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**2020 - 2021
ANNUAL REPORT**

Architects Accreditation Council of Australia

AACA ANNUAL REPORT 2020 – 2021

ABOUT AACA	3
Members of the AACA	3
The Board of Directors	3
Staff	3
AACA Committees	4
National Assessment Panel	4
Architectural Practice Examination Regional Convenors' Committee	4
APEC Architect Monitoring Committee (Australia)	4
Australia and New Zealand Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure Management Committee	5
ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW	6
What we do	6
Who we work with	6
Strategic Plan	6
THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2020-2021: HIGHLIGHTS	7
Release of the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects	7
THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2020-2021: ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS	8
Overseas Qualification Assessment	8
Verification of Australian Accredited Architecture Qualifications	8
Experienced Practitioner Assessment	8
National Program of Assessment	9
NPrA 25 Stage 2 – Response to the Hypothetical Design Brief	9
NPrA 26 Stage 2– Response to the Hypothetical Design Brief	10
NPrA 27 Stage 1 Eligibility	11
Architectural Practice Examination	12
APE 2020-2021 results	12
APE program development	13



THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2020-2021: ACCREDITATION FUNCTIONS	14
The Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure in Australia and New Zealand	14
Australia-Pacific Economic Corporation (APEC) Architect	14
International Mutual Recognition of Registration Arrangement between the USA, Australia and New Zealand	14
Liaison with State and Territory Registration Boards and Other Stakeholders	15
Liaison with Federal Government Agencies	15
FUTURE PLANS	16
Implementation of National Standard of Competency for Architects	16
International Mutual Recognition Agreements	16
LIST OF ACRONYMS	17
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	18

ABOUT AACA

Members of the AACA

Architects in Australia are regulated by statute in each state and territory. Each Architect Registration Board is an independent statutory authority and is responsible for administering the Architects Act in its jurisdiction. A summary of the regulation of architects in each state and territory can be found [here](#).

The AACA was formed by the Architect Registration Boards in Australia in the 1970's to facilitate a nationally consistent approach to the accreditation of architectural education and assessment programs on the path to registration as an architect. AACA comprises 16 members nominated by the [State and Territory architects registration Boards](#) (Nominating Bodies), each of whom nominates two persons to the membership of the Council.

The Board of Directors

AACA's Board of Directors are five in number who are elected by the Members. The President (Board Chair) must be an architect member of the Council with at least 12 months experience as a Director in the five year period preceding nomination for the position of President. Two of the remaining four positions on the Board of Directors must be occupied by architects; and up to two positions may be held by relevantly experienced persons outside the Membership of the AACA.

The Board of Directors meets at least three times a year. Directors during the reporting year included:

- Catherine Townsend (President)
- Dr Deborah Dearing (appointed November 2020)
- Dr Kirsten Orr (resigned November 2020)
- Karen Alcock (appointed November 2020)
- Adam Toma (resigned July 2020)
- Lisa Edwards (Appointed July 2020, resigned November 2020)
- Keith Drew
- Malcolm Middleton

Staff

The current AACA Chief Executive Officer is Kathlyn Loseby, commencing March 2021.

Kate Doyle was the immediate past Chief Executive Officer until March 2021.

Contact details for the AACA are:
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E: mail@aaca.org.au
W: www.aaca.org.au

AACA Committees

The operational committees established to provide professional advice in the conduct of AACA operations are outlined below.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PANEL

The Panel is comprised of three architectural academics and two practising architects. It provides advice to the Board on AACA assessment programs including the Architectural Practice Examination, the National Program of Assessment, Overseas Qualifications Assessment, Experienced Practitioner Program and the conduct of assessments of qualifications for the Federal Government's Skilled Migration Program.

