

## Architects Regulation 2012 Information Sheet CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT March 2013

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for architects in NSW

In each year, architects must take all reasonable steps to *maintain and improve the skills and knowledge necessary for the provision of the architectural services that the architect normally provides* (Part 5, Section 17 of the NSW Architects Code of Professional Conduct - the Code). For administrative ease, the Board requires architects to report on their CPD activities at the time of annual renewal of registration.

### Developing a CPD plan

Each year architects are encouraged to develop a CPD plan that addresses the maintenance, development and enhancement of their own professional knowledge and skills. Activities should relate to practice as an architect and be in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of the architect's practice or employment. Activities in each year should relate to a minimum of two units in the National Architecture Competency Standards - Design, Documentation, Practice Management and Project Management.

The National Competency Standards in Architecture (NCSA) © Architects Accreditation Council of Australia, may be downloaded from the AACA website [www.aaca.org.au](http://www.aaca.org.au).

### Providers of CPD

CPD activities may be provided by a number of organisations and individuals including:

- accredited training providers
- universities
- professional and industry associations
- architects groups or networks
- commercial education and training providers
- employers
- product and service suppliers (Note: Activities offered by product and service suppliers should be technically accurate, educational and well-balanced, not simply a marketing exercise.)
- Architects' Learning Groups

The Board does not accredit CPD providers.

### Selecting appropriate CPD activities

The responsibility for identifying appropriate CPD activities rests with the individual architect. Architects should always be guided by their own need for further development in specific areas of their practice.

Appropriate activities may be attended by architects while overseas or interstate or a provider may choose not to list their activity; activities may be self directed, such as authorship of articles, involvement in committees, private study of technical notes and journals and so on.

When considering whether courses or activities offered by CPD providers may be appropriate, architects should assess the published information about the activity, the reputation of the provider, the quality of the product and the relevance of the content the architectural services they provide.

Architects may also use the following checklist to determine whether an activity provided by a CPD provider may meet the requirements in the Board policy.

### Checklist

- does the presenter/s have appropriate academic, technical or practical expertise?
- has the activity been identified as formal or informal?
- if the activity is formal have the learning outcomes been identified?
- has the content been linked to the National Architecture Competency Standards?
- if the activity is formally assessed - has the form of assessment been identified?
- if the activity is in the formal category but does not include assessment, are there opportunities for significant interaction between the presenter and the learner?



NSW

Architects Registration Board

L2, 156 Gloucester Street

Sydney NSW 2000

T. +61 2 9241 4033 / F. +61 2 9241 6144

mail@architects.nsw.gov.au / www.architects.nsw.gov.au

ABN 63-092-097-847

## Record keeping and compliance

For the purposes of compliance with the Code the Board considers that **20 hours** total CPD, at 10 hours of which should be *formal* activities is considered reasonable.

Where an architect has not met least the minimum hours required the Board will take into account the individual circumstances of an architect when considering whether all reasonable steps have been taken to meet their CPD obligations. Matters that may be taken into consideration include:

- where the architect or his/her immediate family member has suffered illness or some other misadventure
- where an architect has been overseas for a considerable part of the year (at least 3 months)
- where an architect has been on parental leave during the registration year
- where an architect has been included on the Register part way through the year (requirements will then be pro rata)
- other exceptional circumstances.

Where particular circumstances have applied for only part of the year then a pro-rata commitment will be expected.

Where an architect is not able to satisfy the Board that he or she has met their obligations, and it is the Board's view that no extenuating circumstances apply, this may be grounds for characterising the architect's behaviour as unsatisfactory professional conduct. The Board takes this view as it would amount to a straight-out defiance of a legally authorised requirement imposed by the Board with a view to ensuring, in the interests of both the professional and the general public, that registered architects consistently maintain appropriate levels of professional development.

Architects are required to keep records of their activities for at least 5 years. The Board has developed a *Record of CPD Activity* for architects, available for download from the Board's website. Architects may choose to complete that form or keep similar records of CPD activities including the date, activity, location, category of activity - formal or informal, relationship to the National Competency Standards in Architecture and hours claimed.

