



NCSA Review

National Competency Standards in Architecture
Public Feedback Sessions - 2014

Introduction

Review

- **Terms of Reference**
- **Timelines**
 - Review to be completed by September 2014
- **Stakeholder feedback processes**

Terms of Reference

The Review Group is required to:

- (i) review the current structure and content.
- (ii) identify any omissions in the AACA NCSA
- (iii) consider the clarity of purpose and clarity of the terminology contained in the AACA NCSA

The above issues are to be considered in light of:

current and foreseeable public expectations for the professional standards of Architects
current and foreseeable professional practices of Architects
current and foreseeable structures and directions of architectural education

Following the tasks identified in 1. The Review Group is required to draft amendments to the AACA NCSA for the consideration of AACA Council.

The Review Group has the authority to co-opt assistance/advice from those with relevant expertise.

The Review Group is required to consult with relevant stakeholders.

The Review Group is required to make progress reports to AACA Board meetings

The Review Group is required to present its final report to the AACA Council AGM in 2014.

The Review

The Review is in Three Stages:-

- **Analysis**
- **Proposition**
- **Final Revised NCSA**

The Review

Analysis Process

- Invite and consider feedback from stakeholders
- Analyse equivalent Competency Standards from international jurisdictions and other professional institutions.
- Review existing NCSA

The Review

Proposition

- **Propose a draft revised structure**
- **Propose draft competencies**
- **Present to open forum for detailed feedback
(we are at this stage)**

The Review

Final Revision

- Consider and incorporate feedback
- Complete final draft
- Submit for final approval to AACA

What is a Competency Standard?

- The basic premise behind the competency standard is straightforward –
 - elements of competence required for satisfactory practice of an occupation are identified, and evidence of performance needed to show that each has been achieved is described.

How is the NCSA currently used?

- Accreditation of architectural courses
- APE for registration
- Academic Equivalence Assessments
 - NPrA
 - Assessing international qualifications
 - RAE
 - RGE
- NCSA is used in all Australian jurisdictions and under licence in New Zealand

Current Form of NCSA

Four tiers of description of Competencies

- Unit
- Context
- Element
- Performance Criteria

Current Form of NCSA

example from the NCSA:

UNIT 1 – DESIGN

- **Context 1.1** To create an architectural design through the exercise of knowledge, imagination, judgement and professional responsibility
- *Element 1.1.1* *Generate a design concept that can be realised as a building.*
- *Performance Criterion 01* *The design concept demonstrates an analysis of and response to the design brief, user intent and built purpose*

Summary of Feedback

- Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on current NCSA
- Feedback generally fell into categories that respond to how NCSA should reflect :-
 - Changing nature of practice
 - Architects' responsibilities to the general community
 - Clear inclusion of recurring aspects of
 - Sustainability
 - History and Theory
 - Research skills
 - Urban issues

Summary of Feedback

Feedback also sought changes to:-

- Simplify the structure by considering the:
 - Removal of Context layer
 - Reduction in number of criteria
 - Avoidance of repetition
 - Clarification of terminology

Summary of Feedback

- Feedback led directly to a Working Group undertaking a substantial rethink regarding the format, structure and content.

Proposed revisions to NCSA

New format and structure

- Clarify the prime purpose of the NCSA
- Make it a simpler document
- Reduce repetition
- Inclusive of current and foreseeable modes of practice

The Purpose of the NCSA

- The NCSA document is to outline the benchmark level of competency that an architect must demonstrate. The document is considered the standard for this professional competency.
- Within it is a series of aspects of being competent that must be demonstrated and the mode of demonstration is through meeting the Performance Criteria.

The NCSA as a tool

- The NCSA is an aid in the assessment of the skill, knowledge and experience required for practice of the architectural profession.
- The NCSA is not intended to be a form of assessment but rather it is intended to provide a tool to be employed by those authorised in assessment of professional standards of an architect.
- The NCSA is a stand-alone document which does not pre-suppose for which specific purposes it may be employed or considered.

