



Introduction to the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects

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Registration Board
of Victoria





Acknowledgment of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands wherever attendees are situated, in particular the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

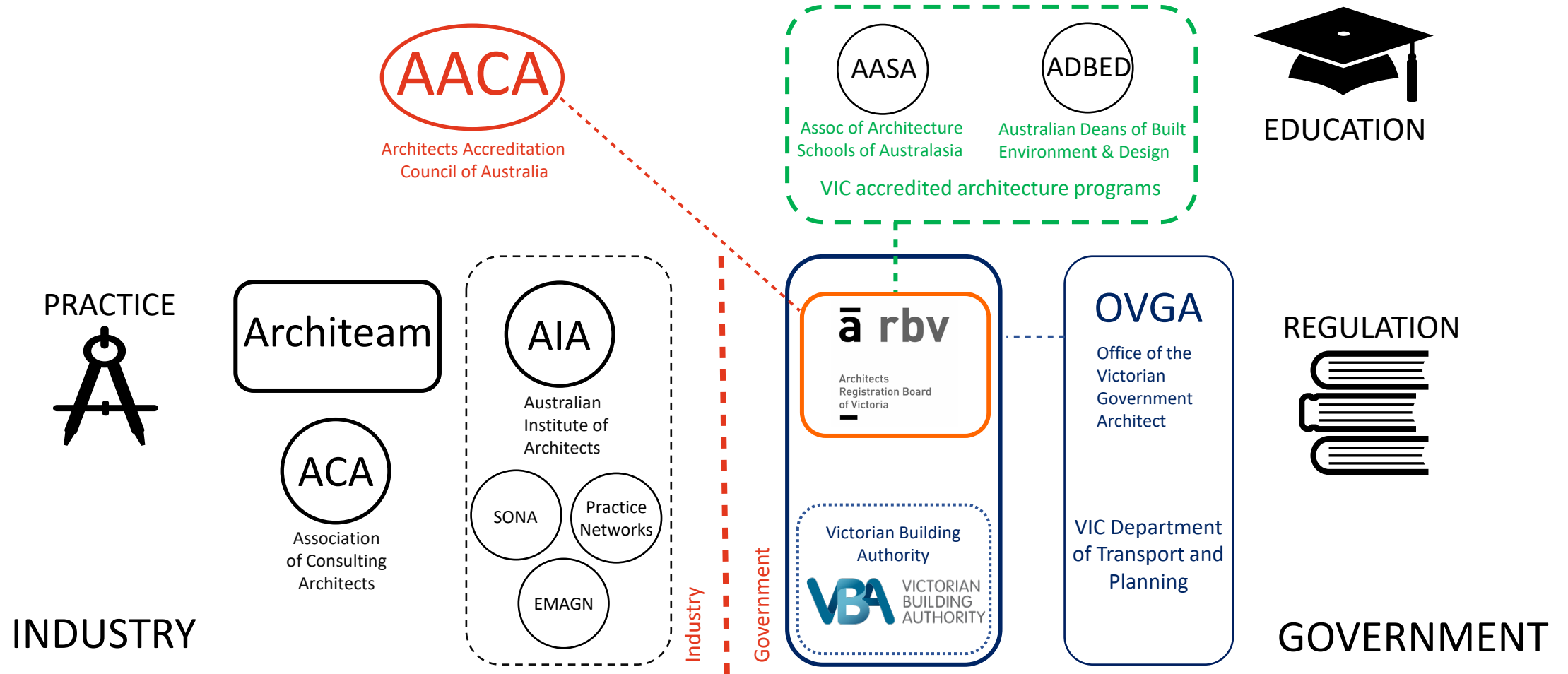




WEBINAR OUTLINE

- Where the ARBV and AACA sit in the practice-regulation-education context, and the relationship between them
- A brief history of the Australian competency standards for architects:
When and why were they first developed?
- How the competency standards have evolved over time
- The 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA):
What is the 2021 NSCA?
- Structure of the 2021 NSCA
- Explanatory Notes supporting the interpretation of the 2021 NSCA
- New content of the 2021 NSCA
 - Understanding and respecting Country
 - Expanded expectations in terms of sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon
- Questions

The AACCA in Context





The Role of the ARBV

Architects Registration Board of Victoria is a statutory authority, established under the *Architects Act 1991*.

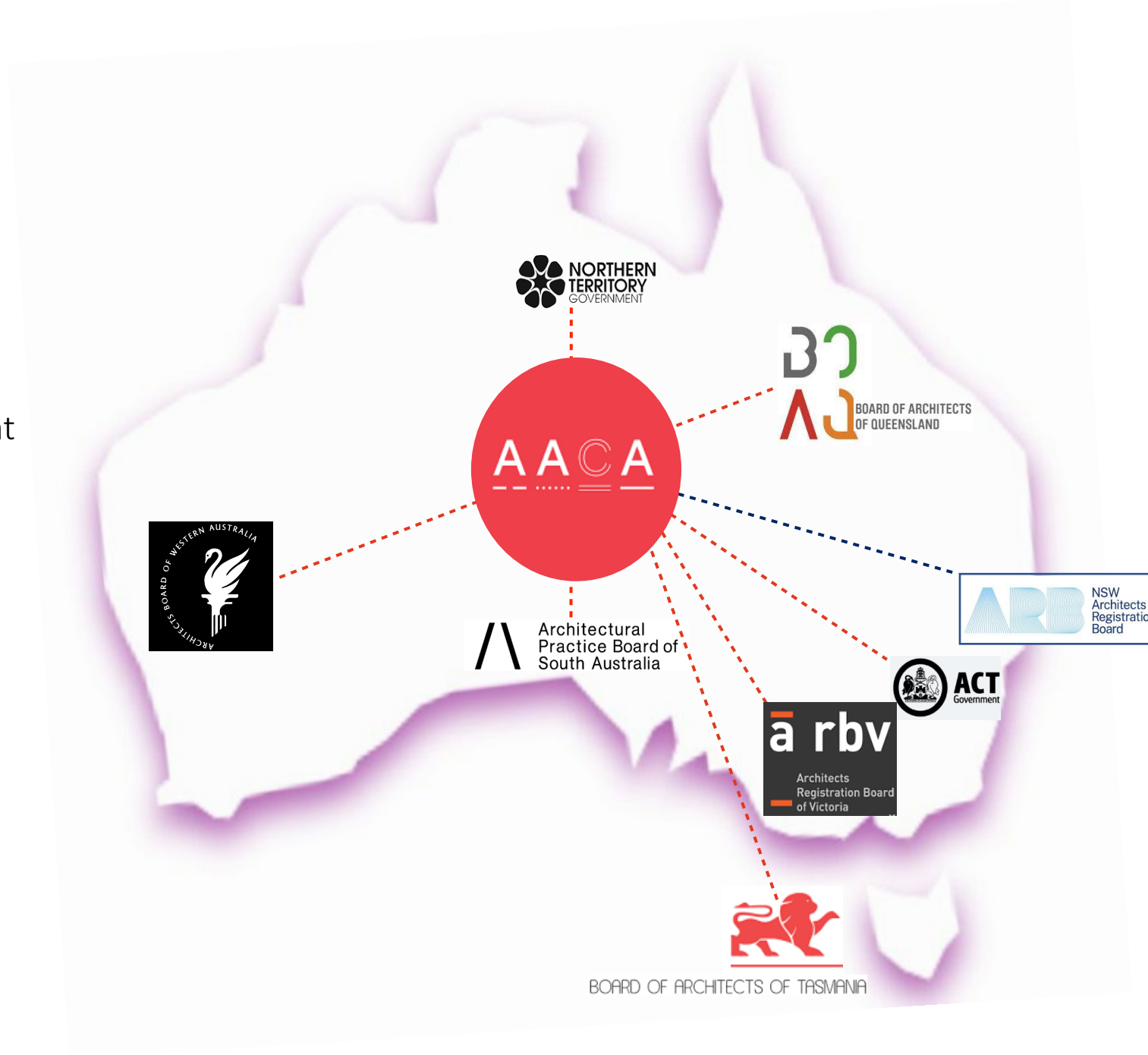
The Role of the ARBV is to:

