

Assessment Scheme 2026



Victoria

IPWEA

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENGINEERING AUSTRALASIA

Institute of Public Works Engineering
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1.0 Introduction

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) is the peak association for the professionals who deliver public works engineering services to communities in Australia and New Zealand. IPWEA provides services to its members and advocacy on their behalf.

IPWEA Victoria represents members throughout the state and offers a range of services – including continuing professional development opportunities – to civil engineers supporting the public works sector. First established as the *Institute of Municipal Engineers* in 1959 and incorporated as the *Local Government Engineers' Association of Victoria* in 1963, IPWEA Victoria has a proud tradition of service to civil engineers engaged with the development and delivery of public infrastructure. The organisation joined the IPWEA group in 2007.

This Assessment Scheme supports the transition of civil engineers servicing the public sector to a regulated environment. The Scheme responds to s34 of the *Professional Engineers Registration Act 2019* in that it:

1. adequately provides for the assessment of qualifications and competencies of engineers in an identifiable area of engineering i.e. structural, civil, mechanical, electrical and fire safety engineering
2. is consistent with national and international standards for the recognition of professional engineers
3. includes procedures for the assessment of applicants for registration that are conducted in an independent and professional manner
4. includes adequate CPD requirements for professional engineers and an effective audit program to ensure registration requirements are met, and
5. has any fees for the assessment of qualifications and competencies that are reasonable having regard to the scope of the services being offered.

2.0 Assessment Scheme

IPWEA Victoria will only solicit, accept and assess applications from applicants seeking registration in the civil area of engineering. IPWEA Victoria will provide assessment services to applicants from the local and state public works sector seeking registration in the area of civil engineering including private consultants and contractors.

IPWEA Victoria will assess applicants with qualifications and experience in a particular area of focus within the area of civil engineering (e.g. structural, geotechnical, hydrology or environmental engineering) however such applicants will be required to demonstrate an understanding of the breadth of the civil engineering discipline which “...involves the research, design, construction, and maintenance of the natural and built environment. As a guide, this may include:

- *structures (including those made from steel, concrete or timber), for example, roads, railways, bridges, airports, pipelines, dams, canals, harbours, dockyards, towers and buildings*
- *analysing the likely behaviour of soil and rock when placed under pressure and designing above and below ground natural or built structures or foundations*
- *environmental impacts, for example, transport, urban development and municipal services, resource protection of building and construction of other infrastructure and service industries, and*
- *hydraulic supply and waste systems.”**

*see **Guidelines on areas of engineering**; 5 February 2021 [www.consumer.vic.gov.au/engineers]

Applicants with qualifications and/or experience in a particular area/s of focus within civil engineering will also be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the Code of Conduct for Professional Engineers (esp. **Obligation 6: Act in area of professional competence**).

To ensure applicants have the breadth of skills considered necessary for registration in the area of civil engineering, IPWEA Victoria’s assessors will be required to be a registered professional engineer (or eligible for registration) with 15+ years civil engineering experience. They will verify an applicant’s competency by reviewing their Curriculum Vitae, interviewing the applicant and validating their experience with two referees.

To be eligible for registration, an applicant must meet the qualifications and experience requirements in either sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2, or in section 2.1.3 below:

2.1 Assessment of qualifications and experience

2.1.1 Qualifications

An applicant applying for registration must have successfully completed either—

- (a) An under-graduate Bachelor of Engineering degree or post-graduate Master of Engineering degree in civil engineering or a related area of engineering accredited by a signatory to the Washington Accord 1989, as amended from time to time.

