

## Factsheet

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# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

**From 1 July 2022 the NSW Architects Registration Board introduced changes to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements for NSW architects. This includes new mandatory content requirements for Formal CPD, changes to when and how often CPD reporting is required, and how CPD is to be recorded. Transition arrangements are detailed on pages 8-10.**

Clause 16 of the [NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct](#) (the Code) requires that architects must report to the NSW Architects Registration Board (the Board) that they have taken all reasonable steps to maintain and improve the skills and knowledge necessary for the provision of the architectural services they normally provide. Architects who fail to comply with CPD requirements may be removed from the Register pursuant to [section 24\(2\)\(g\)](#) of the [Architects Act 2003](#) (the Act), or may be found guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct pursuant to [section 43\(4\)](#) of the Act.

### What are you required to report?

**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.** CPD reporting is retrospective. You are required to report the CPD activities you completed during your last registration term at your next renewal.

### New mandatory topics for Formal CPD from 1 July 2022

**From 1 July 2022, at least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address mandatory topics. You 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**

All architects are required to comply with this new requirement, irrespective of the nature of the architectural services they normally provide. This will assist the NSW profession to address critical knowledge gaps and build capacity in areas required by the [2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects](#).

### 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA)

An effective CPD regime for architects should have as its basis the [2021 NSCA](#). In addition to covering the mandatory topics explained above, your CPD activities each year should relate to a minimum of 2 of the 4 Units of Competency from the [2021 NSCA](#):

- Practice management and professional conduct
- Project initiation and conceptual design
- Detailed design and construction documentation
- Design delivery and construction phase services.

The Units of Competency are populated by a total of 60 Performance Criteria that describe discrete aspects of required knowledge and skills involved in architectural practice. You should explore a range of relevant Units of Competency and Performance Criteria in your CPD activities to strategically develop your knowledge and skills relevant to your career development needs, personal objectives and demands of your practice.

## When is your CPD report due and how often do you need to report?

**Your CPD report is due at the time of your registration renewal and is submitted as part of the renewal process.** Currently, 90% of architects have a registration renewal date of 30 June. For these architects, CPD reporting is due in the month of June. However, other architects who first registered in NSW after 1 July 2019, or were reinstated to the NSW Register of Architects after 1 July 2019, may have a different renewal date that falls on the anniversary of the date of their initial registration or reinstatement. For these architects, CPD reporting is due in the month preceding the renewal date.

Login to [My Account](#) to confirm your renewal date.

**If you have selected a 1 year registration term, you will continue to report your CPD activities annually. If you have selected a 3 or 5 year registration term you will only be required to report your CPD activities at the end of the registration term. In other words, you will report CPD compliance on a 3- or 5-yearly basis.** Nevertheless, you are still required to meet the minimum annual CPD requirements and to regularly complete CPD activities.

## How do you record and track CPD?

**You should progressively record CPD activities as you complete them in the My CPD portal in [My Account](#).** For each activity, you should record the date, activity name/description, provider name, relevant Unit(s) of Competency and Performance Criteria, category of activity (ie. Formal or Informal), and number of hours claimed for the activity. The **My CPD** portal will track your progress and will send you reminders if you are not meeting the annual milestones for CPD compliance.

**A minimum of 20 hours of CPD is required each year, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD activity. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1.**

The ARB OPEN App is no longer available. From 1 July 2022, the pdf FORM 05 CPD Activity Record is no longer accepted for CPD reporting. You must report in the **My CPD** portal in [My Account](#).

## How do you submit your CPD report?

**Your CPD report is submitted as part of the registration renewal process.** The renewal portal will provide you with a summary of your CPD hours as recorded in **My CPD** and will state whether you have met, or not met, the CPD requirements. You will also be prompted to make a declaration that you have, or have not, complied with the CPD requirements for your last registration term. Once you have completed your registration renewal, you will find that your CPD for the last registration term has been automatically rolled over to an archive folder in **My CPD** (where it remains in perpetuity).

## When CPD requirements are met

If you have been correctly recording your CPD in **My CPD** portal and you have complied with the minimum CPD hours for your registration term, the renewal portal should state that you have met the CPD requirements. You will be able to tick-a-box to declare that you have complied with the minimum CPD hours for your registration term and will proceed to the next step of the renewal process. There is nothing further you need to do or upload to submit your CPD report.

