

## Factsheet

# NSW PORTFOLIO PROGRAM OF ASSESSMENT (NSW PPA)

### Introduction

The NSW Portfolio Program of Assessment (NSW PPA) and National Program of Assessment (NPrA) are 2 competency based assessment processes that provide pathways to the [Architectural Practice Examination](#) for those who have substantial skills and experience in the architectural services profession but do not have the approved academic qualification in architecture or overseas equivalent.

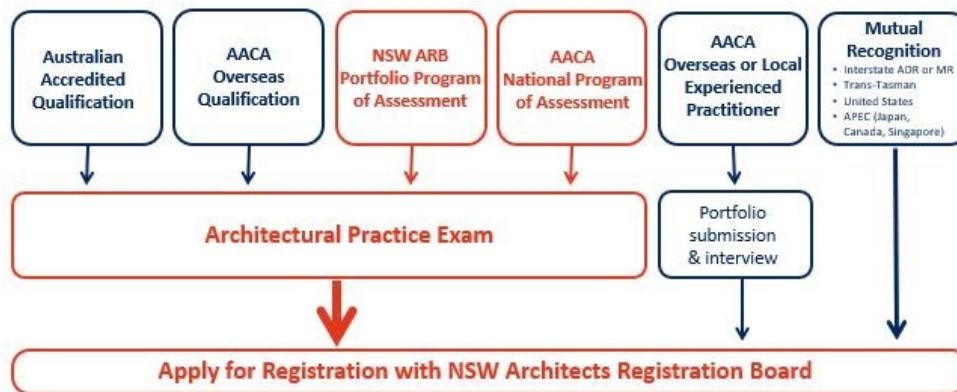


Figure 1: Pathways to registration as an architect in Australia

The [National Program of Assessment \(NPrA\)](#) is an 'assessment by project' process and is administered by the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA). For more information [contact the AACA](#).

**The NSW Portfolio Program of Assessment (NSW PPA) is an 'assessment by portfolio' process and is administered by the NSW Architects Registration Board (the 'NSW ARB').**

**The NSW PPA is a challenging registration pathway for exceptional people with exemplary skills and substantial industry experience in the architectural services profession, but no approved architectural qualification. Eligible candidates will have led the design and delivery of high-quality, complex architectural projects.<sup>1</sup> The NSW PPA should not be regarded as a shortcut to registration as an architect in Australia.**

Candidates submit a portfolio of 3 to 4 complex architectural projects from the last 10 years for which they have been primary decision maker for the project initiation, conceptual design, detailed design and construction documentation. At least 1 of the projects should have been built in Australia in the last 10 years, or overseas in the last 5 years. In addition to the portfolio submission, candidates submit supporting written material and are interviewed about their skills and experience in the architectural services profession.

<sup>1</sup> Refer pages 13-16 for definitions of terms such as "complex architectural project", "architect", and "National Standard of Competency for Architects".

The sole purpose of the NSW PPA is to grant access to the [Architectural Practice Examination](#), the successful completion of which is required before applying for registration as an architect in Australia. The successful completion of the NSW PPA does not provide a qualification.

Candidate submissions to the NSW PPA are assessed against the relevant Performance Criteria from the [2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects](#) to determine the candidate's equivalence with the level of competency required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture).

### The 3 stages of the NSW PPA

- Stage 1 Eligibility Assessment
- Stage 2 Eligibility Interview
- Stage 3 Major Portfolio Submission and Interview

### Annual timetable

The NSW PPA runs annually. Refer to the NSW ARB website for the current year's timetable. For those who pass Stage 3, applications for the next [Architectural Practice Examination](#) Part 1 generally open in January.

### Fees

- Stage 1 \$1,180
- Stage 2\* \$565  
*\* Payable at the time of applying for Stage 1. \$515 will be refunded to candidates who are unsuccessful in Stage 1.*
- Stage 3 \$3,295
- Appeals \$950

### Eligibility

The following eligibility requirements apply to the NSW PPA:

#### a. English language proficiency

If English is not the candidate's first language, or the candidate did not complete secondary school or tertiary education in English, an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) minimum Band 7 is required in all 4 abilities of English Language (ie. speaking, listening, reading and writing).

#### b. Currently resident in Australia

The candidate must currently be resident in Australia.

#### c. Satisfaction of points criteria

The candidate must score a minimum of 1 point in any single category, with a total minimum score of 8 points across the 4 categories listed below. Refer to the next page for the points table with more detail.

1. Australian qualification directly relevant to the architectural services profession\*
2. Relevant full-time (or equivalent) work experience
3. At least 1 completed complex architectural project
4. Experience as primary decision maker in the project initiation, conceptual design, detailed design and construction documentation of 3 to 4 complex architectural projects.

\* Note that the qualification must be Australian and the minimum level required for eligibility for the NSW PPA is Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 6 (ie. Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree). Candidates who hold Australian qualifications obtained prior to 1995, when the AQF was established, are encouraged to consult the [table of Equivalency of pre-AQF qualifications](#) to understand how their qualification corresponds with current AQF awards. Pre-1995 Australian qualifications shown in the [table](#) as equivalent to AQF Level 6 are accepted for the NSW PPA.

