

Architectural education in Australia

In common with other major economies, Australia requires a five year course of post-secondary study as a pre-requisite for architectural registration. This typically takes the form of a three year bachelor degree followed by an accredited two year Master of Architecture (MArch) degree program. Architect registration boards in all States and Territories approve the courses of education leading to registration in Australia.

The Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA), jointly with the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA), maintains the Australia New Zealand Architecture Program Accreditation Procedure. This procedure facilitates the accreditation and approval by each State and Territory Architects Registration Board. This involves a review of architecture schools offering accredited degrees at least every 5 years by an expert panel, which makes a recommendation to the relevant Board.

There are 18 Australian universities that are currently accredited to offer the MArch degree:

1. Bond University
2. Curtin University
3. Deakin University
4. Griffith University
5. Monash University
6. Qld University of Technology
7. RMIT University
8. University of Adelaide
9. University of Canberra
10. University of Melbourne
11. University of Newcastle
12. University of New South Wales
13. University of Queensland
14. University of South Australia
15. University of Sydney
16. University of Tasmania
17. University of Technology Sydney
18. University of Western Australia

While the initial bachelor degree is not accredited in Australia, each university specifies a 'benchmark academic pathway' through which the majority of students are expected to come. This will be a degree such as a Bachelor of Design (Architecture) which provides a foundation in architectural studies. In some cases, a significant proportion of the pathway qualification may be in common with broader design and/or built environment courses of study.

Students with successful performance in the pathway bachelor degree are generally guaranteed admission to the accredited masters program, while students with other suitable initial degrees are admitted on a case-by-case basis. In a variation to this approach, Melbourne University has begun to offer a three year accredited masters program for students without an architecture-related pathway degree, and the implications of this alternative model are still to be fully worked through by the sector.

A five year course of study for architects is needed to cover a large amount of academic ground that can include:

- design and documentation (up to 50 per cent of total study);
- architectural theory, history and philosophy;
- building science, materials and technology;
- communication, visual representation and information technology;
- professional practice and building law;
- urban planning and environmental sustainability; and
- construction project management.