

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Australian  
Institute of  
Architects

PRACTICE OF  
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LEARNING  
SERIES

## What are the PALS Modules?

The PALS program draws together a number of learning resources to give you the best preparation for the APE. At its heart are the 21 Module videos. Each video contains a pre-recorded seminar provided by our team of industry experts focusing on an essential topic area both for your successful completion of the APE and to be the best practitioner you can be.

[Here](#)'s a little sample of what you can expect.

## What are the PALS Case Studies?

To reinforce what you've learned in the Modules, we provide regular Case Study livestream events. These are fully interactive webinars convened by an unsurpassed range of senior professionals and topic area experts. Each Case Study applies the theories into complex, real-world scenarios, and tackles the hard questions faced by architects in practice every day. These rigorous and dynamic sessions will sharpen your ability to evaluate, consider and act in any situation.

Have a quick look at sample of what you can expect [here](#).

## How do I buy PALS?

To buy PALS, simply head over to our [PALS registration page](#) and follow the instructions. If you already have a membership or user record, please have your login and password details handy.

## What if I am already a member?

If you are currently a member of the Institute you can buy PALS straight away at the special discounted rate by logging into the [PALS registration page](#) with your Australian Institute of Architects member number (e.g.: 54321) and your usual password.

## What if I want to join the Institute?

If you would like to become a member of the Institute first, to receive a significant discount on the full PALS price and all of the [benefits of membership](#), please [contact the Institute](#) for assistance prior to creating a login.

## Is it worthwhile becoming a member to get the PALS discount?

Yes. In addition to the other member discounts and benefits, you can buy PALS for \$785 pp instead of \$1224. If you are eligible for A+ membership, PALS is discounted even further to \$510 pp. Additional discounts also apply for multi-user purchases. For more information, view the [benefits of membership](#) and discounts information above.

## Can I get a discount if more than one person from my practice buys PALS?

Yes, and the amount will vary according to the number of users. For example, A+ members get approximately 35% off for 2-5 users. Multi-user options are great for larger firms. Please email [pals@architecture.com.au](mailto:pals@architecture.com.au) for multi-user discounts.

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## **How do I set up a multi-user PALS subscription?**

Please contact Knowledge Services at [pals@architecture.com.au](mailto:pals@architecture.com.au), stating the number of users required and your contact details. The person you nominate will then be contacted to begin the registration process.

## **What if I am not a member of the Institute?**

You can still buy PALS as a non-member and pay the full price. Keep in mind that, depending on your graduate level, it may actually cost less to become an Institute member and then purchase PALS than it does to buy PALS as a non-member.

## **What if I have forgotten my login?**

You can reset your login on the [PALS registration page](#) by clicking on the Reset Username and Reset Password options.

## **What is the difference between the Australian Institute of Architects, the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) and the Architects Registration Board (ARB)**

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) and the Architects Registration Board (ARB) administers Governments legislation regulating architects under the Architects Act.

They regulate and oversee the exams, logbooks, registrations or submission and APE dates. For any APE questions please refer to the [AACA](#) website.

The Australian Institute of Architects, that delivers the PALS course, is a membership organisation and represents the industry and practice of the architect. PALS prepares graduates for the APE exams and develops their pathway in practice. The Institute's PALS course does not regulate or oversee the exams, logbooks, registration or submission and APE dates.

## **What is the Australian Institute of Architects?**

The Australian Institute of Architects is the peak body for the architecture profession in Australia. We represent over 11,500 members globally and are dedicated to improving our built environment and the communities we call home by promoting quality, responsible, sustainable design.

The Australian Institute of Architects renowned PALS course has been helping graduates prepare for successful registration for over 20 years.

## **What does the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia do?**

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia ([AACA](#)) is the national voice for architect registration boards around Australia. They oversee accreditation of architecture programs in Australia and they own the National Standard of Competency for Architects.

The AACA is a not-for-profit organisation that works in collaboration with the architect registration boards on matters of national interest to the profession, industry and the public.

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## **What does the Architects Registration Board do?**

Each state and territory of Australia has its own Architects Registration Board.

They are a statutory authority that accredits courses in architecture, registers and regulates architects.

Find each architect registration board [here](#)

## **What are the different Pathways to registration?**

Please follow the link [here](#)

## **I have an overseas degree, how do I get registered?**

[Oversees Qualifications Assessment](#)

## **I am an experienced practitioner and have worked for many years in an architectural practice, how do I get registered?**

[Experienced Practitioner Assessment questions?](#)

## **Architectural Practice Exam queries? Logbook, exam dates, national examination paper?**

Please follow the link [here](#)

## **What does my PALS subscription include?**

Once purchased, graduates have access to the PALS program for 12 months, ensuring those who want to study at a slower pace, or need to re-sit the exam, have the flexibility to do so.

Your full year's access includes access to:

The full program of [21 pre-recorded online module presentations](#) that you can view, absorb and complete in your own time, along with [recordings of recent Case Study sessions](#).

