



**BUILDING DESIGNERS  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**



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# ACCREDITATION FOR BUILDING DESIGNERS - PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

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## INTRODUCTION

Accreditation ensures building designers meet professional standards required by our industry.

All stakeholders have a right to expect that those operating within the built environment are competent in the area of service they offer. They also have the right to choose the range of service appropriate to their situation.

To ensure appropriate standards of building construction documentation and professionalism, Building Designers Association of Australia (BDAA) provides an independent Accreditation program for building designers.

BDAA Accreditation assessment is based on the national training package for building designers as promoted by the Australian Industry Skills Council (AISC) in conjunction with requirements by industry. Competency standards are continually updated to ensure currency of the profession.

Competency is the ability to apply skills and knowledge to the job in order to achieve the required outcomes in the workplace. Competency standards define the outcomes required, provide benchmarks which allow the assessment of competency and provide a means of recognition of competency wherever or however it is gained.

BDAA Accreditation is available to all building design practitioners not covered by alternate and appropriately recognised schemes. The Accreditation program is endorsed by a number of education, industry and government bodies such as Central Queensland University, Victoria University, TAFE NSW, Master Builders Association (MBA), NSW Department of Planning and local government authorities.

BDAA Accreditation also works closely with the NSW Building Commission to ensure minimum standards for documentation are maintained.

In addition, BDAA engages with educational organisations to develop, maintain and deliver national training requirements for building designers to ensure the expectations of government, the public and the building industry are met.

Accreditation is maintained by engaging in Continuing Professional Development (CPD), holding a level of Professional Indemnity (PI) Insurance consummate with industry participation, and participating in regular audits of completed works.

This Participant Handbook is designed to inform stakeholders of the policies and procedures BDAA and its participants agree to follow.

# LEVELS OF ACCREDITATION

BDAA Accreditation is issued at three levels as follows:

## LEVEL 3 - LOW RISE ACCREDITATION

Scope of work covers design and documentation of:

- Class 1 & 10 buildings as defined by the National Construction Code/Building Code of Australia classifications
- \*Class 2-9 buildings up to a maximum of 2 storeys (not including levels below ground for car parking and/or storage that does not protrude more than 1.2 metres above ground level) and a maximum floor area of 2000m<sup>2</sup>
- This category of accreditation excludes Type A construction as defined by the National Construction Code/ Building Code of Australia

Minimum 2 years (2000 hours) experience as a building designer with a Prescribed Educational Qualification or,

Minimum 3 years (3000 hours) experience as a building designer with no Prescribed Educational Qualification

## LEVEL 2 - MEDIUM RISE ACCREDITATION

Scope of work covers design and documentation of:

- Class 1 & 10 buildings as defined by the National Construction Code / Building Code of Australia classifications
- \*Class 2-9 buildings up to a maximum of 3 storeys and a maximum floor area of 2,000m<sup>2</sup>
- Buildings with a maximum of 4 storeys, where a single storey of Class 7a carpark is located at ground floor or basement level and with 3 storeys of Class 2 above and with a maximum floor area of 2000m<sup>2</sup>

Minimum 3 years (3000 hours) experience as a building designer with a Prescribed Educational Qualification or,

Minimum 5 years (5000 hours) experience as a building designer with no Prescribed Educational Qualification

## LEVEL 1 - OPEN ACCREDITATION

Scope of work covers design and documentation of:

- All Classes and Types of buildings\*\* as defined by the National Construction Code/ Building Code of Australia classifications

Minimum 5 years (5000 hours) experience as a building designer with a Prescribed Educational Qualification or,

Minimum 7 years (7000 hours) experience as a building designer with no Prescribed Educational Qualification

### NOTE:

\*\* Except in NSW where residential buildings containing 3 or more storeys and 4 or more units may only be designed under the direction of a registered architect.

\* In NSW, building designers must be registered with the Department of Fair Trading to undertake Class 2, 3 and 9c designs. Other states and territories may have specific licensing / registration requirements.

# ASSESSMENT PROCESS

## PREREQUISITES

The prerequisites for Applicants are:

- Relevant experience as a building designer
- Hold and maintain appropriate level of Professional Indemnity (PI) insurance commensurate with level of Accreditation
- Current White Card and/ or General Construction Induction Training (GIT) Card
- Commitment to participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

While not mandatory, BDAA recommends Applicants be confident they have language, literacy and numeracy skills equivalent to Year 10 English and Maths, its equivalent, or higher.

### NOTE:

Refer to Submission Documents Section on page [9](#).

