

Northern Territory Architects Board

Continuing Professional Development

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Acronyms	Full form
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
NSCA	National Standard of Competency for Architects
NT	Northern Territory
NTAB	Northern Territory Architects Board

Contents

1. Purpose	4
2. Scope	4
3. CPD Requirements	4
3.1. Annual CPD Points.....	4
3.2. Competency areas	5
3.3. CPD Activities.....	6
4. Exemptions	7
4.1. Grounds of Exemption	7
4.2. Pro Rata Exemptions	8
4.3. Carry-Forward of CPD Points	8
5. CPD Reporting	8
5.1. Consequences of Non-Reporting or Incorrect Reporting.....	8
6. CPD Verification	8
6.1. Board Powers During Verification	9
6.2. Evidence That May Be Requested.....	9
6.3. Outcomes of Verification	9
7. Rectification of Non-Compliance	9
7.1. Rectification Plans.....	9
7.2. Limits on Rectification.....	10
8. Record Keeping and Retention	10
Appendix A – Formal and Informal CPD Guidance	10

1. Purpose

Under section 18 of the *Architects Act 1963* (the Act), all registered architects are required to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) as a condition of maintaining registration. This Policy, made under the authority of the Act and the *Architects Regulations 2025* (NT), establishes the CPD framework that applies to architects registered in the Northern Territory.

CPD ensures that architects maintain, develop and enhance their professional competence, technical knowledge, ethical standards and regulatory awareness throughout their careers. It supports architects in delivering architectural services that are competent, lawful, ethical and responsive to contemporary professional and community expectations.

This Policy supports the objects of the Act, specifically:

- protecting the public and users of architectural services;
- promoting high professional standards in the practice of architecture; and
- ensuring architects maintain current knowledge and skills relevant to their scope of practice.

The Northern Territory Architects Board (the Board) must be satisfied that CPD requirements have been met before renewing registration under the Act.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all persons and entities holding active registration under the *Architects Act 1963*, including:

- architects holding practising registration in the Northern Territory;
- architects registered under mutual recognition arrangements who are practising in, or providing architectural services in, the NT; and
- architectural entities registered under the Act, to the extent that CPD obligations relate to the registered architects responsible for architectural services.

Compliance with this Policy is a condition of registration and renewal.

This Policy does not apply to architects who have been granted a formal CPD exemption by the Board in accordance with *Architects Regulations 2025*.

3. CPD Requirements

3.1. Annual CPD Points

Architects must complete a minimum of 20 CPD points each CPD year. The following minimum requirements apply:

CPD type	Minimum required	Annual cap
Formal CPD	10 points	No cap (within the 20-point total)
Informal CPD	No minimum	Up to 10 points toward the total

Calculating CPD points

One CPD point equals one hour of CPD activity. For activities of between 30 minutes and one hour, a maximum of 0.5 points may be claimed.

CPD compliance must be declared annually at the time of registration renewal. This declaration is a mandatory condition of maintaining registration.

For those architects that renew for a 3 year or 5 year term, if your registration term is 10 September 2025 and expires on 10 September 2030, you must declare CPD compliance by 10 September every year.

3.2. Competency areas

CPD activities must align with one or more of the following competency areas, derived from the National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA 2021). Architects should select activities relevant to their individual scope of practice.

Competency 1: Practice Management and Professional Conduct

This area covers legal, ethical and professional obligations, including risk management and the standards expected under the Act. Relevant topics include:

- professional ethics and codes of conduct
- statutory obligations under the Act
- professional indemnity insurance and contractual risk
- complaints handling and dispute resolution
- practice governance and financial management

Eligible activities include seminars on professional obligations or legislative change, as well as workshops on risk management or practice governance.

Competency 2: Project Initiation and Conceptual Design

This area covers the exercise of professional judgment at early project stages, including integration of regulatory, environmental and contextual considerations. Relevant topics include:

- client briefing and engagement
- feasibility analysis and site analysis
- sustainability principles and climate-responsive design
- cultural and social considerations
- preliminary regulatory constraints

Eligible activities include design workshops, seminars, and professional forums on early-stage project risk.

