

Architects Act 2003 Information Sheet ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION

The NSW Architects Registration Board is the statutory authority established by the Government to administer the NSW Architects Act.

The use of the title “architect” is strictly regulated. It is reserved by law in NSW as well as with other States and Territories in Australia and in many countries overseas that only people who are registered as architects may use the title “architect”, or descriptions such as “architectural” which derive from it.

Section 9 of the NSW Architects Act 2003 sets out the general qualifications and requirements for registration in this State and the criteria for admission to the Register of Architects which it maintains.

Registration also compels architects to act professionally and ethically. Architects are bound by the NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct embodied in the Regulations under the Architects Act.

This information sheet sets out the conditions and procedures for the AACA Architectural Practice Examination, which is accepted by the Board as the final requirement for registration.

The content contained in this Information Sheet is provided for information purposes only. It is based upon the best information available at the date of issue and is subject to change without notice.

The NSW Architects Registration Board does not accept any liability to any person for the information or the use of this information. Any person requiring an interpretation of the meaning of the Architects Act or Regulations should seek their own advice from a legal practitioner.

NSW Register of Architects

Architects are skilled and experienced professionals. In order to be registered as architects in NSW, they must have a university qualification in architecture, or other qualification that the Board deems equivalent. This may include an approved overseas academic qualification or successful completion of assessment of relevant experience.

In addition to holding an approved academic qualification, an individual must have at least two years approved experience equating to 3300 hours, one year of which must be in Australia, pass the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia’s Architectural Practice Examination (APE) conducted by the Board and, upon successful completion of the APE, apply to the Board to be enrolled on the Register of Architects.

Only persons registered can use the title “architect”. Registration is renewed annually. Each year upon renewal, architects receive a statement of currency that confirms their registration in NSW.

The Board publishes the NSW Register of Architects and List of Architect Corporations and Firms. The registration status of an individual can be checked by on the Board’s website www.architects.nsw.gov.au or by contacting the Board’s office. The full name of the registered person, the suburb of the registered address and registration number are published.

Mutual Recognition Act (MRA)

Architects who are currently registered in another State or Territory in Australia are eligible to apply for registration as in New South Wales under the terms of the Mutual Recognition Act (MRA). Applicants are required to submit a completed application form, a certification from the Registrar of a State Registration Board where a person is currently registered as an architect, and the payment of the prescribed enrolment fee.

Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement (TTMRA)

Under the terms of the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement, architects registered in New Zealand are eligible to apply for registration as architects in New South Wales. Applicants are required to submit a completed application form, present the current Practising Certificate from NZRAB and pay a registration fee. Additional experience and examination are not required.

Temporary Registration of Overseas Architects

The Board may register an individual from overseas, not normally a resident of NSW, who intends to practise in NSW for a limited period of time.

Applications for temporary registration must include details of architectural education, registration status from the country of origin and from other registration jurisdiction overseas; and a record of professional employment - in order to assure the NSW Architects Registration Board that the applicant is capable of practising architecture in the NSW with the same level of competence and skills expected of architects with full registration.

APEC Architect

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a cooperative association between 21 regional economies, founded to promote economic and technical cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. APEC builds on WTO General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) principles for the progressive liberalisation of trade in services through the reduction of regulatory restrictions, leading to reciprocal agreements between member economies where appropriate.

The APEC Architect framework is a direct response to these commitments.

Australia, along with a number of other APEC member economies, has agreed to participate in the APEC Architect framework. The aim of the framework is to facilitate the access of APEC Architects to independent practice within the Region. Those economies who are participating in the framework are Australia, Canada, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and United States of America.

A Central Council has been established by the participating economies. Each participating economy has established a Monitoring Committee to take responsibility for administration of the APEC Architect framework in that economy.

The APEC Architect from another economy is required to complete the Supplementary Assessment Process (SAP) conducted by the Board.

Enquiries about the SAP should be directed to AACA.

Non-Practising Status

Architects who have been on the Register at any time may choose to change their status to non-practising if they have retired from practice or are not practising architecture in NSW for a foreseeable future.

Individuals whose names were removed from the Register may apply to be reinstated in the non-practising category by applying to the Board and paying an annual fee for this category.

Architects who are currently on the Register but wish to change their status from practising to non-practising should do so at the annual renewal time. Those who become non-practising architects are unable to offer architectural services of any kind whilst in this status.

Requirements for Registration as an Architect in NSW

- Approved academic qualification in architecture, or equivalent
- Approved period of practical experience
- Successful completion of the AACA Architectural Practice Examination (APE)

Registration and enrolment fees are payable upon application. Contact the Board's office for advice on required fees.