- Regulate the profession of architects in Victoria
- Register architects and monitor their ongoing professional obligations
- Protect consumers by ensuring architects provide services in a professional and competent manner
- Accredite providers of architectural qualifications
- Administer the Architectural Practice Examination as a pre-registration pathway for registration as an architect in Victoria
- Regulate professional conduct, not design.

The ARBV's purpose is to protect the community interest and instil confidence in the regulation, integrity and delivery of architectural services in Victoria.

The Role of the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia

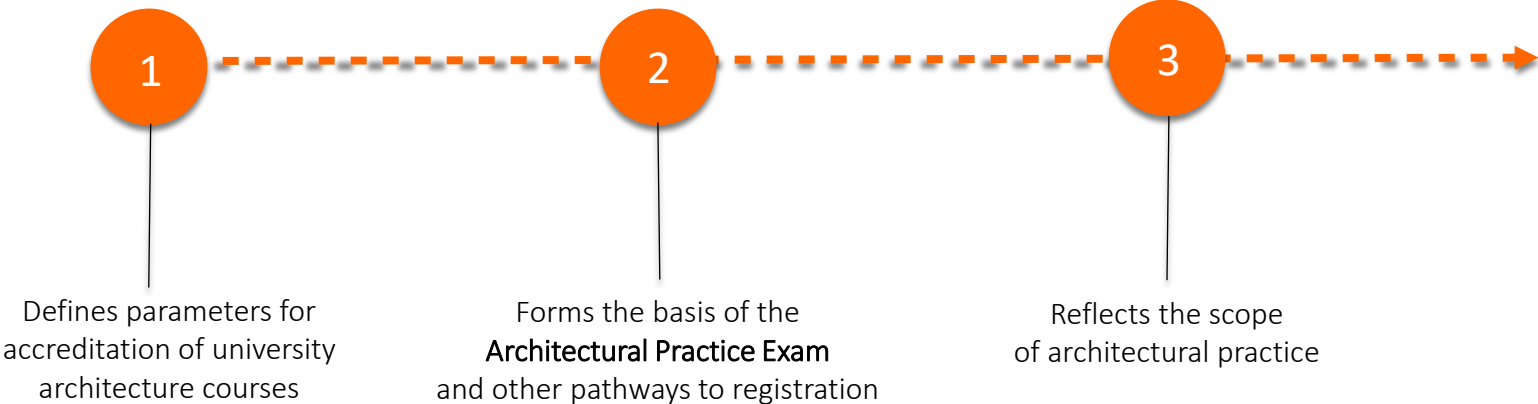
The AACA is a not-for-profit organisation that works in collaboration with the architect registration boards on matters of national interest to the profession, industry and the public.





How the competency standards have evolved over time

- Since the first publication in 1993 of NSCA, the competency standards have evolved and their authority and application has expanded.



- The standards are embedded in accreditation procedures for Australian architecture programs, and inform higher education curricula to directly shape the architects of the future.
- Various subsets of the Performance Criteria underpin all the AACA competency based assessment pathways to registration – defining the skill set expected of a competent architect entering the profession.

How the competency standards have evolved over time

The competency standards are reviewed and updated on a roughly 5-year cycle

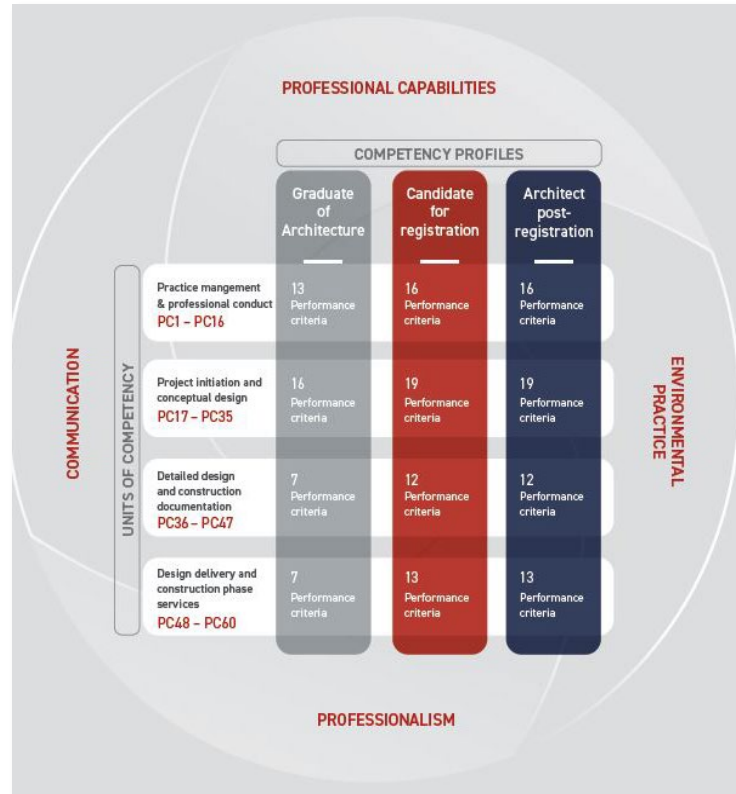
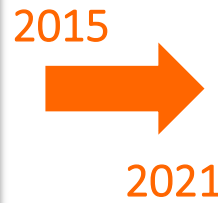
AAACA National Standard of Competency for Architects

The National Standard of Competency for Architects establishes the standard for architectural education and assessment of professional competency prior to registration as an architect in Australia.

Competency	Program level required				
	ANZAPAP	OQA	NPRA	APE	OAA
3. Design: Conceptual Design					
3.1 Design response integrates the objectives of brief, user intent and built purpose.	S	S	A	S	
3.2 Application of creative imagination, aesthetic judgement and critical evaluation in formulating design options.	A	S	A		
3.3 Design response incorporates assessment of the physical location and relevant wider regional, contextual and environmental issues.	A	A	A		
3.4 Design response incorporates assessment of relevant legislation, codes and industry standards.	S	S	A	1 2 3 A	
3.5 Exploration and application of ordering, sequencing and modelling of three-dimensional form and spatial content.	A	S	A		
3.6 Assessment of the economic impact on the project of design strategies and options.	K	K	S	3	
3.7 Assessment and integration of construction systems and materials consistent with project brief.	S	S	A	2 3	
3.8 Application of manual and digital graphic techniques and modelling to describe three-dimensional form and spatial relationships.	A	S	A		

Legend:

 R Regulatory, S Social & Ethical, E Environmentally Sustainable, H Hierarchical, C Communication, K Knowledge acquisition, D Skills acquisition, A Application of Knowledge & Skills in architectural practice, 1 APE Logbook, 2 APE National Exam Paper, 3 APE Interview, 4 All required APE competencies are at the O level.



