The NSW Architects Registration Board is the statutory authority established by the Government to administer the NSW Architects Act.

The use of the title “architect” is strictly regulated. It is reserved by law in NSW as well as with other States and Territories in Australia and in many countries overseas that only people who are registered as architects may use the title “architect”, or descriptions such as “architectural” which derive from it.

Section 9 of the NSW Architects Act 2003 sets out the general qualifications and requirements for registration in this State and the criteria for admission to the Register of Architects which it maintains.

Registration also compels architects to act professionally and ethically. Architects are bound by the NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct embodied in the Regulations under the Architects Act.

This information sheet sets out the conditions and procedures for the AACA Architectural Practice Examination, which is accepted by the Board as the final requirement for registration.

The content contained in this Information Sheet is provided for information purposes only. It is based upon the best information available at the date of issue and is subject to change without notice.

The NSW Architects Registration Board does not accept any liability to any person for the information or the use of this information. Any person requiring an interpretation of the meaning of the Architects Act or Regulations should seek their own advice from a legal practitioner.

NSW Register of Architects

Architects are skilled and experienced professionals. In order to be registered as architects in NSW, they firstly must have a university qualification in architecture, or other qualification that the Board deems equivalent. This may include an approved overseas academic qualification. Individuals not having a qualification in architecture must pass a rigorous assessment of relevant experience.

In addition to holding an approved academic qualification, an individual must have at least two years approved experience, one year of which must be in Australia, pass the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia’s Architectural Practice Examination (APE) conducted by the Board and, upon successful completion of the APE, apply to the Board to be enrolled on the Register of Architects.

Mutual Recognition Act (MRA) (Interstate Architects)

Architects who are currently registered in another State or Territory in Australia are eligible to apply for registration as in New South Wales under the terms of the Mutual Recognition Act (MRA). Applicants are required to submit a completed application form, a certification from the Registrar of a State Registration Board where a person is currently registered as an architect, and the payment of the prescribed enrolment fee. A Statutory Declaration must be completed to signify that the applicant is a ‘fit and proper’ person to be registered in NSW.

Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement (TTMRA)

Under the terms of the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement, architects registered in New Zealand are eligible to apply for registration as architects in New South Wales. Applicants are required to submit a completed application form, present the current Practising Certificate from NZAERB and pay the registration fee. Additional experience and examination are not required.

APEC Architect

The APEC Architect framework is a direct response to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) a cooperative association between 21 regional economies, founded to promote economic and technical cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

The APEC Architect Project is intended to facilitate the provision of architectural services between participating economies around the Pacific Rim.
The fundamental idea behind the project is that using the APEC Architect Framework participating economies are able to enter into bilateral or multi-lateral arrangements which allow senior architects in these economies to access fast-track cross-border registration procedures.

Australia, along with a number of other APEC member economies, has agreed to participate in the APEC Architect framework.

The participating economies in the APEC Architect Project are:

- Australia
- Canada
- People’s Republic of China
- Hong Kong China
- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Republic of the Philippines
- Singapore
- Chinese Taipei
- Thailand
- United States of America

To become an APEC Architect, senior architects should contact their local APEC Architect Monitoring Committee via the participating economies listed above. In Australia, architects should contact the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) www.aaca.org.au

Temporary Registration of Overseas Architects

The Board may register an individual from overseas who intends to practice in NSW for a limited period and who is not normally a resident of NSW. The Board must be satisfied that the individual has architectural qualifications and practical experience in another country that demonstrates that they are capable of practising architecture in this State with the same competence and skill expected of architects with full registration.

A person granted temporary registration is registered as an architect until the temporary registration expires or is cancelled. Temporary registration expires on the date stated in the relevant certificate of registration unless the period of temporary registration is extended.

The Board may from time to time extend the period for which temporary registration is in force; or may cancel a person’s temporary registration for any reason that the Board considers proper. Cancellation does not affect any application for full registration by that person.

The Board may impose such conditions as it thinks fit in the temporary registration of a person and may at any time remove, add to or vary those conditions by notice in writing to the registered person.

Non-Practising Status

Architects who have been on the Register at any time may choose to change their status to non-practising if they have retired from practice or are not providing the services as an architect for a foreseeable future.

