

Guide for Architects - CPD

To commence 1/4/2011

Information Sheet I - Practising Architects and CPD

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for architects in Qld

In each year, practising architects must take all reasonable steps ... *to maintain competency in the practice of architecture* (Section 16 of the Qld Architects Act). 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 for Practising Architects

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 Competency Standards in Architecture – 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.

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, skills and competence. Voluntary participation in some CPD activities may assist this process.

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. However, the following information is provided to assist architects to select 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 to 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:

- 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 Competency Standards in Architecture?
- 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?

Record keeping and compliance

The Board considers that **20 hours** total CPD to be reasonable with at least 10 of the hours to be *formal* activities.

- Where an architect has not met at 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.

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 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.

With 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 the following 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 – a course 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.

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 3 hours may be claimed for authorship of published articles in journals and magazines, up to 5 hours for preparing and presenting a CPD activity, and up to 5 hours for part time lecturing in a relevant program at tertiary level.

Architects' Learning Groups - The Board supports peer education for architects whereby architects provide opportunities with other architects to undertake *formal* activities within their own peer network – outside the formal architect networks that currently exist.

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
- raising awareness of architecture in primary and secondary schools.

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

More information

The Board has a section on its website devoted to CPD: www.boaq.qld.gov.au. Information available includes:

- this Information Sheet 1
- Board Policy on CPD
- template for architects to record their CPD activities

DISCLAIMER

The content of 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 Board of Architects of Queensland does not accept any liability to any person for the information or the use of this information.