



# The APEC Architect Project

## Assessment Interview for APEC Architects from Australia & New Zealand

### Application Process Protocols for an APEC Architect

- Selection of Canadian province/territory where the architect applicant wishes registration/licensure prior to completing application
- Submission of resume and documentation proving the applicant meets the criteria of the MRA
- Payment of appropriate fees
- Domain Specific Interview by a panel of architects
- Submission of application for licensure to chosen province/territory (if successful)

### Background on the *Canadian Standards of Competencies to Practice*

The *Canadian Standards of Competencies to Practice* was adopted by the Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities (CALA) in 2012 as the Pan-Canadian standard for entry into the practice of architecture in Canada. It was developed over a two-year period in consultation with education assessment experts, psychometricians, practising architects and the regulators. The *Standard* was initially created to assess the competencies of foreign architects under the Broadly Experienced Foreign Architects (BEFA) program.,

The architect assessors used in the APEC MRA with Australia and New Zealand have been trained as assessors for the BEFA program. They are senior architects who have undergone a two-week rigorous training program under the direction of the Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB). The training includes a review of the *Canadian Standards of Competencies to Practice*; a demonstration of interview protocols and standard questions; monitoring of an interview; analysis of the assessment rubric and overview of the Code of

Conduct and Conflict of Interest guidelines and the standards of fairness expected in all jurisdictions.

### **Interview Panel**

Once an applicant has submitted his/her resume and documentation showing that he/she meets the criteria set out in the MRA, an interview is scheduled. The documentation required in advance is straightforward and includes an APEC Architect certificate, application form and a resume. To demonstrate competency to practice in Canada, an applicant may bring supporting documentation to assist with explaining differences between his/her home jurisdiction and the Canadian context.

A three-person panel – a Chair, Regional Representative and National Representative, conducts the assessment. This ensures that there is a consistent national interpretation of the process and protocols and that specific jurisdictional regulations are examined. The Regional member is always an architect from the jurisdiction where the applicant is requesting licensure. The panel meets prior to the interview to review the submitted documentation and to discuss focus and line of questioning for the interview. It is understood that the application process, including the interview must observe strict protocols to ensure consistency, fairness and timeliness.

### **Domain Specific Interview**

The interview takes approximately one and one half hours and covers the competencies under code research, construction documents, bidding and contract negotiation, construction phase and professionalism and ethics (refer to APEC Domain Specific Assessment document attached). The panel follows a rubric and standard questions on knowledge required. Optional questions may be used to probe specific competencies. The Chair produces a written report of the interview that is circulated, agreed to and signed by all panel members. If the applicant is successful, this Report and the recommendation for registration/licensure are sent to the appropriate provincial/territorial regulator and to the home jurisdiction. The province/territory will then process an application for licensure/registration following procedures outlined in their respective *Acts*.

## **Competency Areas of the *Canadian Standards of Competencies to Practice* for a Domain Specific Assessment in Canada**

The *Canadian Standards of Practice* has been adopted by the Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities (CALA) as the Pan-Canadian standards of competency for the practice of architecture in Canada. These Standards apply to all architects, be they newly registered/licensed architects in Canada or foreign architects seeking licensure/registration in Canada.

For APEC architects interested in applying for licensure / registration in any Canadian province or territory, there is a domain specific assessment interview as part of the application process. Listed below are the definitions of the competency areas that will be the focus of the interview.

### **Code Research**

Federal, provincial, municipal, and other local regulatory authorities issue regulations and policies governing and affecting aspects of building design, and construction. Building codes, for example, often require complex analysis and design decisions of an architect. Familiarity with such regulations and demonstrated ability to deal with such requirements in design and construction is a necessary part of every architect's skill set.

Typical Activities include the following:

- Search and document codes, regulations, etc. that pertain to the project.
- Understand procedures necessary to obtain relief or variances from particular requirements as they relate to a project.
- Calculate certain variables (i.e. numbers and size of exits, stair dimensions, limiting distance public toilet rooms, ramps) to satisfy code requirements.
- Determine a project's building area as well as maximum floor areas for compliance with the building code or other related ordinances.
- Prepare code report.
- Prepare list of other regulatory instruments/authorities that apply to or are relevant for the project.