## ASSESSMENT MODEL

The BDAA Accreditation program prescribes an assessment model, commensurate with the level of educational qualifications and experience of the applicant. This model is applicable to all three levels of Accreditation and assesses the evidence provided to ensure the national standard of competencies have been met.

The Accreditation model covers all new applications in addition to applications for upgrade of an Accreditation level.

Applicants for all three levels of Accreditation: “Low Rise”, “Medium Rise” and “Open” are required to complete the relevant BDAA Accreditation Application form and provide the required supporting documentation.

- Where an Applicant meets the minimum requirement for work experience and has a Prescribed Educational Qualification, supporting documentation for two projects are required
- Where the Applicant has no Prescribed Educational Qualification, additional work experience is required and an additional set of project documentation is required for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to formally assess skills and knowledge gained through the applicant’s work experience
- Where an Applicant is applying to upgrade their level of Accreditation, the Applicant must complete the application for the level they wish to upgrade to and provide projects supporting documentation for that level
- Where applicants are relying on qualifications gained overseas, supporting documents for three projects prepared in Australia are required

Application forms and templates for use with the submission of supporting documentation can be downloaded from [www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation](http://www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation)

The Assessment Process is described on the following pages and is illustrated in the accompanying flow chart.

# PRESCRIBED EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Current national Prescribed Educational Qualifications and Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Levels

LEVEL 3 - LOW RISE ACCREDITATION	LEVEL 2 - MEDIUM RISE ACCREDITATION	LEVEL 1 - OPEN ACCREDITATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Diploma of Building Design</li> <li>▪ Diploma of Building Design Management</li> <li>▪ Diploma of Architectural Technology</li> <li>▪ Associated Diploma in Applied Science (Architectural Drafting)</li> <li>▪ Or approved equivalent subject to assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advanced Diploma of Building Design</li> <li>▪ Advanced Diploma of Architectural Technology</li> <li>▪ Advanced Diploma of Sustainable Building Design</li> <li>▪ Associate Degree in Building Design</li> <li>▪ Or approved equivalent subject to assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Graduate Diploma of Building Design</li> <li>▪ Degree in Building Design</li> <li>▪ Degree in Building Design Management</li> <li>▪ Degree in Architecture</li> <li>▪ or approved equivalent subject to assessment</li> </ul>

**NOTE:**

These qualifications may change from time to time, as training providers update their offerings.

Where you believe you have an industry relevant educational qualification not listed, but equivalent, please contact **BDAA on 1300 669 854**



## PRESCRIBED INDUSTRY WORK EXPERIENCE

ACCREDITATION LEVEL	PRESCRIBED EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO PRESCRIBED EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION
LEVEL 3 - LOW RISE	2 years or 2000 hours	3 years or 3000 hours
LEVEL 2 - MEDIUM RISE	3 years or 3000 hours	5 years or 5000 hours
LEVEL 1 - OPEN	5 years or 5000 hours	7 years or 7000 hours