Qualifications in Architecture

Prescribed Qualifications

Master of Architecture

- University of Newcastle,
- University of New South Wales
- University of Sydney
- University of Technology, Sydney

The Bachelor of Architecture qualification awarded before December 2008 is also acceptable.

Other Approved Qualifications

The Board recognises accredited qualifications in architecture from an Australian school of architecture, New Zealand, Master of Architecture from the National University of Singapore obtained from July 1999 and Master of Architecture from the University of Hong Kong from December 2010.

Overseas Qualifications

Overseas qualification in architecture is assessed and certified by AACA as being equivalent to a currently accredited qualification in architecture, through the Assessment of Overseas Registered Architects Stage 2 Final Assessment. Another accreditation program in line with this is the Overseas Qualifications Assessment.

Information about accreditation of overseas qualifications is available from AACA website

<http://www.aaca.org.au/overseas-qualifications-assessment/>

National Program of Assessment (NPrA)

Successful completion of the NPrA is accepted by the Board for entry to the Architectural Practice Examination.

<http://www.aaca.org.au/national-program-of-assessment-npra/>

Built Work Program of Assessment (BWPrA)

Successful completion of the BWPrA is accepted for entry to the Architectural Practice Examination.

Download from the Board's website - Information Sheet for the BWPrA that sets out the details of the Program.

The Examination

The AACA Architectural Practice Examination (APE) is a nationally consistent competency based assessment process. All candidates seeking registration as an architect in Australia are required to successfully complete the APE unless exempted through an eligible overseas registration.

The APE is a three part process including completion of a logbook, a written paper and an interview with architect practitioners. All three parts must be completed sequentially.

The APE, developed and maintained by the [AACA](#) has been adopted by all Australian state and territory architects registration boards as the national examination in Architectural practice.

The purpose of the APE is to ensure that persons applying to be admitted to a Register of Architects have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the practice of architecture in Australia and a capacity to exercise professional skill.

APE candidates are assessed against relevant components of the National Standard of Competency for Architects including applicable Knowledge Domains. This includes most of the performance criteria from the Design Unit of Competency and all performance criteria from the Documentation, Project Delivery and Practice Management Units of Competency. These competencies reflect the breadth of abilities expected of an architect in independent practice. Some aspects of design competencies are not tested as they are covered in accredited architectural programs which are subject to a five yearly program accreditation review that requires universities to provide evidence that the specified performance criteria from the National Standard of Competency for Architects are integrated within the curriculum and appropriately assessed in student work.

Candidates who have met the requirements of all three parts of the APE may apply for registration to the [Architect registration board in any State or Territory](#).

The APE consists of three parts:

- Part 1 - Assessment of Eligibility for Admission
- Part 2 - National Examination Paper
- Part 3 - Examination by Interview

The NSW Board conducts two examination sessions each year: February to May and July to October.

Information Session

The Board holds a free information session and is usually held in January each year.

Significant changes to the examination process are constantly introduced by AACA. Prospective candidates are encouraged to attend these sessions to obtain accurate information regarding the APE.

Book a seat by email to mail@architects.nsw.gov.au

Important

From January 2017 only the new Logbooks are accepted. All assessments will be based on the new National Standard of Competency for Architects. Transition period for APE session where old logbooks were allowed has finished. From January 2017 only new logbooks will be considered.

Read the National Standard of Competency for Architects and the Procedures for AACA APE from <http://www.aaca.org.au/the-national-standard-of-competency-for-architects/>

Online Application Facility

A new online facility was introduced to allow applicants for the Examination to upload their application, payment and documents. Read the guide in <http://www.architects.nsw.gov.au/how-to-apply-online>

We encourage applicants to use this facility.

Required Documents

The following submissions are to be submitted in PDF and arranged as follows

Document #1:

- Logbook Identification Form with photograph
- Mandatory Competency Summary (V.4 Jan 2016)
- Summary Sheets arranged as Executive, Participant and Observer (do not include blank summary sheets)
- Statement of Practical Experience (maximum 2,000 words; prescribed format)

Document #2:

- Log Sheets (V.4 Jan 2016)
- Copy of Degree Testamur (show full face of the Testamur), or a letter from the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia confirming accreditation or completion of the NPrA
- Statutory Declaration (signed by a Justice of the Peace or a Legal Practitioner)





Statement of Practical Experience

The Statement of Practical Experience should present a chronological record of experience, preferably those gained in the two years immediately preceding the application.