## When CPD requirements are not met

If you have not recorded sufficient hours to comply with the minimum CPD hours for your registration term in **My CPD** the renewal portal will state that you have not met the CPD requirements. You will be given several tick-a-box options, allowing you to:

1. Exit the renewal portal and record more CPD hours in the My CPD portal in [My Account](#) before you continue with your registration renewal, or
2. Request a reduction in your required CPD hours (by uploading a letter outlining your circumstances with supporting documentation), or
3. Request an exemption from the CPD requirements (by uploading a letter outlining your circumstances with supporting documentation), or
4. Declare that you have not complied with the minimum CPD hours for your registration term. You will be required to upload a letter outlining your circumstances with supporting documentation.

*\*Note that architects who fail to comply with annual CPD requirements may be removed from the Register pursuant to [section 24\(2\)\(g\)](#) of the Act, or may be found guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct pursuant to [section 43\(4\)](#) of the Act.*

## Record keeping and supporting evidence

For all Formal CPD activities you record, you must also upload to **My CPD** in [My Account](#) the supporting evidence to substantiate your 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.

### For provider-delivered CPD, the following evidence is typically required:

- A certificate of completion for every Formal CPD activity as proof of attendance. The certificate must include the participant's name and registration number, provider name, date, activity name/description, relevant Units of Competency / Performance Criteria from the [2021 NSCA](#), category of activity (ie. Formal or Informal), and number of contact hours for the activity. *Note that receipts for payment are not acceptable in lieu of a certificate of completion.*
- Evidence of the completion of a structured assessment task that has genuinely tested participants' understanding of content; or evidence that the activity was structured to include significant interaction between the presenter and the participant (eg. personal notes taken during the activity, or a photograph of work produced).

### Evidence for other types of Formal CPD activities may include as you consider relevant:

- Comprehensive personal handwritten or typewritten notes made during your participation in the CPD activity
- Evidence of preparation and delivery of CPD activities, such as a pdf of your slide deck, your speaker's notes, and/or your supporting research
- Evidence of teaching, such as the unit outline with your name as unit coordinator, lecture program, summary of unit content, intended learning outcomes, and/or relevant research
- Digital copies of publications you have authored.

**For Architects Learning Groups CPD, the following evidence is typically required:**

- If you are the presenter, you should provide evidence of preparation and delivery of the Learning Session
- If you are a participant, you should provide evidence you consider relevant, such as comprehensive personal notes or other evidence of participation.

## CPD compliance audits

Every year architects are randomly selected by the Board for a CPD compliance audit. The number of architects selected is proportionally adjusted, based on the duration of the registration term:

- 1-year term = 5% architects audited
- 3-year term = 15% architects audited
- 5-year term = 25% architects audited.

If you are subject to a CPD compliance audit you may be required to submit additional supporting evidence for the Formal CPD activities you have reported for your last registration term. You will not be notified that you have been selected for a CPD compliance audit unless the Board requires more information from you or considers that you may not have complied with CPD requirements.

Where an architect is not able to satisfy the Board that they have met their CPD obligations and where it is the Board's view that no extenuating circumstances apply, the architect may be removed from the Register pursuant to [section 24\(2\)\(g\)](#) of the Act, or may be found guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct pursuant to [section 43\(4\)](#) of the Act.

An architect who has been removed from the Register for failing to comply with CPD requirements is not eligible for a refund of registration fees. The architect may apply for re-registration at any time. However, prior to having their registration restored, the architect is required to provide evidence that since their removal from the Register, they have undertaken a minimum of 20 hours of CPD, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD activity, or alternatively, provide details of any extenuating circumstances since their removal from the Register that may have prevented them from doing so.

## Exemptions from CPD requirements

- Architects registered in the Non-Practising category are exempt from CPD requirements.
- Architects living overseas and/or only providing architectural services overseas are exempt from CPD requirements.
- Architects working in NSW under Automatic Mutual Recognition – Automatic Deemed Registration (ADR) are exempt from CPD requirements.
- Part-time work is not grounds for an exemption from CPD requirements and architects who work part-time are not entitled to a pro-rata calculation to reduce the number of CPD hours required.