### NOTE:

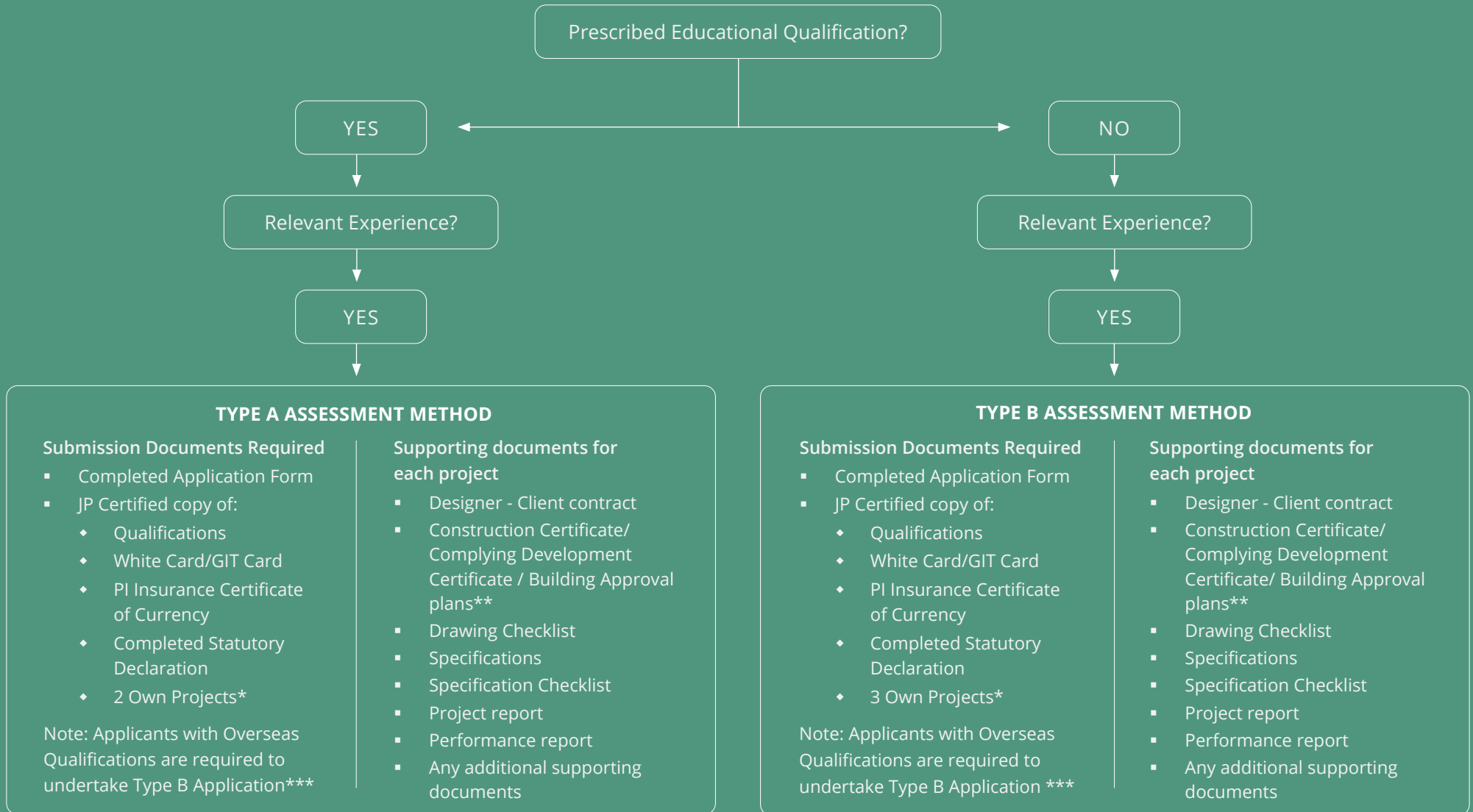
Industry work experience is assuming a minimum of 1000 hours working in the industry per year of industry experience required.

Experience must relate to the level of Accreditation being applied for. Relevant experience is specific experience of a design and technical nature, gained under the direction of a building designer or architect or as a self-employed designer, or other experience which the Assessment Panel deems to be the equivalent.



# ACCREDITATION PROCESS SCHEMATIC

## WHAT TYPE OF ASSESSMENT METHOD IS REQUIRED?



\* 'Own Projects' is defined as meaning the submitted project plans & documentation have been personally completed by the applicant.

\*\* Development Application Approved plans are not accepted.

\*\*\* Note that if you have had your overseas qualifications certified by the AACA or the VETASSESS process, attach this document to your qualifications. In which case you can then provide a Type A application. Make sure that both your qualifications and the certification document copies are JP certified.

# SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS

## APPLICATION FORM

Applicants must fully complete the Accreditation application form and checklists to ensure all information is provided to enable assessment against competency requirements.

**NOTE:** Incomplete forms or missing attachments will not be accepted and may incur a fee where additional information is required.

## QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants who have achieved a national Prescribed Educational Qualification will be considered to have met an equivalent standard of competence to the current industry educational qualification for the level of Accreditation they are applying for.

Applicants who do not hold a relevant Prescribed Educational Qualification will be assessed against the current educational qualification for the level of Accreditation applied for, which will involve additional industry experience and submission of an additional work project and supporting documentation in their submission. Refer to Prescribed Educational Qualifications (page [6](#)), Prescribed Industry Experience (page [7](#)) and Accreditation Process Schematic (page [8](#)).

## WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Holding a current White Card and/ or General Construction Induction Training (GIT) card issued by a suitable RTO satisfies Work Health and Safety (WH&S) competency standards for qualifications in the built environment. If an applicant wishes to instead be assessed using the relevant WH&S competencies. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can be applied, provided all elements within the WH&S competency standard are fully satisfied.

## PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE CERTIFICATE OF CURRENCY

An Accredited building designer must maintain a level of Professional Indemnity Insurance (PI) commensurate with their level of industry participation and the type of designs undertaken. The PI insurance must be held with a recognised insurer and evidence of the policy must be provided when applying for Accreditation and at each anniversary of renewal. The minimum requirement of PI Insurance is:

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### Low Rise Accreditation

\$1 million in any single event with at least one reinstatement

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### Medium Rise Accreditation

\$1 million in any single event with at least one reinstatement

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### Open Accreditation

\$2 million in any single event with at least one reinstatement

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The above values may be higher where the building designer is undertaking work which exceeds these values.

