

guide for
candidates
architects
accreditation
council
of australia

aaca

**Competency Based Assessment
in Architecture**

A GUIDE FOR CANDIDATES

for the AACA

**Architectural Practice Examination (APE)
Review of Academic Equivalence (RAE)
National Program of Assessment (NPrA)**

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A GUIDE FOR CANDIDATES

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This document is to be read in conjunction with the *AACA The National Competency Standards in Architecture (NCSA)*

PREAMBLE

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia is a national body formed by the architects registration authorities of each state and territory for the consideration of matters of common concern or interest.

AACA is responsible for facilitating the competency based assessment (CBA) process and maintaining the National Competency Standards in Architecture (NCSA) on behalf of the profession. AACA is not itself a registration authority. Its role is the facilitation of the assessment process, which is recognised by each of the state and territory registration authorities as a prerequisite to registration. The decision to register applicants is the sole prerogative of the registration authorities.

The NCSA document sets out the benchmark standards of competence against which an applicant for registration as an architect in Australia or New Zealand is measured. It should be seen as the measure of the knowledge, skill and experience that is required of a practitioner for entry to the profession.

In Australia the use of the title architect is reserved by law to those who are registered by the statutory authorities in each state or territory. The purpose of registration and certification of the title architect is to serve the public interest.

Registration is the formal act that recognises acceptable standards of competence and conduct and enables the name of the registrant to be entered upon a state or territory Register of Architects.

Upon registration an architect must be competent in the design, documentation and management of an architectural project which could be undertaken by an independent practitioner. That individual must also be competent to contribute to design resolution, to integration of technology and to procurement of 'complex architectural projects' in a range of practice models. An architect will have exposure to a range of building types of varying size and complexity.

While the NCSA defines core competencies required for registration it is recognised that in the course of their professional development architects may elect to specialize in narrow fields of practice. It is anticipated that those architects will aspire to levels of excellence in their specialized fields, but it is not the purpose of the NCSA to identify, measure or test specialized competencies.

AACA endorses the professional responsibility of tertiary institutions for the determination of course structures and teaching methods and supports those institutions in their assertion of independence in such matters.

1 COMPETENCY BASED ASSESSMENT

The National Competency Standards in Architecture (NCSA), which identify the standards of performance expected of an architect, is the primary document used in the process of Competency Based Assessment (CBA).

These Standards apply to all Candidates for registration as architects in Australia. Candidates fall into the following three (3) distinct Candidature categories. Each category of Candidate must fulfill a distinct set of CBA requirements.

Category 1 Those with a professional qualification in architecture from an accredited Australian tertiary institution or other overseas qualification formally accredited by AACA.

CBA requirement – undertake the Architectural Practice Examination (APE) after a period of practical experience. (For further details see Section 3.)

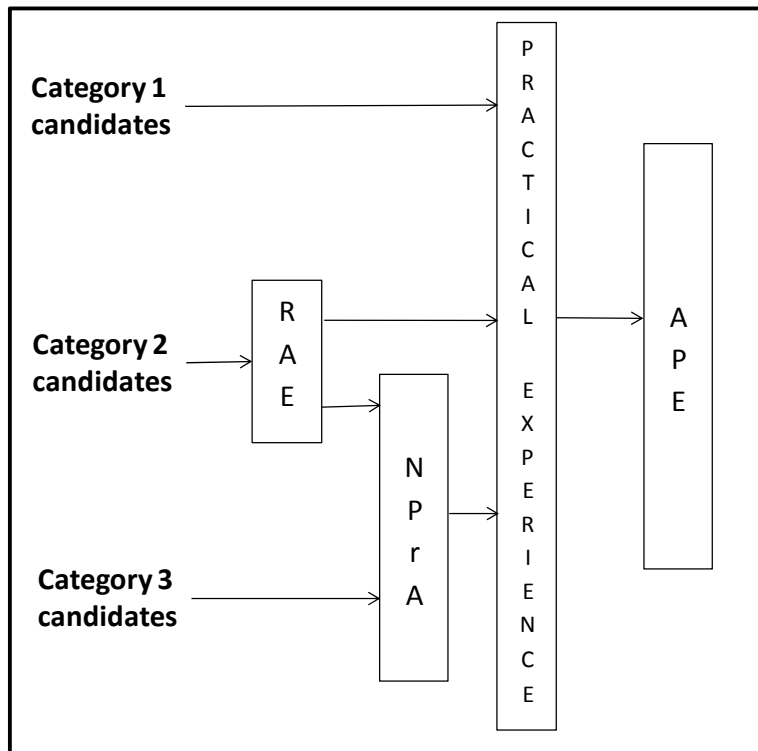
Category 2 Those with an overseas professional qualification in architecture which is not formally accredited by AACA.