Opportunity to join us for our live [Case Study webinar sessions](#)

This in-depth program includes a final module which focuses specifically on preparing for the exam, and is presented by an APE examiner.

The main reference material for the program is the Institute's highly regarded [Acumen practice notes](#), and the course includes full access to Acumen for 12 months.

The program also includes access to online tutorials facilitated by experienced architects. You will be able to ask questions, explore case studies and learn how to apply your new knowledge in a virtual classroom.

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What are the topics covered in the program of the 21 pre-recorded [online modules](#)?

O1 What is the Law?	This module outlines the legal obligations of an architect and the consequences of breaching them. It focuses on five key areas of special importance: negligence, contracts, the Architects Acts, the National Construction Code, and safe design.
O2 What is a Contract?	Contract law exists so that there is as much consistency and certainty as possible in everyone's relations with one another. In the business sector, businesspeople must be able to hold each other to their promises. On the other hand, it is clear that in certain situations, statements made by a party should not be taken by another as a promise. Contract law aims to strike a balance between these considerations.
O3 Authority Approvals and Planning Controls	This module is aimed to assist graduates to have a better understanding of authority approvals, planning controls and how these matters affect the practice of architecture. We will also briefly introduce other standards such as NCC and DDA that affect your work during the preparation of development applications.
O4 Professional Indemnity Insurance	Professional indemnity insurances are some of the most important insurances that an architect needs to undertake business and can prevent it from going under in the event of a claim. This module will discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the most important clauses of a professional indemnity insurance policy, the 'insuring clause';</li> <li>- Common 'need to know' insurance terms;</li> <li>- The difference between professional indemnity and public liability insurance;</li> <li>- Other types of insurance that are relevant for your business;</li> <li>- Common policy exclusions;</li> <li>- The fundamental nature of a professional indemnity policy namely that it is a 'claims made and notified' insurance;</li> <li>- The important requirement of the duty to notify;</li> </ul>
O5 Practice Management	This module covers a range of topics from the establishment of a practice through to its successful operation.
O6 Risk Management	This module discusses areas of risk arising in architectural practice including avoidable and unavoidable risks, and introduces a number of tools that assist architects in managing risk in the delivery of designs.
O7 Commissions and Briefs	This module deals predominately with the early parts of architects' interactions with a potential client. This topic relates closely to subsequent

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	modules 9, 10 and 11, which deal with the specific mechanics of the client-architect agreement.
09 Services, Fees and Agreements	This module provides an understanding of some of the key considerations when initially approached by a client, what to consider in formulating a fee proposal, and what to look out for in a client architect agreement.
08 Consultants	Architects are not the only professionals required to provide design and other services for construction projects. The architect works with consultants from up to dozens of other disciplines to obtain expert advice and design inputs. The selection of, engagement of and collaboration with these consultants brings a range of risks and responsibilities that architects must carefully manage for the success of the project. This module introduces the fundamentals of architects' working arrangements with consultants to help candidates understand how to manage these roles.
10 Client Architect Agreement Part 1	Having sound knowledge of the client-architect agreement and all its different components is critical to a successful project outcome. The scope of services and associated fee structure put in place needs to be well understood to ensure a project can be properly serviced.
11 Client Architect Agreement Part 2	Having sound knowledge of the client-architect agreement and all its different components is critical to a successful project outcome. Knowing about aspects relating to rights and obligations can assist if issues or problems arise during the course of the project. This module will look into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provisions relating to architect's rights on a project;</li> <li>- How to deal with disputes and possible termination;</li> <li>- Itemising various aspects in special conditions;</li> <li>- Advising the client of theirs and the architect's obligations;</li> </ul>
12 Project Cost Control	This module introduces the subject of managing costs on a project.
13 Moral and Ethical Rights	Ethics and ethical practices interact with everything the architect does, from the seemingly trivial through to the seriously life threatening. Moral rights are also incredibly important for the architect—in terms of respecting the work of others as well as protecting your own work, and for providing a meaningful and valuable built environment legacy for future generations.
14 Building Procurement	This module covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An overview of the range of procurement methods currently used by the construction industry, particularly traditional lump sum contracts vs non-traditional contracts;</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The impact on services required of the architect by each procurement method;</li> <li>- The 'standard' forms of contract available in the Australian construction industry;</li> <li>- Advice regarding recommending a form of contract;</li> <li>- Understanding various contract insurance risks;</li> </ul>
15 Tendering	<p>This module covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the objectives of and ethical background to tendering;</li> <li>- the process of calling tenders;</li> <li>- the process of receiving, evaluating and selecting tenders;</li> <li>- advice regarding tender negotiations;</li> <li>- accepting and engaging a contractor;</li> </ul>
16 Contracts	<p>This module introduces the various types of building contracts and aspects to consider when selecting which contract to use. It will then cover providing advice to clients and how they may be included in tender processes and the issues likely to be faced when administering the contract.</p>
17 Contract Terminology and Intro to ABIC	<p>This module focuses on the specific terms and conditions contained within a standard form construction contract, again using the ABIC Simple Works Contract as the example.</p> <p>This module works through the contract schedules and explains why they are relevant, before covering the key terms and conditions throughout the Simple Works Contract.</p>
18 Contract Administration - Framework	<p>This module covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The role of the architect;</li> <li>- Admin essentials;</li> </ul>
19 Contract Administration - Finance	<p>This module provides an outline and understanding of the principles of lump sum contracts with regard to financial aspects, how to manage changes to the works and the contract price, how to make payment for the works and keeping the client informed of costs during construction..</p>
20 Contract Administration - Time	<p>There are three fundamental aspects of a building project: the quality of the work, the cost of the work, and time. This module deals with the last of these three aspects.</p>
21 Preparation for APE 2 & 3	<p>This module covers aspects across the three components of the Architectural Practice Examination (APE), including tips, techniques, submission requirements and a few practical aspects of applying for and undertaking each part of the APE.</p>