Competency 3: Detailed Design and Construction Documentation

This area covers technical competence and the production of compliant, coordinated documentation. Relevant topics include:

- building codes and standards, including the National Construction Code (NCC)
- documentation quality and consultant coordination
- accessibility and fire safety requirements
- digital documentation tools, including BIM

Eligible activities include NCC update seminars, technical detailing workshops, and training in digital design and documentation systems.

Competency 4: Design Delivery and Construction Phase Services

This area covers the competent administration of contracts and the architect's role during construction in protecting client and public interests. Relevant topics include:

- contract administration

- site inspections and contractor communication
- managing variations and defects
- construction phase compliance

Eligible activities include contract administration courses, structured site visits with learning objectives, and workshops on dispute avoidance during construction.

Northern Territory context

It is acknowledged that architectural work in the NT frequently takes place in regional, remote, and culturally distinct contexts. CPD that strengthens capability in remote construction practices, tropical or climate-responsive design, culturally appropriate engagement, or regional regulatory frameworks is especially valued when it supports the competency areas outlined above.

3.3. CPD Activities

3.3.1. Formal CPD Activity

Formal CPD activities are structured learning activities with defined learning outcomes that involve instruction, interaction or assessment. They generally include an identifiable presenter or facilitator and a structured learning environment.

Formal CPD activity	Maximum points claimable per year
Structured seminars, workshops, lectures or webinars relevant to architectural practice	No maximum
Accredited or assessed professional courses, including relevant tertiary units	No maximum
Preparation and delivery of CPD activities for architects or allied professionals	5 points
Presenting or participating as a panel member at professional conferences or forums	5 points
Teaching architecture at a tertiary level	5 points
Authorship of published professional articles, papers or books relevant to architecture	5 points
Acting as an examiner, assessor or panel member for the APE or equivalent	5 points

Activities that do not qualify as formal CPD include unstructured product marketing presentations, attendance without demonstrable learning outcomes, and internal practice meetings without educational content.

3.3.2. Informal CPD Activity

Informal CPD activities are self-directed or experiential learning activities that contribute to professional competence but do not involve formal instruction or assessment. They must have a clear learning purpose and be capable of documentation and explanation.

Informal CPD activity	Maximum points claimable per year
Self-directed study, including reading professional journals, guidance notes and regulatory updates	5 points
Structured site visits with documented learning objectives	5 points
Professional mentoring, as either mentor or mentee	5 points
Practice-based learning activities relevant to competency maintenance, beyond normal duties	5 points
Participation in professional committees, advisory panels or working groups	3 points
Attendance at exhibitions or industry events with documented learning relevance	5 points

Normal work duties

CPD points cannot be claimed for activities that form part of an architect's ordinary employment or contractual duties. To qualify as CPD, an activity must go beyond routine professional practice and have a clear learning objective. Activities such as routine project meetings, contract administration and general business management do not qualify.

4. Exemptions

The Board may, on written application, grant an exemption from all or part of the CPD requirements under section 18 of the Act and Regulations. Exemptions are not automatic and are granted at the Board's discretion, having regard to the circumstances and the objects of the Act.

An exemption application must:

- be submitted in writing in the form approved by the Board;
- specify the CPD year to which it relates; and
- clearly set out the grounds for the application, supported by relevant information.

The Board may grant an exemption in whole or in part and may impose conditions. An architect must comply with any conditions attached to an exemption.

4.1. Grounds of Exemption

Typical outcome: May be deemed to have met CPD requirements for that CPD year.