CBA requirement – submit to a Review of Academic Equivalence (RAE) and if deemed equivalent undertake the Architectural Practice Examination (APE) after a period of practical experience. (For further details see Section 4.)

Category 3 Those with no professional qualification in architecture but with considerable experience in architectural practice and/or related fields.

CBA requirement – undertake the National Program of Assessment (NPrA) and if successful undertake the Architectural Practice Examination (APE). (For further details see Section 5.)

DIAGRAM OF ASSESSMENT PROCESS



2 COMPETENCE OF AN ARCHITECT

The *NCSA* requires architects upon registration to have demonstrated competence through performance in a range of architectural roles and tasks. These actions have been written as standards of performance - competencies. They are not absolute; they may change as community values shift and as the profession reflects upon itself. They must, therefore, be subject to regular review.

The competency standards methodology adopts a particular format and set of language conventions. The following are key terms used throughout the *NCSA* suite of documents:

Competency:

The ability to perform activities within the profession of architecture to the standard expected upon registration.

Unit of Competency:

The four Units of Competency are Design, Documentation, Project Management and Practice Management. Each Unit comprises Elements of Competency that are sufficiently related to each other to be considered as a single block of connected activities. Units are groups of activities, which are likely, amongst experienced practitioners, to become the focus of specialisations.

Context of Competency:

A description of the professional setting within which architects perform and where the Units of Competency are related to the comprehensive process of producing architecture.

Element of Competency:

This is a discrete activity that a competent architect must be able to perform.

Performance Criteria:

There are 149 evaluative statements, which specify the performance required to demonstrate Competency.

3 THE ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION (APE)

CATEGORY 1, 2, AND 3 CANDIDATES

The APE is conducted in three (3) parts:

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Part 1: | Eligibility |
| Part 2: | National Examination Paper (NEP) |
| Part 3: | Examination by Interview |

Parts 1 and 2 must be undertaken in the same jurisdiction (state or territory).

Part 3 may be undertaken in another jurisdiction; where a candidate is offered a Supplementary Examination to Part 3, the Supplementary must always be undertaken in the same jurisdiction as the original Part 3.

APE Candidates are required to complete the APE within two (2) years of the date of notification of success in Part 2 of the APE.

Candidates should be aware that the Examination may traverse all of the Units, Contexts, Elements and Performance Criteria of the *NCSA*.

3.1 PART 1: ELIGIBILITY

3.1.1 The Objective:

The objective of Part 1 is to determine eligibility for entry to the APE.

Generally, to be eligible for admission to the APE Candidates must:

- a) have an approved qualification in architecture

AND

- b) have undertaken a period of practical experience and maintained an AACA Log Book recording that experience

AND

- c) have completed a Statement of Practical Experience to a maximum 2000 words describing their experience in each of the Elements addressed in the APE.

Approved Qualification

An approved qualification is:

- a) an accredited qualification in architecture from an Australian school of architecture

OR

- b) an overseas qualification in architecture that has been assessed and certified by AACA as being equivalent to a currently accredited qualification in architecture from an Australian school of architecture

OR

- c) certified successful completion of the National Program of Assessment.

Period of Practical Experience

Acceptable periods of practical experience are:

- a) a minimum of two years experience under the supervision of an architect.
One year of this experience is to be subsequent to successfully completing an approved qualification in architecture and must be undertaken in Australia.
Experience should range over all competencies. However admission to the APE is conditional upon satisfaction of the mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency, viz 3000 hours of logged architectural experience at the required levels in the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency.

OR

- b) a minimum of two years experience, which may be in a self-employed capacity.
One year of this experience is to be subsequent to successfully completing a recognised qualification in architecture and is to be undertaken in Australia.
Experience should range over all competencies. However admission to the APE is conditional upon satisfaction of the mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency, viz 3000 hours of logged architectural experience at the required levels in the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency.