Members include:

- Keith Drew
- Dr Kate Hislop (Chair)
- Catherine Lassen
- Dr Elizabeth Musgrave
- David Sainsbery

ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION REGIONAL CONVENORS' COMMITTEE

The eight State and Territory Architectural Practice Examination (APE) convenors comprise the membership of this committee led by the APE National Convenor. The committee's major responsibilities are to supervise, monitor and report on the Architectural Practice Examination, as well as to provide quality assurance for the APE in their respective state or territory.

Members include:

- Melonie Bayl-Smith (New South Wales)
- Paul Boyce (South Australia)
- David Bridgman (Northern Territory)
- Keith Drew (Tasmania – APE National Convenor)
- Scott Hodgson (ACT)
- Ian Hamilton (Queensland)
- Sally Matthews (Western Australia)
- John Padas (Tasmania)
- Emma Templeton (Victoria)

APEC ARCHITECT MONITORING COMMITTEE (AUSTRALIA)

The APEC Architect Monitoring Committee is responsible for assessment of architects registered in Australia wishing to have their names entered onto the APEC Architect Register.

Members include the AACA Directors and the CEO.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Accreditation Management Committee comprising nominees of all the stakeholders in the profession 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. The Committee does not accredit programs; that is the decision of the respective State and Territory Architect Registration Boards. More information about the Committee is contained in the Accreditation Procedure.

Membership during the reporting period was:

Current

- Mr Stephen Ward (Chairperson March 2020 - present) – nominee of the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia
- Professor Sandra Kaji-O’Grady – nominee of the Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia
- 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 Lara Mackintosh – nominee of the Australian Institute of Architects

Previous

- Mr Dean Wood (Chairperson July 2019 to March 2020) – nominee of the Australian Institute of Architects
- Dr Michael Jasper – nominee of the Australian Deans of the Built Environment and Design
- Ms Rebecca Naughtin – nominee of the Australian State and Territory Architect Registration Boards

ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

A not-for-profit organisation, AACA maintains the National Standard of Competency for Architects that underpins all assessment processes including the accreditation of architecture programs leading to registration as an architect in Australia.

What we do

Locally we:

- consult with key organisations to develop, maintain and promote the National Standard of Competency for Architects
- develop and provide competency-based assessment programs to determine eligibility for registration as an architect in Australia
- administer the Architecture Accreditation Procedure in Australia and New Zealand on behalf of the Architect Registration Boards.

Internationally we:

- facilitate international mutual recognition agreements in regard to architectural education and registration as an architect in Australia
- assess overseas qualifications for architects seeking to register as an architect in Australia
- provide accurate data on the profession of architecture in Australia and overseas

Who We work with

- State and Territory Architect Registration Boards
- Australian Institute of Architects
- Association of Consulting Architects in Australia
- Australian Deans of the Built Environment and Design
- Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia
- Commonwealth Government Departments of Education, Foreign Affairs and Trade and Home Affairs
- International bodies responsible for architecture standards for licensing architects

Strategic Plan

The AACA developed a new [five-year Strategic Plan](#) in March 2020. The Plan focuses on AACA's supporting the eight architect registration boards by delivering high quality, nationally consistent assessment programs on the path to registration as an architect.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2020-2021:

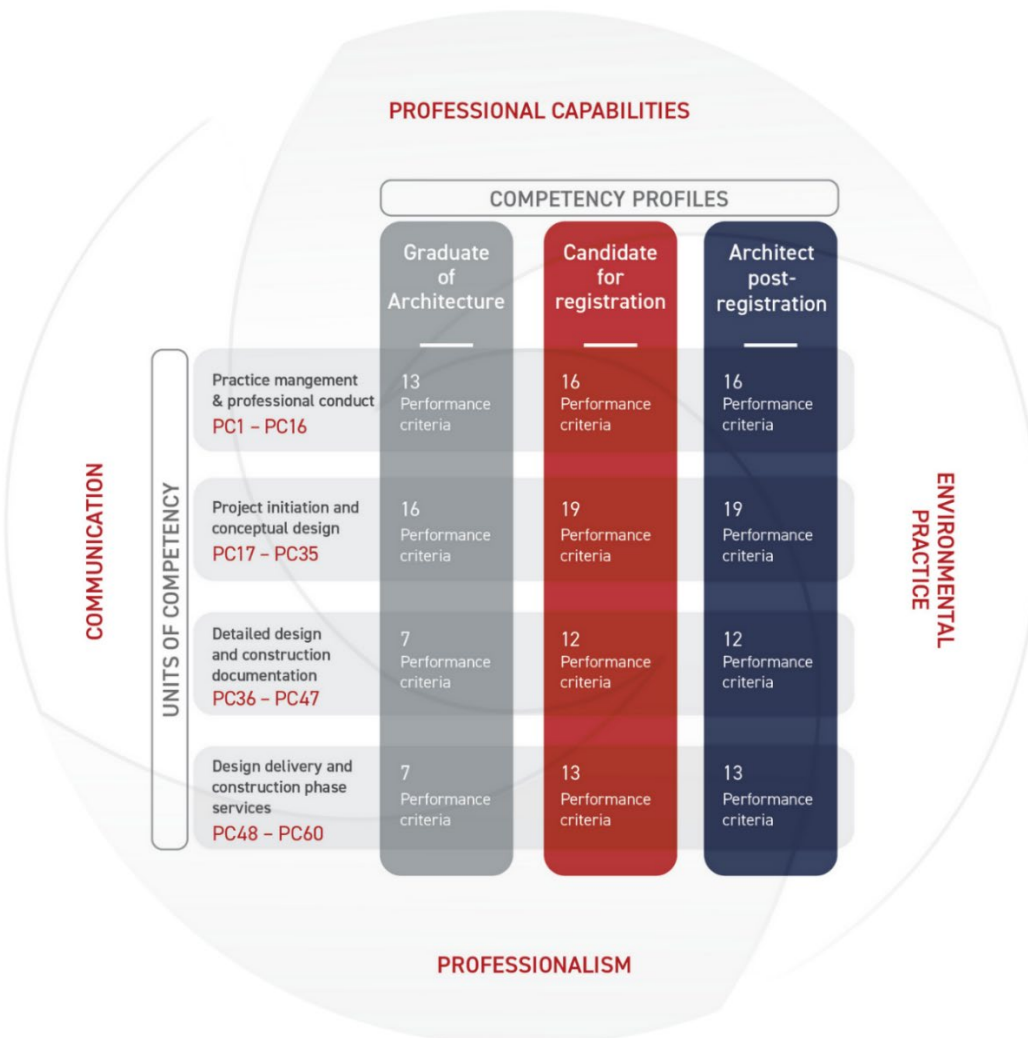
HIGHLIGHTS

Release of the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects

The AACA completed the review of the 2015 NSCA in June 2021 and released the new NSCA on 1 July 2021.

The 2021 NSCA is the result of the regular five-yearly review and underpins all assessment processes including the accreditation of architecture programs leading to registration as an architect in Australia. The 2021 NSCA has been developed through an 18-month-long process involving in-depth research and close engagement with stakeholders, and it will be implemented progressively over 2022 and 2023.

The 2021 NSCA is the first version of its kind to enshrine a greater focus on more meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples and expands sustainability in the performance criteria.



THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2020-2021:

ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

The AACA offers a variety of assessment programs for applicants on the path to registration as an architect. In the 2020-2021 financial year, 750 applications across the programs were directly managed by the AACA (excluding the Architectural Practice Examination) as opposed to 930 in the previous year. The COVID outbreak and travel restrictions resulted in a decreased demand for Overseas Qualifications Assessment as well as general activity downturn.

These programs include:

- Overseas Qualifications Assessment Stage 1 and 2
- Verification of Australian Accredited Architecture Qualifications
- Experienced Practitioner Assessment
- National Program of Assessment

Overseas Qualification Assessment

The two-stage Overseas Qualifications Assessment (OQA) determines if an overseas academic qualification is comparable to a current Australian accredited qualification in architecture. Stage 1 is a Qualifications Assessment, Stage 2 is a competency-based, final assessment and includes the submission of a portfolio and an assessment interview.