**NOTE:** Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) policies are separate to Public Liability Insurance (PLI).

Some PII policies contain a PLI component, while PLI policies generally do not contain PII components.

Applicants should check with their insurance provider to ensure that their policy is a PII policy with the required amount of cover for the level of accreditation being applied for.

## STATUTORY DECLARATION

By submitting a statutory declaration, Applicants are confirming their responses in the application form are true and accurate and the supporting documents are their own. It is illegal to submit a false statutory declaration.

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

An Accredited building designer must maintain a level of competence in an ever-changing industry environment. To do so the person must undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This must be a continuous process throughout the term of Accreditation. Attainment of CPD must be through an approved program conducted by an accepted industry body.

Renewal of Accreditation is dependent upon satisfactory completion of a CPD Program, where a minimum of 10 formal CPD points and 10 informal CPD points is required.

## PROJECT DOCUMENTS

Applicants are to submit examples of work they have authored, at the level of Accreditation being applied for. Further information on the project submission type is explained in the application form.

Project drawings and supporting documents are to be the Applicant's own work, which the Applicant has prepared during the prescribed experience period.

## DESIGNER-CLIENT CONTRACT

Each project submitted must have as part of the supporting documentation, the designer-client contract. The site address must be included, however private or commercially sensitive material may be blacked out.

## CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATE/ COMPLYING DEVELOPMENT/ BUILDING APPROVAL PLANS

The drawings submitted are to be Construction Certificate/ Complying Development/ Building Approval plans, preferably stamped. Further details of the drawing requirements are contained in the drawings checklist section of the application form. A completed drawing checklist for each project is to be submitted with the application. Note that Development Application plans are not accepted. The BDAA Sample Drawing Set & BDAA Plan Checklist are found at [BDAA Accreditation Application](#). The BDAA Example Plan Set is to be used as a minimum standard for plans, & the BDAA Plan Checklist is to be used to check that all appropriate items are included.

## SPECIFICATIONS

Project specific specifications are to be submitted for each project, along with a completed specification checklist. Refer to Application Form for more detail as to the type of specifications required.

## PROJECT REPORT

Each project must be accompanied by a completed project report prepared by the applicant explaining the full nature and extent of the applicant's involvement in the work. Refer to the project report template in the application form.

## PERFORMANCE REPORT

A reference for each project is required. The Applicant may choose from either the client, builder, subconsultant or project supervisor to complete the performance report for the project. Only one handwritten performance report is required per project. A separate referee is required for each project submitted. Each report is to be in the referee's own words. Note that only one performance report can have a colleague (supervisor) referee. The other performance reports must have external referees.



## ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

An Applicant may wish to submit other supporting documentation on a project. These may be items that the Applicant feels will assist the Assessor and Assessment Panel in determining their competency at the level of Accreditation being applied for. These may be emailed to [accreditation@bdaa.com.au](mailto:accreditation@bdaa.com.au).

## INTERVIEW/ WRITTEN TEST OR ASSIGNMENTS

When an Applicant cannot demonstrate the required competencies by the above means, the Assessment Panel will determine if an interview, written test or assignment may be prescribed. An interview will be conducted by telephone / Zoom with the Applicant.

When a test or assignment is required, they will follow as far as possible a 'real life', 'actual office scenario' with 'open book' type testing. The Assessment Panel will set a reasonable time for the test or assignment to be completed. If the test or assignment is not completed within the prescribed time, an extension may be applied for in writing. The request for extension is to be received fourteen (14) calendar days before the expiration of the deadline.

Nothing in this Participant Handbook is intended to preclude the Assessment Panel from using innovative methods for assessment in unusual circumstances. For instance, the Assessment Panel may, at their discretion, agree to visit the office of an Applicant, or the sites of an Applicant's built works, subject to financial considerations being satisfied.

### NOTE:

1. Applicants must keep a copy of all work submitted.
2. Applications are to be submitted electronically on the BDAA 'Online Accreditation Lodgment' form available on the website [www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation](http://www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation).  
No submissions will be accepted through email or post.



## ASSESSORS AND ASSESSMENT PANEL

The fundamental task of the Assessor and Assessment Panel is to ascertain the competency of the Applicant i.e. to ensure they have the competencies set out in the relevant Prescribed Educational Qualification and those required by industry. It is not relevant how or where these competencies were gained. The procedures for assessment outlined herein are for guidance only.