Where an architect is unable to, or has not met, the minimum CPD hours required, the Board may take into account individual circumstances when considering whether all reasonable steps have been taken by the architect to meet their CPD obligations. Architects seeking a pro-rata exemption from the CPD requirements must at the time of renewing their registration upload a letter outlining their circumstances with supporting documentation. Matters that may be taken into consideration by the Board include:

- Parental leave during the registration term
- Unemployment for part of the registration term (at least 3 consecutive months)
- Serious illness or other misadventure suffered by the architect or an immediate family member

- Overseas location and/or travel for part of the registration term and not offering architectural services in NSW / Australia during that period (at least 3 consecutive months)
- Other exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis.

Where extenuating circumstances are identified by the Board, a pro-rata calculation of the CPD requirement may be applied. For example, if an architect has spent 6 months of the last 12 months on parental leave, the Board may reduce the CPD requirement by 50%. In this example the architect's CPD requirement would be reduced to 10 hours of CPD for the previous 12-month period, of which at least 5 hours must have been Formal CPD activity and at least 1.5 hours must have addressed the mandatory topics explained on page 1.

## What counts as Formal CPD?

**You must complete at least 10 hours of Formal CPD each year. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must cover the mandatory topics explained on page 1.** Formal CPD activities are structured and relate to practice as an architect. They are in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of practice or employment.

### Formal CPD activities fall under 8 categories:

1. Provider-delivered activities that include a structured assessment task that genuinely tests participants' understanding of content
2. Provider-delivered activities that are structured to include significant interaction between the presenter and the participant, such as a structured workshop where participants are required to complete an individual or group task
3. Activities relating to the preparation and delivery of CPD activities (*\*max. 5 hours per year may be recorded in this category*)
4. Activities relating to the teaching of architecture at a tertiary level that involve significant preparation and/or scholarship, as in the development of a new course and/or lecture content and/or the design of new curriculum (*\*max. 5 hours per year may be recorded in this category*)
5. Structured training activities delivered by the Board and the AACA for NSW Assessors who are engaged in the assessment of candidates of the various pathways to registration (*\*max. 3 hours per year may be recorded in this category*)
6. Authorship of published articles, books, papers (*\*max. 5 hrs per year may be recorded in this category*)
7. Participation in Architects' Learning Groups (*\*max. 3 hours per year may be reported for preparing and presenting Learning Sessions; max. 10 hours per year for participating in Learning Sessions*)
8. Conference attendance where the conference offers a specific CPD event or a stream of CPD sessions that meet the requirements outlined for provider-delivered Formal CPD.

### Provider-delivered Formal CPD activities must include:

- New knowledge and skills being acquired from, or shared with, peers
- Learning outcomes that are clearly stated by the provider and mapped to relevant Units of Competency / Performance Criteria from the [2021 NSCA](#)
- A structured assessment task to genuinely test participants' understanding of content or significant interaction between the presenter and the participant
- Presenters who have appropriate academic, technical or practical expertise.

## More information about Formal CPD

### Activities with a structured assessment task

A structured assessment component is an important feature of most provider-delivered Formal CPD activities. 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. The participant should receive feedback from the provider on their performance in the assessment task so that they understand where their understanding of content may still be lacking.

### Activities that include significant interaction between the presenter and the participant

Significant interaction in any provider-delivered CPD activity is where there is direct communication between the presenter and learner, 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 face-to-face activities in this category should generally be limited to a maximum of 30-40 participants to allow for an appropriate level of interaction between the presenter and participants.

Examples of activities with significant interaction include:

- Small groups undertaking case studies, workshops, and seminars that may include written exercises with feedback from the presenter
- An online tool that requires participant interaction and input, for example, the completion of a set activity
- Participation in formalised group discussions involving a case study relevant to architecture or industry practices
- 'In-house' training where the participant is required to complete specified tasks or activities.

### Architects' Learning Groups

Architects' Learning Groups are recognised by the Board to support the peer-to-peer education of NSW architects. 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 Factsheet on Architects' Learning Groups, presenters and participants can claim Formal CPD hours.