A successful outcome of the OQA Stage 2 allows a candidate to undertake the Architectural Practice Examination (APE) as a pathway to registration as an architect with a State or Territory Architects Registration Board.

Overall, OQA Stage 2 and concurrent applications (Stage 1 and 2) have a very high success rate (more than 90.82%), while only 84.38% of OQA Stage 1 applications have a positive outcome.

A successful outcome of the OQA assessment provides a Skills Assessment that can be used to apply for a skilled migration visa for permanent residency.

Verification of Australian Accredited Architecture Qualifications

AACA, the assessing authority for the profession 'architect', provides a Skills Assessment letter to candidates who have an overseas qualification in architecture and graduate from an Australian accredited architecture qualification (M Arch). The Skills Assessment letter allows the individual to apply for a temporary graduate working visa.

In 2020-2021, a total of 375 applications were completed, a small increase of 3.5% in comparison to the previous year.

Experienced Practitioner Assessment

The Experienced Practitioner Assessment provides an alternative pathway to registration as an architect for practitioners with an approved architecture qualification and relevant experience at executive level (decision-maker) in a minimum of four complex projects.

National Program of Assessment

The National Program of Assessment (NPrA) is a competency based assessment for those who have substantial skills and experience in the architectural profession, but do not have a recognised qualification. The NPrA process is primarily a design exercise that tests Candidates' competency in architecture on the basis of their acquired knowledge and experience.

Taking the form of a complex architectural project, successful completion of the NPrA is recognised by all Australian registration authorities as a pathway to the Architectural Practice Examination (APE). Candidates must successfully undertake the APE before applying to a State or Territory Architect Registration Board to become registered as an architect.

NPrA 25 STAGE 2 – RESPONSE TO THE HYPOTHETICAL DESIGN BRIEF

Given the evolving COVID-19 situation in Australia and the impact on NPrA candidates participating in the programs, AACA in consultation with the NPrA Management Group extended the Final Submission deadline to 31 August 2020 with candidates submitting online.

- 32 submissions were received and marked by 15 NPrA Assessors.
- 21 submissions were successful.
- After lodging an appeal a further 2 candidates were successful in NPrA 25

Table 1: Outcomes of NPrA 25

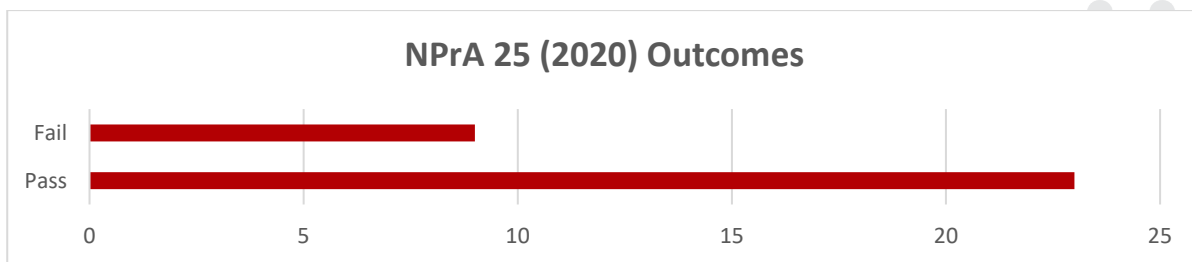
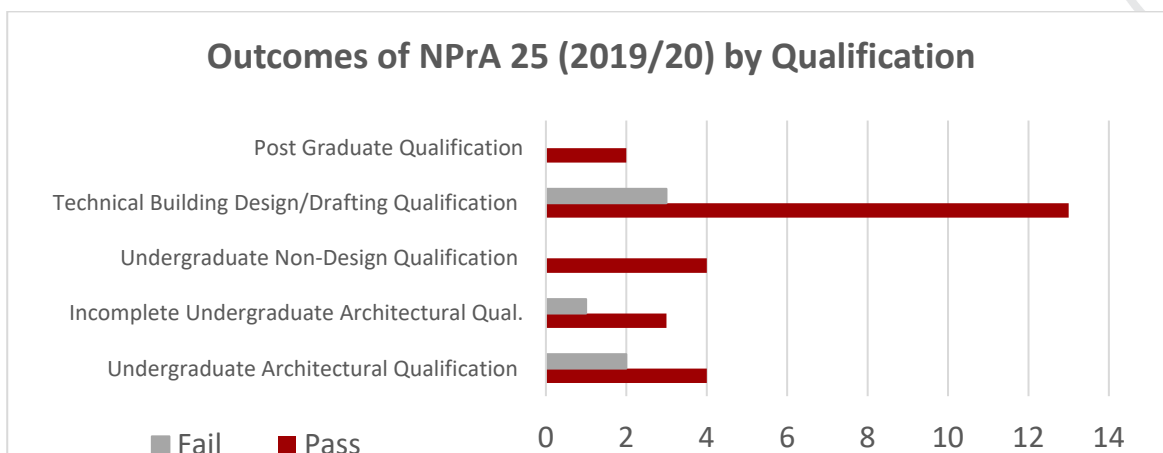


