



**Architectural Education and the
Profession in Australia and New
Zealand**

Research Study 2018

Project Plan 10/18

1. Introduction

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) is leading a major study of *Architectural Education and the Profession in Australia and New Zealand*. This study will be undertaken from August 2018 to June 2019 and will be managed by the AACA in collaboration with the Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia (AASA), the Australian Institute of Architects (Institute), the Association of Consulting Architects (ACA), the Australian Deans of Built Environment and Design (ADBED), Government Architects Network Australia (GANNA) and State and Territory Architect Registration Boards (ARBs), and New Zealand stakeholder organisations.

This aim of this research is to help understand and identify way to improve the experience of architecture students, graduates and academics, and support greater connections between schools of architecture and the architectural profession. The AACA has initiated this work to coincide with the 10-year anniversary of the detailed study of architectural education in Australia published in 2008 by Michael Ostwald and Anthony Williams. This study provided reliable baseline data on questions including the number, background and opinions of architectural academics, the number and background of architectural students, teaching and learning approaches in architecture, the funding environment, and the relationship of architectural education to external processes such as professional accreditation. The new study will replicating some of this research for comparison purposes, as well as introducing new research themes concerning the relationship of education to the changing practice environment.

2. Project Outline

Education is critical to the development of the architectural profession and has ramifications nationally for the business and regulation of architects in Australia and New Zealand, and internationally in terms of the mobility of architects and firms practising overseas and to our increasing attractiveness to overseas students as a source of high quality professional education.

The Architectural Education and the Profession in Australia Study will explore four key themes:

- **Research Theme 1: Resourcing**
How have changes in higher education regulation, practice and funding models over the past decade affected architectural education? What resources are available to schools and can they be considered sufficient? What is the profile of architecture teaching staff including contract and sessional staff? To what extent is staff welfare measured and supported?
- **Research Theme 2: Teaching and Learning Practice**
What are the key contemporary issues in architectural teaching, e.g. the evolving understanding of “Design Studio”, the need to balance multiple curriculum elements? Is there much diversity in the teaching of architectural programs in Australian universities? Does the increasing proportion of international students bring with it different expectations? What has been the impact of new educational technologies? To what extent is there a nexus between architectural education and research?
- **Research Theme 3: Pathways**
What is the background of current MArch students? How flexible are current pathways into and out of architectural education? Where do architecture graduates seek/gain employment? Do they do architecture-related work when studying? How ready are they for

practice and the path to architectural registration? Are there opportunities to increase the diversity in the architectural student body and professional / academic workforce?

- **Research Theme 4: Futures**

What are the future drivers for curriculum development and teaching practice in architecture? How will architectural education be impacted by the changing nature of architectural business (such as internationalisation, specialisation and cross-disciplinary work)? What will be the impact of the new Accreditation Framework / National Standard of Competency for Architects and other changes in the regulatory sphere?

The Study will include a literature review, collection of data from a range of sources, surveys of architecture academics and the architecture profession, interviews with key stakeholders and focus groups with architecture academics, students, graduates and practitioners/employers [see Section 4: Methodology below]. The main report of the Study is scheduled to be completed in mid-2019.

3. Project Resources

The Study is being funded through contributions of the project partners. AACA is provide, led by to a maximum of \$60,000. Management oversight and administrative support to the project is provided as an additional in-kind contribution by the AACA.

Project team

Kate Doyle, ACAA CEO	<i>Project sponsor</i>
Dr Alex Maroya, Research Director	<i>Project leader</i>
Dr Gill Matthewson	<i>Senior researcher</i>
Dr Louise Wallis	<i>Senior researcher</i>
Amanda Baillie	<i>Administration manager</i>

Expert Reference Group (ERG)

Senior experienced academics and / or practitioners who will provide independent expert leadership in the conduct of the Study.

Prof Deborah Ascher Barnstone, University of Technology Sydney

Prof Kirsten Orr, University of Tasmania

Prof Michael Ostwald, University of Newcastle

Dr Peter Raisbeck, University of Melbourne

Ms Caroline Stalker, ARUP

Prof Naomi Stead, Monash University

Stakeholder Group

A nominee from each of the key stakeholders (AACA / AASA / AIA / ACA / ADBED / GANA / ARBs/NZstakeholders). The role of this Group is to take into account the views of respective stakeholders in framing the Study, to assist in identification of participants, to encourage participation in surveys, focus groups and interview. Membership of this group is yet to be finalised.

