include:

Valuable co-op work exposure and hands-on experience as well as a strong foundation in theoretical knowledge.

A degree in which both theory and application is taught, enabling graduates to gain immediate employment and rapidly advance in the Interior Design profession.

Small class sizes with individual, hands-on attention to each and every student. A highly nurturing environment where faculty and students work together to gain knowledge.

Extensive studio learning with emphasis on understanding the fundamentals of design.

A faculty which consists of both experts in theory and research and practitioners working in the field. An extraordinary team of full-time and part-time faculty

who work with students beyond the classroom structure to ensure their success.

A highly active Advisory Committee of professionals working in the field who are actively engaged in helping to educate our students.

Student growth and exploration in all areas of design is encouraged. We are a small program offering personalized attention to each student. Where would you get that at a university?

For questions regarding the Bachelor of Interior Design program (curriculum, transfer credits, portfolio requirements, etc.) email:

[design@algonquincollege.com](mailto:design@algonquincollege.com)







# Portfolio Requirements:

## The Purpose of a Portfolio:

The portfolio submission is extremely important in terms of your overall assessment. The purpose of the portfolio is to provide a sampling of your best pieces of art/design demonstrating your conceptual, problem solving, technical skills and personality. Your portfolio will be reviewed and evaluated by Interior Design faculty and will allow us to determine your suitability for the education available within the Interior Design program.

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate evaluation feedback and resubmit their portfolio a second time should they initially fail to meet the program's requirements.

## What goes into an entrance Portfolio for this program?

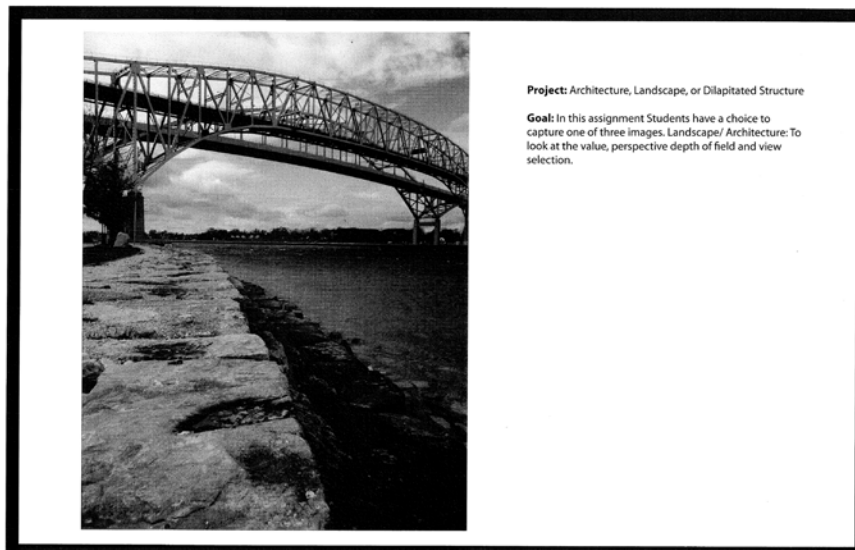
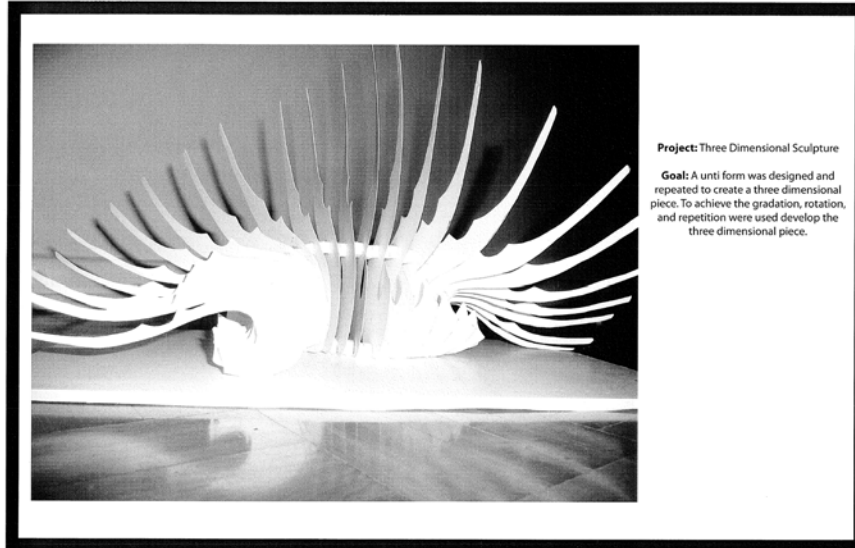
Candidates applying to the Interior Design program must include all of the elements listed on the following pages in their portfolio. This applies for digital and hard copy submissions.