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## Preliminary dates:

- Thursday 4 March 2021
- Thursday 11 March 2021
- Thursday 18 March 2021
- Thursday 25 March 2021
- Thursday 1 April 2021
- Thursday 8 April 2021
- Thursday 15 April 2021

## How long are the Online Tutorial sessions?

Approximate one and a half hours.

## Do I have to attend Online Tutorial sessions?

No, they are not compulsory, but they are strongly recommended to get the most out of the program. We will also be recording the session and making them available after the session.

## Do I need to complete all the modules before attending each tutorial?

Yes, to get the most out of the online tutorials we suggest you cover the relevant modules. There are 21 modules, each online tutorial session is set up to cover case studies and questions to specific modules (e.g. 1-3) Please see below for the program.

Thursday, 4 March 2021	Thursday, 11 March 2021	Thursday, 18 March 2021	Thursday, 25 March 2021	Thursday 1 April 2021	Thursday 8 April 2021	Thursday 15 April 2021
01 What is the Law 02 What is a Contract 03 Authority Approvals and Planning Controls	04 Professional Indemnity Insurance 05 Practice Management 06 Risk Management	07 Commissions and Briefs 08 Consultants 09 Services, Fees and Agreements	10 Client Architect Agreement Part 1 11 Client Architect Agreement Part 2 12 Project Cost Control	13 Moral and Ethical Rights 14 Building Procurement 15 Tendering	16 Contracts 17 Contract Terminology and Intro to ABIC 18 Contract Administration - Framework	19 Contract Administration - Finance 20 Contract Administration - Time 21 Preparation for APE 2 & 3

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## **Will my chapter be hosting face to face tutorials?**

Please contact your [local Chapter](#), to confirm if they will be running face to face tutorials.

## **What if I fail the exam? Can I attend the next round of tutorials?**

Of course we hope all PALS subscribers will pass, but you will have access to the PALS program for one year.

## **What if I can't get to the Online Tutorial sessions?**

You will have access to the recordings of the online tutor sessions. The online learning modules and Acumen access have been designed to make available to everyone the tools and resources to prepare for the exam.

## **What is Acumen?**

[Acumen](#) is the Institute's online database of architectural practice advisory material. Acumen content is structured under Practice, Project and Resource streams. Each stream enables the user to 'drill down' to the level of information required to satisfy their inquiry. Purchase of the PALS program includes 12 months subscription to Acumen. Each module contains links to supplementary Acumen material on the main topics to give you more in-depth knowledge. Once the PALS module takes you to the relevant Acumen entry, you will need to log in using the same login details you use for PALS.

## **I have been out of the workforce for three years, is PALS a suitable refresher course for me?**

Yes, the PALS modules cover all the essentials of architectural practice, so they make an ideal refresher course for architects returning to work.

## **I have an overseas qualification and would like to know more about Australian practice - is it worthwhile subscribing to PALS?**

Yes, because the PALS modules are an excellent, self-paced and easily accessible learning tool for architects and other design professionals who want to familiarise themselves with the essential aspects of Australian architectural practice.

## **My office already has access to Acumen - can I get a discount on PALS?**

No. PALS and Acumen are sold as a fully integrated package that is set up to give you personal, convenient and at-home access.

## **How do I view my invoice for PALS?**

Log into the PALS site with your member id. and password. Click on the "Buy now" button in the top right corner. You should see this message:

"You have already purchased the PALS program and cannot purchase it again for the 12-month duration for which it is active.

For support, please contact [pals@architecture.com.au](mailto:pals@architecture.com.au)

Click here to view your receipt." Click on the link in the last line to view your invoice.

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**My invoice does not show the correct details. What do I do?**

Write to [pals@architecture.com.au](mailto:pals@architecture.com.au) with your correct details and we will update it for you.