



Introduction

There is an expectation today, by Government, the public, consumers and insurers, that the providers of professional services are maintaining their knowledge, skill and competencies. This is also reflected in many Acts of Parliament that control the governing bodies of various professions. Architects are no different, and participating in a continuing professional development (CPD) program is one way architects can ensure their knowledge, skills and competencies are current.

Architects Act 2004

The *Architects Act 2004* requires the Architects Board of WA (Board) to be satisfied that an architect has attained or maintained an appropriate level of knowledge, skill and competence in order to renew a person's registration (section 36(2)(a)(iii)). The Board's preferred method of demonstrating this requirement is participation in a CPD program. However, this does not preclude a person from providing evidence in some other form to satisfy the Board's requirements. In some circumstances, the Board may require the architect to undergo a written and/or oral examination to demonstrate that alternative methods are satisfactory.

Framework for CPD

The Board has developed this CPD framework based on a joint policy developed by the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia and the Australian Institute of Architects. This should ensure that architects registered in more than one state or territory need only keep one set of CPD records. The Board is also committed to making the types of qualifying CPD activities as broad as possible in recognition that continuing education that develops knowledge, skills and competencies may originate from many sources.

This framework takes as its basis the National Competency Standards in Architecture (NCSA)¹. The NCSA identifies reasonable standards to be achieved for registration, and requires that architects will possess an understanding across all competencies and be able to contribute to the resolution of complex architectural problems. Whilst the practice of architecture often involves specialisation, registration requires all competencies to be understood throughout a person's professional career.

The NCSA prescribes standards in four units:

- Design;
- Documentation;
- Project Management; and
- Practice Management.

Each unit is further divided into a detailed set of specific contexts, elements and performance criteria. Each CPD activity should be contained within one or more of these units and address the relevant context, element and performance criteria. Activities in each year should relate to at least two of the competency units listed above.

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing professional development should:

- relate to practice as an architect;
- be additional to activities already undertaken in the normal course of an architect's practice or employment;
- broaden an architect's experience in practice; and
- maintain an understanding of all competencies.

¹ The NCSA are produced by the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia and can be downloaded from their website www.aaca.org.au.

Accepted CPD activities may be either formal or informal as defined below:

- **Formal CPD** – a learning activity with stated learning outcomes that is formally assessed or has significant interaction between presenter and learner.
- **Informal CPD** – a learning activity that may have stated learning outcomes that involves no formal assessment process or significant interaction between presenter and learner.

One CPD point is allocated for every hour of involvement. More details about the types of acceptable CPD activities and their point allocations can be found in the Appendix.

Formal CPD

CPD activities in the formal category must have stated learning outcomes that are formally assessed or have significant interaction between the presenter and learner. They should be conducted by presenters with appropriate academic, technical or practical experience, and they may be internet based.

Accredited courses relating to any aspect of the practice of architecture conducted by TAFE, universities or Registered Training Organisations are formal activities.

Short courses that are offered by professional associations, architect networks, employers etc. that have stated learning outcomes and are formally assessed are included in the formal category. Assessment may be in a variety of forms, for example, a test, self-check questions and answers, or a paper submitted at the end of the activity.

Other activities that do not include formal assessment, but involve significant interaction between the presenter and learner may also be included in the formal category. Significant interaction in any relevant activity is where there is direct communication between the presenter and learner, requiring the learner to actively participate in exercises, case studies, workshops, role plays, discussion etc. Feedback related to the activity should be provided by the presenter to the learner.

Activities under this category may also include an opportunity for participants to prepare for the activity to maximise the benefits to them. For example, participants may be asked to read specified articles prior to attending the activity, or prepare a case study for analysis and discussion.

Examples of activities with significant interaction include:

- small groups undertaking case studies and/or written exercises with feedback from the presenter;
- a web-based tool or CD rom that requires learner 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 learner is required to complete specified tasks or activities.

Architects involved in the preparation and presentation of CPD activities and authoring published articles, books and papers are also able to claim formal CPD points.

Informal CPD

Informal CPD activities may have stated learning outcomes, and they do not involve any formal assessment or significant interaction between the presenter and learner. Only two points can be claimed for an informal activity at any one time.

Examples of informal CPD include:

- self directed study of practice notes and professional magazines;
- talks and presentations;
- visits to buildings and exhibitions;
- conferences;
- involvement in mentoring programs²;
- participation in professional committees and advisory groups²; and
- raising awareness of architecture in primary and secondary schools.

Activities that simply promote brand names and services are not CPD activities.

² May be formal CPD if the activity has been assessed or involves significant interaction between the presenter and learner.

Practising Architects

Architects should undertake a minimum of 20 CPD points each year, of which at least 10 points are formal CPD. Generally, CPD points may not be banked and 'rolled over' from one year to the next.

Architects are required to declare that they have maintained their knowledge, skills and competencies when they complete their renewal of registration application.