Ground	Examples	Typical outcome
Not practised for all or most of the CPD year	Retired; unemployed; working outside the profession; practising exclusively overseas	Full or partial exemption
Significant personal or family circumstances	Serious illness or injury; caring responsibilities; bereavement; other significant and unforeseen hardship	Partial exemption or reduced requirement
Extended leave during the CPD year	Parental leave; long service leave; extended unpaid leave; extended	Pro rata reduction

	overseas travel (generally 3 months or more)	
Registered part way through the CPD year	Newly registered architect; architect returning after suspension or lapse	Pro rata CPD obligation

4.2. Pro Rata Exemptions

Where exemptions are granted on the grounds of extended leave or part-year registration, the Board will generally apply the exemption on a pro-rata basis, having regard to the length of time the architect did not practise, and the nature and extent of any architectural services provided during the CPD year.

4.3. Carry-Forward of CPD Points

An architect may carry forward a maximum of three (3) CPD points accrued in excess of the 20-point minimum to the immediately following CPD year.

Carried-forward points:

- may only be applied to the year immediately following CPD year;
- must not be counted more than once; and
- do not reduce the obligation to undertake CPD in the following year.

Points in excess of the three-point carry-forward limit lapse at the end of the CPD year.

5. CPD Reporting

Registered architects must report CPD activities to the Board annually, in an approved form, as part of the registration renewal process, in accordance with section 18 of the Act. Submission of a CPD report is a mandatory condition of renewal.

CPD reports must be submitted:

- annually, by the anniversary date of the architect's registration or such other date as determined by the Board; and
- in the form approved by the Board, which may require electronic submission through the Board's registration or renewal system.

Architects must declare that the information provided in their CPD report is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

5.1. Consequences of Non-Reporting or Incorrect Reporting

Failure to submit a CPD report, or submission of a report that is incomplete or misleading, may result in:

- refusal to renew registration;
- a requirement to undertake additional CPD;
- an audit or verification of CPD activities; or
- other regulatory action available to the Board under the Act.

6. CPD Verification

The Board may verify compliance with CPD requirements at any time under section 18 the Act. Verification may be conducted on a routine, random or targeted basis and may occur during or after a CPD year.

6.1. Board Powers During Verification

For the purpose of verifying compliance with CPD requirements, the Board may require a registered architect to:

- produce records of CPD activities claimed, including supporting documentation
- provide written explanations or statements relating to CPD activities
- demonstrate how claimed CPD activities align with relevant competency areas; and
- provide details of any exemption granted or applied for

An architect must comply with a request made by the Board within 14 days, or within such other period as specified by the Board.

6.2. Evidence That May Be Requested

Evidence that the Board may request includes, but is not limited to:

- certificates of attendance or completion;
- course outlines or learning objectives;
- records of participation, presentations or authorship;
- reflective notes or summaries demonstrating learning outcomes; and
- records maintained by professional bodies or CPD providers.

Attendance alone is not sufficient

The Board is not required to accept a CPD claim on the basis of attendance where the relevance or adequacy of the activity is not demonstrated. Architects should be prepared to explain what was learned and how it was relevant to their practice.

6.3. Outcomes of Verification

Following verification, the Board may:

- confirm that the architect has complied with CPD requirements;
- require clarification or additional evidence;
- determine that CPD requirements have not been met; or
- take further action in accordance with this Policy or the Act.

Where non-compliance is identified, the Board will generally provide the architect with an opportunity to rectify the matter, unless the circumstances warrant immediate regulatory action.

7. Rectification of Non-Compliance

This section applies where an architect has declared non-compliance with CPD requirements, the Board has determined non-compliance following verification, or an architect has failed to submit a CPD report.

The Board may give written notice requiring the architect to submit a proposed rectification plan within 14 days of receiving the notice.

7.1. Rectification Plans

A rectification plan must:

- identify the nature and extent of the non-compliance;
- specify the CPD activities the architect proposes to undertake to address the shortfall;

- demonstrate how those activities align with the relevant competency areas; and
- propose a completion timeframe not exceeding 90 days, unless otherwise approved by the Board.