## a) 10-15 examples of your own work

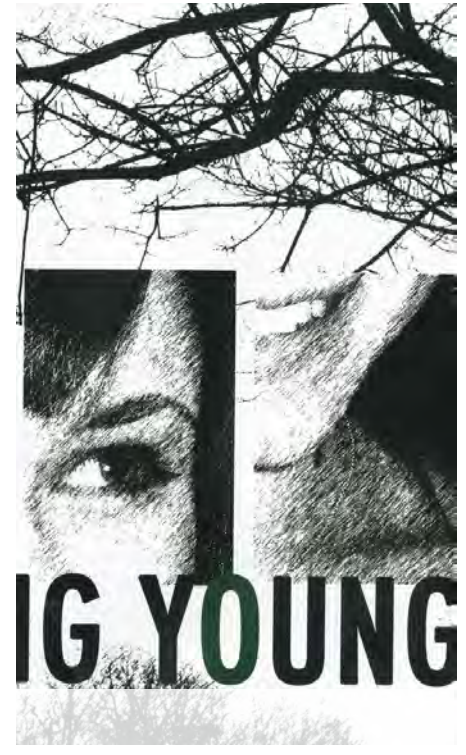
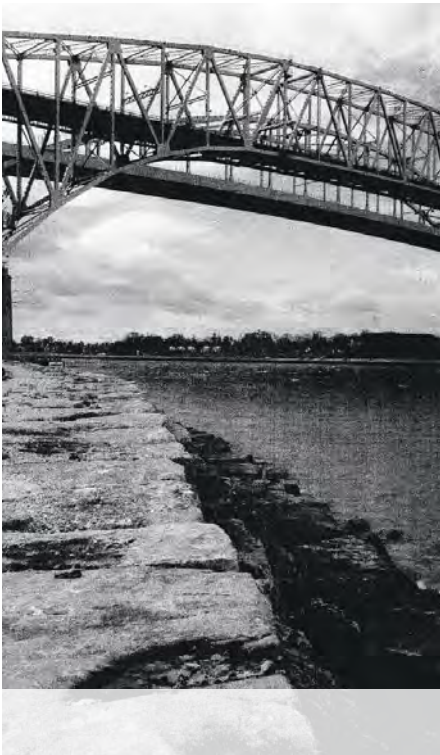
Choose your best work that features your wide range of skills.  
Some examples to include may be:

- Pencil and ink drawings
- Multimedia presentations
- Sketches of ongoing work showing your ideas, observations and imagination
- AutoCAD drawings
- Hand drafted architectural drawings
- Artistic Photography
- Graphic design
- 3D models

**PLEASE NOTE:** Each piece should be clearly labeled indicating the title and medium used.  
Any work that is 3-dimensional should be photographed.







## b) Completed Home Test

The Home Test is comprised of two components. Clearly identify the home test component when you are labelling and organizing your portfolio.

1. A sequence or series of separate elements depicting a journey/story told in seven stages. The journey could be any kind of journey (e.g. narrative, imaginary, fictional or literal). Explore your creativity and concept work. If an explanation of your journey/story helps situate your piece then please include.
2. A hand pencil sketch of an interior public space. Be sure to include what is seen in both the foreground and the background of the space. Please select a public space where you can sit and create this sketch such as a shopping mall, library, coffee shop, school, museum, art gallery, etc.

