

**Competency Based Assessment
in Architecture**

LOG BOOK

for

**The ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION
(APE)**

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1 General Information

Before being eligible to apply for registration as an architect with a state or territory architects registration authority, it is necessary that Candidates pass the AACA Architectural Practice Examination (APE).

Details of the APE are set down in the AACA document, *NCSA/GC A Guide for Candidates* a copy of which is available at the Publications page on the AACA website, www.aaca.org.au.

Candidates intending to apply for admission to an AACA APE should contact the registrar of the responsible registration authority in the state or territory in which they reside.

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

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

For details relating to the contextual application of the NCSA Candidates should refer to the NCSA document.

2 The Purpose of the Log Book

The purpose of the Log Book is to record in condensed, but nevertheless specific, form the Candidate's fulfillment of the mandatory experience requirements for access to the APE. The information contained in the Log Book, and the manner in which it is presented, plays an important role in the assessment of the eligibility of the Candidate for admission to the APE. It will be used as a source of information concerning the practical experience of Candidates.

In addition to the Log Book, the Candidate is required to summarise their practical experience in a Statement of Practical Experience. The Statement of Practical Experience allows the Candidate to expand on each category of experience coded in the Log Book. It also provides an opportunity for the Candidate to give information on experience additional to the mandatory requirements of the Prescribed Elements of Competencies.

3 The Responsibility of the Candidate

It is the responsibility of the Candidate to obtain experience, preferably under the supervision of an architect. This experience must be obtained in at least the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency listed under the heading "Mandatory Practical Experience – Prescribed Elements of Competencies" in NCSA 01/GC and at the levels required. Until these requirements are satisfied the Candidate will not be eligible to submit for Parts 2 and 3 of the APE.

The Candidate should use the period of employment to broaden their experience and knowledge of architectural practice.

It is the responsibility of the Candidate to actively seek out opportunities for supplementing their practical experience in the areas where it is deficient.

It is also the responsibility of the Candidate to ensure that the information recorded in the Log Book and in the Statement of Practical Experience is correct.

Where experience has been gained in an architectural practice the Candidate should ensure that each page of the Statement of Practical Experience indicates the employer's name, and the supervising architect's name and registration number.

4 The Responsibilities of the Supervising Architect

4.1 To the Candidate

Supervising architects should understand the importance of practical experience to the Candidate. The Candidate is required to have practical experience at a professional level in order to qualify for admission to the APE. The Candidate will be examined on their knowledge and understanding of architectural practice, and will also be required to demonstrate that they fully understand the implications of professional decisions taken during their period of practical experience. Supervising architects should be familiar with the various requirements set down in the Log Book, and assist the Candidate to progress through a range of mandatory experience as set out in *NCSA/GC* and *NCSA/LS Log Sheets*.

4.2 To AACA/State and Territory Registration Authorities

It is important that supervising architects understand their responsibility in relation to the correctness of the information included by Candidates in both the Log Book and the Statement of Practical Experience. The supervising architect should also ensure that any inaccuracies in these documents are corrected.

4.3 To the Profession

It is important to ensure that those entering the profession demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge and experience of the practice of architecture. This responsibility rests not only with the registration authority, through Assessors, but also with supervising architects to properly prepare Candidates for the practice of architecture.

5 Eligibility for the APE

5.1 General requirements

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.

For further details refer to *NCSA/GC*.

5.2 Practical Experience Requirements

Generally Candidates shall have practical experience over a minimum period of two years, one of which shall have been subsequent to gaining academic eligibility for entry to the APE (see *NCSA/GC*). Within this period of practical experience Candidates must have acquired at least 3000 hours of architectural experience at the required levels in the Prescribed Elements of Competency (see *NCSA/GC*).

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

Overseas experience may be recognised but a minimum of one year of approved postgraduate experience must be completed in Australia. Australian experience should range over all the mandatory competencies.

Candidates with an accredited qualification in architecture from an Australian School of Architecture or a New Zealand School of Architecture may complete the required practical experience in either Australia or in New Zealand, or as a combination of experience in both countries.

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.

There is no requirement for postgraduate experience where Candidates have seven years practical experience within the last 10 years:

- a) including three years in an architectural office under the supervision of an architect – one year of which must be in Australia

AND

- b) including 3000 hours of logged experience at the prescribed levels in the seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency

AND

- c) have successfully completed an accredited qualification in architecture from an Australian School of Architecture, or the National Program of Assessment (NPRA)

There may be variation to the practical experience requirements where Candidates are admitted to the APE in exceptional circumstances and whose eligibility for admission has been determined by the National Convenor. In such circumstances 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.

5.3 Levels of experience

The minimum level of experience required for eligibility to the Architectural Practice Examination is set out in *NCSA/GC*. Candidates will be required to provide evidence in the form of a completed Log Book and Statement of Practical Experience indicating their experience in seven (7) mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency.

The Elements are drawn from the *NCSA The National Competency Standards in Architecture*. They are:

- Element 2.1.2 Prepare architectural drawings with regard to location, extent of building elements, components, finishes, fittings and systems
- Element 2.1.4 Co-ordinate the documentation of the project

- Element 3.1.2 Establish site conditions
- Element 3.1.4 Assess regulatory context

- Element 3.2.3 Prepare preliminary project evaluations, programs and feasibility studies
- Element 3.2.5 Establish requirements for, and co-ordinate, specialists

- Element 3.3.1 Administer a standard form construction contract

Three levels of experience have been identified. They are:

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:
 - i. at least 40 hours of architectural experience in each of the mandatory seven (7) 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
 - ii. at least 120 hours in total of architectural experience at Executive level across at least three (3) of the mandatory Prescribed Elements of Competency
 - iii. no more than 160 hours of experience at Observer level each of Elements 3.2.3 and 3.3.1. **Elements 3.2.3 and 3.3.1 are the only two Prescribed Elements of Competency in which Observer experience is accepted.**

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

6 The Recording of Practical Experience

6.1 Log Book

Candidates should note that diaries will not be assessed.