Table 2: Outcomes of NPrA 25 by qualification held



NPrA 26 STAGE 2– RESPONSE TO THE HYPOTHETICAL DESIGN BRIEF

Given the evolving COVID-19 situation in Australia and the impact on NPrA candidates participating in the programs, NPrA 26 candidates emailed their final response to the hypothetical brief online via drop box.

AACA in consultation with the NPrA Management Group agreed to requests for extensions on a case by case basis.

- 50 candidates (including 12 candidates from previous programs were issued with the Brief)
- 19 candidates withdrew from the program before the final submission date
- 31 submissions were received and marked by 13 NPrA Assessors
- 24 submissions were successful.

Table 1: Outcomes of NPrA 26

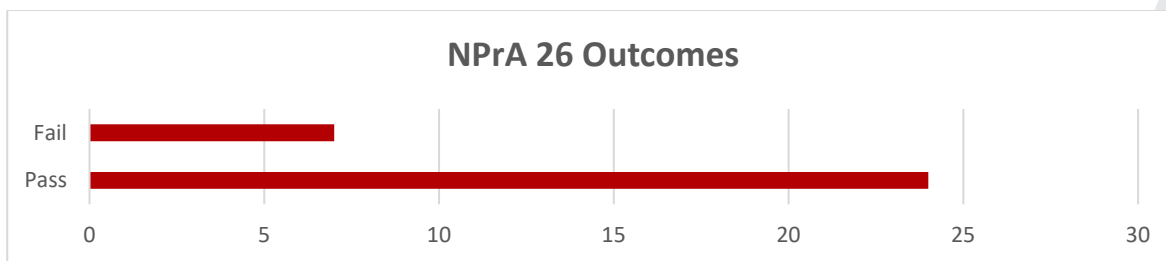
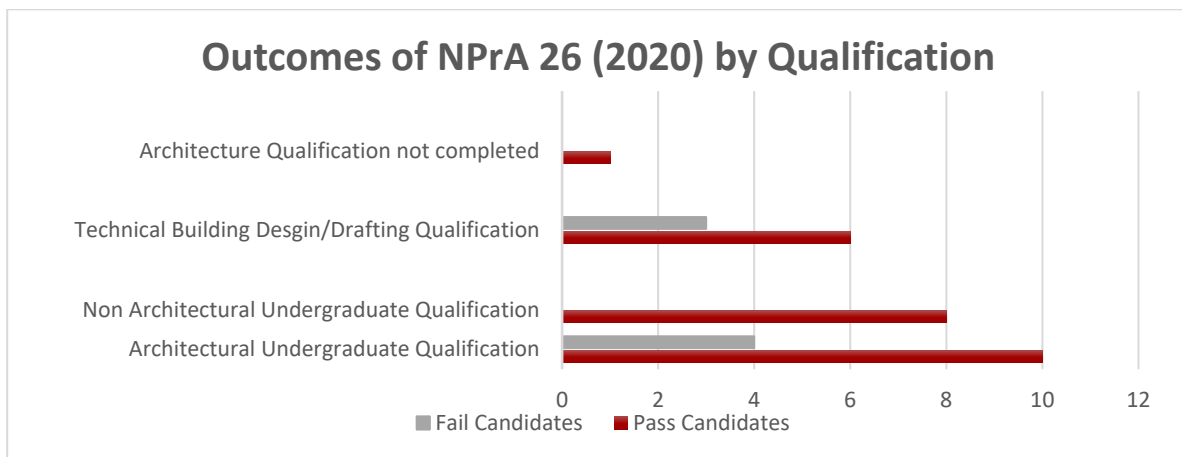