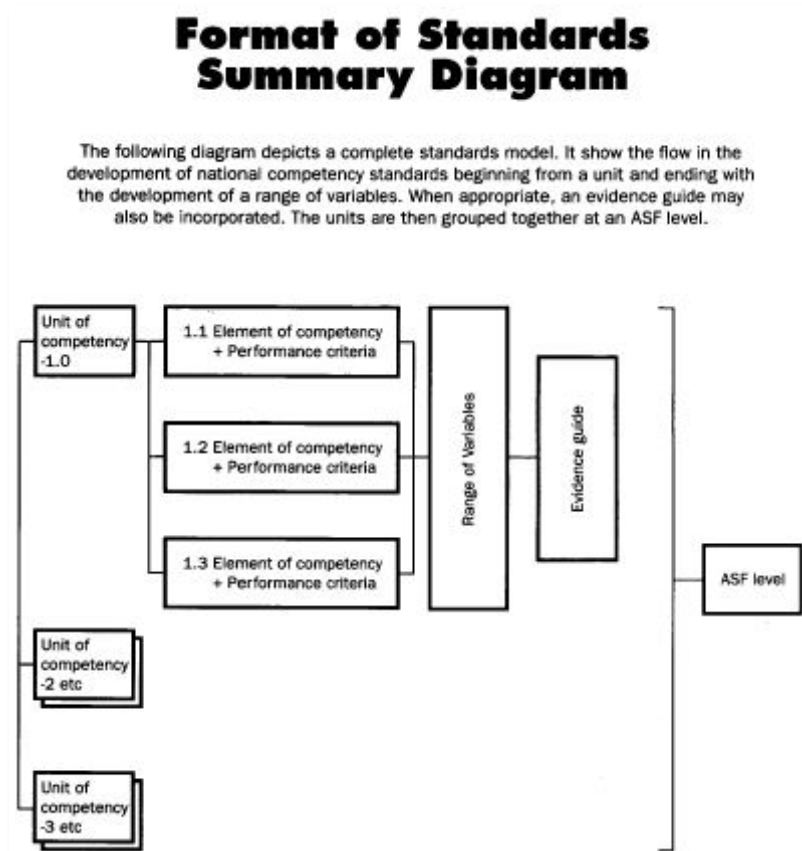
Regular review of the competency standards is important to ensure:

- continuing relevance to professional practice in architecture
- accuracy in the definition of the skillset expected of Australian architects

4 reviews since 1993

- 2001 updated version
- 2008 second edition
- 2015 new edition
- 2021 new edition

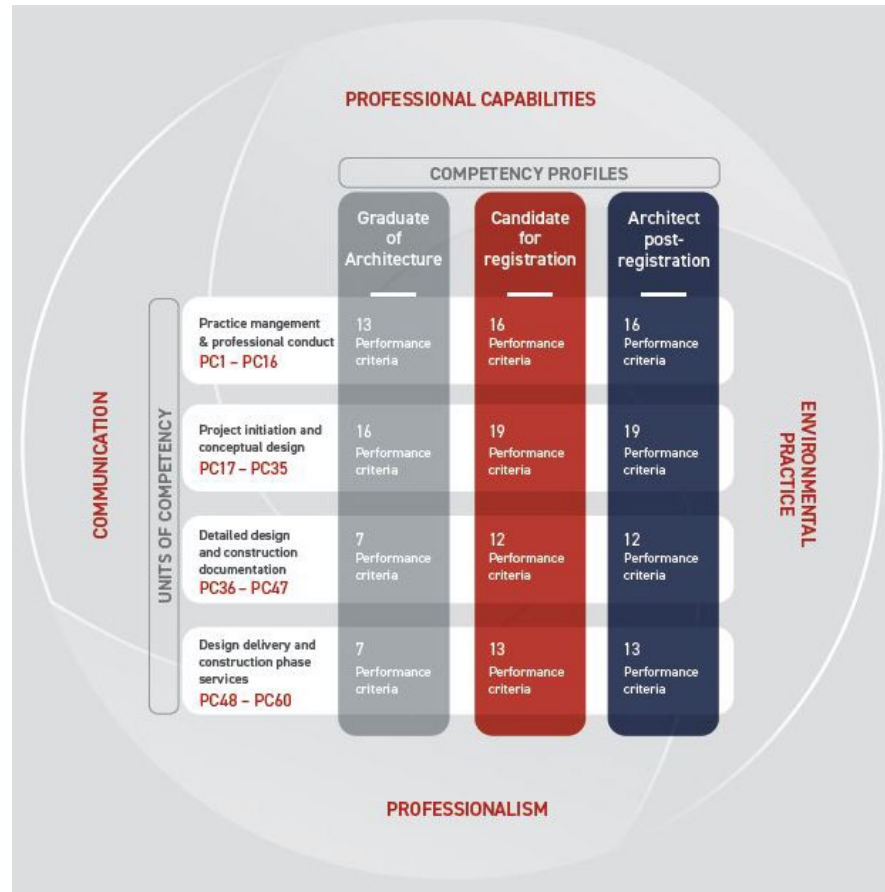
How the competency standards have evolved over time



- The original competency standards generally followed a conventional structure
- Units of competency
 - - Design
 - - Documentation
 - - Project Management
 - - Practice Management
- Broken down into **Contexts**
- Each Context comprised a series of **Elements of competency** populated by **Performance criteria**
- An analysis of how the competency standards have changed over time provides insights into the evolving nature of architectural practice.

How the competency standards have evolved over time

“Architectural design – a creative endeavour combined with the capacity to realise and deliver built projects – is at the core of the profession of architecture.”



PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES

Professional capabilities encapsulate the knowledge, skills and attributes that underpin professional education in architecture and practice as an architect in Australia.

The NSCA groups these into three core areas – Professionalism, Communication and Environmental Practice. These broad capabilities are relevant to all modes of architectural practice and inform the ongoing professional education of architects. They provide the umbrella for the Units of Competency and are reflected across the Performance Criteria as a whole.

Professionalism

Professionalism encompasses the capacity to understand and enact the role and responsibilities of architects within evolving architectural, social, cultural, ethical, legal, technical and business contexts. This includes understanding community values and obligations around equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion, embedding these within the provision of architectural services, and understanding how they impact Country, colleagues, clients, stakeholders and broader communities. At its core, this capability involves maintaining and developing professional competency over the course of a career in architecture.

Communication

Communication capabilities encompass the ability to clearly convey and explain the roles and responsibilities of an architect, to coherently and respectfully communicate within workplace and project contexts, and to articulate the value an architect contributes.

Environmental Practice

Environmental practice capabilities encompass a holistic approach to creating and caring for living environments. This includes the ability to understand, analyse and assess the impacts of design decisions and delivery processes on the natural and built environment, to care for Country and community, to minimise carbon impact, and to support the transition to a carbon-neutral built environment.

COMPETENCY PROFILES

The NSCA maps the expectations of professional competency at three levels:

Graduate of architecture —

The level of competency required at completion of an accredited program of architecture in Australia or equivalent course of study.

Candidate for registration as an architect —

The level of competency required at the point of registration as an architect, following a minimum of two years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture.