For more information, refer to the [Factsheet on Architects' Learning Groups](#).

## What counts as Informal CPD?

**Up to 10 hours of CPD completed each year may be Informal CPD.** Informal CPD activities include self-directed study and professional activities that relate to practice as an architect. They are in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of practice or employment. Informal CPD activities are not required to include assessment or significant interaction between the presenter and the participant.

**Examples of Informal CPD activities include, but are not limited to:**

- Self-directed study of practice notes, technical/professional journals, podcasts, etc
- Talks and presentations by peers
- Design lectures and seminars
- Structured visits to building sites, buildings and exhibitions
- Conference attendance (where sessions do not qualify as Formal CPD)
- Authorship of published articles / books / papers, etc (where not already reported as Formal CPD)
- Involvement in mentoring programs

- Tutoring in architecture at a tertiary level where there is no significant preparation and/or involvement in the development of new content or curriculum (eg. Design studio tutoring)
- Marking student work at a tertiary level (such as a guest critic role or other marking as a tutor)
- Participation as a NSW Assessor for the Board's Architectural Practice Examination or as an AACA Assessor for other pathways to registration
- Participation in professional practice committees and advisory groups through professional associations, regulatory authorities, or government bodies, such as Standards Australia
- Raising awareness of architecture in primary and secondary schools.

**Features of Informal CPD activities include:**

- New knowledge and skills are acquired from, or shared with, peers
- Learning outcomes can be identified
- Activity is intended to be educational and is in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of practice or employment
- Consideration has been given as to how the knowledge and skills gained from the activity may be applied to practice or employment.

## Where to find CPD providers

**The Board does not accredit CPD providers.** There is a multitude of providers offering educational activities in a variety of formats, including face-to-face and online, to meet your CPD needs:

- Universities
- Professional and industry associations
- Membership organisations
- Architects' groups or networks
- Commercial education & training providers
- Employers
- Architects' Learning Groups
- NSW Architects Registration Board
- Product and service suppliers (Note: all CPD activities should be technically accurate, educational and well-balanced, and not just a marketing exercise to promote specific products or services).

For more information about providing CPD to NSW architects, refer to the [Factsheet on Best Practice for CPD Providers](#).

## How to assess the quality of CPD activities

CPD providers should provide information in advance to assist you to make an informed decision about what CPD activities you choose to do. This should include information about the presenter and an outline of the learning outcomes mapped to the relevant Units of Competency / Performance Criteria from the [2021 NSCA](#).

The cost of Formal CPD activities can vary considerably from provider-to-provider but does not necessarily reflect its quality or the degree of difficulty of the content. Shop around to identify activities that best suit your needs and budget. YOU are responsible for self-determining which CPD activities you undertake based on what you consider relevant and appropriate to your individual needs.

You might consider:

- The reputation of the CPD provider
- Does the presenter have appropriate academic, technical or practical expertise?
- Are the learning outcomes clearly stated and mapped to relevant Units of Competency / Performance Criteria from the [2021 NSCA](#)?



- Does the activity include a structured assessment task that will genuinely test the participant's understanding of content? (important for Formal CPD)
- Are the activities structured to include significant interaction between participants and the presenter and what is the class size? (important for some Formal CPD)
- Is this activity relevant to your personal learning needs as an architect and will it improve essential skills and knowledge?
- Does this activity address any of the mandatory topics explained on page 1?
- Does this activity qualify as Formal CPD?

## Transition arrangements for CPD changes implemented from 1 July 2022

The Board has made the transition arrangements below for CPD changes that come into effect from 1 July 2022. Please contact the Board if you require further information and/or clarity about how the transition will apply to you.

### Architects with 30 June renewal date

#### 1 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2023

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2023 and will be expected to have completed a minimum of 20 hours of CPD, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1.