In such circumstances

- All architectural experience gained while self-employed will be at Executive level.
- The Statement of Practical Experience may be expanded to a maximum of 3000 words

OR

- c) completion of an accredited qualification in architecture from an Australian school of architecture part-time or successful completion of the NPrA

AND in so doing have undertaken

seven (7) years experience within the last 10 years including:

- three (3) years in an architectural practice under the supervision of an architect – one year of which must be in Australia
- 3000 hours of logged architectural experience at the prescribed levels in the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency.

Other eligible candidature:

- a) Candidates with an accredited qualification in architecture from a New Zealand School of Architecture and who have completed the required practical experience (in either Australia or in New Zealand, or as a combination of experience in both countries), whose experience is logged in an AACA Log Book, and who have completed a Statement of Practical Experience are eligible to apply for the APE.
- b) Where a Candidate's experience does not satisfy the guidelines and they believe there are exceptional circumstances that would justify their eligibility they should apply in writing to the AACA setting out the 'exceptional circumstances' to be assessed and finally determined by the National Convenor.

Candidates contemplating such an application should first consult the state or territory Convenor in the jurisdiction where the Candidate wishes to undertake the examination.

The decision of the National Convenor will be final and binding and will be based on an evaluation of the material submitted to establish equivalence to the mandatory requirements.

NB: Candidates whose overseas academic qualifications are assessed as equivalent to a currently accredited Australian qualification in architecture through the Review of Academic Equivalence (RAE) may claim Australian practical experience from the date of arrival in Australia.

Candidates whose overseas academic qualifications are assessed as not equivalent to a currently accredited Australian qualification in architecture through the RAE and who are advised to undertake topping up study may claim Australian practical experience from the date of successful completion of the required topping up study.

3.1.2 The Process

Application for the APE is made to the relevant state or territory architects registration authority along with a satisfactorily completed Log Book and Statement of Practical Experience. The Registrar of the relevant authority advises Candidates of their acceptance or rejection, and of the dates on which the APE will be held in their jurisdiction.

Applications will not be accepted unless accompanied by a Statutory Declaration attesting to the accuracy of all the documentation submitted.

Furthermore, Candidates are encouraged to have their Log Sheets and each page of their Statement of Practical Experience certified by their supervising architect.

3.1.3 The Log Book

The objective of the Log Book is to provide information to the Assessors, in a reliable form, which demonstrates that Candidates have satisfied the Mandatory Practical Experience (set out in 3.1.7) for admission to the Architectural Practice Examination.

3.1.4 Statement of Practical Experience

The objectives of the Statement are:

- a) to provide evidence of satisfaction of the practical experience requirements
- b) to provide Assessors with information on the Candidate's practical experience.

The Statement should be well considered, precisely expressed and be cross-referenced to the Prescribed Elements of Competency. Project photographs should not be included.

Content:

Candidates should select from their experience the project, or projects, that in their view best illustrates the application of the Prescribed Elements of Competency. This provides a basis for Assessors to explore the nature and level of experience in the Examination by Interview.

The Statement must be presented in a logical sequence that indicates the scope of work undertaken by the Candidate. It must include an indication of the Candidate's role and level of responsibility in the particular project stage that has been identified.

Sufficient project details should be provided to allow the Assessors to appreciate the scope of work, its cost, floor area and nature of construction.

The work of the two years immediately preceding the Architectural Practice Examination application should be emphasised. Experience obtained more than 10 years prior to application to the APE will not be considered.

Format:

The Statement should be typewritten on A4 sized sheets (maximum 2000 words) and presented in chronological order of experience. Where Candidates have obtained their experience other than under the supervision of an architect, their Statement may be up to 3000 words in length.

It should be headed with the full name of the Candidate and the Candidate's name should appear on each page. Where the experience has been gained in an architectural practice, the name and registration number of the supervising architect should be included on each page.

Statements that do not conform to these requirements will not be accepted.

Candidates who do not submit a Statement in this manner will not be admitted to the Examination.

3.1.5 Practical Experience

Practical Experience shall be gained in the various categories identified in the NCSA/LB Log Book in the practice of architecture.