Architect post-registration —

The additional professional competencies required to comply with regulatory obligations, including Codes of Conduct, and to maintain professional competency and disciplinary knowledge commensurate with their practice.

(Note: this does not describe specialist activities within the profession of architecture.)

UNITS OF COMPETENCY

Four Units of Competency outline the required knowledge and skills involved in the practice of architecture.

Practice Management and Professional Conduct

This unit of competency encompasses a holistic understanding of the organisation of the profession, practice and business of architecture, with the objective of providing value through sustainable, timely and effective professional services in accordance with the ethical and legal obligations of an architect to clients, colleagues, employees and to broader communities.

Project Initiation and Conceptual Design

This unit of competency encompasses the intelligent, creative, iterative and culturally responsive processes of initiating a project and the early stages of design. This involves research, analysis and the exploration of approaches, design ideas and alternative solutions. It leads to a design concept that meets the client's brief, respects Country and is capable of compliance with planning controls and construction codes.

Detailed Design and Construction Documentation

This unit of competency encompasses the process of developing the design through research, detailed assessment of options and the integration of technical solutions, value and cost control processes to maintain or enhance the design intent. The final design proposal is cohesive, fully described and resolved to achieve value and cost objectives, and compliance with planning controls and construction codes.

Design Delivery and Construction Phase Services

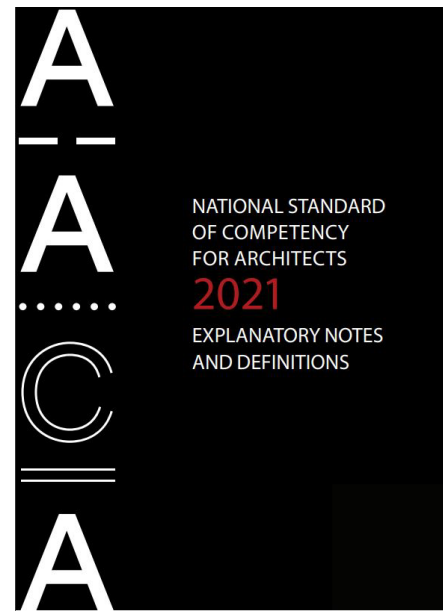
This unit of competency encompasses the provision of services to support project delivery through construction. This may occur through a variety of building procurement methods and construction contracts. The form of construction contract may establish different expectations and obligations upon the architect and may include contract administration services. Typically, all contract types include the timely and cost-effective management of design delivery, review and inspection processes.



What is the 2021 NSCA?

The 2021 NSCA identifies the skills, knowledge and capabilities required for the general practice of architecture in Australia

- Sets out a clear roadmap for the development and assessment of competency at key milestones over the course of a career in architecture
- Is supplemented by the *Explanatory Notes and Definitions* that defines terms, explains what certain new performance criteria mean in practice, and provides examples of how competency might be demonstrated at different stages in an architect's development





QUESTION 1

When and why was the NSCA developed?



QUESTION 2

What 2 documents make up the 2021 NSCA?



What is the 2021 NSCA?

The 2021 NSCA identifies the skills, knowledge and capabilities required for the general practice of architecture in Australia

Structure

- Compared to earlier editions, there is a significant shift in the way the capabilities and competencies of an architect are understood and assessed
- Three main components of the NSCA are
 - **Professional Capabilities**
 - **Competency Profiles**
 - **Units of Competency**
- These are assessed through associated **Performance Criteria**

Explanatory Notes

- Explanatory Notes assist comprehension and understanding of the core components of the 2021 NSCA

New Content

- More meaningful engagement with First Nations Peoples and **understanding and respecting Country**
- Expanded expectations in terms of **sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon** to support key reform in sustainability and the role of the built environment in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change

The Structure of the 2021 NSCA – Professional Capabilities

2 Communication

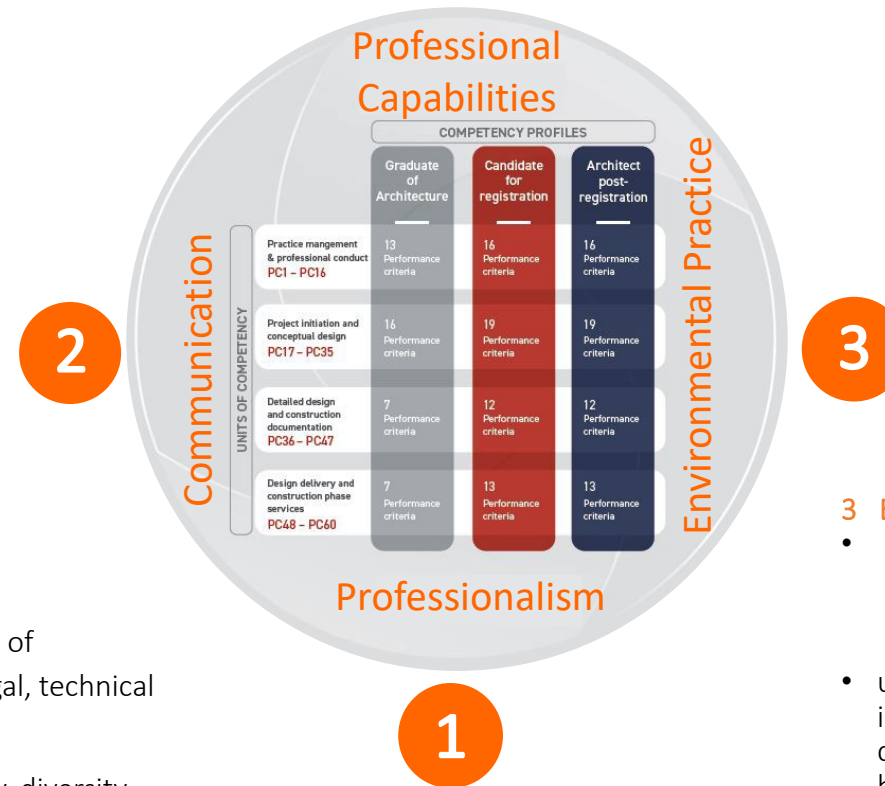
The ability to

- clearly convey and explain the roles and responsibilities of an architect
- coherently and respectfully communicate within workplace and project contexts, and
- articulate the value an architect contributes

1 Professionalism

The capacity to understand and enact the role and responsibilities of architects within evolving architectural, social, cultural, ethical, legal, technical and business contexts, including

- understanding community values and obligations around equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion
- embedding these within the provision of architectural services, and
- understanding how they impact Country, colleagues, clients, stakeholders and broader communities



3 Environmental practice

- encompasses a holistic approach to creating and caring for living environments, including the ability to
- understand, analyse and assess the impacts of design decisions and delivery processes on the natural and built environment
- care for Country and community, and
- minimise carbon impact and support the transition to a carbon-neutral built environment



The Structure of the 2021 NSCA - 3 Competency Profiles

Graduate of architecture —

The level of competency required at completion of an accredited program of architecture in Australia or equivalent course of study.

Candidate for registration as an architect —

The level of competency required at the point of registration as an architect, following a minimum of two years of broad-based professional practice experience in architecture.

Architect post-registration —

The additional professional competencies required to comply with regulatory obligations, including Codes of Conduct, and to maintain professional competency and disciplinary knowledge commensurate with their practice.

