



1. Preamble

The Architectural Practice Examination (APE) is a 3 part examination owned by the ACA. The APE has been adopted by all Australian state and territory architect registration boards as the national examination in architectural practice used to determine eligibility for registration as an architect.

Candidates apply to sit the exam through the architect registration board in the state or territory where they live. The results of the APE are accepted for the purpose of recognising suitability for registration as an architect by all Boards regardless of which state or territory the candidates sat the examination.

This report focuses on Part 2 of the APE – the National Examination Paper. [More information about the APE is found here.](#)

2. Part 2 of the National Examination Paper

The objective of the National Examination Paper is to provide a reliable and valid test of knowledge and application in practice of the relevant performance criteria in the National Standard of Competency for Architects.

Candidates must pass the National Examination Paper as a condition of admission to APE Part 3 - Examination by Interview.

Quality Assurance in the National Examination Paper

The professional content of the National Examination Paper is overseen by the APE National Convenor in consultation with the State and Territory APE Convenors appointed by each Architect Registration Board in Australia.

Specialist advice on assessment is provided by the team from the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Program support is provided by the ACA.

The APE Examination Committee led by the National Convenor allocates nine scenarios to each Examination covering any of the performance criteria that may be tested in Part 2 of the APE. All of the Scenario Writers for the National Examination Paper are architects currently in practice and have participated in the formal Scenario Writing Workshops developed by the ACER.

Draft examination papers are reviewed by the APE Convenors and ACER. The Convenors' review is focused on jurisdictional issues, any practice anomalies or potential ambiguities across State and Territory boundaries, coverage of the performance criteria tested in each Examination and monitoring the balance of the level of difficulty of the questions. Draft Papers are issued to ACER for expert advice in relation to the Paper as an assessment instrument.

Note: ACER does not comment on the professional content of the NEP.

Structure of the National Examination Paper

Each Examination Paper comprises nine scenarios reflecting current architectural practice contexts in Australia. See relevant performance criteria in the National Standard of Competency for Architects that may be tested in the Examination Paper.

Each scenario has five multiple-choice questions with each question having four possible answers.

Once finalised, the examination paper is forwarded to ACER for import into the online platform and testing prior to the implementation of the Examination.

3. Impact of COVID-19 on 2020 National Examination Papers

In late February/early March 2020, AACA began monitoring the COVID-19 situation and relevant Public Health Orders recognising the impact it would have on all AACA Assessment Programs including the National Examination Paper.

In consultation with the Architect Registration Boards, the NEP scheduled for the 21 April was postponed and re-scheduled for 18 August with the plan to implement both 2020 NEP sessions on that date.

Candidates enrolled for the April NEP were advised by the Architect Registration Boards.

As the move towards easing of COVID restrictions in all States did not eventuate and after assessing the alternatives available during the COVID-19 pandemic, the AACA advised the Architect Registration Boards that it was necessary to change the platform for the NEP from an on-line testing centre to remote on-line proctoring.

The Architect Registration Boards agreed that this was the most practicable and fair way of implementing the NEP in 2020. AACA partnered with ProctorU, who provided the technical basis for candidates to provide their own platform for the exam. ACER continued their services in professional advice on the exam.

This decision was [communicated](#) to NEP candidates on 29 May with AACA and Architect Registration Boards continuing to update candidates.

4. Administration of the National Examination Paper

The administration of the National Examination Paper is coordinated by AACA working closely with:

- **Architect Registration Boards**
The Architect Registration Boards provide information to AACA on their candidates. Boards are responsible for communicating NEP updates to candidates on the exam arrangements, and for issuing results to candidates in their State or Territory.
- **ACER**
ACER is responsible for providing professional advice relating to assessment and for implementation of the remote delivery of the 2020 National Examination Paper.
- **ProctorU (in 2020)**
ProctorU provided the technical basis for candidates to provide their own platform for the exam.

5. Exam Results

After each exam the APE Convenors participate in a debrief guided by ACER's statistical analysis of the cohort's responses to each question.

Calculation of results for the exam only occurs after this Debrief session has occurred.

Individualised examination results are issued to candidates by the respective Architect Registration Boards generally within three weeks of the date of the Examination Paper.

After each session of the APE, a Summary Report of how the national cohort performed by question by performance criteria is published in the APE section of the AACA website. State specific information is made available only to the relevant Architect Registration Board.