**No samples of the home test are shown as we want you to use your creativity and we are looking to see your own interpretation.**

## c) A short essay of 300-500 words

The essay is a required element of your portfolio presentation. It is to be approximately 300-500 words that describe your interest and knowledge of Interior Design as a profession. Introduce yourself and explain why you wish to become a professional designer and how you have been influenced.

Include any architectural/design influences, books, designers/architects (or their work), mentors who have influenced you, or any Interior Design projects that have inspired you. You might want to research on various Interior Design-related web sites such as ARIDO, IDC, IFI, CIDA or NCIDQ.

## How to present your work:

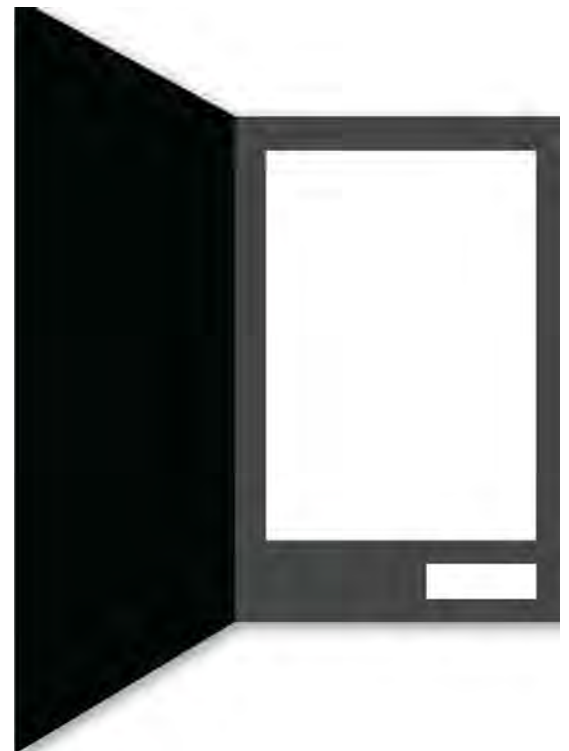
A well-organized, well-executed presentation is extremely important. It is your only method of communicating who you are to us. Your work can be submitted online as a PDF. The PDF submission will depend upon the size of the work being presented but should be no larger than 11" x 17".

Be sure to organize your work into a cohesive presentation, labelling each item. You should also label your work and include a very brief description if you think appropriate.

## When is the portfolio due?

**Portfolio submission date is April 30th.** After April 30th portfolios will be assessed as required until the program meets the maximum number of registrants.

Candidates can only be considered for acceptance once all admission requirements have been met.





## Where do I send my portfolio?

Your submission can be submitted online as a single PDF. Be sure to include your name, email address, telephone number and student number. Organize your work into a cohesive presentation.

### Electronic Portfolio Submission

Please label your pdf as “Interior Design Portfolio” and include your name.

Example: Interior Design Portfolio\_John.Smith.

Email your electronic portfolio to: **design@algonquincollege.com** in a single PDF document, and include your name, email address, telephone number and student number in the email.



## Bridging Courses:

Algonquin College is proud to offer a new opportunity for designers who wish to stay professionally competitive in the marketplace and/or are interested in pursuing graduate studies. This opportunity is particularly important because beginning January 1, 2015, a four-year bachelor's degree will be the minimum standard of accreditation for both intern and registered membership categories within the Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario (ARIDO).

If you already possess a 3-year advanced diploma in Interior Design and are looking to upgrade your current credential to an applied degree, we now offer a series of bridging courses which will enable graduates with this diploma to upgrade to a degree credential in Interior Design. Successful completion of these entirely online courses will enable you to then enter the Bachelor of Interior Design program with our Co-op work term at the end of the third year of study.

The online bridging courses cover areas of the curriculum which are not normally part of a diploma program and include topics such as: history and theory of design, sustainable issues, critical thinking and academic writing, social responsibility and cultural diversity in design.

For detailed information about the bridging program, please go to: <http://www.algonquincollege.com/mediaanddesign/program/bachelor-of-interior-design/bridging-program/>