Explanatory notes

- *These qualifications comprise all qualifications accredited at the level of ‘Professional Engineer Washington Accord’ including those that are no longer offered at that level.*
- *For Australia, these qualifications are listed in the ‘Accredited Engineering Program Directory’ at <https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/about-us/accreditation>*



→ Overseas qualifications accredited under the Washington Accord are listed on Washington Accord signatory websites, which can be accessed from <https://www.ieagrements.org/accords/washington/signatories/>

OR

(b) An Australian or overseas non-Washington Accord academic qualification in civil engineering or a related area of engineering that has been assessed as substantially equivalent to an accredited Washington Accord under-graduate Bachelor of Engineering degree or a post-graduate Master of Engineering degree by:

- the signatory to the Washington Accord 1989, as amended from time to time, for the country where the qualification was obtained, or
- an assessing authority listed in the Commonwealth –
 - Migration (LIN 19/051: *Specification of Occupations and Assessing Authorities*) Instrument 2019
 - Migration (LIN 19/260: *Assessing Authorities for Subclass 494 Visas*) Instrument 2019, or
 - Migration (LIN 19/049: *Specification of Occupations and Assessing Authorities—Subclass 186 Visa*) Instrument 2019

where the applicant is applying for a visa under the Australian Government Skilled Migration Program.

An applicant seeking a qualification equivalency assessment of a non-Washington Accord qualification will be advised to approach a Washington Accord signatory or assessing authority, as appropriate, for that assessment and to provide certification of same.

Explanatory notes

- A list of signatories to the Washington Accord and links to their websites is available at <https://www.ieagrements.org/accords/washington/signatories/>
- Engineers Australia is the migration assessing authority for the areas of structural, civil, electrical, mechanical and fire safety engineering. A list of the skilled occupations and the assessing authorities is available at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia/skill-occupation-list>
- IPWEA Victoria requires a person applying for assessment of academic qualification equivalency to pay all fees associated with the assessment by the assessing authority.

AND**2.1.2 Experience**

An applicant applying for registration must have —

- (a) Gained five years of engineering experience in civil engineering or a related area of engineering, of which at least four years must be post-graduate experience, and for applicants applying for registration as a ‘practising’ professional engineer, the experience was gained in the last 10 years.

IPWEA Victoria will accept a shorter period of experience provided the applicant:

- meets the competency requirements listed in sections 2.1.2(b) as relevant, and
- is assessed as competent to provide professional engineering services without direct supervision.

A minimum of three years post-graduate experience within the last 10 years will be accepted by IPWEA Victoria if the applicant demonstrates competence as a result of accelerated learning (e.g. graduate program participation, mentoring by a registered professional engineer or endorsement by two referees) to the satisfaction of the assessor.

IPWEA Victoria will use the following methods to assess an applicant's experience:

- evidence reports from work experience
- interviews

AND

(b) Demonstrated competency in the following five elements of competence from the 'Australian Engineering Competency Standards Stage 2: Experienced Professional Engineer' in a relevant area/s of engineering:

- Element 1 – Deal with ethical issues
- Element 2 – Practice competently
- Element 4 – Develop safe and sustainable solutions
- Element 6 – Identify, assess and manage risks, and
- Element 13 – Engineering knowledge – according to their area of practice including a knowledge of standards and practices.

Explanatory notes

- *Experience may be gained working full time or part time.*
- *The Stage 2 Competency Standards dated 12 June 2012 as determined by the Australian signatory to the Washington Accord are published at https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/content-files/2016-12/competency_standards_june.pdf*

IPWEA Victoria will use the following methods to assess an applicant's competency:

- evidence reports from work experience
- interviews

OR

2.1.3 Competencies

As an alternative to the qualification and experience requirements specified in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 above, that an applicant has been certified by a signatory to the Washington Accord 1989, or a member of the International Engineering Alliance competency agreements for professional engineers – International Professional Engineers Agreement and APEC Agreement – as amended from time to time, as having demonstrated substantial equivalence with the competencies and outcomes of:

- (a) a Washington Accord undergraduate Bachelor of Engineering degree or postgraduate Master of Engineering degree, **and**
- (b) the experience requirement set out in section 2.1.2 above.

IPWEA Victoria is not a signatory to the Washington Accord and will refer an applicant seeking a competency assessment to Engineers Australia for that assessment.

