

01 June 2022

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UNIVERSAL DESIGN INDEX SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Objective

1 This circular is to inform the industry on the introduction of the Universal Design index (UDi) self-assessment framework, which will be integrated with the Building Plan (BP) approval and Temporary Occupation Permit (TOP) / Certificate of Statutory Completion (CSC) application processes.

Background

2 As Singapore strives towards being an inclusive society and prepares for an ageing population, our built environment must be ready to support as many users to the greatest extent possible. More considerations need to be made for user groups who may have specific needs such as persons with disabilities, the elderly, families with young children and expectant or nursing mothers.

3 The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) has been promoting the adoption of Universal Design (UD) principles and incorporation of user-friendly features in buildings to better support the needs of different users. Over the years, BCA has accorded recognition to projects and project teams that had adopted a user-centric philosophy in their design, operations and maintenance through the BCA UD Mark certification scheme and the earlier UD Awards. More than 250 developments and 100 stakeholders were recognised through these awards.

Universal Design Index

4 To further expand the adoption of universal design to as many building projects as possible and to aid designers in incorporating user-friendly features upfront, a new UDi self-assessment framework will be introduced. The UDi framework will be integrated with the BP approval and TOP / CSC application processes⁽¹⁾ and will consist of a self-help UDi Checklist to enable Qualified Persons (QPs) and developers to, in relation to their projects:

⁽¹⁾ Exceptions apply. Refer to the UDi guide for projects that do not require submission of the UDi checklist.

- (a) learn about and consider user-friendly features that could be provided; and
- (b) obtain an indicative measure and rating of the level of user-friendliness.

5 A completed UDi Checklist is to be submitted together with a QP's application for BP approval and TOP/CSC. QPs and developers are however encouraged to refer to and fill in the UDi Checklist at the onset of design and consider the provision of user-friendly features as well as to set targets for levels of user-friendliness for their projects.

6 BCA has also released a UDi Guide to assist architects, designers and building owners in understanding the UDi's framework, procedures, and applicability. The guide provides explanatory notes and photograph examples to enhance awareness and understanding of the user-friendly features listed in the UDi Checklist. A copy of the guide can be downloaded from BCA's website (<https://go.gov.sg/bcaudi>).

Phasing out of UD Mark Certification Scheme

7 With the introduction of the UDi framework which allows for self-assessment, the BCA UD Mark certification scheme will be phased out. Projects which had made reference to the BCA UD Mark certification scheme as a benchmark for the level of user-friendliness can now adopt the UDi framework with its corresponding ratings.

UD Excellence Award

8 To spur the pursuit of exemplary UD implementation in buildings and innovations in user-friendly designs, outstanding projects will continue to be recognised with a new Universal Design Excellence Award (UDEA). For the pioneer batch of projects to be awarded in 2022, BCA will be providing guidance and assistance to existing UD Mark applicants⁽²⁾ on the adoption of the UDi scheme.

9 To promote greater awareness of UD and friendly buildings, updates and information related to the UDEA, UDi and UD ratings of buildings will be published on BCA's website on a regular basis for the public's information.

Implementation Timeline

10 All applicable projects which are first applying for BP approval, TOP or CSC on or after 1 September 2022 will be required to complete and submit the UDi Checklist as part of their application for BP and TOP/CSC.

11 QPs can submit the completed UDi Checklist at <https://go.gov.sg/bcaudi-sub> and attach the acknowledgement of the submitted UDi Checklist as part of their BP approval and TOP/CSC application.

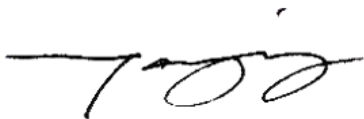
⁽²⁾ Existing UD Mark applicants with projects completed before 1 June 2022.

For Clarification

12 A set of Frequently Asked Questions is shared on our website (<https://go.gov.sg/bcaudi-faq>).

13 We would appreciate if you could convey the contents of this circular to members of your organisation. For clarifications, please contact us through BCA's Online Feedback Form at <https://www.bca.gov.sg/feedbackform/>

Yours faithfully



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