Non-practising architects pay an annual fee of $40. Architects who are currently on the Register but wish to change their status from practising to non-practising should apply to do so at annual renewal time and should state a reason for doing so, noting that they could not offer architectural services of any kind whilst in the non-practising status.

Requirements for Registration as an Architect in New South Wales

The requirements for registration as an architect in New South Wales are:

- an approved academic qualification in architecture, or equivalent
- an approved period of practical experience
- successful completion of the AACA Architectural Practice Examination (APE)

Registration and enrolment fees are payable upon application. Contact the Board’s office for advice on required fees.

Qualifications in Architecture

Prescribed Qualifications

The Bachelor of Architecture or Master of Architecture (from 2008 onwards) from the University of Newcastle, the University of New South Wales, the University of Sydney, and the University of Technology, Sydney.

Other Australian Qualifications

The Board also recognises academic qualifications in architecture obtained from other States and Territories in Australia that have been approved by the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA).

Overseas Qualifications

Generally, all qualifications in architecture obtained outside Australia must be assessed and accepted by the AACA. Provisional assessments carried out to intending migrants before they reach Australia are not sufficient for registration purposes. The final AACA recommendation of equivalence is through a process called the Review of Academic Equivalence (RAE) or the Review of Graduate Equivalence (RGE).

Academic qualifications from approved overseas schools are:

- New Zealand architecture qualifications
- Master of Architecture from the National University of Singapore obtained from July 1999 onwards
- Master of Architecture from the University of Hong Kong from December 2010 onwards

Information about accreditation of overseas qualifications is available from AACA website www.aaca.org.au
A person with any of the qualifications stated above must obtain 12 months work experience in Australia, record the experience in the AACA logbook and complete the AACA Architectural Practice Examination (APE).

National Program of Assessment (NPrA)

Persons who do not hold an approved academic qualification in architecture may qualify through the National Program of Assessment established by the AACA to assess a person's qualifications using a competency-based assessment. Applicants who are accepted in the program are required to complete a project submission carried out within 6 months from the commencement date of the program. Successful completion of the NPrA is accepted by the Board as equivalent to an approved academic qualification in architecture.

Contact AACA directly or visit the www.aaca.org.au for information.

Built Work Program of Assessment (BWPrA)

Persons who do not hold an approved academic qualification in architecture may also qualify through the BWPrA. Candidates must have design and construction experience gained in Australia over a minimum of ten years. For the purposes of this assessment, the candidate must have authored or directed the design of a built project in architecture and present this for assessment.

Successful applicants must, in addition to the BWPrA complete the AACA Architectural Practice Examination (APE). They may apply for the APE immediately upon successful completion of the BWPrA.

Information Sheet for the BWPrA sets out the details of the program.

Application

Form 01 – Initial Application for Registration

Persons who wish to apply for registration as an architect in NSW for the first time must complete the NSWARSB Form 01.

Submit the application with:
- Original degree / testamur for verification
- Letter confirming successful completion of the AACA Architectural Practice Examination
- Prescribed registration and enrolment fee

In exceptional circumstances, where the original degree / testamur cannot be produced, the Board may accept a certification from the Awarding Body that the missing documents have been issued or a certificate confirming the academic award was received.

APEC Architect - SAP

An APEC Architect who wishes to be registered in Australia should contact the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) to confirm eligibility for the Supplementary Assessment Process (SAP). On completion of the SAP, the APEC Architect may apply for registration as an architect in NSW by completing Form 01.

Form 02 – Application for Registration by Interstate and NZ Architects

Under Section 20 of the Mutual Recognition Act 1992 of the Commonwealth, a person is entitled to be registered as an architect in NSW if they are currently registered as architects in another State or Territory in Australia.

The same applies to a person who is currently registered in New Zealand.

Applicants for registration must submit with the application and fee, a letter from the State or Territory Registrar where registration is held confirming the currency of registration and for New Zealand architects, a copy of the current practising certificate.

Form 03 – Application for Temporary Registration by Overseas Architects

The NSW Architects Registration Board may register an individual with an overseas qualification for a defined and limited period.

This temporary registration is not designed for individuals seeking recognition of their overseas qualifications for registration as an architect in Australia and for immigration purposes.