The Board may approve the plan, approve it with conditions, or require it to be amended. An architect must comply with any approved rectification plan and any conditions imposed.

Failure to comply with an approved rectification plan may result in further regulatory action under the Act, including action affecting registration.

7.2. Limits on Rectification

A rectification notice may only be issued in relation to the current CPD year or any of the three preceding CPD years. In determining whether to require rectification, the Board may have regard to:

- the seriousness of the non-compliance;
- whether the architect self-disclosed the non-compliance;
- the relevance of the CPD shortfall to current practice; and
- any previous non-compliance.

8. Record Keeping and Retention

Registered architects must maintain accurate and complete records of CPD activities undertaken for each CPD year in accordance with section 18 of the Act.

Records must be sufficient to demonstrate:

- the nature and relevance of each CPD activity;
- the date or period during which the activity was undertaken;
- the number of CPD points claimed;
- whether the activity was formal or informal CPD; and
- the competency area or areas to which it relates.

Retention period

CPD records and supporting evidence must be retained for a minimum of five (5) years after the end of the CPD year to which they relate.

Records may include certificates of attendance or completion, course outlines or agendas, records of presentations or authorship, reflective notes or summaries, correspondence from CPD providers, and records maintained by professional bodies or education institutions.

Records may be kept electronically or in hard copy, provided they are readily accessible and can be produced to the Board upon request.

Appendix A – Formal and Informal CPD Guidance

This Appendix provides additional guidance to assist architects in identifying CPD activities that meet the requirements of this Policy. It does not limit the Board's discretion to assess the relevance, quality or adequacy of CPD activities on a case-by-case basis.

Key Principles

All CPD activities must:

- be relevant to the practice of architecture;

- contribute to the maintenance, development or enhancement of professional competence;
- relate to one or more competency areas set out in the Policy; and
- be additional to an architect's normal day-to-day work duties.

Architects are expected to exercise professional judgment in selecting CPD activities appropriate to their scope of practice.

Formal CPD – Examples and Exclusions

Examples of acceptable formal CPD

Category	Examples
Professional education and training	Accredited seminars and workshops; continuing education courses; structured webinars with learning outcomes
Technical and regulatory learning	National Construction Code (NCC) update courses; fire safety, access and compliance training; sustainability and performance-based design courses
Professional contribution	Preparation and delivery of CPD seminars; presenting at conferences or professional forums; tertiary teaching in architecture
Assessment roles	Participating as an examiner or assessor for the Architectural Practice Examination

What is not formal CPD

The following generally do not qualify as formal CPD:

- unstructured product marketing presentations;
- attendance without demonstrable learning outcomes; and
- internal practice meetings without educational content.

Informal CPD – Examples and Exclusions

Examples of acceptable informal CPD

Category	Examples
Self-directed learning	Reading professional journals, technical guidance and regulatory updates; research into materials, systems or design approaches
Experiential learning	Structured site visits with learning objectives; reflective learning during project delivery (excluding normal duties)
Professional engagement	Mentoring as mentor or mentee; participation in professional committees or advisory groups
Industry engagement	Attendance at exhibitions or industry events with documented learning relevance

What is not informal CPD

The following do not qualify as informal CPD:

- routine project meetings;
- routine contract administration;
- general business management unrelated to architectural competence; and
- marketing or sales activity without learning intent.

Mapping CPD to Competency Areas

Every CPD activity must relate to at least one competency area. The following table provides examples of how activities may be mapped:

CPD activity	Competency area
Professional conduct seminar	Practice Management and Professional Conduct
Sustainability concept design workshop	Project Initiation and Conceptual Design
NCC documentation training	Detailed Design and Construction Documentation
Contract administration course	Design Delivery and Construction Phase Services

Evidencing CPD Activities

Architects should retain documentation sufficient to demonstrate what was learned, how it was relevant to practice, when it was undertaken, and how many CPD points were claimed. Appropriate evidence includes certificates, agendas, course outlines, reflective summaries and mentoring logs.