## Points criteria

<b>1. Australian qualification directly relevant to the architectural services profession</b> (max 3 points; min 1 point)		<b>points</b>
Incomplete Australian accredited architecture qualification (must be at least 90% complete or equivalent to 9 of 10 semesters completed)		<b>3</b>
Australian postgraduate qualification, such as architecture (non-accredited program), architectural science, sustainable built environment, urban design, heritage conservation, etc		<b>2</b>
Australian bachelor qualification, such as architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, etc		<b>1</b>
Other relevant Australian tertiary qualification at minimum level of Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 6 (ie. Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree or pre-1995 AQF equivalent)		<b>1</b>
<b>2. Relevant full-time (or equivalent) work experience</b> (max 3 points; min 1 point)		<b>points</b>
<b>7 years in the last 10 years worked</b> in architectural services, planning, building or other related fields, <b>and</b>	<b>3 years in the last 5 years</b> worked with an architect in an architectural practice in Australia	<b>3</b>
<b>10 years in the last 15 years</b> worked in architectural services, planning, building or other related fields, <b>and</b>	<b>3 years in the last 10 years</b> worked with an architect in an architectural practice in Australia	<b>2</b>
<b>7 years in the last 10 years in Australia</b> worked in architectural services, planning, building, or other related fields, <b>and</b>	<b>Completion in the last 2 years of an Australian professional development program</b> – either the Practice of <a href="#">Architecture Learning Series (PALS)</a> or <a href="#">Practicing ARChitecture (PARC)</a>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. At least 1 completed complex architectural project</b> (max 3 points; min 1 point)		<b>points</b>
Built in Australia in the last 5 years		<b>3</b>
Built in Australia in the last 10 years		<b>2</b>
Built overseas in the last 5 years		<b>1</b>
<b>4. Experience as primary decision maker in the project initiation, conceptual design, detailed design and construction documentation of 3 to 4 complex architectural projects</b> (max 3 points; min 1 point)		<b>points</b>
In Australia in the last 10 years		<b>3</b>
In Australia in the last 15 years		<b>2</b>
In the last 15 years, with at least 1 project in Australia		<b>1</b>

## Stage 1 eligibility assessment

### Submission requirements

Applications for Stage 1 must be submitted by email as a single PDF file to: [mail@architects.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@architects.nsw.gov.au)

Stage 1 submissions will not be assessed unless accompanied by payment of the application fees for both Stage 1 and Stage 2. Once an application has been submitted, the Stage 1 fee is non-refundable. A partial refund of the Stage 2 fee will be made to the candidate if they are unsuccessful in Stage 1.

Submissions should comprise the following documents in the order listed below:

**1. Completed Application Form (Form 11A)**

– including completed credit card payment authorisation form and completed submission checklist *and* the following attachments:

- 1a If English is not the candidate's first language**, documentation in support of their English Language Proficiency, as instructed at Question 3 of the Application Form.
- 1b A copy of the testamur and/or academic transcript for candidate's Australian qualification(s)** that are directly relevant to the architectural services profession, as instructed at Question 5.1 of the Application Form.

**2. NSW Statutory Declaration**

– signed by a Justice of the Peace, lawyer, or notary public, and

- Declaring that all submitted documents are true and correct records of the candidate's experience in the architectural services profession, and
- Declaring the authenticity of the candidate's involvement in the nominated complex architectural projects, and
- Attesting to 1 of the nominated complex architectural projects being a built project completed in Australia in the last 10 years or overseas in the last 5 years.

**3. Two written references**

– each reference should be a maximum of 2 x A4 pages and include the contact details for the referee. At least 1 reference must be from a practising architect currently registered in Australia. References must comment on the candidate's:

- Professional capacity to operate to the standard expected of an architect in Australia, and
- Eligibility Portfolio prepared specifically for the NSW PPA, noting the complex architectural projects the referee worked on with the candidate and the candidate's role, and
- Professional experience, with specific reference to the relevant Performance Criteria from the *2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects* against which the NSW PPA is assessed.

**4. Table of Contents** (including page numbers)

– including a table indicating on which pages each of the 11 relevant Performance Criteria are addressed in the Eligibility Portfolio and Statement of Eligibility.

**5. Summary Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

– maximum of 2 x A4 pages linking work experience to the architectural projects in the Eligibility Portfolio.

## 6. Eligibility Portfolio

– maximum total of 16 x A3 pages or 4 x A3 pages per project of graphic material that demonstrates the candidate's involvement in the last 10 years as primary decision maker in the project initiation, conceptual design, detailed design, and construction documentation of 3 to 4 complex architectural projects. More detail is provided below.

## 7. Statement of Eligibility

– maximum of 2,000 words. The Statement of Eligibility should directly link the work featured in the Eligibility Portfolio to the relevant Performance Criteria from the *2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects*, as detailed below.