Candidates shall familiarise themselves with the information included with the *NCSA/LS Log Sheets* and *NCSA/GC Guide for Candidates*. It is the responsibility of each Candidate to download the electronic *NCSA/LS Log Sheets* document and maintain it. AACA will not be responsible for loss of any electronic records.

Candidates must ensure that they fill out Log Sheets regularly.

Log Sheet entries shall be related to individual projects in which Candidates have had involvement.

Log Sheets are project based. A minimum of one sheet should be used for each project. If a project runs for longer than three months extra sheets should be used.

Electronic Format of NCSA/LS Log Sheets:

The suite of electronic Log Sheets and Summary Sheets is preceded by a Candidate Information page. Candidates should complete details of their name prior to opening the Log Sheets as this information is carried forward automatically into the Log Sheets and Summary Sheets. Address and contact details need not be completed until Candidates are preparing to apply for the APE.

Log Sheets: Candidates are only required to enter information into the shaded areas on the Log Sheets. Other areas are automatically populated. Each Log Sheet covers a three month period. In completing the shaded areas in the top section of each Log Sheet, Candidates shall observe the following

- a) Provide the employer's name, and where experience has been gained in an architectural practice ensure that the supervising architect's name and registration number are included.
- b) Complete project details:
 - i. Project Description and Location
 - ii. Building Area
 - iii. Type of Construction
 - iv. Cost of Work - probable cost or tendered
- c) Indicate the period (each sheet covers three (3) months) and the year.

Candidates may access the Mandatory Experience section of each Log Sheet by scrolling down the page. Details of Mandatory Experience should be entered in terms of 'hours' and entered into the shaded portion on the right hand of the Log Sheet. Executive, Participant and Observer Roles are automatically populated from this information. Further information on how to complete the Mandatory Experience section of the Log Sheet is contained in the margin adjoining the electronic Log Sheet.

Executive, Participant and Observer Summary Sheets, and the Mandatory Experience Summary Sheet, are automatically populated from the Log Sheets.

6.2 Statement of 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.

While the Statement of Practical Experience provides a basis for Assessors to explore the nature and level of the Candidate's experience in the Part 3 Examination by Interview, Candidates should be aware that they will also be expected to be familiar with topical professional issues and must be prepared to discuss them. The Part 3 Examination is not restricted to discussion on the Candidate's Log Book and Statement of Practical Experience; it can explore knowledge in both actual and hypothetical situations.

6.3 Re-submissions

Should a Candidate fail to satisfy the Examiners in any part of the Architectural Practice Examination, subsequent applications shall include information previously submitted, supplemented by subsequent experience properly recorded in the *NCSA/LS* together with a new Statement of Practical Experience, as set out in Clause 6.2.

Details of the Mandatory Experience Categories

Unit 2 Documentation

Context 2.1 To generate documentation and clearly communicate information for an architectural project so that it can be costed, built and completed in accordance with the brief, time frame, cost and quality objectives.

Element 2.1.2

Prepare architectural drawings with regard to the location, extent of building elements, components, finishes, fittings and systems.

Performance Criteria:

- 70 Materials, products and systems are selected and described in accordance with the detailed design
- 71 Timely, accurate, complete and comprehensible drawings are produced for consultants, building contractors and relevant authorities
- 72 Design changes which evolve during the documentation process are communicated to the client for approval

Element 2.1.4

Coordinate the documentation of the project.

Performance Criteria:

- 77 The architectural and consultants' documentation are checked for consistency and compatibility
- 78 The architectural and consultants' documentation are checked and confirmed for consistency with the detailed design intent and with quality, cost and time parameters
- 79 The documentation is consistent with the type of building contract and/or procurement procedure that has been selected for the project

Unit 3 Project Management

Context 3.1 To confirm objectives and conditions at inception of project

Element 3.1.2

Establish site conditions

Performance Criteria:

- 87 The limitations of the site and its environs are investigated, identified and opportunities recorded
- 88 Site access and utility connections are identified and considered
- 89 Specialist input is identified and obtained
- 90 The options for re-use, life cycle costing and, where relevant, the conservation of existing buildings and infrastructure are considered

Element 3.1.4

Assess regulatory context

Performance Criteria:

- 94 The implications of the law, relevant codes, regulations and industry standards are identified, understood and assessed

Context 3.2 To establish an appropriate procurement method and complete contractual arrangements with all participants

Element 3.2.3

Prepare preliminary project evaluations, programs and feasibility studies

Performance Criteria:

- 100 Project scope is clearly defined
- 101 A project cost analysis is undertaken which reflects an understanding of procurement method, contractual arrangements and other project parameters
- 102 Time, cost and quality requirements are recognised and balanced against client needs and priorities

Element 3.2.5

Establish requirements for, and coordinate, specialists

Performance Criteria:

- 105 The need for consultants, contractors and suppliers is established
- 106 The scope of specialist services is specified and briefs prepared
- 107 The selection of specialists including fee arrangements is negotiated and client agreement secured

Context 3.3 To provide contract administration for the construction of a project

Element 3.3.1

Administer a standard form construction contract

Performance Criteria:

- 113 Administrative processes are established and maintained which ensure progressive fulfillment of requirements of contract documents
- 114 Construction progress is systematically monitored and compliance with the contract provisions and budget ensured
- 115 Progress claims, variations and extensions are evaluated and certified
- 116 Problems and uncertainties are resolved and advice provided
- 117 Defects are identified and rectification by the builder is monitored
- 118 Instructions are issued.