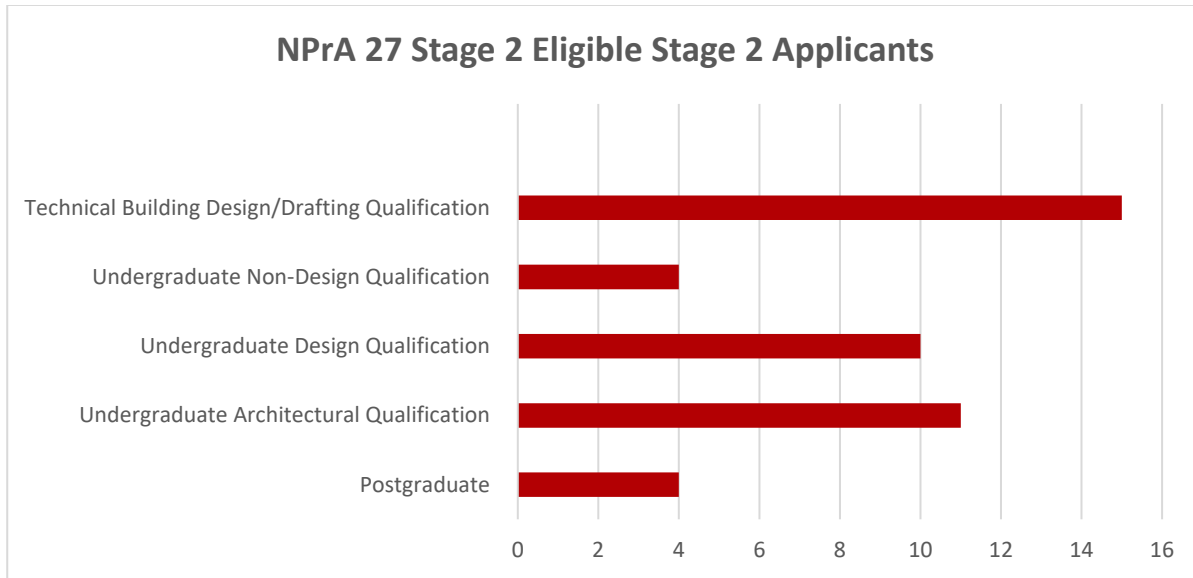
Table 2: Outcomes of NPrA 26 by qualification held



NPRA 27 STAGE 1 ELIGIBILITY

AACA received 46 applications to the Stage 1 – Eligibility for the 2021 NPRA Program. 44 applicants were invited to Stage 2 – Response to the Design Brief.

Qualifications held by Eligible Applicants



Architectural Practice Examination

The Architectural Practice Examination (APE) has been adopted by all Australian State and Territory Architect Registration Boards as the national examination in architectural practice.

The APE is a three-part process, of which all three parts must be completed sequentially. Once all requirements of the three-part APE have been satisfactorily met, candidates can apply to the Architect Registration Board in the state or territory in which they wish to practice.