Explanatory notes

- A list of signatories to the Washington Accord and members of International Engineering Alliance competency agreements and links to their websites is available at:
- <https://www.ieagreements.org/accords/washington/signatories/>
 - <https://www.ieagreements.org/agreements/ipea/>, and
 - <https://www.ieagreements.org/agreements/apec/>

2.1.4 Membership schemes and national engineering registers

IPWEA Victoria does not operate a membership scheme that has entry requirements equal to or higher than the qualification and experience or competency requirements set out in sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3. Where an applicant cites membership of a scheme operated by an assessment entity that purports to have entry requirements equal to or higher than the prescribed qualification and experience or competency requirements (e.g. Engineers Australia or Professionals Australia), IPWEA Victoria will refer them to the assessment entity operating that scheme.

In this circumstance IPWEA Victoria will no longer be involved in the assessment.

2.1.5 Mutual recognition

IPWEA Victoria will not assess a person who is registered under a mandatory statutory registration scheme for professional engineers in another Australian state or territory or New Zealand but instead refer that person to Consumer Affairs Victoria for advice on mutual recognition.

2.1.6 Report on assessment of qualifications and experience

IPWEA Victoria will report the outcome of the assessment of a person's qualifications and experience on the approved form.

2.1.7 Applicants for assessment of qualifications and experience

IPWEA Victoria will:

- accept applications for assessment from both members and non-members, and
- require members and non-members to comply with the qualification, experience and competency requirements of its approved assessment scheme.

2.1.8 Publication of qualification and experience requirements

IPWEA Victoria will:

- publish the qualification and experience requirements in an approved assessment scheme on its website, and
- on request, give a copy of the qualification and experience requirements in an approved assessment scheme to a person applying for assessment.

2.2 Assessments are independent and professional

2.2.1 Professional assessments

IPWEA Victoria assessors must:

- be a registered professional engineer or meet the qualification and experience requirements for registration and;
- be a Fellow member of the IPWEA or have a minimum of fifteen (15) years civil engineering experience

Assessors will be trained and accredited by IPWEA Victoria and will be required, as a minimum, to:

- demonstrate compliance with the above requirements, and
- certify they have read and understood IPWEA Victoria's Assessment Scheme, and
- satisfactorily perform a mock assessment/s, or
- be supervised to conduct their first assessment, or
- conduct their first assessment/s jointly with an experienced assessor, and
- access ongoing assessor training, coaching and mentoring as required

To ensure the qualifications and experience of applicants are assessed in a professional manner, IPWEA Victoria will adopt the criteria and procedures listed in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Assessment scheme criteria and procedures for professional assessments

Areas of evidence	Person applying for assessment	Assessor conducting an assessment
Evidence of qualifications	IPWEA Victoria will require a person applying for assessment to provide a digital copy of the original document as evidence of their qualifications.	IPWEA Victoria will require an assessor to review the document and confirm its status as a Washington Accord-accredited qualification.
Evidence of practical experience	IPWEA Victoria will require a person applying for assessment to provide: • a curriculum vitae or career record evidencing their experience in civil engineering or in a related area, and • the name and contact details of two referees who can confirm the experience claimed including, where possible, a person who managed/supervised the applicant.	IPWEA Victoria's assessors will verify an applicant's experience by: • reviewing their curriculum vitae • validating the nature and extent of the experience claimed with two referees – including at least one manager/supervisor – during a 20-30 minute phone/video interview • gauging an applicant's response to questions during a 45-60 minute face-to-face or video interview
Evidence of supporting competence	IPWEA Victoria will require a person applying for assessment to provide: • a statement to demonstrate they have the required Stage 2 elements of competency, and • the name and contact details of two referees who can confirm they have the required Stage 2 elements of competency.	IPWEA Victoria will require an assessor to: • review the applicant's statement and verify that they have the required Stage 2 elements of competency with two referees

Table 1: Assessment scheme criteria and procedures for professional assessments

Evidence of ability to carry out professional engineering services without supervision	IPWEA Victoria will require a person applying for assessment to provide two written references attesting to their ability to carry out and take full professional responsibility for professional engineering services without supervision within the area of engineering for which they are being assessed.	IPWEA Victoria will require an assessor to verify the references provided by an applicant by contacting both referees.
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IPWEA Victoria will require an assessor to interview a person applying for assessment. If the interview is in person, the assessor must verify the identity of the person being interviewed using photographic identification (e.g. driver's licence, passport). If the interview is conducted by video conference, the assessor must, in an appropriate way, verify the identity of the person being interviewed and confirm that they are not being assisted with the interview by another person.

