



Accreditation of Architecture Programs Stakeholder Update Report – March 2023

1. 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA)

From January 2023, the [2021 NSCA](#) became the standard for the Accreditation of Architecture Programs. Refer also to the companion document [2021 NSCA Explanatory Notes and Definitions](#).

Full integration of the 2021 NSCA in program curricula is required for the next scheduled assessment of an accredited program.

The new standard has been incorporated into the Accreditation Procedure and updates can be found on the AACAA website [Publications](#) page in the following documents:

- [Summary of Procedural Amendments](#)
- [Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure](#)
- [Guidance – Provider Accreditation Submission](#)
- [Guidance – Evidence that the Standard has been met](#)

Procedural amendments include:

- **43** Performance Criteria (PC) are assessed under the “Graduate of Architecture” Competency Profile.
- The PC required level of execution no longer refers to “Knowledge”, “Skills” or “Application” of knowledge and skills.
- There are new and expanded areas of required knowledge relating to understanding and respecting Country and sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon.

2. UK - Aust - NZ Mutual Recognition Agreement

The Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) between the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand was signed on 15 March 2023, after six years of collaboration between the nations. This highly anticipated agreement enhances the global exchange of skills, expertise, collaboration and employment opportunities.

The MRA provides incentives for domestic students to remain in Australia for postgraduate studies, as an Australian accredited Master of Architecture is now a recognised qualification, allowing graduates to undertake the UK Architects Registration Board Part 3 Professional Practice Examination without further assessments.

While the MRA does not currently provide international students with the same access for UK recognition, the MRA was set up with a view to extend this to all graduates in the years to come. We hope this will come to fruition and assist student recruitment efforts by creating added value for Australian accredited degrees.

It is a requirement of the MRA that a historic listing of accredited qualifications (since 1990 and earlier if possible) is available online. Universities have therefore been requested to provide a historic listing of accredited qualifications in the 2023 Provider Annual Report (see item 5).

[Visit our website](#) to find out more.

3. Review of the Accreditation Fee Schedule for FY2024

The Accreditation Fee Schedule will have an annual increase in line with the consumer price index, effective for the Financial Year 2024 (1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024). The Financial Year 2023 Fee Schedule is available via the AACA Publications page (see [here](#)).

The Accreditation Procedure is intended to be administered on a cost recovery basis from identified stakeholders. However, the Fee Schedule has not historically covered the costs to the AACA. The underpinning financial model and associated fee arrangements will therefore be reconsidered during the upcoming Procedure Review.

4. Procedure Review

The five yearly review of the Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure is anticipated to commence in mid-2023. Additional information will be provided to all stakeholders when available.

5. Provider Annual Reporting (PAR) for 2023

The following link to download the [2023 PAR template](#) can also be accessed via the AACA [Publications](#) page.

As outlined in the [Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure](#), the PAR is a critical component of the accreditation of architecture programs.

Key submission guidance:

- Reports are due to be submitted to the Accreditation Secretariat via Accreditation@aaca.org.au no later than **15th April 2023**.
- Due to the review activities scheduled following the submission date, time extensions are not possible.
- A separate Report is required for each accredited program.
- A historic list of accredited qualifications in each institution since 1990 (and earlier if possible) is required, in accordance with the terms of the UK Mutual Recognition Agreement (see item 2) and will assist in administering related applications.
- Providers with open Action Items written around Performance Criteria from the 2015 NSCA should refer to the document [Performance Criteria Mapping: 2021 NSCA to 2015 NSCA](#) also accessible via the AACA website [Publications](#) page.
- The response to each Action Item in the template should **not exceed 2 pages** and the supporting evidence should **not exceed 20 pages**.
- Review the relevant Procedural Guidance document: [Guidance – Provider Annual Reporting](#) prior to preparing the Report.

Provider Annual Reports will be reviewed by the Accreditation Secretariat and the Accreditation Management Committee (May), and then referred to the respective Architect Registration Board for review and noting (Jun/Jul). Following direction from each Architect Registration Board, the Secretariat will contact all Providers regarding clarification of the status of Action Items and any other matters raised through the Provider Annual Reporting process (August/September). De-identified data from the Reports is used to inform the [Annual Report on 2021 Accredited Architecture Programs](#).

6. Annual Report on 2021 Accredited Architecture Programs

The [Annual Report on 2021 Accredited Architecture Programs](#) was released in December 2022. The Report provides a state-based comprehensive summary and analysis of accredited architecture programs and accreditation related activity during the 2021 reporting period.

7. Accredited Architecture Qualifications Listing

The AACA is responsible for maintaining the listing of Accredited Architecture Qualifications that provide entry to the Architectural Practice Examination. The listing can be accessed [here](#).

During 2022 the following qualifications were added to the listing:

In Australia:

- Bond University: M Arch (Prof) SD-93045
- University of Adelaide: M Arch with M Land. Arch SATAC 3CM021

In New Zealand:

- Auckland University of Technology: M Arch (Prof) AK1338
- University of Auckland: MArch(Prof)HerCons; MArch(Prof)UrbDes; MArch(Prof)UrbPlan; MArch(Prof)HousSt

8. Accreditation Standing Panel

The ongoing success of the Accreditation Procedure is largely dependent on having a suitably experienced pool of architecture academics and practitioners in the Accreditation Standing Panel. Nominations to join the Standing Panel may be submitted to the Secretariat at any time and are referred to stakeholder organisations for endorsement generally on an annual basis between April and June. This year there has been an additional January 2023 member intake to include members with knowledge specific to the 2021 NSCA.

The current membership listing is posted online and can be viewed [here](#).

Providers are requested to encourage academics to join the Standing Panel. Experience has demonstrated that this hands-on knowledge of the process can assist in achieving positive outcomes at accreditation reviews and addressing Action Items.

Standing Panel nominees should:

- Be familiar with the [Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure](#)
- Read the Procedural [Guidance](#) for selection criteria.
- Complete the online [Nomination Form](#).
- Nominees do not need to seek pre-endorsement from their preferred stakeholder organisation, as this is coordinated by the Secretariat.

The document [Guidance – Operation of the Accreditation Standing Panel](#) has been updated to extend the term of appointment from 3 to 5 years for a maximum of two terms.

9. Accreditation Management Committee membership

The Committee is responsible for providing advice on the management and implementation of the Procedure and providing strategic, high quality advice to the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia Board in order to implement a transparent and fair Procedure in Australia. Refer to the Committee's [Terms of Reference here](#).

Current committee membership:

- Dr Lara Mackintosh – nominee of the [Australian Institute of Architects](#)
- Dr Kirsten Orr – nominee of the [Australian State and Territory Architect Registration Boards](#)
- Mr Paul Boyce – nominee of the [Australian State and Territory Architect Registration Boards](#)
- Dr Chris Landorf – nominee of the [Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia](#)
- Mr Stephen Ward (Chairperson) – nominee of the [Architects Accreditation Council of Australia](#)

10. Covid-19 and the accreditation of architecture programs

Due to Covid-19 in 2020 and 2021 the three-day university Site Visits by the Accreditation Review Panels were conducted online. From 2022 on-site / face to face Site Visits resumed.

11. Links to key information on the Accreditation of Architecture Programs

- [Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure](#)
- [Publications page](#) – relevant documents and reports, including links to the Procedure, Guidance documents, and recent Stakeholder Reports.
- [2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects \(NSCA\)](#) - the standard required for architecture program accreditation.
- [2021 NSCA Explanatory Notes and Definitions](#)

All inquiries should be sent to AACA C/- Accreditation@aaca.org.au