

# Certification Scheme for Ecological Consultants in NSW

## INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The **OBJECTIVES** of this Certification Scheme are:

- 1. To establish a high standard of practicing ecological assessment in NSW;**
- 2. To provide planning authorities and communities with more confidence in ecological assessments prepared by Certified Practising Ecological Consultants;**
- 3. To facilitate professional recognition for those involved in ecological assessment; and**
- 4. To promote the development of a viable ecological survey and assessment industry.**

A Certified Practising Ecological Consultant (CPEC) will be recognised by the industry, government authorities and the community as competent to undertake ecological assessment. A CPEC will be able to display the appropriate logo and certificate to demonstrate their accreditation.

A CPEC will:

- act in a responsible and professional manner, extending courtesy to clients, colleagues, public authorities and legal practitioners;
- provide unbiased and objective advice;
- have proper regard to confidentiality agreements, and the sensitivity of client information;
- understand and abide by contracts;
- conduct work in a safe manner, and be compliant with work safety laws;
- be capable of providing oral and written advice that is defensible at all levels; and
- report correctly, truthfully, clearly and so far as is possible in the circumstances, fully and convey their findings objectively.

Two intake periods will be established each year. Intake periods will be advertised on the ECA website. Applications for accreditation as a CPEC will be advertised on the ECA web site. Applications must be lodged with the Administration Assistant, Ecological Consultants Association of NSW two weeks prior to the closure of each intake.

There are four stages in the application and certification process that must be undertaken.

1. Provision of a completed and signed Application Form<sup>1</sup>, current *Curriculum Vitae*, four recommendations, an example of applicant's work, and a written statement summarising career and interests.
2. A possible interview with a panel.
3. Providing all seven criteria as described below are met by the applicant, then public notification of intention to consider applicant as a CPEC will ensue followed by an appraisal period. If successful<sup>2</sup>, the applicant will sign an agreement to undertake professional development and maintain professional indemnity insurance. A certificate and logo will be issued.
4. Certification is for two years. At the end of this period the CPEC will be required to present evidence of on-going professional development in the previous two years to renew certification.

An application fee of \$350 will be charged for the first stage (presentation of application form), second stage (eligibility confirmed) \$300 and for the two-yearly assessment of on-going professional development leading to a renewal of certification \$300.

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<sup>1</sup> An Application Form will be provided that requests personal information and contact details and a list of requirements.

<sup>2</sup> Unsuccessful applicants will be advised in writing. They will be provided with a summary of the areas in which they failed to meet the certification criteria. As well, options for meeting the relevant criteria may be suggested, including the name of potential mentors who can be contacted by the applicant for assistance in the process. Fees for certification will not be refunded if an application is not successful.

**Table 1: CPEC Application Process**

| <b>STAGE 1: SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION</b>  |  |
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| <b>CPEC Application Criteria</b>   | <b>Documentation Required</b>  |
| 1. Sign the ECA (NSW) Code of Business Practice, Professional Conduct and Ethics.  | Listed as practising member of the ECA.  |
| 2. Have at least five years of consulting experience in a relevant ecological field.   | Provide a full <i>Curriculum Vitae</i> showing evidence of 5 years of consulting experience within a 10 year period leading up to the date of application.   |
| 3. Demonstrate your knowledge of and ability to undertake ecological assessments.  | Provide an example of the applicant's work, either as a report (produced within the last 5 years) or published peer-reviewed document (published within the last 10 years). Relevant sections of any report may be deleted to ensure confidentiality of the client. An estimate of the percent contribution by the applicant to the writing of the report or publication must be provided. Accreditation will depend on the applicant delivering work that is of a quality that is acceptable to the authorities responsible for assessment of their work/reports.<br><br>With the application for CPEC examples should be provided which demonstrate a commitment to professional development and maintaining an appropriate understanding of current sound ecological assessment methodologies (see Information Sheet 1: Ongoing Professional Development for examples of acceptable activities). Please note accrual of points only applies with biannual application for recertification |
| 4. Be respected by peers within the ecological consulting industry.  | Provide two references from full members of the ECA and two from within the applicant's area(s) of particular interest that provide verification of the applicant's expertise (these shall not include the employer of the applicant or an employee of the applicant). Four references in total that outline the ways in which the applicant is suitably qualified and able to meet the responsibilities of a CPEC.  |
| 5. Have good written and oral communication skills, and have a good understanding of ecological processes within Australia, particularly NSW.  | Provide a written statement of 500 words summarising career and relevant interests and an example of the applicant's work (see Point 3). Attendance at a meeting with the review panel maybe requested on a case by case basis.  |
| 6. Hold appropriate licences and approvals to undertake work in fields listed as areas of professional expertise and have Professional Indemnity Insurance applicable to their area of consulting. | Provision of copies of appropriate licences and approvals, and Certificate of Currency for insurance.  |
| 7. Agree to the terms of the 'Certification Scheme for Ecological Consultants in NSW', including all disciplinary procedures designed to uphold the integrity of the profession.                   | Completed and signed application form  |
| 8. Payment of the application fee.   | Receipt of payment   |