- The NSCA maps the expectations of professional competency at three levels.
- **Graduate of Architecture**
Foundational knowledge. Note that not all PCs apply at graduation
- **Candidate for registration as an architect**
Able to articulate more detailed knowledge and apply core knowledge sets
- **Architect post-registration**
Able to skillfully apply knowledge and increase understanding and expertise over time



QUESTION 3

What are the 3 different competency Levels?



The Structure of the 2021 NSCA - 4 Units of Competency

These units outline the required knowledge and skills involved in the practice of architecture.

- **Practice Management and Professional Conduct**
Understanding of the organisation of the profession, practice and business of architecture.
- **Project Initiation and Conceptual Design**
Intelligent, creative, iterative and culturally responsive processes of initiating a project and the early stages of design.
- **Detailed Design and Construction**
The process of developing the design through research, detailed assessment of options and the integration of technical solutions, value and cost control processes.
- **Design Delivery and Construction Phase Service**
Services to support project delivery through construction.



The Structure of the 2021 NSCA - 60 Performance Criteria

These PCs describe discrete aspects of required knowledge and skills involved in architectural practice and are organised under the Units of Competency.

- 43 PCs are relevant to university curricula
- All PCs apply from the point of registration onwards
- There is no prioritisation or weighting of PCs
- The order of PCs is not intended to suppose a particular mode of practice or project type
- The NSCA sets out minimum requirements for meeting the criteria at each Competency Profile
- **Requirements are described through a set of active terms from foundational awareness, to understanding, to skilled application**
- Specialist activities within the profession are not described (and the standards have never attempted to do this in their 20 years of existence)

The Structure of the 2021 NSCA - 60 Performance Criteria

Practice Management and Professional Conduct (Unit of Competency 1)

	On graduation from an architecture program — a graduate will	At the point of registration — a candidate will	Post registration — an architect will
PC 1	Understand the regulatory requirements and obligations pertaining to practice as an architect, including professional codes of conduct and obligations for continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance.	Demonstrate understanding of the regulatory requirements and obligations pertaining to practice as an architect, including legislation, professional codes of conduct, and obligations for continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance.	Comply with the regulatory requirements and obligations pertaining to practice as an architect, including legislation, professional codes of conduct, obligations for continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance.
PC 2	Understand the role of quality assurance systems in facilitating efficient and timely delivery of architectural services.	Be able to identify practice resources and apply practice methods and quality assurance systems within an ethical practice management framework to comply with and facilitate efficient, consistent and timely delivery of architectural services.	Implement practice resources and apply ethical employment practice methods and quality assurance systems to facilitate efficient, consistent and timely delivery of architectural services.
PC 3	Understand the principles of project planning, considering implications for Country, environmental sustainability, communities, stakeholders and project costs.	Demonstrate understanding of the principles of project planning, considering implications for Country, environmental sustainability, communities, stakeholders and project costs.	Apply principles of project planning, considering implications for Country, environmental sustainability, communities, stakeholders and project costs.
PC 4		Be able to apply principles of project and staff planning and resource costs to establish realistic and achievable timeframes.	
PC 5	Understand the essential elements of a client architect agreement, across the range of procurement methods and the different scales and types of project.	Demonstrate understanding of the essential elements of a client architect agreement across the range of procurement methods, and be able to explain appropriateness of different approaches to procure services to a client, including alternatives for partial services and the engagement of secondary and sub-consultants.	Be able to apply essential elements of a client architect agreement across the range of procurement methods in relation to their appropriateness to the scale and type of the project, including alternatives for partial services and the engagement of secondary and sub-consultants.
PC 6	Understand appropriate processes for reporting and varying the scope of services provided by an architect.	Apply appropriate processes for reporting and varying the scope of services provided by an architect.	Be able to apply appropriate processes for reporting and varying the scope of services provided by an architect.
PC 7	Understand appropriate processes for clear and consistent communication with clients and relevant stakeholders throughout a project, including obtaining approvals from clients and stakeholders.	Apply and follow processes for clear and consistent communication with clients and relevant stakeholders throughout the project, including obtaining approvals from clients and stakeholders.	
PC 8	Understand how to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.	Be able to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.	
PC 9	Understand contemporary and emerging building procurement methods. This involves identifying the most appropriate form of delivery for a project, including associated risks, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and understanding appropriate construction and consultant contracts and agreements.	Demonstrate understanding of contemporary and emerging building procurement methods. This involves identifying the most appropriate form of delivery for a project, including associated risks, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and integrating appropriate construction contracts and consultancy contracts and/or agreements.	Be able to apply contemporary and emerging building procurement methods. This involves identifying the most appropriate form of delivery for a project, including risks, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and integrating appropriate construction contracts and consultancy contracts and/or agreements.
PC 10	Understand the whole life carbon implications of procurement methods, materials, components and construction systems.	Demonstrate understanding of the whole life carbon implications of procurement methods, materials, components and construction systems.	
PC 12	Understand how relevant building codes, standards and planning controls apply across architectural practice, including climate change implications, the principles of fire safety, and barriers to universal access.	Be able to assess, recommend and/or select an appropriate procurement process, with consideration for its impact on all phases of a project - including design, documentation and project delivery - and provide advice to the client in terms of the level of scope of service for consultants.	
PC 13	Have knowledge of documentation processes that facilitate project delivery appropriate to selected procurement processes.	Be able to identify and apply strategies, programming and processes for documentation through all project stages to facilitate project delivery, as appropriate to selected procurement processes.	
PC 14		Be able to identify and apply construction services provisions and/or construction administration systems needed to fulfil all obligations appropriate to the procurement process in accordance with the terms of the agreement.	
PC 15	Understand legal and ethical obligations relating to copyright, moral rights, authorship of cultural knowledge and intellectual property requirements across architectural services.	Comply with legal and ethical obligations relating to legislated requirements in relation to copyright, moral rights, authorship of cultural knowledge and intellectual property requirements across architectural services.	
PC 16	Understand risk management and mitigation principles and strategies - including safety in design, project risk, requirement for resilience from the impacts of climate change and appropriate insurances - across architectural services.	Be able to apply risk management and mitigation strategies - including safety in design, project risk, requirement for resilience from the impacts of climate change and appropriate insurances - across architectural services.	