## Construction Documents

Documentation for the construction, contract management and handover of an architectural project, will include, but is not limited to, architectural drawings, specifications and schedules, which must conform to relevant codes and industry standards. The drawings describe in graphic and written form all of the essentials of the work to be done; the location, size, arrangement and details of the project, its systems and materials, in compliance with applicable codes. The specifications describe in detail the materials, hardware and equipment indicated in the drawings, and include information on detailed descriptions of the product or material, conditions of installation, and standards to be met. The compliance of documentation that is supplied by consultants, with codes and regulations, is to be confirmed. The consistency of all project documentation (in the selection and disposition of building elements, components, finishes and fittings) with design objectives and budgetary constraints must be demonstrated.

Typical activities include the following:

- Prepare detailed drawings, demonstrating technical skills in drawing accuracy, completeness and clarity.
- Coordinate all documents produced by the architect and the consultants.
- Assemble the finished construction documents.
- Review construction specifications, purpose and format.
- Evaluate data for products to be specified, including information regarding availability, cost, code acceptability and manufacturers' reliability.
- Cross-check products and materials called for in the specifications for consistency with corresponding terminology and descriptions on the working drawings.
- Check drawings prepared by others for pertinence and accuracy of dimensions, notes, abbreviations and indications.
- Check consultants' drawings with architectural drawings and other consultants' drawings for possible conflicts and interference of plumbing lines, ductwork, electrical fixtures, etc.
- Undertake the final project review for compliance with applicable codes, regulations, etc..

## **Bidding and Contract Negotiation**

This process involves establishing and administering bidding procedures, issuing addenda, evaluating proposed alternatives, reviewing the qualifications of bidders, analyzing bids or negotiated proposals, reviewing the effect of cost considerations on budgeted and actual tender costs and reporting results to the owner (including possible recommendations) for the selection of the contractor(s). The construction contract and related documents are the formal conditions that bind the parties together during the construction phase.

Typical Activities include the following:

- Review the bidding/award process stages of previous projects.
- Review and analyze bidding forms, insurance and bonding requirements, lien provisions, supplementary and special conditions.
- Assist in the pre-qualification of bidders, if required.
- Receive, analyze and evaluate bids, including any alternative or unit prices.
- Establish what information and submittals are required prior to issuance of the Letter of Intent.
- Evaluate product considerations in preparing addenda.
- Meet with contractors and material suppliers to approve alternates or equals and issue relevant addenda.
- Prepare and negotiate construction contracts, including the conditions of the contract for construction in order to clarify the roles of the architect, contractor, owner, bonding company and insurer in the administration of the construction phase.
- Review the contract for compatibility with client-architect agreements.

## **Construction - Office and Site**

During the construction phase an architect typically handles the following matters: processing contractors' applications for payment, preparing change orders, reviewing shop drawings and samples and adjudicating disputes. The architect's primary function is to conduct field reviews in order to determine if the contractor's work generally conforms to the requirements of the contract documents.

To evaluate the quality of material and workmanship, the architect must be thoroughly familiar with all of the provisions of the construction contract as well the drawing and specifications.

Typical activities include the following:

- Assemble Building Permit Application documentation for the client.
- Communicate with the Authority Having Jurisdiction to seek resolution of Building Permit issues.
- Process applications for payment and prepare architectural certificates for payment of construction progress payments.
- Review shop drawings, evaluate samples submitted and maintain records of all submittals.
- Evaluate requests for changes, interpret documents and prepare change orders.
- Resolve disputes/conflicts arising from the contract documents.
- Visit the job site and participate in observation of the work in place and material stored, and prepare field reports of such routine field reviews.
- Attend job-site construction meetings and assist in recording and documenting all actions taken and agreed to at such meetings.
- Participate in the substantial performance review and assist in the deficiency list verification.
- Participate in the final occupancy field review with the owner and other involved parties.

## **Professionalism and Professional Practice**

Members of self-governing professions in Canada are granted exclusive rights of title and/or practice in return for commitments to meet professional obligations. These obligations include protection of the public interest first and foremost – above expectation of reward or gain. They also include commitments to maintain one’s level of knowledge and learning throughout one’s career and to act in accordance with prescribed codes of conduct. Every practitioner is expected to know the requirements of being a member of a self-governing profession and to understand the special obligations that attach to their professional status.

Typical activities include the following:

- Understand the Act and Bylaws of the Association
- Attend educational classes as required by the Association
- Attend annual meetings and informational sessions arranged by the Association
- Understand the structure of an office and the requirements of record keeping and financial responsibilities
- Understand the contracts used by architects and the level of architectural services and fee