#### 3 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2023

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2023 and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1. *When you report in 2023 you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 20 hours of CPD, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD and at least 3 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.*

#### 3 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2024

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2024 and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1. *When you report in 2024 you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 40 hours of CPD, of which at least 20 hours must be Formal CPD and at least 6 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.*

#### 3 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2025

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2025 and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1. *When you report in 2025 you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 60 hours of CPD, of which at least 30 hours must be Formal CPD and at least 9 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.*

#### 5 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2025

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2025 and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1. *When you report in 2025 you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 60 hours of CPD, of which at least 30 hours must be Formal CPD and at least 9 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.*



### **5 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2026**

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2026 and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1. *When you report in 2026 you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 80 hours of CPD, of which at least 40 hours must be Formal CPD and at least 12 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.*

### **5 year registration term due for renewal by 30 June 2027**

You are next required to report your CPD in the month of June 2027 and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1. *When you report in 2027 you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 100 hours of CPD, of which at least 50 hours must be Formal CPD and at least 15 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.*

### **Architects with renewal dates other than 30 June**

The requirement to complete 3 hours of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics will be applied on a pro rata basis until 1 July 2023 for architects with renewal dates other than 30 June.

During the transition, if you are required to complete only 1 or 2 HOURS of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics, you may choose which of the three topics you complete. You are not required to cover all three. If you are required to complete 2 HOURS for the mandatory topics at least 1 hour must be completed for each of 2 mandatory topics.

#### **1 July 2022 - 31 October 2022 renewal date**

You are NOT required to commence your compliance with the new CPD requirements until the next year of your registration term.

#### **1 November 2022 – 28 February 2023 renewal date**

You are only required to complete 1 HOUR of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics in the current 12-months of your registration.

#### **1 March 2023 – 29 June 2023 renewal date**

You are required to complete 2 HOURS of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics in the current 12-months of your registration. At least 1 hour must be completed for each of 2 mandatory topics.

### **All registration terms due for renewal between 1 July 2022 and 29 June 2023**

You are next required to report your CPD in the month preceding the renewal date. When you report you will be expected to have completed a minimum of 20 hours of CPD, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. The requirement to complete 3 hours of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics will be applied on a pro rata basis as described above. Some pro rata examples are provided below for different renewal dates:

- 27 October 2022 renewal – you are NOT required to complete any mandatory topics this year.
- 10 December 2022 renewal – you are required to complete 1 HOUR of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics this year.
- 28 February 2023 renewal – you are required to complete 1 HOUR of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics for your current registration term.
- 26 April 2023 renewal – you are required to complete 2 HOURS of Formal CPD for the new mandatory topics for your current registration term.

For 3- or 5-year registration terms due for renewal after 1 July 2023 on a date other than 30 June, refer to the transition provisions on pages 8-9. Transition provisions are similar for all multi-year registration terms irrespective of the renewal date. You are next required to report your CPD at the end of your registration term

and to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year of your registration term, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD you complete each year must address the mandatory topics explained on page 1.

## Moving between Practising and Non-Practising categories

Architects who apply to transfer from the Practising to the Non-Practising category are required to submit evidence that they have met the pro rata CPD requirements for their last registration term.

Architects who apply to transfer from the Non-Practising to the Practising category after having been in the Non-Practising category for 3 or more years are required to demonstrate that they have met the pro rata CPD requirements for the last 12-month period.

## CPD requirements for reinstatement to the Register

Architects who apply for reinstatement to the Register are required to demonstrate that they have complied with the minimum CPD hours for their last registration term. When an architect is unable to demonstrate the correct CPD hours for their last registration term, and where no extenuating circumstances exist that might qualify the architect for a pro-rata reduction or exemption from CPD requirements in the last registration term, the following will apply:

### Less than 12-months since last registered:

Prior to their reinstatement to the Register, the architect must complete the minimum CPD hours for their last registration term.

### 12-24 months since last registered:

Prior to their reinstatement to the Register, the architect must complete the lesser of two options, either

- complete the minimum CPD hours for their last registration term, or
- complete 20 hours of Formal CPD, of which at least 6 hours is Formal CPD that addresses the mandatory topics.

### More than 24 months since last registered:

Prior to their reinstatement to the Register, and within the last 12-month period, the architect must complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD, of which at least 10 hours must be Formal CPD. At least 3 hours of the 10 hours of Formal CPD must address the mandatory topics.

**If you have any questions about CPD, please contact the NSW Architects Registration Board.**

[architects.nsw.gov.au](http://architects.nsw.gov.au)

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