It should contain the name of the candidate and identify relevant employers supervising architects.

The Statement must not be over 2,000 words, typewritten on A4 paper, in portrait format. If a person is self-employed, the Statement may be expanded to 3,000 words to provide further details of work gained in that capacity.

The Statement must show the candidate's role and level of responsibility in a narrative form, demonstrating activities and relating them to the Prescribed Elements of Competency to allow Examiners to assess the candidate's experience and involvement in scopes of work, costs, areas and nature of projects. It should be written in plain English. Graphic and numerical charts may be included but are not necessary.

Assessment of Eligibility (APE Part 1)

The objective of Part 1 is to determine eligibility for admission to the APE in terms of education, prescribed experience and relevant documentation. Acceptance in Part 1 does not imply that the applicant's experience is adequate to pass the examination. A Pass in Part 1 is a condition of admission to Part 2.

Approved Practical Experience in Architecture

The acceptable periods of experience are:

- a) a minimum of two years' practical experience or 3,300 hours. One year experience must be subsequent to successful completion of an approved academic qualification in architecture and must be undertaken in Australia.

NPrA and BWPrA successful candidates can apply for the APE straight after completion of the Program.

- b) a minimum of two years' experience that is in a self-employed capacity must be all in Executive level and should range over all mandatory competencies. The Statement of Practical Experience can be expanded to a maximum of 3,000 words.

A Statutory Declaration signed by a Justice of the Peace (JP) to confirm that the authenticity of the record of experience and documents submitted for the Examination.

Prescribed Performance Criteria for Eligibility to the APE

Candidates are required to have experience in each of the 15 Performance Criteria listed below:

Element 1.2

Establishment, analysis and evaluation of client project requirements and objectives

Element 1.4

Identification of factors that may impact on client project requirements and objectives

Element 2.1

Identification, analysis and integration of information relevant to siting of project

Element 2.2

Application of principles controlling planning, development and design for the project site

Element 3.4

Design response incorporates assessment of relevant legislation, codes and industry standards

Element 5.3

Evaluation and integration of regulatory requirements

Element 6.1

Identification and adoption of a strategy, program and process of documentation integrated through all project stages to enable project delivery

Element 6.2

Continuing coordination and integration of information and project material from relevant consultants, specialists and suppliers

Element 6.3

Incorporation of the project requirements and objectives in accordance with Project Brief and approved Detailed Design

Element 6.4

Timely completion and communication of accurate and comprehensible documents that will include, as required, drawings, models, specifications, schedules and other relevant modes of information

Element 6.8

Project documentation is in accordance with, and appropriate to, the project contract and project procurement procedure

Element 7.1

Identification of available procurement methods and assessment of relevance and application to the project

Element 8.3

Identification and application of the process and administration systems needed to fulfil all obligations under project contract

Element 8.4

Construction progress and quality is systematically reviewed and monitored as required under the contract provisions

Element 8.5

Identification and application of all relevant processes required for certification of monetary claims, project variations, extensions of time, project instructions or other administrative responsibilities under the contract provisions

Levels of Experience

- Executive – Experience gained as the principal decision-maker on a project
- Participant – Experience gained as a team member or operative working under the instruction or supervision of a responsible person
- Observer – Experience gained by careful observation of procedures and practices carried out by others

AACA Log Book

The AACA log book holds a record of varying levels of experience relating to the seven mandatory competencies in the practice of architecture.

The hours and levels of experience required across the Mandatory Elements of Competency

- A minimum of 40 hours of experience in each of the following mandatory Performance Criteria (PCs 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.4, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.8, 7.1, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 - of the new National Standard of Competency for Architects)
- At least 40 hours of architectural experience at *Executive Level* in each of at least five (5) of the 15 Prescribed Performance Criteria
- A maximum of 160 hours of Observer level in each of the Prescribed Performance Criteria 1.2, 7.1, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5.
- All logged experience that has been gained in a self-employed capacity must be at Executive level.

National Examination Paper (APE Part 2)

The object of the National Examination Paper (NEP) is to provide a reliable and valid test of knowledge and application of the National Standard of Competency for Architects.

The National Examination Paper is a one-hour 'closed book' scenario style paper. It is conducted by all registration boards twice a year.

Successful completion of the NEP is required for admission to Part 3 of the APE.

Candidates will be notified in writing of the result ('successful' or 'unsuccessful') generally within three (3) weeks of sitting the NEP.

If unsuccessful in the NEP, advice is given listing the areas of weakness against the NSCA.