Architects should keep records of their CPD activities for at least 5 years as they may be relevant in the case of a complaint.

Compliance will be monitored through random audits of CPD records as part of the renewal of registration process.

Architects subject to a formal complaint or disciplinary action will also be required to submit their CPD records as part of any investigation, and possibly for the subsequent renewal of registration process.

Non Practising Architects

Non practising architects are not required to maintain their knowledge, skills and competencies for renewal of non-practising registration. However, should a non practising architect wish to re-commence practice, they will need to satisfy the Board that they have maintained their knowledge, skill and competence. Voluntary participation in some CPD activities may assist this process. For more information see Information Sheet 04 – Restore to Practising Division.

Exemptions

The Board will consider providing an exemption to the requirement for architects to provide evidence that they are maintaining an appropriate level of knowledge, skill and competence, if they can demonstrate that 'special circumstances' apply. Examples of special circumstances include:

- where the architect or his/her immediate family member has suffered serious illness or some other significant misadventure;
- where an architect has become registered for the first time and has completed the Architectural Practice Examination (APE) in the current registration period (the architect will be deemed to have undertaken 20

formal points of CPD and an automatic exemption will be granted);

- where an architect has been included on the Register part way through the registration period (requirements will then be pro rata); and
- other special circumstances.

Where a particular circumstance applies for only part of the registration period, then a pro rata commitment will be expected.

To apply for a 'special circumstances' exemption, architects should submit a written explanation to the Board outlining their circumstances.

Selecting Appropriate CPD Activities

Architects are responsible for identifying appropriate CPD activities. Each year architects are encouraged to develop their own continuing professional development plan which addresses the maintenance of their knowledge, skills and competencies.

The requirement to undertake CPD should be seen as an opportunity to develop particular skills in light of individual career development needs, personal objectives and employment needs.

CPD Providers

Providers of appropriate CPD activities include:

- registered training organisations;
- universities, TAFE etc;
- professional and industry associations;
- architect learning groups or networks;
- commercial education and training providers;
- employers; and
- product and service suppliers (activities offered by product and service suppliers should be technically accurate, educational and well balanced, not simply a marketing exercise).

The Board will not accredit CPD providers. Architects should assess the published information about the activity, the reputation of the provider, the quality of the activity and relevance of the subject matter to determine if a particular activity is

appropriate to their needs. A list of some CPD providers can be found in Information Sheet 03 – CPD providers.

Monitoring Compliance and Records

Architects are required to keep records of their CPD activities for at least 5 years. The Board has developed a CPD recording sheet (Form 09 – CPD Record) which can be downloaded from the Board's website. Architects may choose to complete this form or keep similar records of CPD activities including the date, activity, location, category of activity – formal or informal, relationship to the NCSA and points claimed.

Auditing Practising Architects

CPD records of 5% of practising architects will be randomly audited annually as part of the renewal of registration process. Those architects to be audited will be notified 3 months in advance of receiving their renewal of registration documentation. This will allow architects time to undertake CPD activities if necessary, and ensure appropriate CPD records are in order.

The Board will establish a CPD committee to check an architect's compliance against this framework. If an architect does not meet the CPD framework requirements, the architect will be asked to develop a program that outlines how they plan to make up the balance of points. The architect will be audited again the following year to ensure the CPD program has been undertaken. Removal from the Register will only be considered as a last resort.

In the absence of providing CPD records on request for auditing purposes, the Board may refuse to renew an architect's registration or require the architect to sit an oral exam³. In these circumstances, practising architects will have to submit a statement outlining how they have maintained their knowledge, skill and competence in relation to the NCSA, and this statement will form the basis of the oral interview.

Changing Registration Divisions

If a non practising architect wishes to re-commence practice, they will have to demonstrate that their knowledge, skill and competence adequately addresses the NCSA. This may include:

- having voluntarily undertaken CPD activities and providing documentary evidence of this;
- sitting an oral examination³;
- providing a log book documenting 12 months experience in an architectural office, sitting a written and oral examination³; or
- another method acceptable to the Board.

See Information Sheet 04 – Restore to Practice Division for more information.

³ Examinations may incur a fee.

Acknowledgements

The Architects Board of WA would like to acknowledge the NSW Architects Registration Board for generously permitting the use of their CPD information and processes as a starting point for developing this framework.

This framework has been endorsed in principle by the Australian Institute of Architects, WA Chapter, Chapter Council.

