

NSW

Architects Registration Board
L2, 156 Gloucester Street
Sydney NSW 2000

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

Architects Regulation 2017 Information Sheet ARCHITECTS' LEARNING GROUPS

August 2019

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for architects in NSW

The NSW *Architects Code of Professional Conduct* (the Code) Part 5, Section 16 requires that architects must annually demonstrate to the NSW Architects Registration Board (the Board) that they have taken all reasonable steps to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills relevant to their architectural practice and their provision of architectural services.

[Download the Code here.](#)

Architects are required at their annual renewal of registration to upload evidence of their CPD activity for the last 12-month period.

In NSW, a one-hour activity is equivalent to one CPD point.

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

[Download the CPD Policy here.](#)

[Download the CPD Information Sheet here.](#)

Architects should regard the requirement to undertake CPD as an opportunity to address their individual career development and employment needs and to meet personal objectives. As such, you should be strategic in how you plan your CPD to ensure that it genuinely relates to, and enhances, your practice.

Architects are expected to explore a range of relevant Elements of Competency and Performance Criteria from the *National Standard of Competency for Architects* (the Standard) to strategically develop their knowledge and skills.

[Download the Standard here.](#)

Architects' Learning Groups

Peer education amongst experienced practitioners is recognised as an effective tool for professionals to maintain and improve knowledge and skills in the dynamic environment of professional services.

The concept of Architects' Learning Groups has been developed 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 guidelines below, participants in the Group's activities 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 on the basis of 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 if there are any changes to the Group.** Each Group should confirm / update their membership as at 1 July each year.

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 the decision of the architect members of your Group. If a Learning Group comprises five architects, the Group may decide to run five Learning



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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 architect members.**
- 2.3 **Identify who will be responsible for preparing and presenting each of the Learning Sessions for the Group.**

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 they comply 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 a result of the other architect members of the Group participating in your Learning Session.
- 3.2 **Map the learning outcomes to 2-3 relevant Units of Competency / Elements of Competency / Performance Criteria from the Standard.** CPD activities in each year should relate to a minimum of two of the four Units of Competency from the Standard:
 - Design;
 - Documentation;
 - Project Delivery; and
 - Practice Management.

These Units of Competency are further divided into a detailed set of 9 Elements of Competency and 70 Performance Criteria.

[Download the Board’s summary of the Standard here.](#)

- 3.3 **Decide on a format for your Learning Session that will optimise peer-to-peer learning between the architect members of the Group.**

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; and so on.

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.

Note that 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).

Each architect member of the Group will record their participation on their Activity Record of CPD which must be kept for a minimum 5 years.

- 4.1 **Log your participation in Learning Sessions on your Activity Record of CPD.**

If the Learning Session is one 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).

**Note 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.



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**Note a maximum 10 hrs Formal CPD per year may be claimed for participating in Learning Sessions*

- 4.2 The presenter keeps a record of the planning and presentation for their Learning Session.**
- 4.3 All architect members keep records of their CPD activities for at least 5 years.**

Architects can update their CPD activity at any time by logging into their account on the Board's website.

[Login into your account here.](#)

The Board has also developed the **ARB OPEN App** that allows architects to record their CPD Activity on the spot and to synchronise this with their Board account. Use your mobile device to download the ARB OPEN App for iOS or Android.

Additionally, architects can download from the Board website the *CPD Activity Record* as an editable pdf form.

[Download the CPD Activity Record here.](#)

If you have any questions regarding Architects' Learning Groups or Continuing Professional Development, please contact the NSW Architects Registration Board.

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