*Note that the assessors will not undertake a site visit to any of the candidate's projects and will rely solely on the submitted material and the interview in deciding the outcome of the application.*

### Eligibility portfolio

**The objective of the Eligibility Portfolio is to provide evidence of the candidate's fundamental abilities as a conceptual thinker and designer.** It will also evidence the candidate's authorship or co-authorship as primary decision maker in the last 10 years for the project initiation, conceptual design, detailed design and construction documentation of 3 to 4 complex architectural projects, at least 1 of which should have been built in Australia in the last 10 years, or overseas in the last 5 years.

In selecting appropriate projects for the Eligibility Portfolio, emphasis should be placed on more recent projects by the candidate, and those completed in the 3 years with an architect in an architectural practice in Australia.

The Eligibility Portfolio must include 3 to 4 complex architectural projects from the last 10 years and must not exceed a maximum total of 16 x A3 pages or 4 x A3 pages per project. The candidate must therefore be selective in the material they include.

The candidate is encouraged to submit authentic content originally produced in the course of the actual architectural projects themselves and to supplement this with new content as required to address the 11 relevant Performance Criteria (18, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 39, 40).

Include the following information for each project:

- Project name
- Location (street address, suburb/city, state, country)
- Building type (eg. multi-residential apartment building)
- Project value
- Period of candidate's involvement in the project (provide start and finish dates, month and year)
- Date project construction completed (practical completion), if applicable (month and year)
- Brief statement outlining the candidate's role in the project (eg. Project leader, Senior architectural assistant,\* etc) and their relationship with the rest of the team, including consultants.

*\* Note that under [Part 2, Division 2 of the Architects Act 2003](#) (the 'Act') only an individual whose name is on the Register of Architects in the Australian state(s) and/or territory(ies) in which they work may use the title 'architect' or its derivatives to describe the services they offer. The candidate may only refer to themselves as an 'architectural assistant', 'architectural technician' or 'architectural drafter' if they are an employee of an architect, and only for the period that they are an employee of an architect.*

If a candidate is found to be in breach of Part 2, Division 2 of the Act, their application for the NSW PPA will not be accepted.

The Eligibility Portfolio should demonstrate:

- Original creative thinking
- The architectural proposition and its core principle(s) throughout the material provided
- Evolution of design thinking in response to project requirements
- Exercise of architectural judgement in progressing ideas and concepts to a resolved, final architectural solution
- Appropriate use of graphic techniques to effectively communicate design intent, structure, construction and materials
- The full exploration of design ideas and their resolution which may be conveyed cumulatively across all projects through a variety of image types as relevant and appropriate, such as:
  - sketches (not to scale)
  - diagrams (not to scale)
  - 3-D digital models and photographs of physical models (not to scale)
  - site plan(s) as relevant (suggested scale 1:5000 to 1:200)
  - selected horizontal section(s) (plans) (suggested scale 1:500 to 1:50)
  - selected vertical section(s) (suggested scale 1:200 to 1:20)
  - architectural details that make a significant contribution to the technical resolution of the architectural intent and design concept aspirations (suggested scale 1:1 to 1:10)
  - other drawings, renders, images, visualisations and photographs that document the project.

*\* Note that the candidate should be selective in the images they include.*

Include a linear scale for all drawings that have been drawn to scale.

Wherever possible, identify where various details occur in the building on the general arrangement drawings.

Drawings that are reduced in size must remain legible in all respects. The Eligibility Portfolio will most likely be read on screen by assessors and will not be printed out at full size. All drawings and any important dimensions, legends and annotations must therefore be legible when read on screen at 75% of full size.

The candidate should note that the maximum total of 16 x A3 pages or 4 x A3 pages per project page limit for the Eligibility Portfolio is strictly enforced and portfolios that exceed these limits will not be accepted.

### **Features of a strong eligibility portfolio**

Strong Eligibility Portfolio submissions communicate in a professional and engaging manner by maximising the use of graphic material, rather than relying on wordy responses.

- Include a short 'project description' or 'statement of intent' (no more than 250-300 words) for each project
- Cross-reference the work in the Eligibility Portfolio with the Statement of Eligibility
- All pages in the portfolio should be numbered.

Strong submissions clearly demonstrate the candidate's ability across the 11 relevant Performance Criteria. Typically, these are best illustrated in the following capability areas:\*

- Undertake iterative explorations and appraisals of a range of ideas and concepts, leading towards the development of a coherent proposal for a project (PC\* 25, 28, 29)
- Creatively explore spatial sequencing and hierarchy and 3-dimensional architectural form (PC\* 18, 36)
- Develop compelling design concepts in response to client, user and public requirements, and appropriate social, environmental and contextual considerations (PC\* 26, 30, 36, 40), and

- Integrate technical requirements into the resolved design and demonstrate an understanding of construction and materiality (PC\* 31, 32, 39).