3.1.6 Period of Practical Experience

Candidates demonstrating less than 3000 hours of practical experience in the mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency will not be admitted to the examination.

The required period of practical experience may be the summation of several periods in different offices. Periods less than the full-time equivalent of eight (8) weeks continuous duration will not be credited.

3.1.7 Mandatory Practical Experience – Prescribed Elements of Competency

Candidates are required to have experience in each of the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency:

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---|
| Context 2.1 | Element 2.1.2 | Prepare architectural drawings with regard to the location, extent of building elements, components, finishes, fittings and systems |
| | Element 2.1.4 | Co-ordinate the documentation of the project |
| Context 3.1 | Element 3.1.2 | Establish site conditions |
| | Element 3.1.4 | Assess regulatory context |
| Context 3.2 | Element 3.2.3 | Prepare preliminary project evaluations, programs and feasibility studies |
| | Element 3.2.5 | Establish requirements for, and co-ordinate, specialists |
| Context 3.3 | Element 3.3.1 | Administer a standard form construction contract |

3.1.8 Levels of Experience

Three (3) levels of experience have been identified:

Executive: Defined as experience gained as the principal decision-maker on a project.

Participant: Defined as experience gained as a team member or operative working under the instruction or supervision of a responsible person.

Observer: Defined as experience gained by careful observation of procedures and practices carried out by others.

A total minimum of 3000 hours of logged **architectural** experience is required in the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency.

It is acceptable that logged experience may be:

- a) all at Executive level, OR
- b) a composite of Executive, Participant and Observer level experience as follows:
 - at least 40 hours of architectural experience in each of the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency – Elements 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.1.4, 3.2.3, 3.2.5 and 3.3.1
 - at least 120 hours in total of architectural experience at Executive level across at least three (3) of the mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency
 - no more than 160 hours of experience at Observer level in each of Elements 3.2.3 and 3.3.1. **Elements 3.2.3 and 3.3.1 are the only Elements for which Observer experience is accepted.**

All logged experience that has been gained in a self-employed capacity must be at Executive level.

3.2 PART 2: THE NATIONAL EXAMINATION PAPER (NEP)

3.2.1 The Objective

The objective of the National Examination Paper is to provide a reliable and valid test of knowledge and application of the *NCSA*.

3.2.2 The Process

The Examination takes the form of a one-hour 'closed book' multiple-choice scenario style paper. The Examination is conducted in each state and territory by the responsible architects registration authority in accordance with a timetable that is compatible with the Examination program in that state or territory.

As the NEP is an externally set examination, AACA is unable to make copies of examination papers available to Candidates once they have been submitted.

Candidates will be notified in writing of the result ('pass' or 'fail') by the responsible architects registration authority, generally within three (3) weeks of sitting the Examination. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified in writing of areas of weakness.

Candidates must pass this Examination as a condition of admission to Part 3, the Examination by Interview.

Candidates who are unsuccessful in Part 2 may re-sit at the next or any subsequent Examination without being required to resubmit for Part 1, provided they are sitting within 2 years from the date of first notification of being unsuccessful in Part 2. Candidates may only re-sit Part 2 in the same jurisdiction in which they submitted for Part 1. Additional Log Sheets and a revised Statement of Practical Experience evidencing experience gained subsequent to the previous Part 2 examination should be provided along with a Statutory Declaration attesting to the accuracy of all documentation submitted.

Candidates who do not re-sit within 2 years from the date of first notification of being unsuccessful in Part 2 are required to re-apply for entry to Part 1. These Candidates may apply in any jurisdiction. They will be required to maintain their Log Book. When re-applying for entry to Part 1 they must provide a Log Book and a Statement of Practical Experience that satisfy the eligibility criteria.

3.3 PART 3: EXAMINATION BY INTERVIEW

3.3.1 The Objective

The objective of the Examination by Interview is to enable the Assessors, by discussion with the Candidate, to confirm that the Candidate has demonstrated adequate knowledge and/or experience of all *NCSA*.

3.3.2 The Process

The Candidate is examined on their range of work and experience by two experienced practitioners. The Examination may traverse all of the Units, Contexts, Elements and Performance Criteria of the *NCSA*. The purpose of this Examination is to assess the Candidate's knowledge and experience with reference to the documentary submission as well as to the *NCSA*. The Assessors will take an overall view of the Candidate's training and ability to deal with situations in a mature professional manner.