APE 2020-2021 RESULTS

This 2020-2021 financial year saw a total of 1097 candidates sitting the National Examination Paper and 995 candidates completing the Interview.

A total of 860 Candidates completed the three stage APE successfully - an 86.4% success rate.

Table 1: Outcomes of APE 2020-2021 in each State and Territory

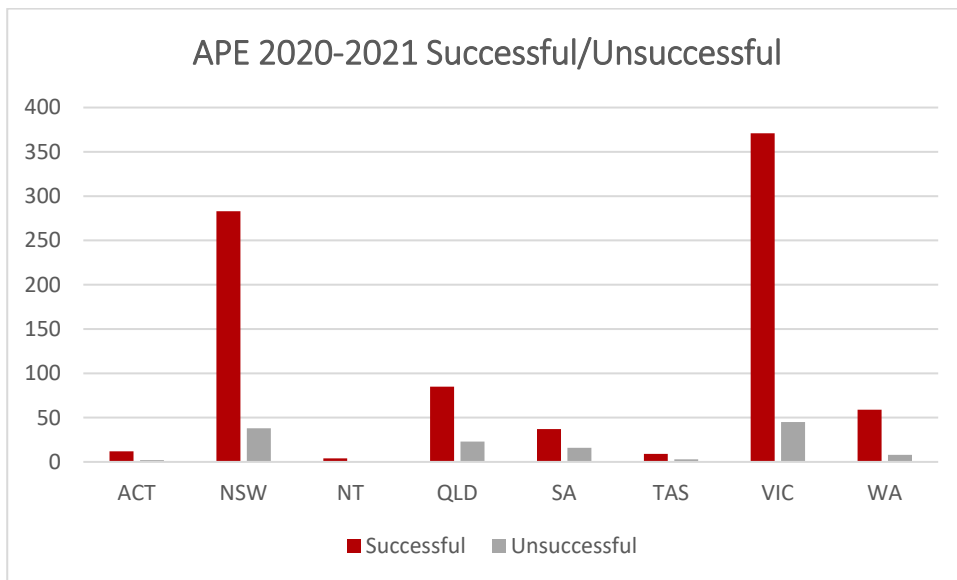


Table 2: Successful APE 2020-2021 Candidates by Gender in each State and Territory

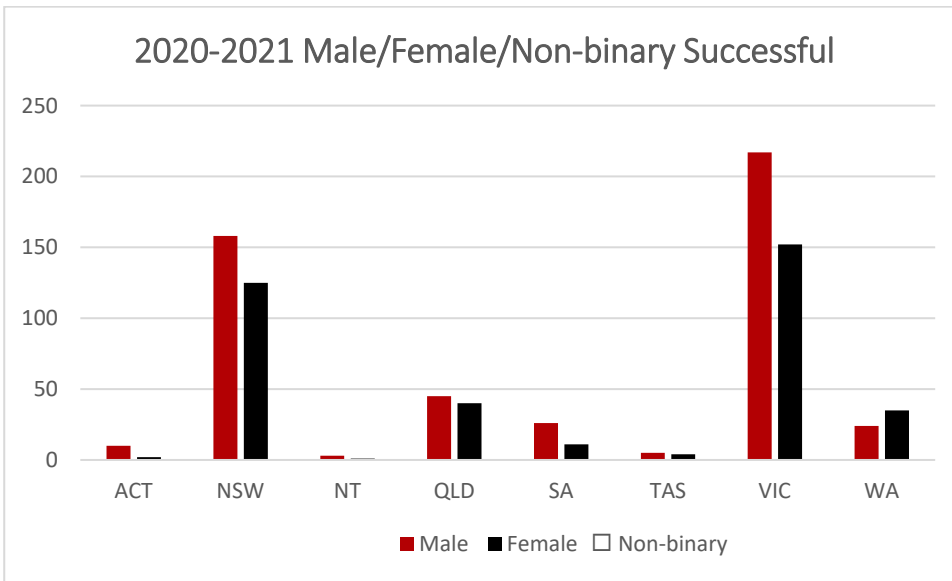


Table 3: Successful APE 2020-2021 Candidates by Qualifications Origins in each State and Territory