*\* Note that this mapping of Performance Criteria to capability areas is intended to assist the candidate to visualise how the PCs can be grouped together. The mapping is indicative only and the candidate may wish to develop their own approach in structuring their Eligibility Portfolio and Statement of Eligibility.*

### **Statement of eligibility**

**The objective of the Statement of Eligibility is to demonstrate that the candidate possesses design skills and experience equivalent to the competencies required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program.** This is achieved by cross-referencing the candidate's work experience and Eligibility Portfolio of complex architectural projects to the 11 relevant Performance Criteria (18, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 39, 40).

The candidate must demonstrate competency at the level required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture).

The Statement must be well considered, precisely expressed, properly composed and appropriately cross-referenced to the Performance Criteria.

In determining the content for their Statement of Eligibility, the candidate should select the project, or projects, from their Eligibility Portfolio that best illustrates the application of the Performance Criteria.

Strong Statement of Eligibility submissions are able to focus on the development of a single project from the Eligibility Portfolio, demonstrating the application of creative imagination, aesthetic judgement and critical evaluation across all phases of the design process, from the formulation of initial design options to the production of a coherent design, and the ultimate resolution of that design.

However, where it is not possible to fully demonstrate competency within a single project, the candidate may select from their Eligibility Portfolio a combination of projects that best illustrates their competency across the relevant Performance Criteria, with the additional projects used to fill gaps and demonstrate depth of skills and experience.

Emphasis should be placed on the last 5 years immediately preceding the NSW PPA application, and especially the 3 years' work completed with an architect in an architectural practice in Australia.

Provide a detailed description of the candidate's role for each of the project(s) featured in the Statement of Eligibility, including explicit comments about how the candidate has demonstrated achievement of the required Performance Criteria from the *2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects*.

The candidate should note that the 2,000 word limit for the Statement of Eligibility is strictly enforced and statements that exceed this limit will not be accepted.

### **Features of a strong statement of eligibility**

Strong Statement of Eligibility submissions focus on the development of a single project, if possible. They are explicit about the candidate's skills and experience and present this in a chronological order.

Strong submissions demonstrate the candidate's familiarity with the *2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects* and their understanding of the intent of the relevant Performance Criteria in establishing competency thresholds.

Strong submissions include a post-project evaluation of the selected project(s) and whether their design concepts were realised and how the experience informed the candidate's later work.

Strong submissions clearly demonstrate the candidate's ability across the relevant Performance Criteria. Typically, these are best illustrated in the capability areas as listed previously for the Eligibility Portfolio.



## Outcome of stage 1

The assessment of Stage 1 submissions is undertaken by NSW ARB staff and the Registrar, at least 1 of who is an architect.

At any time during the Stage 1 assessment process, the Registrar may, at their discretion, contact the candidate's supervising architect(s) and/or consultant/builder/client to confirm the accuracy of the submission or to discuss particular elements that require clarification.

A rating of 'SATISFACTORY' is required for all 11 Performance Criteria to pass Stage 1.

The NSW ARB will email the candidate the outcome of their Stage 1 Eligibility Assessment within 2-3 weeks of the finalisation of all assessments.

### Successful

Where a candidate is successful, they will be invited to proceed to the NSW PPA Stage 2 Eligibility Interview. The candidate must complete the Eligibility Interview in the same 12-month period as their Stage 1 application.

### Unsuccessful

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised in writing that they have been unsuccessful, and the area/s in which deficiencies have been identified. Unsuccessful candidates at Stage 1 may reapply for the NSW PPA at any time.

## Stage 2 eligibility interview

Candidates deemed eligible in the NSW PPA Stage 1 will be invited for a Stage 2 Eligibility Interview.

**The objective of the Eligibility Interview is to confirm that the candidate can demonstrate and communicate adequate practical application and experience across the 11 relevant Performance Criteria (18, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 39, 40), consistent with their submission for the Stage 1 Eligibility Assessment. Additionally, the assessors may ask the candidate questions related to Performance Criteria 17 and 27.**

The interview will explore the candidate's:

- Involvement in projects from the Eligibility Portfolio, including the roles they have played in design teams
- Conceptual approaches and design processes, and
- Methods for informed decision-making during the design process.

In the interview, the candidate must demonstrate competency at the level required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture) in each of the 13 relevant Performance Criteria.

The Eligibility Interview is not restricted to discussion of the candidate's Eligibility Portfolio and Statement of Eligibility.

The interview will be 45-60 minutes duration and will be conducted by 2 assessors. One assessor will be a NSW registered architect and the other assessor will be an academic from a NSW accredited architecture program.

The candidate is not permitted to take any equipment, notes, reference materials, phones, recording or other devices into the interview.

The candidate is not permitted to contact the assessors either before or after the interview.

At the conclusion of the interview, the assessors will decide whether, on balance, the candidate possesses the design skills and experience equivalent to the level of competency required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture).

A rating of 'SATISFACTORY' is required for all 13 Performance Criteria to pass Stage 2.



## Outcome of stage 2

The NSW ARB will email the candidate the outcome of their Stage 2 Eligibility Interview within 2-3 weeks of the finalisation of all assessments.