All PCs apply from point of registration onwards

Some PCs impose higher minimum requirements for architects post registration

Not all PCs relate to university curricula

Graduate of Architecture

Candidate for registration as an architect

Architect post-registration

Competency Profiles

The Structure of the 2021 NSCA - 60 Performance Criteria

Unit 2 Project Initiation and Conceptual Design

On graduation from an architecture program — a graduate will	At the point of registration — a candidate will	Post registration — an architect will
PC 17	Have an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' aspirations to care for Country and how these inform architectural design.	
PC 18	Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, research, emergent knowledge and critical evaluation in formulating and refining concept design options, including the exploration of three dimensional form and spatial quality.	
PC 19	Understand the purpose of project feasibility assessments, including research of site constraints, opportunities and risks, and methods of determining preliminary cost analysis.	Be able to identify, analyse and evaluate client project requirements and objectives using qualitative and quantitative methods and, where required by the terms of engagement, to assist cost estimators in determining project feasibility/viability.
PC 20		Be able to assess project budget and timeframe against project requirements and objectives, relevant legislation, statutory planning requirements, building codes and standards.
PC 21		Be able to apply project budgets, or work with quantity surveyor to establish project budgets, based upon understanding of cost planning, value management and factors influencing project cost relevant to the project type and scale.
PC 22		Identify and manage risks arising from real or perceived conflict of interests.
PC 23	Understand the purpose and process of generating a return brief for approval by the client and relevant stakeholders, including an awareness of the implications of non-compliance.	Be able to prepare a return brief for approval by the client and relevant stakeholders in response to a client brief and any areas of deviation or non-compliance.
PC 24	Understand how to identify and evaluate project development options in response to a project brief - its objectives, budget, user intent and built purpose, risk and timeframe, including environmental sustainability considerations.	Be able to prepare and analyse project development options in response to a project brief - its objectives, budget, user intent and built purpose, risk and timeframes, including environmental sustainability considerations.
PC 25	Be able to draw on knowledge from the history and theory of architecture as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design.	
PC 26	Be able to undertake site, cultural and contextual analysis as part of preliminary design research.	
PC 27	Understand how to embed the knowledge, worldviews and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, shared through engagement processes, into the conceptual design in a meaningful, respectful and appropriate way.	
PC 28	Be able to draw on knowledge from building sciences and technology, environmental sciences and behavioural and social sciences as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design to optimise the performance of the project.	
PC 29	Be able to develop and evaluate design options in terms of the heritage, cultural and community values embodied in the site, and in relation to project requirements.	
PC 30	Be able to explore options for siting a project, including integrating information and analysis of relevant cultural, social and economic factors.	
PC 31	Be able to identify, analyse and integrate information relevant to environmental sustainability - such as energy and water consumption, resources depletion, waste, embodied carbon and carbon emissions - over the lifecycle of a project.	
PC 32	Be able to apply planning principles and statutory planning requirements to the site and conceptual design of the project.	
PC 33	Be able to investigate, coordinate and integrate sustainable environmental systems - including water, thermal, lighting and acoustics - into the conceptual design.	Be able to investigate, coordinate and integrate sustainable environmental systems - including water, thermal, lighting and acoustics - in response to consultants' advice.
PC 34	Be able to apply principles and methodologies for presenting conceptual design proposals and associated information to clients, stakeholders and communities, including using culturally responsive methods appropriate to different audiences.	Communicate conceptual design proposals and associated information to client, stakeholders and communities using appropriate and culturally responsive methods appropriate to different audiences.
PC 35	Understand the operational and embodied carbon implications of chosen materials, components and systems.	Be able to assess operational and embodied carbon implications of materials, components, construction systems and supply chains (including transport) to achieve net zero whole life carbon when developing design concepts. This includes integrating relevant consultant expertise and advising on the impact of chosen materials, components and systems on carbon outcomes.

Unit 3 Detailed Design and Construction Documentation

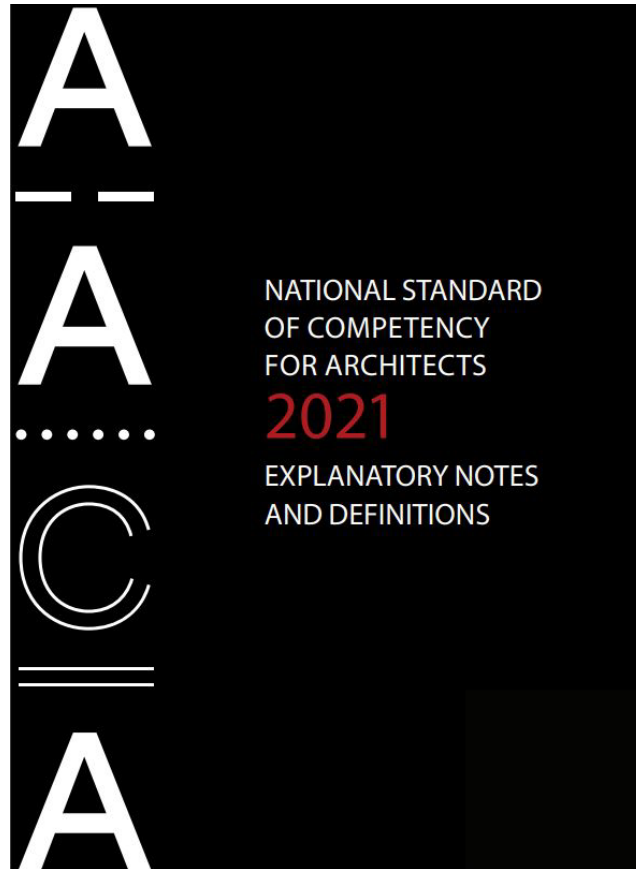
On graduation from an architecture program — a graduate will	At the point of registration — a candidate will	Post registration — an architect will
PC 36	Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, emergent knowledge, critical evaluation and continued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to produce a coherent project design. This should be resolved in terms of supporting health and wellbeing outcomes for Country, site planning, formal composition, spatial planning and circulation as appropriate to the project brief and all other factors affecting the project.	
PC 37		Be able to produce timely, accurate, complete and comprehensible documentation of the design so that it can be constructed.
PC 38		Be able to work within budget and time constraints while maintaining the defined project design intent. This includes participating in value management processes where engaged to do so.
PC 39	Understand how the integration of material selection, structural and construction systems impacts on design outcomes.	Be able to integrate the material selection, structural and construction systems established in the conceptual design into the detailed design and documentation.
PC 40	Be able to resolve and present a coherent detailed design solution within necessary timeframes to obtain client and stakeholder approvals.	
PC 41		Be able to coordinate and integrate input from specialists and consultants into the detailed design and documentation.
PC 42		Be able to prepare planning applications that comply with planning regulations.
PC 43		Be able to collaborate with nominated contractors early in the documentation process to identify key construction methodology opportunities and constraints.
PC 44	Understand the roles and types of relevant consultants and suppliers as well as applicable construction terminology.	Maintain effective and clear communication in the coordination of relevant consultants, manufacturers and suppliers as required under the terms of engagement.
PC 45	Understand processes for selecting materials, finishes, fittings, components and systems, based on consideration of quality and performance standards, the impact on Country and the environment, and the whole life carbon impact of the project.	Be able to nominate and integrate quality and performance standards with regard to selected materials, finishes, fittings, components and systems, considering the impact on Country and the environment, and the whole life carbon impact of the project. This includes integrating life cycle assessments and other expertise and advice from consultants.
PC 46	Understand the processes for producing project documentation that meets the requirements of the contract and procurement procedure and complies with regulatory controls, building standards, codes, and conditions of construction and planning approvals.	Be able to produce project documentation that meets the requirements of the contract and procurement process and complies with regulatory controls, building standards and codes, and conditions of construction and planning approvals.
PC 47	Be able to complete and communicate on-time, accurate documents for relevant stakeholders, including drawings, models, specifications, schedules and construction documentation.	

