**Provide a written response / statement to each of the 43 Performance Criteria in the 13 Topic Areas.**

Note: Applicants must achieve a satisfactory result in 10 of the first 12 Topic Areas.

Each response must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects (maximum 400 words per Topic Area).

Refer to the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA) and the Explanatory Notes and Definitions on the [AACA](https://aaca.org.au/national-standard-of-competency-for-architects/2021nsca/) website.

This document forms the basis of the Competency Assessment Interview, together with the Portfolio. Each of the responses submitted by the applicant will be TESTED during the Interview.

IMPORTANT: Refer to the OQA – COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW – [Video GUIDE for Applicants](https://aaca.org.au/overseas-qualifications-assessment/apply/) prior to completing this document.

The OQA program is mapped against the competency level expected of applicants at graduation. The expected competency level varies between *UNDERSTANDING* and *AWARENESS* (as defined in the NSCA document).

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

COMPETENCY LEVEL: AWARENESS

*Be aware of, have knowledge of.*

Please note that Topic Area 13 refers to *First Nations* and *Country*, and applicants will be expected to review the reference material before providing a response that demonstrates AWARENESS of this Topic Area.

Refer to the [*OQA Applicants Guide*](https://aaca.org.au/overseas-qualifications-assessment/apply/)for assistance.

[Note: Minimum 3 and maximum 4 projects.]