4. Study methodology

There are three key elements to the methodology of the Architecture Education and the Profession in Australia Study:

Literature review and initial data gathering

The Study will commence with a review of significant Australian, New Zealand and international work on contemporary architectural education, starting with the 2008 Understanding Architectural Education study and follow-up work on design studies and collaborative education. Literature will also be sought on the professional skills needs of architectural businesses. Background data will be obtained from a variety of sources such as the Department of Education and Training, architecture schools, the Australian Institute of Architects, the Association of Consulting Architects, Architects Registration Boards, International Union of Architects, and the Commonwealth Association of Architects.

Survey of Architecture Academics and the Architecture Profession

An online survey / census will be undertaken of all full-time and part-time academic staff involved regularly in the teaching of architecture (including sessional staff). Each school will take responsibility for circulating the survey to its ongoing and sessional staff, and following up to ensure the target response rate of 70% is achieved. Each school will provide the AACA with the number of academics to whom the survey was circulated by level so the AACA can track the extent to which responses match the overall population.

Similar to the 2008 study, the survey will include a mix of factual questions (“What is your highest qualification?”), Likert scale questions (“How important is program accreditation in shaping architectural degree curriculum on a scale of one to five?”), list questions (“What are the top three challenges facing architecture schools?”) and a small number of open questions (“How can architectural teaching and research be better connected?”). The overall number of questions will be kept to approximately 40.

Approximately a quarter of questions from the 2008 study have been dropped to allow for additional questions, e.g. adding questions concerning the relationship between architectural education, the profession, and regulators. A similar survey will be conducted of design professionals working in architecture (not necessarily architects).

Interviews and focus groups

The research team will undertake individual semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, e.g. Heads of Schools, Deans / Senior University Managers, Registrars, AACA Board, the Institute, ACA, GANA, APESMA, Professions Australia, Department of Education and Training, employers of graduates. This would total approximately 35 interviews of up to 45 minutes each which could be conducted in person or by phone / skype as circumstances allow. The structure of interviews would be informed by the initial literature review / data gathering and by initial results of the survey.

Compared with the 2008 study there would be an expanded number of 12-15 focus groups of 12-20 persons each to include cohorts of academic staff, current students, graduates and practising architects. As with interviews, the content of focus groups would be informed by the initial literature review / data gathering and by initial results of the survey.

This project will be undertaken in accordance with best practice principles for human research and subject to review by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Technology Sydney. All participants will give informed consent to participation, which they may withdraw at any time. A protocol for the collection and management of project data is at **Attachment B**.

5. Timeline of the study

Stage 1: (September 2018)

Task	When	Status
Appoint team member/s	07/09	Complete
Commence literature review	14/09	Complete
Finalise survey questions	21/09	Complete
Plain Language Statement and consent form	14/09	Complete
Submit ethics application	14/09	Complete
Finalise survey design in Survey Monkey	25/09	Complete

Stage 2: October-December 2018

Task	When	Status
Test survey	19/10	Complete
Publish project webpage	24/10	In process
Draft literature review	30/10	In process
Initial data gathering	30/10	In process
Identification of interview membership	30/10	In process
Deploy academic survey to population	05/11	
Follow up on non-responses	16/11	
Close academic survey	26/11	
Deploy survey of profession to population	26/11	
Follow up on non-responses	07/12	
Close Survey	14/12	
Initial analysis of survey results	30/11	
First tranche interviews	21/12	
Commence drafting of report	21/12	

Stage 3: January – April 2019

Task	When	Status
Complete 'boilerplate' sections of report	08/02	
Second tranche interviews / focus groups	22/03	
Complete full draft report	19/04	
Approve draft to go to stakeholders	30/04	

Stage 4: May-June 2019

Task	When	Status
Consultation with stakeholders on draft report	10/05	
Preparation of final report	24/05	
Publication Design	03/06	
Sign off on final report	30/06	
Report Launch / Media	14/07	