On graduation from an architecture program — a graduate will	At the point of registration — a candidate will	Post registration — an architect will
PC 48	Understand available procurement methods and their application to project delivery, considering relevant factors including project type, scale and coordination of contractors	Be able to select and implement project administration systems, based upon an assessment of the selected procurement method and its implications on project delivery.
PC 49		Be able to implement project team structures necessary to deliver a full suite of professional services or partial services appropriate to the selected procurement process.
PC 50		Be able to continue engagement with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples throughout all stages of the project and its delivery in a meaningful, respectful and appropriate way.
PC 51	Understand the process of selecting qualified contractors in accordance with an agreed procurement method and construction contract.	Be able to provide advice to clients and lead (or contribute to) the process of selecting a qualified contractor in accordance with the agreed procurement method and construction contract.
PC 52		Be able to apply the principles and mechanisms implicit in the selected procurement method and associated construction contract(s), based on an understanding of the implications of differing contractual relationships.
PC 53		Be able to provide advice to clients on the impact of a selected procurement method on cost, time, life cycle implications and quality control during the construction phase.
PC 54	Understand the purpose of periodic site visits of construction works for quality assurance.	Be able to monitor construction progress and quality as required under the provisions of the construction contract, which may include site visits.
PC 55	Understand methodologies for record keeping, document control and revision status during the construction phase.	Be able to apply appropriate and consistent systems for record keeping, document control and revision status during the construction phase.
PC 56	Understand the purpose of identification of defects, rectifications and approval substitutions.	Be able to apply appropriate and consistent systems for identification of defects, rectifications and approval of substitutions.
PC 57	Understand the principles of contract administration, including certification, variations, instructions, requests for information and practical completion.	Be able to apply relevant processes required for certification of monetary progress claims, project variations, extensions of time, project instructions, and requests for information, practical completion or other administrative functions explicit in the selected procurement method and associated construction contract.
PC 58	Understand the contract components - including all documents - and the process of executing a contract, as defined within the construction contract and in accordance with relevant building and planning codes.	Complete documentation - including specifications, drawings, schedules, reports, certification and approvals - and other project information for issue to the client and relevant authorities, as required under the construction contract and relevant building and planning codes.
PC 59		Understand and mitigate risks associated with preparing and recording documentation.
PC 60		Apply appropriate methodologies for undertaking post occupancy evaluations and life cycle assessment where required under terms of engagement.



2021 NSCA – explanatory notes

Explanatory Notes assist comprehension and understanding of the core components of the 2021 NSCA



- Significant contributions have been made by Danièle Hromek (Budawang/Yuin) and Vanessa Dudman, with guidance from AACA National Advisory Panel, AACA National Convenor, various AACA working groups, AIA First Nations Working Group, and AIA Climate Action and Sustainability Taskforce
- Organised by the four Units of Competency
- Notes tackle specific PCs, particularly prioritising those PCs that address new and expanded areas of knowledge
- Definitions are provided for key terms
- Definitions are provided for terms specific to architectural practice
- There are references and links to external resources
- Examples are provided for how competency might be demonstrated at different stages in an architect’s development

2021 NSCA – explanatory notes

Explanatory notes are provided for all new Performance Criteria

PC 8

On graduation from an architecture program	At the point of registration	Post registration
Understand how to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.	Be able to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.	

External Resources
[Indigenous Cultural Rights and Engagement Principles, National Museum of Australia \(www.nma.gov.au\)](#)
[Aboriginal Cultural Values: An Approach for Engaging with Country, Danielle Hromek \(diinjama.com\)](#)
[Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Services \(PAMS\) Healthcare Hub Newman, Kaunitz Yeung Architecture, Newman WA \(kaunitzyeung.com\)](#)

Explanatory Notes
Meaningful **engagement processes** require the understanding that there is no universal way to engage with all peoples or **communities**. The project-specific engagement process should be designed in partnership with the community and respect the nuances of that particular community. For **First Nations communities**, this entails recognising how each group is diverse and different – including within groups – and therefore requires tailored engagement methods. Important to this process is the identification of appropriate **Knowledge Holders** and respect for what they can share. Meaningful engagement means being inclusive to all who relate to places, including those who can speak for **Country** – for example, **Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders** – as well as those who live there, and First Nations organisations that may have **care for Country** responsibilities.
Meaningful engagement means working with communities in **culturally safe ways**, rather than making uninformed decisions or taking actions **on their behalf**. It requires developing genuine and reciprocal relationships that endure beyond the project life. It might include a written or verbal agreement with Traditional Custodians and other stakeholders about the project, its processes and proposed outcomes. Meaningful engagement starts by asking each group or individual how they would like to be engaged and embedding that in an engagement plan. It means that the design of the plan of engagement is as considered as the design of the building and placemaking. The engagement plan should include an undertaking that the process is community driven. It may use processes of **vouching** by cultural translators or relational guides.

Examples
At graduation, this may be demonstrated by engaging with First Nations authored books, articles, audio-visuals, and other references in the existing body of knowledge that give foundations for improving a graduate's lens on the world and understanding of their own perspective. Engagement with these resources should include gaining an expanded understanding of social, cultural, historical contexts and racism. It may also be shown by writing a culturally responsive engagement plan for a studio project.
At registration and post registration, this could be demonstrated through the development and implementation of an engagement plan. An example could include a methodology or framework that incorporates a means of identifying Traditional Custodians and other stakeholders, and an appreciation of how they prefer to be engaged. The engagement plan should contain a project definition, an understanding of what the project is and why it is happening, and be inclusive, both of Knowledge Holders who can speak for Country, those who live there, and those who have care for Country responsibilities. The engagement plan should be mapped to the stages of the project, including timelines and any details that Traditional Custodians feel are relevant – for example, the values of Country and/or community, or defining the scope and briefing information.

Performance Criteria Outline describes the minimum standard of knowledge at each competency profile

References and links to external resources

Explanatory notes provide a narrative expansion on the intent of the specific Performance Criteria with links to key terms and definitions

Links to definitions of key terms are included within narrative

Examples are provided of how each competency profile might demonstrate competency for this Performance Criteria.

2021 NSCA – explanatory notes

NEW AND EXPANDED AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

This section supports the new areas of knowledge with the NSCA – understanding and respecting Country and expanded expectations in terms of sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon. It explains and defines terms and phrases that may be unfamiliar to some. Becoming familiar with these terms, and the concepts conveyed through them, is fundamental to developing competency in these areas.

UNDERSTANDING COUNTRY

Embedded within the practice of architecture, as defined by the NSCA, is the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' ongoing connection and custodianship of Country, and the ethical responsibilities to the physical environment. These responsibilities are fundamental to architecture practice in Australia.

Country is broadly understood as a holistic worldview that incorporates human, non-human and all the complex systems that connect them. Country relates to First Nations Peoples' cultural groups and the places to which they belong. It is understood in cultural, spiritual and tangible ways. An understanding of Country includes intangible ideas about place, law, lore, language, customs, spirit, cultural practice, identity and kin. It is very important to recognise that First Nations Peoples' understanding of Country differs between groups, individuals and contexts.

First Nations or First Nations Peoples refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These terms recognise and respect the position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as those who first inhabited and cared for the continent now called Australia. **Aboriginal peoples** are those whose ancestry originates from the mainland. **Torres Strait Islander peoples'** ancestry originates from the Torres Strait Islands. **Indigenous peoples** is the term used to include both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while also associating with Indigenous peoples globally. Each individual, community and group will have different preferences regarding how they are identified. It is good practice to ask their preference and to respect this by using their preferred terms.

Caring for Country is a term used to describe the land management practices and programs that First Nations Peoples undertake, and the role these play in enabling continuing culture. To care for Country is to recognise that the different ecosystems across the continent require different practices to enable sustainable living.