Given that Applicants will present with a very wide range of backgrounds, skills, formal qualifications and experience, the Assessment Panel has a wide discretion as to the exact form of assessment required, particularly in unusual circumstances while maintaining competency standards required for the level of Accreditation.

At all times, preference will be given to the assessment of built works and relevant documentation, rather than the setting of theoretical academic tests or assignments. Wherever possible, for all levels of Accreditation assessment, the Assessment Panel will assess the competency of the Applicant by means of the submission of work examples and their supporting documents, completed application form and required attachments and, if deemed necessary an interview/ written test or assignment.

Assessments are conducted by industry and suitably trained Assessors, before submission to the BDAA Assessment Panel for ratification. To ensure assessment meets the needs of our industry, Assessors are suitably trained and experienced within the industry and provide assessments that are fair and flexible. All Assessors have industry competencies to at least the level being assessed, have been trained by a holder of a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, extensive assessment and industry experience and participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The Assessment Panel is appointed by, responsible to, and reports directly to the BDAA Board of Management and consists of the Manager of BDAA Accreditation along with other suitably trained Assessors.

## ASSESSMENT TIMEFRAME

Applicants will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their application, along with a fee invoice within five (5) working days. Should further information be required for the application, the Applicant will be contacted by email within fifteen (15) working days. There may be an additional charge for incomplete applications. The applicant must submit the requested additional information within ten (10) business days. Applications will be closed where an applicant does not submit the required information within the timeframe.

Accreditation applications will be finalised and a Certificate of Accreditation issued (if applicable) within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the completed application.

## ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATION

BDAA Accreditation uses a competency-based assessment method which deems the application as either “Approved” or “Rejected”.

Upon assessment of a successful application, the Applicant will be issued with a Certificate of Accreditation at the level applied for.

If an Applicant is unable to demonstrate competency at the Accreditation level applied for, they will either be issued with a Certificate of Accreditation at a lower Accreditation level to which their standard of work equates, or informed that their application has been “Rejected”.

If an Application has been Rejected”, an Applicant may re-apply, provided 6 months has lapsed since receipt of their previous accreditation assessment result. Re-applications will incur a new application fee. Refer to Application fees on Page [15](#).

Alternatively, the applicant can lodge an appeal request (fee applies) of the works originally supplied for accreditation, no additional information will be allowed. See COMPLAINTS / APPEALS on Page [17](#)

## RENEWING ACCREDITATION

BDAA Accredited building designers are required to demonstrate the completion of a minimum of 20 CPD points within the preceding twelve (12) months, to be submitted prior to their annual Accreditation renewal date. This requirement includes ten (10) formal CPD points and ten (10) informal CPD points. BDAA members and Accredited non-members can easily record their CPD activities by logging into their account on the BDAA website and updating the information within their profile. Additionally, a copy of a PI Insurance certificate of currency is to be provided.

Persons who fail to undertake CPD and carry PI insurance to the required level will be asked to show just cause to why their Accreditation should be renewed. If the BDAA Management Committee have not been provided with, or are not satisfied with the justification provided, BDAA has the right to immediately terminate Accreditation.

**NOTE:** BDAA conducts 12 monthly audits of its Accredited building designers to ensure CPD and PI Insurance requirements are being met.

## UPGRADING ACCREDITATION LEVELS

BDAA Accredited building designers may apply to upgrade to a higher level of Accreditation at any time by submitting a completed application form and providing documentation required by the level of Accreditation applied for. Refer to Application fees on page 15.



## TERMINATION OF ACCREDITATION

If an Accredited building designer does not renew their Accreditation within sixty (60) calendar days of expiration, their Accreditation will be terminated.

Accredited building designers who fail to undertake CPD and carry PI insurance to the required level and do not provide BDAA with an acceptable just cause to why their Accreditation should be renewed, will have their Accreditation terminated.

If an Accredited building designer does not meet the requirements of their level of Accreditation during an audit process, BDAA has the right to either downgrade the level of Accreditation, provided the standard of works meets that lower Accreditation level, or terminate Accreditation.

Accredited building designers must comply with the BDAA Code of Ethics. Non-compliance will result in termination of Accreditation by BDAA.

Complaints made to BDAA with regards to an Accredited building designer will be investigated by the BDAA Accreditation Committee. The Accredited building designer will be contacted and may be requested to provide further information to inform their decision.

A decision to terminate Accreditation is only taken following careful consideration by the BDAA Accreditation Committee and may be subject to appeal.

## AUDITS

Random audits may be conducted during the accreditation period to ensure CPD requirements are being met and PI Insurance is current for the level consummate with the level of Accreditation.