The Assessors will decide whether, on balance, the Candidate possesses skills and abilities that will inspire that trust and confidence, which is fundamental to professionalism.

The Examination will be conducted as an interview between fellow members of the profession. The Candidate will be expected to be familiar with topical professional issues and must be prepared to discuss them. The Examination is not restricted to discussion on the Candidates Log Book and Statement of Practical Experience; it can explore knowledge in both actual and hypothetical situations. Often in interviews the manner of responding can be as important as the content of the response. It is recognised that professional interviews are often tense and Assessors are aware that the Candidate may be nervous and inexperienced in these situations. The Assessors will attempt to put the Candidate at ease before commencing to deal with the substantive issues in the Interview.

The duration of an Examination by Interview should be generally about one hour.

Candidates will be free to ask questions, make comments or raise issues as opportunities present themselves. They may refer to notes, diaries or other documentation that they consider may be relevant during the course of the Interview.

3.3.3 Part 3 Examination

Candidates will be notified of the result of Part 3 of the Examination by Interview by the responsible state or territory architects registration authority. After the conduct of the Examination Candidates are not permitted to contact the Assessors.

If the Assessors in Part 3 are satisfied the Candidate meets the objective set out in section 3.3.1, the Candidate will be invited to apply for registration.

If the Assessors in Part 3 are not satisfied that the Candidate meets the objective set out in section 3.3.1, the Candidate will be advised in writing that they have been unsuccessful. The written advice to unsuccessful Candidates will include the areas in which weaknesses have been identified.

Where appropriate, Assessors in Part 3 may identify unsuccessful Candidates to be invited to undertake a Part 3 Supplementary Examination. Candidates will be provided with written advice indicating the areas of weakness that concern the Part 3 Assessors prior to the Supplementary Examination.

3.3.4 Supplementary Examination (Part 3)

A Candidate will be eligible for only one Part 3 Supplementary Examination.

Candidates do not automatically qualify for a Part 3 Supplementary Examination by Interview. Admission to a Supplementary Examination is by invitation only. A fee will apply. Two Assessors not previously involved with the assessment of the Candidate will conduct the Supplementary Examination in the same form as the Part 3 Examination.

Candidates invited to submit for a Part 3 Supplementary Examination by Interview will be required to notify the responsible state or territory architects registration authority of their intention to accept the invitation. The Supplementary Examination must be taken within twelve (12) months of notification of the result in Part 3, at the discretion of the responsible architects registration authority.

Candidates who are unsuccessful in a Part 3 Supplementary Examination will be required to re-apply to sit the Part 3 Examination. They will not be eligible for re-admission for the Part 3 Examination for a minimum period of twelve (12) months from the original Part 3 Examination.

3.3.5 Eligibility for Re-admission

Unsuccessful Candidates in the Part 3 who have not been offered a Supplementary Examination will be eligible to apply for re-admission to the second or any subsequent rounds of Part 3 Examinations after their failed examination, within the time limits set out elsewhere in this document. (These Candidates will not be eligible for re-admission to the Part 3 Examination immediately following a failed Examination round.) That is, these unsuccessful Candidates will not normally be eligible for re-admission for the Part 3 Examination for a minimum period of twelve (12) months from the original Part 3 Examination. This measure is aimed at encouraging Candidates to gain further practical experience.

Candidates applying for re-admission to Part 3 will be required to submit the earlier Log Book and to demonstrate the experience gained subsequent to the date of the previous Part 3 by the submission of additional Log Sheets and a revised Statement of Practical Experience. A Statutory Declaration attesting to the accuracy of the documentation submitted will also be required. They will be exempt from Part 2 provided they complete the entire Architectural Practice Examination within two (2) years of the date of notification of success in Part 2 of the Examination.

3.3.6 Preparation

NCSA/REF/G A Reference Guide for Candidates

Some important aspects of architectural practice that are examinable are outlined in *NCSA/REF/G A Reference Guide for Candidates* which should be read together with *NCSA (The National Competency Standards in Architecture)*.