APE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Working in partnership with the Architect Registration Boards, the AACA continued work on the Pathways to Registration project. The recommendations of the Working Group were considered at the Annual Meeting of Architect Registration Boards in October 2020. It was agreed at that meeting to develop an APE Mentoring Framework and a Pre-Registration Education Program for graduates. Work is continuing on this project.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2020-2021:

ACCREDITATION FUNCTIONS

The Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure in Australia and New Zealand

Following assumption of the role from the Australian Institute of Architects in July 2017, the AACA continues to provide all Secretariat support to the Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure in Australia and New Zealand.

In the reporting year the work of the Secretariat included:

- Management of the Accreditation Standing Panel, including an annual review of membership
- Support to the conduct of Accreditation Review Panels.
- Released the 2020 Annual Report on Accredited Architecture Programs in Australia.

In the reporting year the following programs have received initial accreditation for the purpose of registration as an architect:

- Master of Architecture delivered by the University of Notre Dame, Australia (WA)
- Master of Architecture and the Master of Architecture and Urban Design delivered by Swinburne University of Technology, Australia (VIC)

Australia-Pacific Economic Corporation (APEC) Architect

The AACA received 4 applications for Australian APEC Architects register in 2020-2021. 2 were admitted to the register.

The AACA received no Supplementary Assessment Program Applications from overseas APEC Architects seeking registration in Australia.

International Mutual Recognition of Registration Arrangement between the USA, Australia and New Zealand

To the end of the 2020-2021 reporting period, 6 Australian architects have applied for registration in the USA and 13 USA architects have applied for registration in Australia via the provisions of the Agreement.

Liaison with State and Territory Registration Boards and Other Stakeholders

During the reporting year the CEO provided Briefings for assessors hosted by Architect Registration Boards across Australia.

The AACA hosts an annual meeting of Architect Registration Boards. Timetabled with the AACA Annual General Meeting, it provides a forum for discussion and exchange of information on relevant national issues. In 2020 the meeting was held via Zoom and all Nominating Bodies (Architect Registration Board in each state and territory) attended.

Liaison with Federal Government Agencies

During the reporting year AACA was actively involved in liaison with a number of Federal Government agencies.

Discussions were held with:

- The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in relation to Mutual Recognition Agreements, and professional services components of Free Trade Agreements.
- Austrade regarding research and data collection matters.
- The Department of Immigration and Border Protection in relation to migration trends and issues.
- The Department of Education on issues relating to migration assessments and the review of criteria for assessment agencies.

FUTURE PLANS

Implementation of National Standard of Competency for Architects

A major focus for 2021-2022 is the implementation of the 2021 National Standard of Competency. The staged rollout will start in January 2022 for the National Program of Assessment, July 2022 for the Experienced Practitioner and Overseas Qualification Assessment, and January 2023 for Accreditation and the Architectural Practice Exam.

International Mutual Recognition Agreements

The AACA expects to conclude the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand Mutual Recognition Agreement early in 2022.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AACA	Architects Accreditation Council of Australia
AASA	Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia
ACA	Association of Consulting Architects
ADBED	Australian Deans of the Built Environment and Design
AIA	Australian Institute of Architects
APE	Architectural Practice Examination
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
MRA	Mutual Recognition of Registration Agreement
NAP	National Assessment Panel
NSCA	National Standard of Competency for Architects
NEP	National Examination Paper
NPRA	National Program of Assessment
NVP	National Visiting Panel
OQA	Overseas Qualifications Assessment
OQRP	Overseas Qualifications Review Panel
SAP	Supplementary Assessment Program
SOL	Skilled Occupation List

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