BDAA may conduct a targeted audit when reviewing a complaint made in regards to a participating Accredited building designer.

At an audit, copies of your CPD statement, PI Insurance Certificate of Currency and documents of 2 recently prepared projects will be required to be forwarded to the assessor. An Audit Form will be forwarded to you for completion at this time.

Accredited building designers applying for registration under the NSW Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 and have been referred to the BDAA for assessment, will be required to undergo a supplementary audit. This will be a 'one-off' audit that will incur a fee. See page 15.



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## APPLICATION FEES

	LOW RISE	MEDIUM RISE	OPEN
Accreditation Application	\$1895.00	\$1895.00	\$1895.00
Resubmission fee due to incomplete/ inadequate application, up to	\$440.00	\$440.00	\$440.00
Annual Renewal Fee after first year	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00
Supplementary interview (in addition to Accreditation Application) for new accreditation applicants	\$385.00	\$385.00	\$385.00
Upgrade of Accreditation Level	\$985.50	\$985.50	\$985.50
Appeal fee will apply for all appeal applications*	\$660.00	\$660.00	\$660.00

\*If the appeal is successful, the appeal fee will be returned to the applicant.

Applicants may select a 3 year or 5 year payment option for all Levels of Accreditation

The 3 year payment option is priced at \$2695 which includes initial assessment and 2 years discounted renewal (save \$100)

The 5 year payment option is priced at \$3495 which includes initial assessment and 4 years discounted renewal (save \$200)

### NOTE:

All the above fees include GST

Does not include any government levy for registration as a building designer

## REFUND POLICY

No refunds are applicable.

If an application for Accreditation granted at a lower level to which their standard of work equates or the Applicant is informed that their application has been "Declined", no refund will be issued.

Re-applications require the full fee to be paid.

Re-applications following a "Declined" determination may be made provided six (6) months has lapsed since receipt of their previous accreditation assessment result. Re-applications will incur a new application fee.

## CODE OF ETHICS

- Participants will be treated fairly and with respect and have their application assessed reliably irrespective of the Assessor
  - Participants are to contact the BDAA Accreditation Manager of any conflict of interest in the Accreditation application process to allow any alternative arrangement to be made, if required
  - Participants shall know that the Accreditation assessment and auditing process is valid in that it is assessed against skills and knowledge essential for competent performance and will be conducted in a timely manner
  - Participants shall strictly treat personal and business information in a confidential, secure and professional way
  - Participants are to abide by copyright laws
  - Participants are to comply with workplace health and safety regulations at all times
  - Participants are to comply with anti-discrimination legislation at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, equal opportunity, racial vilification and disability discrimination
  - Participants are to comply with workplace harassment, victimisation and bullying regulations and ensure that behaviour is of a level acceptable to the workplace at all times
  - Participants shall carry out their duties in the knowledge that their duty is to maintain the highest standards to stakeholders in the built environment, with consumer protection being paramount by maintaining PI Insurance
  - Participants shall continuously improve their knowledge of the profession by keeping informed about changes in the building industry and associated legislation and to meet BDAA's minimum requirements for CPD, so that stakeholders may consistently receive greater value for its investment
  - Participants shall conduct themselves so as to uphold the dignity and reputation of the profession, and shall at all times avoid any actions which could impair their integrity or bring BDAA into disrepute
  - Participants shall achieve the highest degree of professionalism amongst building designers
  - Participants shall pursue and establish guidelines for achieving higher standards in building design and documentation
- Failure to comply with the BDAA Code of Ethics may result in cancellation of Accreditation.

## LEGISLATION

Legislation that particularly affects building design services includes:

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (CWTH)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Privacy Act 1988
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Copyright Act 1968
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Fair Trading Act 1987
- Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020
- Architects Act 2003

## COMPLAINTS / APPEALS

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services or people which has not been resolved. Should an Applicant have a complaint or wish to appeal an Accreditation assessment, they are able to use the following process.

In the first instance, email the Assessor.

If the complainant is not comfortable contacting the Assessor, or the matter has not been resolved, they may email the BDAA Accreditation Manager with their contact details, nature of the complaint and details of any communication with the Assessor.

The handling of a complaint is to commence within seven (7) working days of lodgement of the complaint and all reasonable measures taken to resolve the complaint as soon as practicable. A written response is to be provided by the BDAA Assessor within fourteen (14) working days of lodgement of the complaint which includes details of the reasons for the outcome.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they must notify the BDAA Accreditation Manager by email within seven (7) working days.