### Successful

Where a candidate is successful, they will be invited to proceed to the NSW PPA Stage 3 Major Portfolio Submission and Interview. The candidate must apply for Stage 3 within 2 years of the date of the email advising them of their successful completion of Stage 2 of the NSW PPA.

### Unsuccessful

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised in writing that they have been unsuccessful, and the area/s in which deficiencies have been identified. Unsuccessful candidates at Stage 2 must wait 2 years from the date of the email notifying the result before re-applying for the NSW PPA. Re-applying candidates are required to re-submit for Stage 1 Eligibility.

## Stage 3 major portfolio submission and interview

Candidates who pass the NSW PPA Stage 2 must apply for Stage 3 within 2 years of the date of the email advising them of their successful completion of Stage 2.

Candidates for Stage 3 will be assessed by 2 new assessors who are not familiar with the documentation submitted for Stages 1 and 2.

The amount of time necessary to prepare a comprehensive Stage 3 submission should not be underestimated. It is recommended that the candidate seek feedback on their draft submission from architect colleagues and peers to confirm the appropriateness of their submission and to confirm that their experience and skills are clearly demonstrated and communicated in the Major Portfolio Submission.

### Submission requirements

Applications for Stage 3 must be submitted by email as a single PDF file to: [mail@architects.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@architects.nsw.gov.au)

Stage 3 submissions will not be assessed unless accompanied by payment of the application fee. Once an application has been submitted, fees are non-refundable.

Submissions should comprise the following documents in the order listed below:

- 1. Completed Application Form (Form 11B)**
  - including completed credit card payment authorisation form and completed submission checklist.
- 2. NSW Statutory Declaration**
  - signed by a Justice of the Peace, lawyer, or notary public, and
    - Declaring that all submitted documents are true and correct records of the candidate's experience in the architectural services profession, and
    - Declaring the authenticity of the candidate's involvement in the nominated complex architectural projects, and
    - Attesting to 1 of the nominated complex architectural projects being a built project completed in Australia in the last 10 years or overseas in the last 5 years.
- 3. Table of Contents** (including page numbers)
  - including a table indicating on which pages each of the 25 relevant Performance Criteria are addressed in the Major Portfolio and Stage 3 Report.

**4. Summary Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

– maximum of 2 x A4 pages linking work experience to the architectural projects in the Major Portfolio.

**5. Major Portfolio**

– maximum of 32 x A3 pages of graphic material. It is anticipated that the Major Portfolio will feature the same projects as were included in the Stage 1 Eligibility Portfolio but provide more detail.

**6. Stage 3 Report**

– maximum of 3,500 words. The Report submission should directly link the work featured in the Major Portfolio to the relevant Performance Criteria from the National Standard of Competency for Architects, as detailed below.

*Note that the assessors will not undertake a site visit to any of the candidate's projects and will rely solely on the submitted material and the interview in deciding the outcome of the application.*

### **Major portfolio**

**The objective of the Major Portfolio is to provide evidence of the candidate's fundamental abilities as a conceptual thinker and designer.** It will also evidence the candidate's authorship or co-authorship as primary decision maker in the last 10 years for project initiation, conceptual design, detailed design and construction documentation of 3 to 4 complex architectural projects, at least 1 of which should have been built in Australia in the last 10 years, or overseas in the last 5 years.

It is anticipated that the Major Portfolio will feature the same complex architectural projects as were included in the Stage 1 Eligibility Portfolio but provide more detail. The candidate may reuse some of the pages from their Eligibility Portfolio for the Stage 3 submission, noting that the range of competencies to be demonstrated at Stage 3 is much broader (25 Performance Criteria) than for Stage 1 (only 11 Performance Criteria).

The Major Portfolio must include 3 to 4 complex architectural projects from the last 10 years and must not exceed 32 x A3 pages. The candidate must therefore be selective in the material they include. The candidate may be flexible in the number of pages they choose to allocate to each project. Some projects may be allocated more pages than others, depending on their significance in demonstrating the satisfaction of the relevant Performance Criteria.

The same considerations as for the Eligibility Portfolio apply (refer pages 5-6), with content as required to address the 25 relevant Performance Criteria (3, 7, 10, 12, 16, **18**, 19, 23, 24, **25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32**, 33, 34, 35, **36, 39, 40**, 45, 46, 47).

The candidate should note that the 32 x A3 page limit for the Major Portfolio is strictly enforced and portfolios that exceed this limit will not be accepted.

### **Features of a strong major portfolio**

The same features as for the Eligibility Portfolio apply (refer pages 6-7).

Additionally, strong Major Portfolio submissions demonstrate the candidate's understanding of the principles of architectural detailing and the role of architectural details in determining architectural aesthetics and realising design intent.