Applications for temporary registration as an overseas architect in NSW must include details of architectural education, registration status from the country of origin and from other registration jurisdiction overseas; and a record of professional employment - in order to assure the NSW Architects Registration Board that the applicant is capable of practising architecture in the NSW with the same level of competence and skills expected of architects with full registration.

The applicant for temporary registration must be currently registered or licensed as an architect in a jurisdiction outside Australia. Evidence of current registration/licence must accompany the application. A certified copy of the current...
registration or licence must be provided, together with an English translation if the original document was issued in a language other than English.

Applicants must satisfy the Board that they have completed a minimum of seven years of professional practice as an architect. Experience must be gained in the practice of architecture as articulated in the Australian National Competency Standards in Architecture: Design, Documentation, Project Management and Practice Management.

Applicants must provide a summary of their experience over a minimum of seven years of professional practice and should include details of:

a. dates and location of each period of employment
b. position title and description; the nature of the projects worked on (multi-residential, retail, industrial, commercial or other), key responsibilities held and categories of clients (occupier, developer, builder, investor or other - give description)
c. name and contact details of present employer

Three professional referee reports testifying to the competence of the applicant’s competence in the provision of architectural services are also required. At least one of these referee reports should be from a client.

The applicant’s passport and visa to Australia must be presented to the Board for verification. The applicant must inform the Board immediately of any change in status/category of their visa.

Temporary registration as an overseas architect in NSW will entitle an individual to practise architecture in NSW only.

Each application is considered on a case by case basis, and temporary registration may be renewed at the discretion of the Board, or alternatively, may be withdrawn at any time.

Form 06 – Application for Re-registration as an Architect

Applicants whose names have been taken off the Register for up to three years, will be required to submit a current CV and may be required to submit a record of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) undertaken in the year leading up to the application for re-registration.

Applicants whose names have been taken off the Register for a period between 3 – 7 years will be required to submit the above requirements, undertake a refresher course and to attend a registration interview after the course is completed. Contact the Board if you fall in this category.

Applicants who are currently listed in the non-practising architects category wishing to re-register as practising architects will be required to complete this form. If listed as non-practising for more than three years, it will be necessary to comply with the conditions above.

Form 07 – Application for Registration as a Non-Practising Architect

Architects who have retired from practice or are not likely to be practising as an architect in the foreseeable future may use this form. Alternatively the transfer can be made in the renewal of registration form.

A person must have been on the Register previously in the full registration category.

Registration in this category entitles a person to continue using the title ‘Architect’ but not providing architectural services.

Fees

Initial Registration $370
Registration Renewal $220
Registration of Interstate and New Zealand Architects $220
Temporary registration of overseas architects $620
Non-Practising annual fee $40

Registration fees do not attract GST.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Practising architects should maintain and improve the skills necessary for the provision of the architectural services they normally provide.

Upon annual renewal of registration architects are required to certify that they have taken reasonable steps to maintain and improve their skills.

Each year 5% of all registered architects are audited on CPD.
Professional Indemnity Insurance

Practising architects should maintain professional indemnity insurance appropriate to the architectural services they provide.

Exemptions may apply to
- architects providing services as an employee of an architect corporation or firm
- architects who have commenced an architectural practice recently
- architects, on application to the Board can request waiver due to extenuating circumstances.

Architects Code of Professional Conduct

The NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct was introduced as a Regulation under the NSW Architects Act 2003, in force from 30 June 2004. The Architects Regulation was amended in July 2012.

The Code articulates guidelines for acceptable standards of professional practice for architects.

It enables clients to understand the standards expected of architects and the level of accountability expected of them in the provision of architectural services. Importantly, the Code encourages a shared understanding between architects and clients of the nature, extent and cost of services and the obligations of each party.

Important features of the NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct are that architects should:
- act fairly and ethically at all times
- have a written architect-client agreement for all work undertaken
- have adequate professional indemnity cover
- keep their professional practice up to date through participation in continuing professional development activities
- disclose any conflicts of interest
- include their registration number on all business stationery and agreements

The NSW Architects Registration Board will have regard to the Code when investigating complaints against providers of architectural services. It will be a relevant consideration in determining what constitutes proper and ethical conduct by an architect.

An architect engaged to provide an architectural service to a client should provide the client with a copy of the Code before commencing the provision of services, or as soon as reasonably practicable after commencing.

Contacts

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