The BDAA Accreditation Manager will assemble an Accreditation Review Panel to process and finalise the complaint. The Manager will inform the complainant in writing, the Accreditation Review Panel's decision, including

reasons why, within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the escalated complaint. The Accreditation Review Panel will consist of three (3) qualified assessors who were not part of the original Assessment Panel.

Should the Accreditation Review Panel require additional time, the complainant will be notified and regular updates will be provided to inform of the progress of the matter. Updates will be provided at a minimum of two (2) weekly intervals.

All complaints/appeals will be handled in the strictest of confidence and no unjust treatment will be given to any person making a complaint.

Complaints made to BDAA regarding an Accredited building designer will be investigated by the BDAA Accreditation Committee. The Accredited building designer will be contacted and may be requested to provide further information in order for the BDAA Accreditation Committee to determine what / if any action is to be taken.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by BDAA, the complainant is to be advised that they have the right to refer the matter to an external authority/agency who may be relevant to their complaint such as the Office of Fair Trading or NSW Building Commissioner.



## PRIVACY POLICY

BDAA will collect information, manage, use it and disclose it in a way that complies with the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth), as amended in the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector 2000)

BDAA is required to supply the following information of participants for the purpose of issuing a Licence/Registration:

- Contact and business details including address, telephone number and email address
- Professional Indemnity Insurance Certificates of Currency
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) annual reports

## CHANGE OF DETAILS

Should participants change personal details, they must notify BDAA in writing within thirty (30) calendar days. Such details include, address, surname, contact telephone number, contact email address, business name, website address, PI Insurance change in status, conclusion of trading etc.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **How much does accreditation cost?**

All applicants pay an upfront fee of \$1895. This fee does not include any government levy for registration as a building designer.

## **Is there an annual renewal fee?**

There is an annual renewal fee of \$450 (incl GST). This fee does not include any government levy for registration as a building designer.

## **Do you have to be a member of a building designers association to be Accredited?**

No.

## **How long does the Accreditation Assessment take?**

Applicants will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their application within five (5) working days, and will be contacted by email within fifteen (15) working days if additional information is required. Accreditation applications are finalised and Certificates of Accreditation issued (if applicable) within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the completed application.

## **How long does Accreditation last?**

Accreditation is for a period of 3 years. There is an annual renewal fee, and at the 3rd anniversary of your accreditation we conduct an audit of your work to ensure you are maintaining an acceptable standard of documentation pursuant to your level of Accreditation.

## **I have qualifications that I gained 20 years ago. Are they still relevant?**

Provided you have continuously been working as a building designer since gaining your qualification, we would consider that you have maintained currency of the qualification over that period. If you have only been intermittent in the profession, you will be required to complete your application as if you have no Prescribed-Educational Qualification.

## **I have overseas qualifications. Are these acceptable for Accreditation?**

Generally, the answer is yes. We would need a certified copy of your qualification and a written report from you outlining your building design experience while residing in Australia. Applicants with overseas qualifications will be required to provide a Type B application (see Page 8) which includes documentation for three projects prepared in Australia for assessment. Note that if you have had your overseas qualifications certified by the AACA or the VETASSESS process, attach this document to your qualifications. In which case you can then provide a Type A application. Make sure that both your qualifications and the certification document copies are JP certified.

## **Is there a discount for multiple applications from the same office?**

Unfortunately, no. We only conduct assessments on an individual basis, not a 'job lot'. We cannot accredit companies, only individuals. The principal of a company could become Accredited and any work that required certification by an Accredited building designer would have to go out under his/her name.

## **Can I use my employer's professional (PI) Insurance for my Accreditation application?**

Applicants who are employed by a company can be covered by that company's PI Insurance also while undertaking design work for that company. If the Applicant were to undertake design work as an individual then they must carry their own PI Insurance. This requirement would also apply should the applicant leave the employ of the company. A copy of the company's PI Insurance Certificate of Currency must accompany the application and a note from the employer that the Applicant is covered under the company's PI.

## **Is there a BDAA logo that will be issued upon becoming an Accredited building designer?**

Yes. A logo is issued to BDAA Accredited building designers and a unique BDAA Accreditation number to use on drawings, reports and correspondence while the participant remains Accredited.

### **What if my plans aren't up to the standard of the BDAA Sample Plan Set?**

If you feel that your plans are close, but not up to, the standard of the BDAA Sample Plan Set, use your own discretion as to whether to still make your application for accreditation. The Assessor, & possibly together with the Accreditation Panel, will determine how to proceed. The Assessment Panel can utilise different methods of assessment. See Page 11 - INTERVIEW / WRITTEN TEST OR ASSIGNMENTS.