Compliance with the requirement to take *reasonable steps to undertake appropriate CPD* may be checked where there is a complaint against the professional conduct of an architect. Each year 5% of architects will be selected by random audit to provide their CPD

record of activity for the previous registration year.

## Formal CPD activities - definition

A formal CPD activity relates to practice as an architect and is in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of practice or employment. In formal CPD activities

- new knowledge and skills are being acquired or being shared with peers
- learning outcomes must be stated
- an assessment activity must be included or there must be significant interaction between the presenter and the learner
- presenters must have appropriate academic, technical or practical expertise.

Formal activities may fall under four broad categories : accredited courses; activities that include assessment; activities with significant interaction between the presenter and the learner; and activities relating to the preparation and facilitation of CPD activities and authorship of published articles, books, paper; participation in Architects' Learning Groups.

**Accredited courses** - courses provided by a registered training organisation (eg a CAD course provided by TAFE) or a university award course (eg post graduate Diploma).

**Activities that include assessment** - examples include short courses offered by professional associations, architect networks, employers etc that relate to your practice of architecture.

Assessment may be in a variety of forms, for example a test, self-check questions and answers, a paper or report submitted after the activity.

**Activities that include significant interaction between the learner and the presenter** - 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, discussions and so on.

In activities that include significant interaction there should be feedback from the presenter to the learner in relation to the activity. Activities under this category may also include an opportunity for participants to prepare for the 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 for analysis and discussion.



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The number of participants in face to face activities in this category should generally be limited to a maximum of 30-35 participants to allow for an appropriate level of interaction between the presenter and the participants.

Typical examples of activities with significant interaction include:

- small groups undertaking case studies, workshops, seminars, may include 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.
- Remote learning activities (whether print based or e-learning) must include the opportunity to demonstrate engagement and participation in the activities.

### ***Activities relating to the preparation and facilitation of CPD activities and authorship of published articles, papers, books***

architects involved in the preparation and presentation of CPD activities and authoring published articles/books/papers are also able to claim hours in the formal CPD category. For example, up to 5 hours per registration years may be claimed for authorship of published articles in journals and magazines, up to 5 hours per registration year for preparing and presenting CPD activity, up to 5 hours per registration year for part time lecturing in a relevant program at tertiary level per registration year, up to 5 hours for contributing information about architecture to [www.architectureinsights.com.au](http://www.architectureinsights.com.au) per registration year.

***Architects' Learning Groups*** - The Board has developed a model to support peer education for architects - Architects' Learning Groups. The aim of Architects' Learning Groups is to provide opportunities for architects to undertake *formal* activities within their own peer network - outside the formal architect networks that currently exist.

An Architects' Learning Group comprises architects who have formed a group for the purpose of peer education. If the Group follows the guidelines produced by the Board, participants in the Group's activities can claim formal CPD hours.

Refer to *Information Sheet 8 Architects' Learning Groups*

## **Informal CPD activities - definition**

An informal CPD activity relates to practice as an architect (see the National Competency Standards in Architecture) and is in addition to activities already undertaken in the normal course of practice or employment but does not include any form of assessment.

- learning outcomes can be identified
- activity is intended to be educational, and is not part of normal employment practices
- new knowledge and skills are being acquired or being shared with peers
- consideration has been given to how this new knowledge may be applied to practice.

*Informal* CPD may include a wide range of activities from self directed research on professional issues, to attendance at talks and presentations on topics relevant to the practice of architecture.

**Note:** Only two hours can be claimed for an informal activity at any one time.

Examples of informal CPD activities include:

- self directed study of practice notes, technical magazines
- talks and presentations by peers
- structured visits to buildings and exhibitions
- design workshops, lectures and seminars
- conferences
- involvement in mentoring programs
- participation in professional practice committees and advisory groups - through professional associations, regulatory authorities, government bodies such as Standards Australia

Activities that simply promote product brand names and services would not be deemed to be a CPD activity.



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## More information

The Board has a section on the website devoted to CPD- [www.architects.nsw.gov.au](http://www.architects.nsw.gov.au).

Information available includes:

- Board Policy on CPD
- guidance for architects on CPD
- guidelines for establishment and operation of Architect Learning Groups
- a template for architects to record their CPD activities

### Disclaimer

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