3.4 GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

3.4.1 Grievances

- a) Candidates aggrieved by any outcome of any Part of the Architectural Practice Examination must lodge their grievance in writing with the relevant state or territory architects registration authority within 21 calendar days of the date of notification of the result to which the grievance relates.
- b) Candidates must clearly state the grounds of any grievance. Causes external to the Examination will not normally constitute acceptable grounds for a grievance or any subsequent appeal.
- c) A grievance or any subsequent appeal arising from the outcome of Parts 1 or 2 of the Examination may only relate to procedural matters, **and not to the outcome of an assessment**. A grievance or subsequent appeal arising from the outcome of Part 3 or the Part 3 Supplementary Examination may relate to the outcome of that Examination and any procedure applied.
- d) The grievance will be referred to the state or territory Convenor. Where an aggrieved Candidate is personally known to the Convenor a Senior Assessor may be substituted.
- e) Upon receiving a notice of grievance the Convenor (or Senior Assessor where substituted) may take whatever action is appropriate to resolve the grievance.
- f) The Convenor may recommend, to the state or territory architects registration authority, that the Candidate be re-examined. Where a Candidate is to be re-examined the outcome of the contested Part of the Examination to which the grievance relates will be ignored.
- g) In attempting to resolve a grievance, the Convenor may consult with or seek the advice from the Convenor of any other state or territory or a person nominated by the National Convenor. Any person consulted by the Convenor must not participate in any appeal process pursuant to paragraph 3.4.2 (b).
- h) Anything said or done by the Convenor and the Candidate arising from or relating to the resolution of a grievance shall be confidential and not admissible in any legal proceedings. The provisions of Section 131 of the *Evidence Act (Commonwealth)* apply to any communication or documentation arising from or relating to the resolution of a grievance, and for this purpose any communication or document shall be considered an attempt to negotiate a settlement of the grievance.
- i) Where a grievance cannot be resolved by the Convenor within 14 days, the Convenor shall: certify that attempts have been made to resolve the grievance; certify that those attempts have been unsuccessful; and advise the Candidate, the relevant state or territory architects registration authority, and the National Assessment Panel (NAP) of the AACA accordingly.

3.4.2 Appeal

- a) Within 14 calendar days of receipt of notice of advice from the Convenor that the grievance cannot be resolved, the aggrieved party may lodge notice of appeal to the NAP addressed to the registrar of the AACA with payment of any prescribed fee and stating clearly the grounds of appeal.
- b) Upon receiving an appeal the registrar will forward the appeal and all relevant documents to the members of the National Assessment Panel (NAP) of the AACA who will promptly review all the material provided and determine the appeal.
- c) In determining the appeal the NAP will act in good faith and consider all matters of relevance to ensure that proper processes have been applied and may inform itself, in any manner it considers appropriate. The NAP may give such directions as are necessary to facilitate the timely finalisation of the appeal.
- d) In determining an appeal the NAP may:
 - (i) recommend to the relevant state or territory architects registration authority that the appellant be re-examined without any consideration of the earlier Examination which is the subject of the appeal
 - OR**
 - (ii) recommend to the relevant state or territory architects registration authority that the result of the Examination to which the appeal relates be set aside and/or that the result of the Examination which was the subject of the appeal be varied
 - OR**
 - (iii) recommend to the relevant state or territory architects registration authority that the appeal be dismissed. Where an appeal is dismissed the result of the Examination which was the subject of the appeal is affirmed.

Candidates considering an appeal from any decision of AACA should obtain legal advice. AACA will seek to recover any costs it incurs in defending any legal proceedings arising from any of its decisions.

4 THE REVIEW OF ACADEMIC EQUIVALENCE (RAE)

CATEGORY 2 CANDIDATES

4.1 ELIGIBILITY

Candidates for Competency Based Assessment in Category 2, who have had an AACA provisional assessment of their academic qualifications obtained outside Australia, must have this reviewed to confirm the status of their qualification and eligibility for the Architectural Practice Examination (APE).

4.2 APPLICABLE COMPETENCY STANDARDS

All Contexts of Unit 1 Design; and Context 3.1 of Unit 3 Project Management; Context 4.1 – Elements 4.1.4 and 4.1.5 - of Unit 4, Practice Management.

4.3 THE PROCESS

The Review of Academic Equivalence takes the form of an interview in the state or territory in which the Candidate is resident and involves assessment of the **professional tertiary qualifications** in terms of the applicable *NCSA*.

