

Architect	Queensland
ANZSCO Code: 2321-11	June 2009
Labour market rating	Shortage
Comment:	

Occupational demand

An architect is a multi-skilled professional who provides building design, documentation and contract administration services to the general public. Employment opportunities can be found in the broader sector of architectural services which includes commercial development companies, private and self-owned firms or partnerships, government departments and statutory bodies. Demand for this profession is dependent on the volume of investment and activity in the building and construction industries. Australian Bureau of Statistics data suggest that the strength of building activity in Queensland continues to be strong with the volume of building work done growing by a solid 10 per cent over the year to December 2008. The strength of Queensland's building activity generated steady demand for professional architectural services.

Occupational supply

Formal entry to this profession requires the completion of a Bachelor of Design in Architecture and a Master of Architecture. To practice in Queensland, it is a mandatory requirement that architects be registered and have passed eligibility requirements with the Board of Architects of Queensland. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations data indicate that commencements in bachelor courses for this profession have grown gradually with 271 students enrolling in 2007, compared with 214 in 2003. Completions have increased accordingly, with 142 students completing their studies in 2007 compared with 115 in 2003. Arrivals and departures data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship indicate overseas migration contributed 33 self-identified architects and landscape architects to Queensland in 2007-08.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

This year, 70 per cent of vacancies for architects were filled within six weeks of advertising and although the profession continues to be rated as 'in shortage' this year's figure was a significant improvement on the 29 per cent filled rate recorded in 2008. Demand was greatest for professionals with 10 years or more experience or for architects with specific software and industry experience with employers finding only 12 per cent of the applicants as suitable. The majority of applicants were considered unsuitable because they did not have the required length of experience needed for the position or the specific software or industry related skills for the advertised role. Most respondents agreed that while private sector building may have moderated over the last eight months, public sector investment and activity has continued to strengthen and demand for highly skilled and specialist architects has remained unchanged. Contacts stated that there has been a general shift in the architectural labour market with workers seeking permanent and secure employment rather than entering into contractual agreements. Employers reported receiving a good response from overseas applicants but many suggested these applicants typically required additional education and training or that the length of the immigration process did not meet the immediate needs of their businesses.

Labour market outlook

April 2009 data from the ABS show that although the trend value of building approvals in Queensland fell monthly over the first half of 2008-09, approvals from February 2009 have been on an upward trend. Combined with private sector respondents reporting a slight recovery in forward orders and construction activity in June, this may be an indication that demand for this occupation will continue to hold steady. If construction activity continues at this pace, demand for architects is likely to respond accordingly. In the meantime, student numbers and supply through overseas migration are not meeting demand and the Queensland labour market for suitably skilled and qualified architects is in shortage. This outlook is not expected to change over 2009-10.