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| Applicant Name |  | |
| Project Overview - enter the name and note if it is academic (A) or professional (P) project: | | Enter the portfolio pages relevant to the project: |
| Project 1 (A or P) |  |  |
| Project 2 (A or P) |  |  |
| Project 3 (A or P) |  |  |
| Project 4 (A or P) |  |  |
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COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **1. Evaluation of client project requirements and project brief** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 5 | Understand the essential elements of a client architect agreement, across the range of procurement methods and the different scales and types of projects. |
| 6 | Understand appropriate processes for reporting and varying the scope of services provided by an architect. |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 19 | Understand the purpose of project feasibility assessments, including research of site constraints, opportunities and risks, and methods of determining preliminary cost analysis. |
| 23 | Understand the purpose and process of generating a return brief for approval by the client and relevant stakeholders, including an awareness of the implications of non-compliance. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos: |  | Portfolio pages Nos: |  |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  5:  6:  19:  23: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **2. Communication with stakeholders** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 7 | Understand appropriate processes for clear and consistent communication with clients and relevant stakeholders throughout a project, including obtaining approvals from clients and stakeholders. |
| 13 | Have knowledge of documentation processes that facilitate project delivery appropriate to selected procurement processes. |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 34 | Be able to apply principles and methodologies for presenting conceptual design proposals and associated information to clients, stakeholders and communities, including using culturally responsive methods appropriate to different audiences. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos. |  | Portfolio page Nos. |  |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  7:  13:  34: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **3. Analysis and integration of project in its wider context** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 3 | Understand the principles of project planning, considering implications for Country, environmental sustainability, communities, stakeholders and project costs. |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 25 | Be able to draw on knowledge from the history and theory of architecture as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design. |
| 26 | Be able to undertake site, cultural and contextual analysis as part of preliminary design research. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos. |  | Portfolio page Nos. |  |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  3:  25:  26: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **4. Translation of project brief into a functional design concept through spatial planning** | |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 18 | Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, research, emergent knowledge and critical evaluation in formulating and refining concept design options, including the exploration of three-dimensional form and spatial quality. |
| 24 | Understand how to identify and evaluate project development options in response to a project brief – its objectives, budget, user intent and built purpose, risks and timeframe, including environmental sustainability considerations. |
| 29 | Be able to develop and evaluate design options in terms of the heritage, cultural and community values embodied in the site, and in relation to project requirements. |
| 30 | Be able to explore options for siting a project, including integrating information and analysis of relevant cultural, social and economic factors. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos. |  | Portfolio pages Nos. |  |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  18:  24:  29:  30: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **5. Environmental responsibilities** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 10 | Understand the whole life carbon implications of procurement methods\*, materials, components and construction systems. |
| 12 | Understand how relevant building codes, standards and planning controls apply across architectural practice, including climate change implications, the principles of fire safety, and barriers to universal access. |
| 16 | Understand risk management and mitigation principles and strategies – including safety in design, project risk, requirement for resilience from the impacts of climate change and appropriate insurances – across architectural services. |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 35 | Understand the operational and embodied carbon implications of chosen materials, components and systems. |
|  | NOTE: \* Disregard procurement methods in context of life carbon implications. |
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| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  10:  12:  16:  35: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **6. Integration of environmental and social science research to optimise the project** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 12 | Understand how relevant building codes, standards and planning controls apply across architectural practice, including climate change implications, the principles of fire safety, and barriers to universal access. |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 24 | Understand how to identify and evaluate project development options in response to a project brief – its objectives, budget, user intent and built purpose, risks and timeframe, including environmental sustainability considerations. |
| 28 | Be able to draw on knowledge from building sciences and technology, environmental sciences and behavioural and social sciences as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design to optimise the performance of the project. |
| 31 | Be able to identify, analyse and integrate information relevant to environmental sustainability – such as energy and water consumption, resources depletion, waste, embodied carbon and carbon emissions – over the lifecycle of a project. |
| 32 | Be able to apply planning principles and statutory planning requirements to the site and conceptual design of the project. |
| 33 | Be able to investigate, coordinate and integrate sustainable environmental systems – including water, thermal, lighting and acoustics – into the conceptual design. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos. |  | Portfolio page Nos. |  |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  12:  24:  28:  31:  32:  33: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **7. Developed design** | |
|  | **DETAILED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION** |
| 36 | Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, emergent knowledge, critical evaluation and continued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to produce a coherent project design. This should be resolved in terms of supporting health and wellbeing outcomes for Country, site planning, formal composition, spatial planning and circulation as appropriate to the project brief and all other factors affecting the project. |
| 40 | Be able to resolve and present a coherent detailed design solution within necessary timeframes to obtain client and stakeholder approvals. |
|  | NOTE: \* You can disregard *continued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* and *Country* if not applicable to the project. |
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| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  36:  40: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **8. Construction documentation** | |
|  | **DETAILED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION** |
| 44 | Understand the roles and types of relevant consultants and suppliers as well as applicable construction terminology. |
| 46 | Understand the processes for producing project documentation that meets the requirements of the contract and procurement procedure and complies with regulatory controls, building standards, codes, and conditions of construction and planning approvals. |
| 47 | Be able to complete and communicate on-time, accurate documents for relevant stakeholders, including drawings, models, specifications, schedules and construction documentation. |
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| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  44:  46:  47: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **9. Relationship of the structure, construction and materiality to the brief and the context** | |
|  | **DETAILED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION** |
| 39 | Understand how the integration of material selection, structural and construction systems impacts on design outcomes. |
| 45 | Understand processes for selecting materials, finishes, fittings, components and systems, based on consideration of quality and performance standards, the impact on Country and the environment, and the whole life carbon impact of the project. |
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| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  39:  45: | | | | |

Refer to the **[Explanatory Notes and Definitions](https://www.aaca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021-NSCA-Explanatory-Notes.pdf)** for the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA) that refer to the below listed six performance criteria and introduce PROCUREMENT areas of knowledge. Applicants must review and understand this Topic and be prepared to demonstrate an UNDERSTANDING during the Competency Assessment Interview.

Note: It is strongly recommended that applicants gain an understanding of this Topic Area before completing this section, as it is an area that many applicants struggle with and may lead to an unsuccessful OQA outcome overall.