### **How are Accreditation Applications to be submitted?**

All accreditation applications must be submitted electronically using the 'Online Accreditation Lodgment' form available on our website [www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation](http://www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation) . If a file is too large use 'We Transfer' found via Google Chrome. This is a free file sharing service and is user friendly. Make sure you label your files according to the 'File Naming Format' as described on the application form. If using WeTransfer, ensure your folders are named with your surname/family name. Submit these files to [accreditation@bdaa.com.au](mailto:accreditation@bdaa.com.au) .

### **I have a building designers license to practice in another state, can I use this to prepare regulated projects in another State or Territory?**

State based licences do not automatically allow a building designer to undertake work in another State or Territory, Each jurisdiction has different criteria for registration/licensing. You will need to contact the licensing authority to determine the requirements that apply.

### **Is my building designers license issued in another state recognised by the BDAA Accreditation program?**

It may be recognised as satisfying some of the requirements of the BDAA Accreditation program, but we will require a copy of your licence, samples of your documentation and copy of your PI Insurance Certificate of Currency.

### **What if I cannot tick all the boxes?**

Do not panic! We do not expect that all boxes will be ticked as there are many mitigating conditions that apply to each individual project. Just tick as many boxes that you can supply documents for. For those that you are unable to tick, provide an explanation in one of the response boxes that are applicable to that particular project report. In some cases example



documents can be supplied.

Mandatory documents must be included in each application. Depending on the significance of that unticked box, you may be contacted by the application assessor to clarify your explanation.

### **Can I use drawings that I prepared while working for an employer?**

Yes, you can provided that on the drawings there is clear evidence that you prepared them. This could be your initials or name in the Title Block under 'Drawn By' or 'Prepared By'. Additionally, you may like to include a signed statement from the employer that you did, indeed, prepare the drawings.

### **I am the owner/supervisor of a building design company which employs draftspeople to draw plans. Can I still apply for Accreditation?**

While it is preferable that you have personally drawn the plans, if the plans have evidence that you have had at least some input into the design & have checked the plans, the plans become your responsibility. In most instances, projects such as these, can be considered suitable. Refer to the Statutory Declaration that you would be declaring, found on the BDAA Accreditation website page.

### **Where can I find more information about the BDAA CPD Program?**

Further information on the BDAA CPD program can be found on our website [www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation](http://www.bdaa.com.au/accreditation)

# TERMINOLOGY

**Accreditation:** recognition by the relevant accreditation authority that a nominated building designer meets the required standard of knowledge and skills as defined by the Accreditation level.

**Accreditation Process:** meaning a structured sequence of submitted documents for assessment against the required standard for Accreditation. The documents include an application form, Prescribed Educational Qualifications, copies of Insurance and CPD reports and supporting documentation.

**Assessment:** the assessment of qualifications and bodies of work to determine the level of knowledge and skills of an Applicant.

**Assessor:** the fundamental task of the Assessor is to ascertain the competency of the Applicant i.e. to ensure they have the competencies set out in the relevant Prescribed Educational Qualification and those required by industry, and report to the Assessment Panel whether the Applicant is competent at the level of Accreditation being applied for.

**Assessment Panel:** is appointed by, responsible to, and reports directly to the BDAA Accreditation Committee and consists of the BDAA Accreditation Manager along with several suitably industry trained Assessors.

**Assessment Review Panel:** meaning a selection of three (3) trained Assessors who were not part of the original Assessment Panel, appointed to form a panel of experts to review an assessment application, with the key task of providing a second independent decision to ensure validity and transparency of the assessment process.

**Accredited Building Designer:** a person approved by the relevant accreditation authority and listed on its register

**BDAA Accreditation Committee:** a committee of building design representatives formed to implement and manage Accreditation of building designers.

**Continuing Professional Development (CPD):** to maintain, improve and broaden knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop personal and professional qualities required by a profession.

**Competency Standards:** meaning the evaluative statements that specify the performance required to demonstrate a standard of competency for building designers as promoted by the Australian Industry Skills Council (AISC) in conjunction with requirements by industry. Competency standards are continually updated to ensure currency of the profession.

**Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII):** to cover the designer for legal costs and expenses incurred and to cover any damages or costs that may be awarded to a client where inadequate advice, services or designs have caused a client to lose money.

**Register of Accredited Building Designers:** meaning the current listing of Accredited building designers maintained and published by the BDAA.

**Registered Design Practitioner:** Application to become a Registered Design Practitioner in NSW is made directly to the Department of Fair Trading.

**Supporting Documentation:** meaning the specific items that the Assessor and Assessment Panel require when forming their expert opinion of whether the Applicant achieves each of the required competency standards.