Strong submissions clearly demonstrate the candidate's ability across the relevant Performance Criteria. Typically, these are best illustrated in the following capability areas:\*

- Identify, analyse and integrate relevant information in the design and documentation of a complex architectural project (PC\* 3, 10, 16, 19, **30**)
- Analyse and evaluate design options against project requirements, regulatory requirements, industry codes and standards, and social, environmental and contextual considerations (PC\* 24, **29, 32**, 46)

- Develop compelling design concepts in response to client, user and public requirements, and appropriate social, environmental and contextual considerations (PC\* **26, 28, 36**)
- Apply creative imagination, aesthetic judgement and critical evaluation to the iterative exploration and appraisal of a range of ideas and concepts, leading towards the development of a coherent proposal for a project (PC\* **25, 36**)
- Creatively explore urban context, spatial relationships, sequencing and hierarchy and 3-dimensional architectural form (PC\* **18, 36**)
- Integrate technical requirements into the resolved design and demonstrate an understanding of structure, construction systems, materials, and service and transport systems (PC\* **12, 31, 33, 35, 39, 45**), and
- Communicate clearly and with an appropriate level of detail with clients and stakeholders using graphic techniques, modelling and written modes (PC\* **7, 23, 34, 40, 47**).

*\* Note that this mapping of Performance Criteria to capability areas is intended to assist the candidate to visualise how the PCs can be grouped together. The mapping is indicative only and the candidate may wish to develop their own approach in structuring their Major Portfolio and Report.*

### **Stage 3 report**

**The objective of the Stage 3 Report is to demonstrate that the candidate possesses skills and experience equivalent to the competencies required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program.** This is achieved by cross-referencing the candidate's Major Portfolio of complex architectural projects to the 25 relevant Performance Criteria (3, 7, 10, 12, 16, **18**, 19, 23, 24, **25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32**, 33, 34, 35, **36, 39, 40**, 45, 46, 47).

The candidate must demonstrate competency at the level required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture).

The same considerations as for the Statement of Eligibility apply (refer page 7).

The candidate should note that the 3,500 word limit for the Report submission is strictly enforced and statements that exceed this limit will not be accepted.

### **Features of a strong stage 3 report**

The same features as for the Statement of Eligibility apply (refer page 7).

Strong submissions clearly demonstrate the candidate's ability across the 25 relevant Performance Criteria. Typically, these are best illustrated in the capability areas as listed previously for the Major Portfolio.

### **Assessment of the major portfolio and report**

At any time during the Stage 3 assessment process, the Registrar may, at their discretion, contact the candidate's supervising architect(s) and/or consultant/builder/client to confirm the accuracy of the submission or to discuss particular elements that require clarification.

Two assessors will be appointed to assess the candidate's Major Portfolio and Report submissions and conduct the Stage 3 Interview. One assessor will be a NSW registered architect and the other assessor will be an academic from a NSW accredited architecture program. The assessors will be different to those allocated for the candidate's Stage 2 Eligibility Interview.

The assessors will receive a copy of the candidate's submission and undertake an independent preliminary evaluation prior to the Stage 3 Interview.

The assessors will structure the Stage 3 Interview in response to the Major Portfolio and Report submission

### **Stage 3 interview**

**The objective of the Stage 3 Interview is to confirm that the candidate can demonstrate and communicate adequate practical application and experience across the 25 relevant Performance Criteria (3, 7, 10, 12, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 45, 46, 47), consistent with their Major Portfolio and Report submissions.**

Additionally, the assessors may ask the candidate questions relating to a further 18 Performance Criteria that are not addressed in the Major Portfolio and Stage 3 Report (1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 27, 44, 48, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58).

The interview will explore the candidate's:

- Involvement in projects from the Major Portfolio, including the roles they have played in design teams
- Conceptual approaches and design processes
- Methods for informed decision-making during the design process, and
- Technical knowledge.

The Stage 3 Interview is not restricted to discussion of the Candidate's Major Portfolio and Report.

The interview will be 45-60 minutes duration and will be conducted by the 2 assessors.

The candidate is not permitted to take any equipment, notes, reference materials, phones, recording or other devices into the interview.

The candidate is not permitted to contact the assessors either before or after the interview.

At the conclusion of the interview, the assessors will decide whether, on balance, the candidate possesses the design skills, technical knowledge and experience equivalent to the level of competency required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture).

A rating of 'SATISFACTORY' is required for at least 35 of the 43 Performance Criteria to pass Stage 3.

### **Outcome of stage 3**

The NSW ARB will email the candidate the outcome of their Stage 3 Major Portfolio Submission and Interview within 2-3 weeks of the finalisation of all assessments.

#### **Successful**

Where the candidate is successful, they will be granted access to the next available Architectural Practice Examination (APE) in NSW provided they meet eligibility requirements. The candidate must apply for the APE within 3 years of the date of the email advising them of their successful completion of Stage 3 of the NSW PPA.

The APE is conducted twice a year. Successful completion of the APE is required before a candidate can apply for registration.

#### **Unsuccessful**

Unsuccessful candidates will be advised in writing that they have been unsuccessful, and the area/s in which deficiencies have been identified. Unsuccessful candidates at Stage 3 are ineligible to reapply for the NSW PPA.