Appendix – CPD Activities

Title	Description	Type	Point Allocation per Annum
Employment	Ongoing practice for an architect which allows direct contribution to the resolution of complex architectural problems and where knowledge and skills are being achieved and extended across more than one area of competency.	Formal	Up to a maximum of 2 points for full time employment and 1 point for part-time employment.
Self directed study	Self directed study of advisory notes, technical magazines, journals, statutory publications etc.	Informal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points per year.
Talks, lectures, conferences	<p>Activities that are not formally assessed or do not involve significant interaction between the presenter and learner. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attendance at talks and presentations by peers; • design workshops, lectures and seminars; • structured visits to specific / relevant buildings and exhibitions; • conferences⁴; and • raising awareness of architecture in public forms or in primary and secondary schools. <p>⁴ Some conference activities may be formal CPD.</p>	Informal	<p>1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points per session / day.</p> <p>Cannot be the sole informal CPD activity undertaken for the year.</p>
Travel / study tours	<p>Where specific travel / study tours have been undertaken to extend a person's knowledge relevant to their field of expertise⁵.</p> <p>Up to 5 formal points in a year may be claimed for appropriately documented travel i.e. travel in which a report has been prepared which lists buildings that were visited, describes the outcomes of the travel and explains how the travel has contributed to improving knowledge, skill and competencies.</p> <p>⁵ Some travel / study tour activities may be formal CPD.</p>	Informal or Formal ⁵	<p>1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points for any one trip. In addition, up to 5 formal points in a year, may be claimed if supported with appropriate documentation.</p> <p>Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.</p>

Title	Description	Type	Point Allocation per Annum
Mentoring students and graduates, and providing work experience for students	Architects responsible for overseeing work experience in the workplace, mentoring architectural students or graduates, including structured sessions with employed graduate architects leading towards their registration. Activities that develop the profession will be accepted and should be recorded against Unit 4: Practice Management of the NCSA.	Formal or Informal ⁶	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points per session. Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Professional committees and groups	Participation in professional practice committees and advisory groups through professional associations, regulatory authorities, government bodies, providing expert witness services e.g. arbitration and mediation. Activities that develop the profession should be recorded against Unit 4: Practice Management of the NCSA.	Formal or Informal ⁷	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points per session. Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Architect learning or peer groups	Architect learning or peer groups provide opportunities for specialist groups or like minded architects to form a group that organises forums, workshops, project visits etc. in their particular field of interest. ⁸ Activity may be formal or informal depending on the level of interaction between presenter and learner and if the activity is assessed.	Formal or Informal ⁸	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points per session. Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Delivering Presentations	Preparation and delivery of a CPD activity to either internal or external architects.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 5 points for the year. Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Activities that include assessment	Examples include short courses offered by professional associations, architect networks, employers, internet / on-line etc. Assessment may be in a variety of forms e.g. a test, self-check questions and answers, a paper or report submitted after the activity.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 3 points per session.

Title	Description	Type	Point Allocation per Annum
Activities that include significant interaction between learner and presenter	<p>Significant interaction is where there is direct communication between the presenter and learner, and the learner is required to actively participate in exercises, case studies, workshops, role-plays, discussions etc. Activities under this category may also include an opportunity for participants to prepare for an activity to maximise the benefit to them. For example, participants may be asked to read specified articles prior to attending or prepare a case study analysis and discussion.</p> <p>Examples of activities with significant interaction include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small groups undertaking case studies, workshops, seminars, and may include written exercises with feedback from the presenter; • a web-based tool or CD Rom that requires learner interaction and input e.g. the completion of a set activity; • participation in formalised group discussion involving a case study relevant to architecture or industry practices; and • remote learning activities (either print based or e-learning) that include the opportunity to demonstrate engagement and participation in the activities. 	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 3 points per session.
In-house practice activities that include significant interaction between learner and presenter	In-house training where the learner is required to complete specified tasks or activities or includes some form of assessment.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 2 points per session. Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Architectural Practice Examiners	Participating as an examiner for the Architects Board of WA (or equivalent)	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement. Cannot be the sole CPD activity undertaken for the year.

Title	Description	Type	Point Allocation per Annum
Certificate or Award Courses	A course provided by a registered training organisation (e.g. a CAD course provided by TAFE) or a university award course (e.g. post graduate diploma or University 'Extension' course). Includes face to face lectures, correspondence or external course and e-learning modes of delivery.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 5 points for the year. Significant post graduate courses (i.e. minimum diploma level or equivalent) may be eligible for recognition of meeting all CPD point requirements for the current year subject to written application to the Board.
Authorship of Published Articles	Authorship of published papers or articles in journals and magazines. Authorship of published books.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 3 points. Cannot be the sole formal CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Lecturing	Full time, part time or sessional lecturing in relevant program at tertiary level.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 5 points for the year. Cannot be the sole formal CPD activity undertaken for the year.
Research	Research undertaken which is not part of teaching units or student work, and where the results of research leads to the publication of referred papers, articles etc.	Formal	1 point for every hour of involvement up to a maximum of 5 points for the year. Cannot be the sole formal CPD activity undertaken for the year.

Note: Generally, the allocation of points per activity can be applied to multiple events of the same type of activity throughout the year; however, CPD points must be gained across at least two competency units of the NCSA. A maximum of two sessions can be claimed in one day e.g. attending a conference that includes 6 talks for the day can be split into a morning and afternoon session allowing two lots of 2 points to be claimed (4 points in total).