| <b>STAGE TWO: ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION BY THE PANEL</b>  |   |
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| <b>Step</b>   | <b>Action</b>   |
| The applicant will be assessed by a panel on written and oral communication skills, and an understanding of ecological processes within Australia, particularly NSW. The assessment will be based on the information provided above and an interview may be required. | <p>A panel comprising the President and one representative from the ECANSW, one representative from OEH, and two independent members.</p> <p>If considered necessary, an independent expert in a field not familiar to the panel members will be consulted to ensure a correct assessment of the applicant's work is undertaken.</p> <p>If considered necessary, an interview with the applicant may be request by the committee.</p> |
| <b>STAGE THREE: PUBLIC NOTIFICATION</b>   |   |
| <b>Step</b>   | <b>Action</b>   |
| Public appraisal of application   | Following determination of eligibility by the panel public notification of intention to accept this person as a CPEC will be shown on the ECA website, with public appraisal period of 30 days.   |
| Final decision by panel   | After the 30 day advertising period, the CPEC Accreditation Panel shall review all public submissions (if any) and deem the application to be "unsuccessful" or "successful".   |
| <b>STAGE FOUR: FINALISATION OF CERTIFICATION</b>  |   |
| <b>Step</b>   | <b>Action</b>   |
| Granting of certification   | A certificate and relevant logo will be issued to the successful CPEC and their name and details will be added to a specific listing on the ECA website on payment of the final accreditation fee.  |
| <b>STAGE FIVE: RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION</b>   |   |
| <b>Step</b>   | <b>Action</b>   |
| On-going Professional Development   | <p>At the end of each two years, a CPEC will seek renewal by submitting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. an On-going Professional Development log that provides evidence of ongoing professional development, such as receipts, certificates; and</li> <li>II. evidence of on-going professional indemnity insurance and relevant licences and approvals.</li> <li>III. Payment of CPEC renewal fee.</li> </ol>         |

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|  | A minimum of 50 professional development points will need to be accumulated over a two year period (details are given in Information Sheet 1). |
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Applications Forms and Information Sheets are available for download on the ECA web site ([www.ecansw.org.au](http://www.ecansw.org.au)).

**Application Lodgement and Fees**

| Stage required | Nature of Fees & Charges      | Amount plus GST |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1              | CPEC Application Fee          | \$350.00        |
| 4              | CPEC Accreditation Fee        | \$300.00        |
| 5              | Renewal fee (every two years) | \$300.00        |

**Applications are to be lodged with:**

Administration Assistant,  
 Ecological Consultants Association of NSW,  
 415 Parishes Rd, Hilldale, NSW 2420.  
[admin@ecansw.org.au](mailto:admin@ecansw.org.au)

**Payment of fees**

- Direct Deposit

Account Name: ECA of NSW, CPEC  
 Bank: Westpac  
 Branch: New Lambton NSW  
 BSB: 032-036  
 Account No: 324150

Please ensure your name is in the description and that you email the administration assistant at [admin@ecansw.org.au](mailto:admin@ecansw.org.au) and the treasurer at [treasurer@ecansw.org.au](mailto:treasurer@ecansw.org.au) following a successful internet deposit to confirm payment.

- Credit Card

Visit <http://www.ecansw.org.au/pay-an-eca-invoice/>

*PLEASE NOTE: Fees for certification will not be refunded if an application is not successful.*