First Nations Peoples' **aspirations to care for Country** respond to the knowledge and responsibility entrusted to them, providing a deep sense of belonging, purpose and identity.

Respects Country is a design position. It requires an ethical approach to design and respect for Country and the environment.

Implications for Country refers to ethical and considered behaviour towards Country and those who are part of Country, including human and non-human. The specifics of this will involve different things on different projects, depending on the capacity within the project and project team to engage with First Nations Peoples and the place itself. Minimum considerations involve the protection of existing cultural materials. The next step is to do no further harm to culture and the environment. At its best, working with 'implications for Country' is about celebrating Country through the project. In a rural or outback setting, this could mean enabling cultural practices associated with a site. In an urban context, it might involve engaging with deeper memories and narratives of place.

External Resources
Planning Connects 2019:
Designing with Country: Dillon
Kombumerri and Danièle Hromek
webinar on Designing with
Country

Kevin O'Brien - Finding Country:
Kevin O'Brien talks about Sep
Yama/Finding Country, a position
originating from an Aboriginal
perception of space

Indigenous Knowledge Systems
and Yurlendj-nganjin

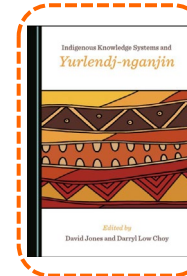
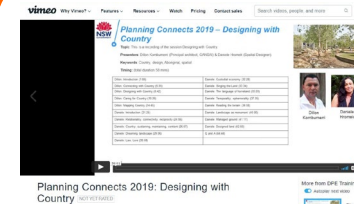
National Indigenous Housing
Guide, Australian Government

National Indigenous
Infrastructure Guide, Centre for
Appropriate Technology

Language and Terminology for
Referencing Aboriginal Culture
and Heritage in the Design of the
Built Environment

Cultural Principles and Protocols
For Designers

External Resources
Planning Connects 2019:
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Country



References and links to external resources

- Websites
- Books
- Guidelines, principles and protocols,
- Dictionaries and reference publications

Respects Country is a design position. It requires an ethical approach to design and respect for Country and the environment.

Definitions for key terms



QUESTION 4

At what stage of an Architects professional development should they reference the NSCA?



2021 NSCA – new content

Understanding and respecting Country

A more meaningful engagement with First Nations Peoples and **understanding and respecting Country**.

Sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon

Expanded expectations in terms of **sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon** to support key reform in sustainability and the role of the built environment in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

2021 NSCA – new content

Understanding and respecting Country

PC 8

On graduation from an architecture program	At the point of registration	Post registration
Understand how to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.	Be able to implement culturally responsive and meaningful engagement processes that respect the importance of Country and reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across architectural services.	

External Resources
[Indigenous Cultural Rights and Engagement Principles, National Museum of Australia \(www.nma.gov.au\)](#)
[Aboriginal Cultural Values: An Approach for Engaging with Country, Danièle Hromek \(diniama.com\)](#)
[Pantukurnu Aboriginal Medical Services \(PAMS\) Healthcare Hub Newman, Kaunitz Yeung Architecture, Newman WA \(kaunitzyeung.com\)](#)

Explanatory Notes
Meaningful **engagement processes** require the understanding that there is no universal way to engage with all peoples or **communities**. The project-specific engagement process should be designed in partnership with the community and respect the nuances of that particular community. For **First Nations communities**, this entails recognising how each group is diverse and different – including within groups – and therefore requires tailored engagement methods. Important to this process is the identification of appropriate **Knowledge Holders** and respect for what they can share. Meaningful engagement means being inclusive to all who relate to places, including those who can speak for **Country** – for example, **Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders** – as well as those who live there, and First Nations organisations that may have **care for Country** responsibilities.

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There are 8 Performance Criteria directly relevant to this area of responsibility and knowledge:

- PC 3, 8, 15, 17, 27, 36, 45, 50
- An additional 5 Performance Criteria address culturally responsive behaviour:
- PC 12, 26*, 29, 30*, 34
- *asterisk indicates that there is currently NO explanatory note for new PC



2021 NSCA – new content

Sustainability, life cycle assessment and whole life carbon

- Referenced in Professional Capabilities as:
- **Environmental Practice** includes the capability to understand, analyse and assess the impact of design decisions and delivery processes on the natural and built environment, to care for Country and community, to minimise carbon impact, and to support the transition to a carbon-neutral built environment –
- *Minimising the impact on, and use of, limited natural resources, recognising their inherent value, and prioritising design for a circular economy and longevity.*
- *Demonstrating an ethical, service-oriented commitment to the responsible care for Country, the environment and regenerative design.*
- *Understanding and integrating relevant design principles and technological applications to support the transition to a carbon-neutral built environment.*



QUESTION 5

What are the two new areas of competency introduced in the 2021 NSCA?

2021 NSCA – new content

Terms Specific to Architecture Practice

TERMS SPECIFIC TO ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

A **Complex project** is typically a project of medium scale or larger that requires the application of skills and knowledge to resolve and integrate significant complex components including, but not limited to, siting, planning, structure, services, materials, composition and configuration. A complex project is demanding in its ordering and organisation of multiple occupancy and/or special purpose user requirements and requires the integration of cultural, social, environmental and technical issues.

Construction administration systems refers to the systems employed to enable architects to carry out their contract administration duties as defined in the **Client Architect Agreement**, ensuring that the works are executed in accordance with the terms of the construction contract. In addition to the construction services provisions highlighted above, these duties comprise the following: issuing instructions, assessing progress claims, issuing progress certificates, assessing contract price adjustments and extension of time claims, certificate of practical completion and final certificate on completion of the defects liability period. The systems employed include using template forms that are compatible with the construction contract, registers to track claims, variations, and adjustments to the contract sum. Underpinning this should be a robust filing system for storing and retrieving contract information.

Construction services provisions relate to construction phase services as defined in the **Client Architect Agreement**. (They are sometimes referred to as construction or site attendance.) These services involve observing conformity to the design intent and quality outcomes embedded in the contract documents. They include attending site meetings; periodic site visits to carry out visual inspections; responding to contractors' requests for information (RFIs); reviewing shop drawings, mock-ups, prototypes and sample submissions; and carrying out defects inspections and preparing inspection reports. 'Provisions' relate to the processes and supporting documentation that must be provided to deliver these services. Processes include programming regular site visits; having an appropriate tracking system for managing responses to RFIs and shop drawing review; and documentation such as monthly site reports, defects inspection reports, and compliance certificates and registers.

Continued engagement means engaging in a genuine, meaningful and ongoing way from the project conception to completion.

Copyright is an intangible property right that is founded on a person's creative work. Copyright law in Australia automatically protects creative work once it is put into material form. Generally, the person who created the work becomes the owner of that copyright. This provides them with exclusive economic rights to undertake certain acts with that material. Copyright protection allows the owner to control how the work will be used. There are some exceptions to copyright ownership, including when employees create works during their employment. In this arrangement, copyright ownership is vested in the employer, rather than in the employee who created it.

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Partial services are when an architect is appointed to only complete some of the core architectural services, such as 'design only', 'design and documentation only' and 'partial contract administration only'. It is important to understand the inherent risks associated with providing partial services – for instance, taking over design and documentation services from another architect, or only completing documentation to tender phase. Partial services with limits and exclusions need to be clearly defined.



Thank you

 **a** rbv



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of Victoria