In exceptional circumstances the assessors may consider that the candidate should be allowed to reapply following the satisfaction of specific conditions intended to address the identified deficiencies. In this situation, the candidate is required to re-submit for Stage 1 and to provide a statement not exceeding 1 x A4 page indicating how they have met the specified conditions.

## Appeals

An appeal may be lodged in writing to the NSW ARB within 28 days from the date of the notification of the result of any stage. A fee applies.

Causes of appeal external to the NSW PPA will not normally constitute acceptable grounds for appeal. For example, insufficient time due to personal or other reasons is not considered a valid reason for appealing the outcome of the assessment.

The appeal is not an opportunity to submit further material that should have been included in the original submission, or to submit entirely new materials.

The submission of solicited testimonials from practising architects or others on the candidate's behalf will not be considered in an appeal.

## Definitions

### Architect

Only an individual whose name is on the Register of Architects in the Australian state(s) and/or territory(ies) in which they work may use the title 'architect' or its derivatives to describe the services they offer. The NSW Register of Architects can be searched from the homepage of the NSW ARB website at [www.architects.nsw.gov.au](http://www.architects.nsw.gov.au) under the 'Search Register' field.

### Architectural practice

In NSW, an architectural practice may be a sole trader who is a registered architect; or a corporation or firm that has at least 1 nominated architect who is responsible for the provision of architectural services by the corporation or firm.

### Complex architectural project

A complex architectural project is defined by the AACA as a project of medium scale or larger that requires the skill and knowledge to deliver the resolution and integration of complicated aspects including but not limited to siting, planning, structure, services, materials, composition and configuration. A complex project is demanding in its ordering and organisation of multiple occupancy and/or special purpose user requirements and requires the integration of cultural, social, environmental and technical issues.

Generally, single dwelling residential projects would not be considered a complex project.

For smaller scale projects that do not meet the definition of a complex architectural project, the candidate must include a rationale as to why the particular project should be considered complex.

### National Standard of Competency for Architects

The AACA's [2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects](#) is the overarching document establishing the standard for the assessment of architectural education and professional competency prior to registration as an architect in Australia. It comprises 3 Professional Capabilities, including Professionalism, Communication and Environmental Practice, and 60 individual Performance Criteria.

Candidates should also consult [2021 NSCA Explanatory Notes and Definitions](#).

Candidates must demonstrate the 'Competency Profile' of a candidate for registration as an architect. That is, they must demonstrate competency at the level required of a graduate from an Australian accredited architecture program at the point of their initial registration as an architect (ie. following a minimum of 2 years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture).

## Relevant Performance Criteria

The 11 Performance Criteria listed below in bold text are tested in submissions for all stages of the NSW PPA. A further 14 Performance Criteria are tested in the submission at Stage 3.

Additionally, the assessors may ask the candidate questions at interview relating to a further 18 Performance Criteria marked with an asterisk and in *grey italics* that are not addressed in submissions.

### Practice Management and Professional Conduct

- 1\* *Demonstrate understanding of the regulatory requirements and obligations pertaining to practice as an architect, including legislation, professional codes of conduct, and obligations for continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance.*
- 2\* *Be able to identify practice resources and apply practice methods and quality assurance systems within an ethical practice management framework to comply with and facilitate efficient, consistent and timely delivery of architectural services.*
- 3 **Demonstrate understanding of the principles of project planning, considering implications for Country, environmental sustainability, communities, stakeholders and project costs.**
- 5\* *Demonstrate understanding of the essential elements of a client architect agreement across the range of procurement methods; and be able to explain appropriateness of different agreements in relation to scale and type of project, including alternatives for partial services and the engagement of secondary and sub-consultants.*
- 6\* *Demonstrate understanding of appropriate processes for reporting and varying the scope of services provided by an architect.*
- 7 **Apply and follow processes for clear and consistent communication with clients and relevant stakeholders throughout the project, including obtaining approvals from clients and stakeholders.**
- 8\* *Be able to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.*
- 9\* *Demonstrate understanding of contemporary and emerging building procurement methods. This involves identifying the most appropriate form of delivery for a project, including associated risks, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and integrating appropriate construction contracts and consultancy contracts and/or agreements.*
- 10 **Demonstrate understanding of the whole life carbon implications of procurement methods, materials, components and construction systems.**
- 12 **Provide independent, culturally responsive and objective advice in accordance with relevant building codes, standards, technical specifications and guidelines, and planning regulations, including climate change implications, across all aspects of architectural practice.**
- 13\* *Be able to identify and apply strategies, programming and processes for documentation through all project stages to facilitate project delivery, as appropriate to selected procurement processes.*
- 15\* *Comply with legal and ethical obligations relating to legislated requirements in relation to copyright, moral rights, authorship of cultural knowledge and intellectual property requirements across architectural services.*
- 16 **Be able to apply risk management and mitigation strategies – including safety in design, project risk, requirement for resilience from the impacts of climate change and appropriate insurances – across architectural services.**