2.2.2 Independent assessments

To ensure the independence of assessments, IPWEA Victoria will require:

- an assessor to make a written declaration that in relation to both the person applying for assessment and the assessment stating that:
 - they have no actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest
 - they have no bias, and
 - there are no facts or circumstances that might give rise to a reasonable apprehension that they have a bias, and
- that an assessor who declares an actual, perceived, or a potential conflict of interest in an assessment will not be appointed to conduct that assessment.

IPWEA Victoria will allow a person who is aggrieved by the outcome of an assessment to apply for a review of the assessment, and for a fee to be charged for the review that will be refunded if the review finds in favour of that person.

In the event of an applicant being aggrieved with the outcome of an assessment the following process will apply:

1. The applicant will be requested to provide written notice of their grievance and their proposed resolution.
2. The notice will be reviewed by the IPWEA Victoria CEO (CEO) and referred to the assessor for review with a written response required within 7 days.
3. The CEO will communicate to the applicant that:
 - a. The outcome of the assessment stands with reasons provided (e.g. perceived competency gaps in a particular area) or
 - b. A second assessment will be undertaken by another assessor at no charge.

In the event of an applicant being aggrieved with the outcome of a second assessment the following process will apply:

1. The parties to the dispute (the applicant, the CEO and the second assessor) will meet to discuss the matter and, if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days
2. If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at the meeting, or if a party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator with the cost of the mediation agreed to be shared equally by the parties
3. The mediator must be a person appointed by Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators Australia
4. The parties to the dispute must, in good faith, attempt to settle the dispute by mediation.
5. The mediator, in conducting the mediation, must:
 - a. give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard; and
 - b. allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
 - c. ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.
6. The mediator must not determine the dispute.
7. If the mediation process does not result in the dispute being resolved, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute at law.

2.3 Continuing professional development requirements

To be eligible to renew a registration under the PER Act a professional engineer must meet the CPD requirements of section 2.3.1 below:

2.3.1 CPD requirements

2.3.1.1 A professional engineer registered as ‘practising’ during the last three years

- If the applicant worked full-time as a registered practising professional engineer – 150 hours of structured CPD in the last three years irrespective of the area/s in which they are registered.
- If the applicant worked part-time as a registered practising professional engineer or took a career break – 90 hours of structured CPD in the last three years irrespective of the area/s in which they are registered.

A career break is a period of a minimum of three months during the last three years during which a person does not work as a professional engineer due, for example, to illness, travel, parental or carers leave, sporting commitments, cultural or ceremonial commitments, broadening knowledge and skill or unemployment.

2.3.1.2 A professional engineer registered as ‘non-practising’ during the last three years

- 90 hours of structured CPD in the last three years.

2.3.1.3 A professional engineer who changed their registration between ‘practising’ and ‘non-practising’ during the last three years

- If an applicant worked full-time as a practising professional engineer before transferring their registration to non-practising or vice versa – pro-rata based on the time working as a registered practising professional engineer and the time registered as a non-practising professional engineer.

2.3.1.4 Exemptions from CPD

A person who is registered under a mandatory statutory registration scheme for professional engineers in another Australian state or territory or New Zealand that requires them to complete an equivalent amount of CPD is not required to complete CPD to renew their registration under the PER Act.

2.3.1.5 CPD areas and activities

The requirements for the areas of CPD and the types of CPD activities are set out in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: CPD areas and activities