It is important therefore, that Candidates bring to the interview an adequate portfolio of academic material completed as a student, as this is a review of academic equivalence, not of work experience. This material should include degree certificates, course transcripts, projects, drawings, and other documentation illustrating course work undertaken in obtaining academic qualifications.

In addition Candidates are required to bring to the interview one A4 photocopied duplicate set of EVERY document presented to the Assessors at the interview (e.g. degree certificates, course transcripts, projects, drawings). This duplicate set will remain with AACA. The accompanying RAE Documentation Certification Sheet is to be completed and signed by all parties. If Candidates do not provide an exact duplicate set of the documentation presented, the interview will be concluded and the Candidate will need to re-apply for a second interview. An additional fee will apply.

A panel, comprising a minimum of two architect Assessors, acting on behalf of AACA, conducts the interview. Notification of the result of interview is forwarded to Candidates by AACA on receipt of a report from the interviewing panel.

4.4 OUTCOMES OF ASSESSMENT

Where the academic qualification is approved as equivalent to a currently accredited Australian qualification in architecture, Candidates will be eligible to apply for entry to the Architectural Practical Examination (APE) provided they have fulfilled the practical experience requirements for the Examination. Successful RAE candidates may claim relevant Australian practical experience from the date of their arrival in Australia.

Where the academic qualification is not approved as equivalent to an accredited Australian current qualification in architecture, Candidates will have to undertake further tertiary study, or the National Program of Assessment (NPrA).

Candidates advised to undertake further academic study will be required to gain one year of relevant practical experience in Australia subsequent to satisfactorily completing the required topping up study.

4.5 APPEAL AND GRIEVANCES

Candidates may appeal to AACA against the outcome of a Review of Academic Equivalence. The appeal must be lodged in writing with the registrar of AACA, with payment of any prescribed fee, within 28 calendar days from the date of notification of the result.

Candidates must state clearly in writing the grounds for the appeal. Causes external to the Assessment will not normally constitute acceptable grounds for appeal.

The National Assessment Panel (NAP) of AACA will review all cases promptly basing its decision on reasons stated by the Candidate, reports from Assessors and any further evidence provided by either the Candidate or the Assessors or both. In determining an appeal the Panel may:

- a) ignore the outcome of the contested assessment and call for a re-assessment of the Candidate without charging an assessment fee,

OR

- b) where, in the opinion of the Panel, the evidence clearly warrants it, overturn the result of the contested assessment,

OR

- c) recommend that the original decision should be upheld and dismiss the appeal. The Candidate may again appeal in writing to the registrar, AACA, within 28 calendar days of receiving the response from the Panel. This second appeal is considered by AACA Executive Committee, the role of which is to ensure due process has been followed and not to re-assess the performance of the Candidate.

Candidates considering an appeal from any decision of AACA should obtain legal advice. AACA will seek to recover any costs it incurs in defending any legal proceedings arising from any of its decisions.

5 THE NATIONAL PROGRAM OF ASSESSMENT (NPrA)

CATEGORY 3 CANDIDATES OR CATEGORY 2 CANDIDATES WHO ELECT TO UNDERTAKE THE NPrA.

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

- a) *Academic Requirement* - Pass in Year 12 or accepted equivalent OR a minimum of Year 10 plus a minimum of two (2) years full-time (or part-time equivalent) tertiary study

AND

- b) *English Requirement* - Year 12 standard or accepted equivalence (i.e. an overall score of 6.5 on the IELTS scale or other recognised equivalent, e.g. TOEFL)

AND

- c) *Work Experience* - A minimum of seven (7) years work experience in the last 10 years (architectural, planning, building, or other related fields); three (3) of the seven (7) years must be in an architect's office. A minimum of one (1) year of the three (3) years must be in an architect's office in Australia.

A partially completed qualification is not recognised as work experience

AND

- d) *Residency* – A candidate must be a Citizen or a Permanent Resident of Australia and reside in Australia throughout the Program.

NB: NPrA Candidates who have been unsuccessful in two successive previous Programs are required to have gained a minimum of a further three years work experience before they will be accepted into any future Program. This requirement also applies to Candidates who have failed to submit in two successive previous Programs.

Candidates who have officially withdrawn, within the prescribed period, or have been granted official deferment, will be exempt from this requirement.