The NCSA as a tool

- In determining the appropriate level of Competency for and Architect the NCSA assumes the level to be at least that of a Professional Practitioner’.
 - ‘The Competency Standard describes what is reasonably expected of a person who can demonstrate the standard of skill, care and diligence widely accepted in Australia as competent professional architectural practice.’

Name Change of NCSA

- With the purpose of the NCSA in mind it is proposed to rename the document the National Competency Standard in Architecture.
 - The 's' has been dropped as the intention is to describe what is required for an architect to be deemed competent.

Structural changes to NCSA

- New structure
 - Removal of context layer.
 - New divisions are:
 - Units
 - Elements of Competency
 - Performance Criteria (with associated Contexts)

Units

Units are a group of activities within the profession of architecture. The four Units are:

1. **Design**
2. **Documentation**
3. **Project Delivery**
4. **Practice Management**

Units – Name Change

- The name of the Unit- Project Management has been changed to Project Delivery to encompass Elements that relate to final project outcomes.
- Some of the aspects previously encompassed have been transferred to the Elements of Project Briefing, Pre-Design and Practice Management

Units – Content Changes

There are a number of changes to the content and organisation of the Units. Below are some key changes

- Under **Unit – Design**, the Elements ‘Project Briefing’ and ‘Pre-Design’ have been added.
- Under **Unit – Documentation**, the Element ‘Detailed Design’ has been included’.
- Under **Unit – Project Delivery**, the Element ‘Procurement’ has been included to require knowledge of the differing types of project procurement systems available.
- Under **Unit – Practice Management**, aspects that relate to business management have been excluded.

Elements of Competency

- The Competency Standard outlined in this document is described through a series of Elements.
 - These Elements present aspects of architectural practice that must be demonstrated for the particular competency to be met.
 - The demonstration of competency is guided by a series of related Performance Criteria.

Performance Criteria

These are statements that specify the performance required to demonstrate the Element of Competency

- Performance Criteria are to be seen as both individual criterion and together as an incorporated whole. All are required to be achieved for the demonstration of the Element of Competency. All criteria have equal standing.
- The Performance Criteria are not absolute; they may change as community values shift and as the profession reflects upon itself. They are, therefore, subject to regular review.

Contexts

Contexts describe the range of environments which are to be considered when assessing whether a Performance Criteria has been achieved.

- The Contexts are named thus:
 - Regulatory Context
 - Social Context
 - Sustainability Context
 - Disciplinary Context
 - Communication Context
 - Typically each of the Contexts would apply to numerous Performance Criteria. They are arranged in a graphic matrix in association with the Performance Criteria to clearly articulate that one or a number of Contexts must be considered for each of the specific Performance Criteria.

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Contexts

A detailed description of these Contexts

- Regulatory *Regulations relevant to architectural practice including project design/ project delivery are understood and addressed.*
- Social *Relevant social values and ethics are evident in architectural practice. Impacts on project users and broader communities are addressed*
- Sustainability *The need to sustain the natural and built environment is acknowledged. Broad understanding of sustainability in relation to project users and communities is evident.*
- Disciplinary Culture *Knowledge of relevant histories and theories of architecture, practice and building is evident*
- Communication *Relevant aspects of architectural practice including project design and project delivery are clearly communicated to clients and other stakeholders.*

Proposed revisions to NCSA

- Form of NCSA
 - Goal is to accommodate changes in practice
 - Simple language
 - Allow for evaluation by experts and professionals

Proposed revised NCSA

- Draft presented for discussion
- Description of proposed changes
- Encourage detailed feedback

Feedback

- Feedback
 - This PowerPoint and the draft revised NCSA is uploaded onto the AACA Website with instruction regarding timing and methods of providing feedback.
- Timing of feedback
 - The feedback should be sent via email to AACA before
- Next steps
 - Completion of presentation For a of the draft NCSA
 - Review of feedback.
 - Amended NCSA prepared for final approvals.



Questions?

Thank you