### Project Initiation and Conceptual Design

- 17\* *Have an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' aspirations to care for Country and how these inform architectural design.*
- 18 **Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, research, emergent knowledge and critical evaluation in formulating and refining concept design options, including the exploration of 3 dimensional form and spatial quality.**

- 19 Be able to identify, analyse and evaluate client project requirements and objectives using qualitative and quantitative methods and, where required by the terms of engagement, to assist cost estimators in determining project feasibility/viability.
- 23 Be able to prepare a return brief for approval by the client and relevant stakeholders in response to a client brief and any areas of deviation or non-compliance.
- 24 Be able to prepare and analyse project development options in response to a project brief – its objectives, budget, user intent and built purpose, risk and timeframes, including environmental sustainability considerations.
- 25 **Be able to draw on knowledge from the history and theory of architecture as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design.**
- 26 **Be able to undertake site, cultural and contextual analysis as part of preliminary design research.**
- 27\* *Understand how to embed the knowledge, worldviews and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, shared through engagement processes, into the conceptual design in a meaningful, respectful and appropriate way.*
- 28 **Be able to draw on knowledge from building sciences and technology, environmental sciences and behavioural and social sciences as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design to optimise the performance of the project.**
- 29 **Be able to develop and evaluate design options in terms of the heritage, cultural and community values embodied in the site, and in relation to project requirements.**
- 30 **Be able to explore options for siting a project, including integrating information and analysis of relevant cultural, social and economic factors.**
- 31 **Be able to identify, analyse and integrate information relevant to environmental sustainability – such as energy and water consumption, resources depletion, waste, embodied carbon and carbon emissions – over the lifecycle of a project.**
- 32 **Be able to apply planning principles and statutory planning requirements to the site and conceptual design of the project.**
- 33 Be able to investigate, coordinate and integrate sustainable environmental systems – including water, thermal, lighting and acoustics in response to consultants’ advice.
- 34 Communicate conceptual design proposals and associated information to client, stakeholders and communities using appropriate and culturally responsive methods appropriate to different audiences.
- 35 Be able to assess operational and embodied carbon implications of materials, components, construction systems and supply chains (including transport) to achieve net zero whole life carbon when developing design concepts. This includes integrating relevant consultant expertise and advising on the impact of chosen materials, components and systems on carbon outcomes.

#### **Detailed Design and Construction Documentation**

- 36 **Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, emergent knowledge, critical evaluation and continued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to produce a coherent project design. This should be resolved in terms of supporting health and wellbeing outcomes for Country, site planning, formal composition, spatial planning and circulation as appropriate to the project brief and all other factors affecting the project.**
- 39 **Be able to integrate the material selection, structural and construction systems established in the conceptual design into the detailed design and documentation.**
- 40 **Be able to resolve and present a coherent detailed design solution within necessary timeframes to obtain client and stakeholder approvals.**
- 44\* *Maintain effective and clear communication in the coordination of relevant consultants, manufacturers and suppliers as required under the terms of engagement.*
- 45 Be able to nominate and integrate quality and performance standards with regard to selected materials, finishes, fittings, components and systems, considering the impact on Country and the environment, and the whole life carbon impact of the project. This includes integrating life cycle assessments and other expertise and advice from consultants.



- 46 Be able to produce project documentation that meets the requirements of the contract and procurement process and complies with regulatory controls, building standards and codes, and conditions of construction and planning approvals.
- 47 Be able to complete and communicate on-time, accurate documents for relevant stakeholders, including drawings, models, specifications, schedules and construction documentation.

#### **Design Delivery and Construction Phase Services**

- 48\* *Be able to select and implement project administration systems, based upon an assessment of the selected procurement method and its implications on project delivery.*
- 51\* *Be able to provide advice to clients and lead (or contribute to) the process of selecting a qualified contractor in accordance with the agreed procurement method and construction contract.*
- 54\* *Be able to monitor construction progress and quality as required under the provisions of the construction contract, which may include site visits.*
- 55\* *Be able to apply appropriate and consistent systems for record keeping, document control and revision status during the construction phase.*
- 56\* *Be able to apply appropriate and consistent systems for identification of defects, rectifications and approval of substitutions.*
- 57\* *Be able to apply relevant processes required for certification of monetary progress claims, project variations, extensions of time, project instructions, and requests for information, practical completion or other administrative functions explicit in the selected procurement method and associated construction contract.*
- 58\* *Complete documentation – including specifications, drawings, schedules, reports, certification and approvals – and other project information for issue to the client and relevant authorities, as required under the construction contract and relevant building and planning codes.*

#### **Registration as an architect**

Successful completion of the [Architectural Practice Examination](#) is required before the candidate can apply for registration. Candidates for the NSW PPA may log their experience in architectural practice gained prior to the successful completion of the NSW PPA for the purposes of meeting the eligibility requirements for the APE.

#### **Further information**

For further information, visit the NSW ARB website or contact the Registrar, Dr Kirsten Orr.

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

T. +61 2 9241 4033

E. [registrar@architects.nsw.gov.au](mailto:registrar@architects.nsw.gov.au)

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#### **Disclaimer**

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