Where application is refused on the grounds of eligibility, the Candidate may seek review of the determination upon the submission of additional evidence.

5.2 APPLICABLE COMPETENCY STANDARDS

All Contexts of Unit 1 Design; and Context 3.1 of Unit 3 Project Management.

5.3 THE PROCESS

The NPrA is centrally coordinated by AACA. AACA will appoint a panel of three Assessors from the approved list of nominated Assessors to set and assess each individual National Program. Currently one program is offered per year. Candidates accepted into the program are required to complete a project submission within 6 months of the date of commencement. Notification of results is forwarded to Candidates at the completion of the assessment period.

5.4 FORM OF SUBMISSION

Each submission will comprise:

1. Master set made up of
 - (a) One A4 typewritten report; and
 - (b) One full set of A1 drawings – maximum of six A1 size sheets; and
 - (c) One set of the A1 drawings referenced in (b), reduced to A3 size, bound into the A4 report referenced in (a)
2. Copies

Three further sets of the A4 report; each of which must also have bound into it a set of the reduced A3 size drawings.

All submitted material is retained by AACCA. Candidates should therefore retain a copy of their submission for their own records.

5.5 ASSESSMENT

Submissions received for the NPrA are assessed by those appointed by AACCA to set the Program. The Assessors determine whether or not there is sufficient evidence of achievement of the required standards of competence in the responses made to the applicable Performance Criteria.

5.6 APPEAL AND GRIEVANCES

Candidates may appeal to AACCA against the outcome of a NPrA. The appeal must be lodged in writing with the registrar of AACCA, with payment of any prescribed fee, within 28 calendar days from the date of notification of the result. Candidates must state clearly the grounds for the appeal and in particular stipulate whether the appeal relates to:

- a) the outcome of the assessment, in which case the subject matter would relate to the deficiencies identified by the Assessors;
- OR**
- b) the procedures applied in the assessment process;
- OR**
- c) both a) and b).

To ensure the integrity of the assessment process and to ensure the independence of an Assessor, information as to the identity of Candidates is not provided to any Assessor (either the Assessors who undertake the initial assessment or the independent Appeal Assessor appointed by the National Assessment Panel to assess appeals). Assessments by any Assessor or an independent Appeal Assessor are based solely on the written information provided by Candidates. Accordingly it is imperative that when submitting an appeal Candidates provide all necessary information in writing.

Candidates are advised that:

- a) causes external to the assessment undertaken as part of the program will not normally constitute grounds for appeal. For example, insufficient time, due to personal or other reasons, is generally not considered valid reason for an appeal
- b) the appeal is not an opportunity to provide further submission of material which should have been presented in the original submission, or to provide entirely new material

- c) the appeal process should not be construed as an opportunity of gaining, in effect, an extension of time beyond that provided for in the initial submission period. Any written submission in support of an appeal may, however, bring to the attention of the independent Appeal Assessor, material, which in the opinion of the Candidate, may have been overlooked, mistaken or otherwise misinterpreted in the original assessment
- d) the submission of solicited testimonials from practicing architects on behalf of a Candidate is inadmissible.

Candidates considering an appeal from any decision of AACA should obtain legal advice. AACA will seek to recover any costs it incurs in defending any legal proceedings arising from any of its decisions.

Where the appeal relates to procedures applied in the assessment process

Where the appeal relates to procedures applied in the assessment process, the Executive Committee of AACA will review the material provided by the Candidate and determine the aspects of an appeal that relate to the procedures applied in the assessment process.

The decision of the Executive Committee in relation to procedures applied in the assessment process shall be final.

The determination of aspects of an appeal that relate to procedures applied in the assessment process will precede the determination of other matters to which the appeal relates.

Where the appeal relates to the outcome of an assessment

Where the appeal relates to the outcome of an assessment, the National Assessment Panel will appoint an independent Appeals Assessor. The role of the independent Appeal Assessor is to adjudicate the appeal of an assessment, on the written material provided by the Candidate in support of the appeal and the documents relating to the original assessment.

The independent Appeal Assessor will furnish a report to the NAP, which will in turn forward a copy of the report and recommendations to the Executive Committee.

The decision of the Executive Committee shall be final.

6 FEES

Details of the fees, which apply to the above procedures, may be obtained from the AACA Web Site.