Areas of CPD training	- At least 33 per cent of CPD hours must relate to technical matters relevant to the area/s of engineering in which the applicant is registered. - The remaining CPD should be in related areas, for example, project management, ethics and law, risk management, communication, health and safety programs, occupational health and safety training and mentoring junior engineers.
Types of CPD activity	(i) Formal post-graduate study or tertiary course units whether or not undertaken for award purposes – no limit. (ii) Short courses, workshops, webinars, seminars and discussion groups, conferences, technical inspections and meetings – no limit. (iii) Learning activities in the workplace that extend competence in the regulated or a related area/s of engineering – maximum 75 hours. (iv) Research which extends knowledge and skills – maximum 57 hours. (v) Private study (engineering journals and magazines) which extend knowledge and skills – maximum 18 hours. (vi) Service to the engineering profession (volunteer work, mentoring) – maximum 50 hours. (vii) Publishing of articles in technical forums and preparation and presentation of papers for courses, conferences, seminars, etc - maximum 45 hours per paper or 75 hours per paper for papers subject to critical peer review before publication. (viii) Professional engineers employed in tertiary teaching or academic research and registered as 'practising' – minimum of 40 hours of industry involvement in any three-year period.

2.3.2 Applicants for assessment of CPD

IPWEA Victoria will not be responsible for CPD for professional engineers who have not attained membership of its organisation but will make CPD training available to both members and non-members.

2.3.3 Publication of CPD requirements

IPWEA Victoria will:

- publish the above CPD requirements on its website, and
- on request, give a copy of the above CPD requirements to a person wishing to undertake CPD with IPWEA Victoria in order to meet the requirements to renew their registration.

2.3.4 Annual CPD audit program

IPWEA Victoria will establish an effective audit program to ensure the integrity of registration renewals from 1 July 2024. The audit program will only apply to professional engineers who have attained membership of an assessment entity that administers an approved assessment scheme (i.e. membership of IPWEA) and will include the information set out in **Table 3** below:

Table 3: CPD audit program requirements

Number of audits	The CPD records of all members who are registered with the assessment entity for the purposes of CPD will be audited within a seven-year period (or 15 per cent a year). The BLA will use information obtained through the registration renewal process to select professional engineers for a CPD audit and advise an assessment entity of the names of the professional engineers they are to audit.
Nature of audits	The audit will be undertaken against the CPD requirements of IPWEA Victoria's assessment scheme and not the criteria for any other schemes it administers.
Auditor training	IPWEA Victoria auditors must: • be a registered professional engineer or meet the qualification and experience requirements for registration, and; • be a Fellow member of the IPWEA or have a minimum of fifteen (15) years civil engineering experience Auditors will be trained and accredited by IPWEA Victoria and will be required, as a minimum, to: • demonstrate compliance with the above requirements, and • certify they have read and understood the CPD requirements of IPWEA Victoria's Assessment Scheme, and • satisfactorily perform a mock audit/s, or • be supervised to conduct their first audit, or • conduct their first audit/s jointly with an experienced assessor, and • access ongoing auditor training, coaching and mentoring as required
Auditor conflict of interest	IPWEA Victoria will require an auditor to make the same conflict of interest declaration as an assessor, see section 2.2.2 above, with respect to both the person being audited and conducting an audit, and where a conflict of interest is declared, not be appointed to conduct the audit.
Review of audit outcome	IPWEA Victoria will: • allow a person who is aggrieved by an audit outcome to apply for a review of the audit (refer 2.2.2 for IPWEA Victoria grievance process) • allow a fee to be charged for the review that will be refunded if the review finds in favour of that person, and • set out the action that will be taken if a review of an audit or a complaint about an auditor identifies an issue that requires training, monitoring or termination of their role as auditor.
Reporting to the BLA	IPWEA Victoria will notify the BLA in writing: • within three months after 30 June each year of the results of its audit program for the previous financial year including the – · number of audits that were conducted · audit selection criteria and process, and · results of the audits conducted • within seven days if a person selected for an audit refuses to participate in the audit for a period of more than 30 days after being requested to do so, and • within seven days if a review of an audit identifies an error in an audit.

2.4 Fees for assessments

IPWEA Victoria will undertake assessments for the following fees:

1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027 (including qualification, experience & competencies review and advice)

- IPWEA members: \$550 (including GST)
- Non-members: \$880 (including GST)

Fees will be published on our website and increased annually by 5% from 1 July 2027.

An applicant seeking a qualification equivalency assessment of a non-Washington Accord accredited qualification will be advised to approach a Washington Accord signatory.
