

NSW ARB Policy

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

May 2018

NSW Architects' Code of Professional Conduct

The NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct requires architects to undertake appropriate continuing professional development (CPD).

Part 5, Section 16 of the Code states that architects must demonstrate to the Board that they have taken all reasonable steps each year to maintain and improve their skills and knowledge, and demonstrate to the Board that they have done so.

The intention of CPD is that an architect should remain current in her/his understanding of codes, standards, design, documentation, project delivery, and practice management, as required to provide architectural services in a competent manner.

Framework for continuing professional development

Continuing professional development should:

- Relate to practice as an architect.
- Be additional to activities already undertaken in the normal course of the architect's practice or employment.

Architects should undertake a minimum of 20 hours of continuing professional development each year. Hours may not be 'rolled over' from one year to the next.

The minimum commitment of 20 hours is divided into two categories:

- Informal self-directed and professional activities.
- Formal structured activity.

At least 10 hours must be in the Formal category.

An effective continuing professional development regime for architects should have as its basis the National Standard of Competency Standards for Architects which prescribes standards in four units:

- Design
- Documentation
- Project Delivery
- Practice Management

Each of these units is further divided into a detailed set of 11 Elements of architectural practice, and 70 detailed Performance Criteria. Continuing professional development activities should be contained within one or more of these units and address the relevant element and performance criteria. Activities in each year should relate to a minimum of two competency units listed above. A summary of the Standard can be downloaded from the Board's website, or from the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia's website: www.aaca.org.au

Continuing professional development activities

The requirement to undertake continuing professional development should be seen as an opportunity to consider possible activities in light of individual career development needs, personal objectives and employment needs.

Architects will determine for themselves activities that are appropriate to their individual needs, subject to the requirement that the activity relates to the normal provision of architectural services and is within the framework described by the National Standard of Competency for Architects.

Formal Category

Structured courses and learning (minimum of 10 hours).

A *formal* CPD activity relates to practice as an architect and is in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of practice or employment. In formal CPD activities:

- New knowledge and skills are being acquired or being shared with peers.
- Learning outcomes must be stated.
- An assessment activity must be included or there must be significant interaction between the presenter and the learner.
- Presenters must have appropriate academic, technical or practical expertise.

Formal activities may fall under four broad categories : accredited courses; activities that include assessment; activities with significant interaction between the presenter and the learner; and activities relating to the preparation and facilitation of CPD activities and authorship of published articles, books, paper; participation in Architects' Learning Groups.

A maximum of 5 hours per registration year may be allocated for:

- Preparing CPD activities.
- Preparing or coordinating teaching and academic activity at a tertiary level.
- Preparing a peer-reviewed article or publication.

Informal Category

Self-directed study and professional activities (minimum of 10 hours)

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Self-directed study of practice notes, technical magazines, podcasts.
- Talks and presentations by peers.
- Structured visits to buildings and exhibitions.
- Design workshops, lectures and seminars.
- Authorship of published articles/books/papers etc.
- Involvement in mentoring programs.
- Participation in professional practice committees and advisory groups - through professional associations, regulatory authorities, government bodies such as Standards Australia.
- Raising awareness of architecture in primary and secondary schools.

A maximum of two hours may be allocated to any one activity in the Informal category for the purpose of meeting requirements of the Code.

Providers of CPD

The Board does not accredit providers. Architects should assess published information about the course structure, the reputation of the provider, the quality of the product and the relevance of the subject matter to determine if a particular activity is appropriate to their needs, and whether it constitutes Informal or Formal activity.

Providers of appropriate continuing professional development activities include the Australian Institute of Architects, Architects Learning Groups, universities, professional and business associations and networks, and employers.

Monitoring compliance and record keeping

Architects are required to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable steps to maintain and improve the skills necessary for the provision of architectural services that they normally provide when they complete their annual application for renewal of registration.

Architects are required to upload evidence of their CPD activity during their annual renewal of registration. Architects should keep records of their activities for at least five years. Records should include date, activity, category of activity ie. Formal or Informal, hours claimed.

At the annual renewal period, architects will declare that they have taken all reasonable steps in the previous registration year to maintain and improve the skills and knowledge necessary for the provision of architectural services they normally provide.

In investigating complaints concerning professional conduct, the architect may be required to produce evidence of participation in appropriate continuing professional development for the previous 5 years.

CPD Audit

An audit of CPD is carried out annually on 5% of all practicing architects, to be randomly selected by algorithm, and on the basis of risk assessment will also include:

- Architects who transferred, in the registration year, from non-practicing to practicing
- Architects who re-register after September of each registration year
- architects who have been restored to the Register after 5+ years, whom, upon discretion of the Registrar, may be required to report on CPD activities
- architects who are subject of complaints investigations
- architects who are subject of disciplinary actions whom, upon discretion of the Board is required to undertake and report on CPD activities
- architects who fail to provide evidence of CPD activities by 1 September of the year in which they are required to report

Exemptions

To comply with the Code, architects should undertake 20 hours total CPD - 10 hours of which should be formal activities.

Architects registered in the non-practicing category, and architects residing and practicing overseas are exempt from the requirement to undertake continuing professional education.

Architects who work part-time are not exempt from this requirement.

Where an architect has not met the minimum hours required, the Board may take into account the individual circumstances of an architect when considering whether all reasonable steps have been taken to meet their CPD obligations. Matters that may be taken into consideration include:

- has the architect or his/her immediate family member suffered serious illness or some other misadventure?
- has the architect been overseas for a considerable part of the year (at least 3 months)?
- has the architect been on parental leave during the registration year?
- Has the architect been included on the Register part way through the year?
- other exceptional circumstances.

In these situations, or if you have only been registered for a part of the year, a pro-rata commitment will be expected.

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