Unsuccessful candidates may re-apply at the next or any subsequent NEP without being required to resubmit for Part 1, provided they are sitting within 2 years from the date initial application.

AACA does not make copies of Papers or Candidates' Answer Sheets after they are marked

Candidates may only undertake Part 2 in the same jurisdiction in which they submitted for Part 1. An updated Logbook and a revised Statement of Practical Experience evidencing experience gained subsequent to the previous Part 2 must be provided along with a Statutory Declaration attesting to the accuracy of all information in the documentation submitted.

Candidates who do not re-sit within 2 years from the date of first notification of being unsuccessful in Part 2 must apply for Part 1 and 2 again in any Australian registration jurisdiction.

Examination by Interview (APE Part 3)

The objective of the Examination by Interview is to confirm that the Candidate has demonstrated adequate knowledge and/or experience of the National Standard of Competency for Architects sufficient to satisfy the requirements for registration.

Examination by interview is conducted by two examiners from the NSW Examination Panel.

Examiners assess the knowledge and experience of a candidate and form an overall view of the candidate's experience and ability to deal with practice issues in a mature professional manner. The duration of the interview is forty-five minutes to one hour.

If successful in Part 3, the Board will invite the candidate to apply for registration.

If unsuccessful in Part 3, the candidate will be advised in a letter from the Board listing the areas of competency where weaknesses have been identified.

Candidates can re-apply for Part 3 at a subsequent session but application must be within two-years from successful completion of Part 2.

NSW
Architects Registration Board
L2, 156 Gloucester Street
Sydney NSW 2000

T. +61 2 9241 4033 / F. +61 2 9241 6144
mail@architects.nsw.gov.au / www.architects.nsw.gov.au
ABN 63-092-097-847

Prescribed Fees

Parts 1 & 2 - \$450

If a candidate is not eligible for admission to the APE, \$230 will be refunded and submissions will be returned.

There is no refund if candidate is unsuccessful in Part 2 (NEP).

NEP re-sitting fee- \$230

The candidate must apply within 12 months from advice of unsuccessful initial NEP

Part 3 - \$395

Unsuccessful candidates can apply to re-sit Part 3 without having to sit the NEP in any session within two years of successful completion of Part 2.

Portability of Results

Examination results are released within 10-15 working days.

Successful APE results are accepted by any State or Territory and New Zealand registration boards.

Grievances and Appeals

A grievance can be submitted if a candidate believes that due process was not observed resulting in an unsuccessful NEP.

A candidate can lodge grievance within 21 calendar days from the date of notification of unsuccessful result for Part 3. The grievance letter must be addressed to the NSW State Convenor c/- the Board.

Counselling is not available to candidates.

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA)

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) is a national organisation comprising representatives from all States and Territories registration boards.

The AACA promotes national standard for registration of architects throughout Australia and is responsible for the assessment of overseas qualifications in architecture.

In pursuance of this function, AACA is the recognised authority in the assessment of qualifications; it is the conducting authority for the architectural practice examination; and it negotiates international agreements with similar authorities overseas.

Registration boards conduct examinations in their jurisdictions but all decisions of content and policy rest with the AACA. Acceptance of AACA standards by all Australian Boards facilitates the portability of registration of architects around Australia and with other countries where registration is a requirement.

AACA Publications

The National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA)

The NSCA is the standard required for registration as an architect in Australia.

Download the National Standard of Competency for Architects and the Procedures for AACA APE from <http://www.aaca.org.au/the-national-standard-of-competency-for-architects/>

Procedures for Candidates

This booklet contains information about the Review of Academic Equivalence (RAE), the National Program of Assessment (NPrA) and the Architectural Practice Examination (APE).

Reference Guide for APE Candidates

This booklet provides reference information for intending APE Candidates for matters which may be referred to by the Examiners in conducting the APE. Reference is made to Advisory notes produced by the RAI A Practice Services.

Logbook Information and Log Sheets

These can be downloaded from AACA's website free of charge

Sample Paper (NEP)

Download from the AACA website www.aaca.org.au

Other References

The NSW Architects Act 2003
The NSW Architects Regulation 2004
The NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct

These can be downloaded from the www.architects.nsw.gov.au/publications

Contacts

NSW Architects Registration Board

Level 2, 156 Gloucester Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone 61 2 9241 4033
mail@architects.nsw.gov.au
www.architects.nsw.gov.au

Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA)

PO Box A275
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

Telephone 61 2 8042 8930
mail@aaca.org.au
www.aaca.org.au

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