*Partial Extract from the Explanatory Notes and Definitions:*

*“The Procurement method is the method used to bring a building or other project into existence – from client initiation to commissioning and handover. A variety of procurement methods and corresponding construction contracts are available. The choice of procurement strategy is influenced by key client objectives and project parameters such as scope, time, quality and cost. These factors also allocate a specific risk profile to the parties involved in each method.”*

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING:

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **10. Demonstrate an understanding of the most common procurement methods** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 9 | Understand contemporary and emerging building procurement methods. This involves identifying the most appropriate form of delivery for a project, including associated risks, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and understanding appropriate construction and consultant contracts and agreements. |
|  | **DESIGN DELIVERY AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES** |
| 48 | Understand available procurement methods and their application to project delivery, considering relevant factors including project type, scale and coordination of contractors. |
| 51 | Understand the process of selecting qualified contractors in accordance with an agreed procurement method and construction contract. |
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| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  9:  48:  51: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING:

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| 11. **Demonstrate an understanding of quality control and contract administration** | |
|  | **DESIGN DELIVERY AND CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES** |
| 54 | Understand the purpose of periodic site visits of construction works for quality assurance. |
| 55 | Understand methodologies for record keeping, document control and revision status during the construction phase. |
| 56 | Understand the purpose of identification of defects, rectifications and approval substitutions. |
| 57 | Understand the principles of contract administration, including certification, variations, instructions, requests for information and practical completion. |
| 58 | Understand the contract components – including all documents – and the process of executing a contract, as defined within the construction contract and in accordance with relevant building and planning codes. |
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| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  54:  55:  56:  57:  58: | | | | |

COMPETENCY LEVEL: UNDERSTANDING:

*Understand, demonstrate understanding, have an understanding of, be able to draw on, to evaluate, to explain, to explore, to identify, to investigate, to nominate, to select.*

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| **12. Professional obligations in order to meet ethical and legal business requirements** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 1 | Understand the regulatory requirements and obligations pertaining to practice as an architect, including professional codes of conduct and obligations for continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance. |
| 2 | Understand the role of quality assurance systems in facilitating efficient and timely delivery of architectural services. |
| 15 | Understand legal and ethical obligations relating to copyright, moral rights, authorship of cultural knowledge and intellectual property requirements across architectural services. |
| 16 | Understand risk management and mitigation principles and strategies – including safety in design, project risk, requirement for resilience from the impacts of climate change and appropriate insurances – across architectural services. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos. |  | Portfolio page Nos. |  |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  1:  2:  15:  16: | | | | |

Refer to the [**Explanatory Notes and Definitions**](https://www.aaca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021-NSCA-Explanatory-Notes.pdf) for the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA) that refer to the below listed six performance criteria and introduce the Australian *First Nations* and *Country* areas of knowledge. Applicants must review and understand this Topic and be prepared to demonstrate an AWARENESS during the Competency Assessment Interview.

Please note that applicants will be expected to review the reference material before providing a response that demonstrates AWARENESS of this Topic Area.

COMPETENCY LEVEL: AWARENESS

*Be aware of, have knowledge of.*

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| **13. Understanding community values and obligations around equity, diversity and inclusion, and the First Nations’ ongoing connection and custodianship of Country** | |
|  | **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** |
| 3 | Understand the principles of project planning, considering implications for Country, environmental sustainability, communities, stakeholders and project costs. |
| 8 | Understand how to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services. |
|  | **PROJECT INITIATION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN** |
| 17 | Have an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ aspirations to care for Country and how these inform architectural design. |
| 27 | Understand how to embed the knowledge, worldviews and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, shared through engagement processes, into the conceptual design in a meaningful, respectful and appropriate way. |
|  | **DETAILED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION** |
| 36 | Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, emergent knowledge, critical evaluation and continued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to produce a coherent project design. This should be resolved in terms of supporting health and wellbeing outcomes for Country, site planning, formal composition, spatial planning and circulation as appropriate to the project brief and all other factors affecting the project. |
| 45 | Understand processes for selecting materials, finishes, fittings, components and systems, based on consideration of quality and performance standards, the impact on Country and the environment, and the whole life carbon impact of the project. |
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|  |  | Mapped against Project Nos. |  | Portfolio page Nos. | N/A |
| **Response:** | Each response below must be specifically referenced (mapped) to the Portfolio projects.  3:  8:  17:  27:  36:  45: | | | | |