Factsheet

ARCHITECTS' LEARNING GROUPS

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for NSW Architects

Architects should undertake a minimum of 20 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD activity.

From 1 July 2022, at least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD that architects complete each year must address mandatory topics. Architects must complete at least 1 hour annually for each of the following mandatory topics:

1. **Understanding and respecting Country**
2. **Sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon**
3. **National Construction Code**

For more information about NSW CPD requirements for architects, refer to the Factsheet on Continuing Professional Development.

Architects' Learning Groups

Architects' Learning Groups are recognised by the Board to support the peer-to-peer education of NSW architects, which is recognised as an effective mechanism for maintaining and improving knowledge and skills in the dynamic environment of professional services. The aim is to provide opportunities for architects to undertake Formal CPD activities within their own peer network. An Architects' Learning Group comprises architects who have formed a group for the purpose of peer education. If the Group follows the guidelines below, participants can claim Formal CPD hours.

Architects' Learning Groups are suited to any network or group of architects that intend to meet regularly to exchange peer learning, or to share evidence or data intended to maintain and improve the knowledge and skills they need to practice as an architect.

A maximum 3 hours Formal CPD per year may be claimed for preparing and presenting Learning Sessions. A maximum 10 hrs Formal CPD per year may be claimed for participating in Learning Sessions.

Step One:
Identify the architect members of your Architects' Learning Group

Participation in an Architects' Learning Group is voluntary, and groups are organised by the architect members themselves. Groups may be formed based on location, workplace, or specific interests.

1.1 Identify the architect members of your group and agree who will be the administering architect

1.2 The administering architect completes the *Architects' Learning Group Registration* (Form 12) and submits it to the Board. Download Form 12 here

1.3 The Administering Architect manages the group membership and advises the Board of any changes

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Step Two:
Organise a program of Learning Sessions throughout the year

Once your group is established you should decide how many times per year you will meet. The number of Learning Sessions you organise is entirely up to you. If an Architects' Learning Group comprises 5 architects, the group may decide to run 5 Learning Sessions so that each member gets a turn to prepare and present their own session.

2.1 Organise a program of dates and times for your Learning Sessions throughout the year

2.2 Identify a range of desirable topics that your group thinks are suitable for strategically developing the knowledge and skills of the members

2.3 Identify who will be responsible for preparing and presenting each of the Learning Sessions

Each presenter is responsible for keeping a record of the planning and presentation for their Learning Session – *refer Step Four below*.

Step Three:
Plan each Learning Session

All Learning Sessions delivered through the Architects' Learning Group count as Formal CPD, provided each presenter complies with the requirements below:

3.1 Prepare an outline of 2-3 learning outcomes proposed for the Learning Session. Consider what changes in professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or performance might be expected as an outcome of the other group members participating in your Learning Session

3.2 Map the learning outcomes to 1-2 relevant Units of Competency and relevant Performance Criteria from the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (2021 NSCA). CPD activities in each year should relate to a minimum of 2 of the 4 Units of Competency and a range of relevant Performance Criteria from the 2021 NSCA

3.3 Decide on a format for your Learning Session that will optimise peer-to-peer learning between the group members. For example, you might give a presentation or run a seminar; or you could involve participants in case studies or demonstrations. Participants could be asked to contribute to discussions with opportunities for questions and answers; or to complete in-house training; etc. You might also ask participants to undertake preparatory work for the Learning Session, such as pre-reading articles, collecting data, or pondering issues to be addressed.

To qualify as Formal CPD the Learning Session must either incorporate a structured assessment task to genuinely test participants' understanding of the content or a significant interaction between the presenter and the participants.

Assessment *may take a variety of forms, for example a pop-quiz, test, self-check questions and answers, or a paper or report submitted after the activity. Participants must receive feedback on their performance in the assessment task so that they understand where their understanding of content may still be lacking.*

Significant interaction *is direct communication between the presenter and participants, requiring participants to complete individual or group tasks or actively participate in exercises, case studies,*

workshops, role-plays, discussions and so on. The number of participants in interactive activities should generally be limited to a maximum of 10-20 architects to allow for an appropriate level of peer-to-peer learning and interaction between the presenter and participants.

Step Four:
Record your participation in the Architects' Learning Group

Each Architects' Learning Group will be registered with the Board - *refer Step One above*. Each architect member of the Group will record their participation in the **My CPD** portal in [My Account](#).

4.1 Record your participation in Learning Sessions in **My CPD**. If the Learning Session is 1 hour, the following Formal CPD can be claimed:

Presenter - 3 hours of Formal CPD activity
(= 2 hours preparation time plus 1 hour for presenting/participating in the peer-to-peer environment of the Learning Session). *A maximum 3 hrs Formal CPD per year may be claimed for preparing and presenting Learning Sessions*

Participants - 1 hour of Formal CPD activity for each 1 hour Learning Session attended. *A maximum 10 hrs Formal CPD per year may claimed for participating in Learning Sessions*

4.2 The presenter keeps a record of the planning and presentation for their Learning Session

Presenter and participants must upload to **My CPD** the supporting evidence to substantiate completion of the activity. This evidence will be reviewed by the Board if you are the subject of a CPD compliance audit. You must keep complete records of your CPD activities for at least 7 years.

If you have any questions about Architects' Learning Groups or CPD, please contact the NSW Architects Registration Board.

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