

Appendix A

Women's involvement in the Australian architecture profession: building a clearer and more inclusive picture

**Draft for discussion, submitted to the project Steering Committee
and the National Council of the Australian Institute of Architects**

***Equity and diversity in the Australian architecture profession:
women, work and leadership***
Australian Research Council linkage project (2011–2014)

September 2013



: women, equity, architecture.

Credits and Acknowledgements

The research project 'Equity and diversity in the Australian architecture profession: women, work and leadership' (2011–2014) is funded by the Australian Research Council through the Linkage Projects scheme.

The project has five industry partners: The Australian Institute of Architects; Architecture Media; BVN Architecture; Bates Smart; and PTW Architects. The research team comprises: Naomi Stead (UQ); Julie Willis (UMelb); Sandra Kaji-O'Grady (UQ); Gillian Whitehouse (UQ); Karen Burns (UMelb); Amanda Roan (UQ); and Justine Clark (UMelb). Gill Matthewson (UQ) is undertaking PhD study within the project.

The website *Parlour: women, equity, architecture* (<http://www.archiparlour.org/>) has been developed as part of the larger research project, and is edited by Justine Clark with assistance from the other research team members. The website publishes numerous outcomes and discussion papers from the research project, alongside reflections submitted by members of the architecture profession. The project has convened a number of public events and forums, notably *Transform: Altering the Future of Architecture*, held in Melbourne in May 2013. One of the main policy outcomes of the project is a series of *Parlour Guides to Equitable Practice*.

The project integrates other research elements including a literature review and survey of previous scholarly work in the field; two major industry surveys 'Where do all the women go?' and '...and what about the men?', along with associated reports and analysis; ethnographic field work within the three case study architecture practices; visual sociology research in the three case study practices; a scan of gender equity policies and measures in comparable international institutes of architecture, plus institutional bodies in other comparable professions in Australia; a scan and summary of past research commissioned by the Australian Institute of Architects on issues of gender equity and diversity; an analysis of demographic data on Australian architects drawn from the 2011 Census; a consultation and report on priorities, perceptions and existing practices around equity policy in the architecture profession; and a mapping of the involvement of women in the Australian architecture profession – which is represented in this report.

This report was prepared by Gill Matthewson, with assistance from Kirsty Volz, Naomi Stead, and other members of the research team. Parts of the report were previously published on the *Parlour* website in January and February of 2013.

Table of Contents

Credits and Acknowledgements	2
1. Introduction	4
2. Women in Architectural Education.....	4
2.1 Gender balance in student attrition rates	4
2.2 Gender balance amongst graduates	5
2.3 Gender balance amongst teaching staff	6
3. Women in the Australian architectural workplace	9
3.1 Women's participation in architecture as measured by registration	9
3.1.1 <i>A comparison with registered architects data from the UK</i>	10
3.1.2 <i>Tracking the proportion of architects new to the register</i>	12
3.2 Women's participation in architecture as measured by Census data	13
3.3 Women's participation in architecture as measured by membership of the Australian Institute of Architects	16

1. Introduction

This report seeks to build a more rich and detailed picture of women's involvement in the Australian architecture profession that has previously been available to researchers, architects, or policy-makers. It does so by verifying, expanding, and clarifying existing (often incomplete) data, and seeking to triangulate different sets of data to verify themes and patterns. So what is the situation of women in architecture in Australia today?

It is difficult to create a complete or clear picture of the different representation and experience of women and men in architecture in Australia in numeric terms. Whilst there is reasonably clear, accurate data on the proportion of women and men graduating from architectural Schools since 1999 (and patchy data prior to that date), the actual number employed in the architecture profession is not tracked by any agency. This report represents an attempt to come closer to mapping the distribution of men and women across the profession, but further research is required, and further data gathering in future is imperative if a true picture of the demographic profile of the profession is to be understood.

2. Women in Architectural Education

There are 18 Architecture Schools in Australia.¹ In 2011 there were 9222 students in total across the two degrees studying architecture across Australia.

- 42% of them were women.
- 44% of the intake into Year One of the first degree were women.

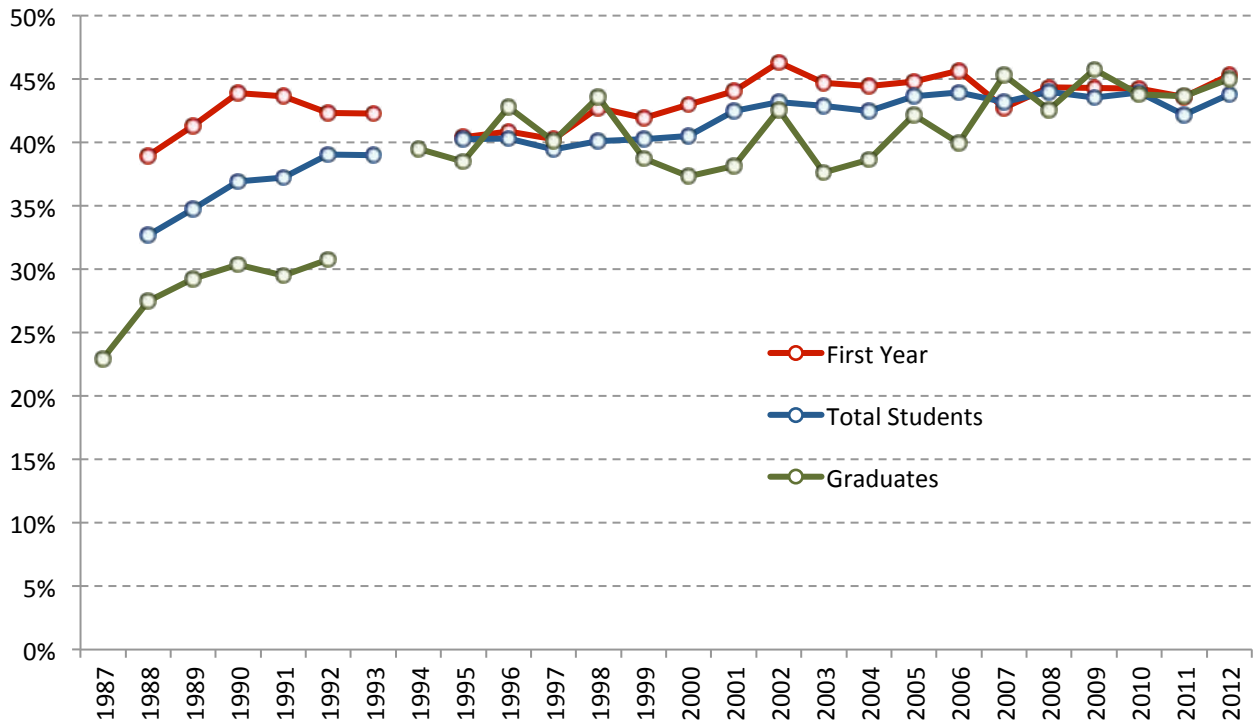
2.1 Gender balance in student attrition rates

Last century (particularly in the seventies and eighties) there was a considerable attrition of women in the Schools.² That is the proportion of women entering the Schools was much higher than the graduation rate. Architecture usually has a reasonably high attrition rate for all students, but it seemed to affect women much more than men. However, that attrition imbalance has shifted markedly and has increasingly improved over the years we have data for. The chart below shows the coming together of the proportion of women in the first year intake, in the total number of all architecture students, and in graduates over the last five years (aberration in the intakes for 2002 and 2004 notwithstanding).³

¹ Statistics extracted by Carol Capp, National Education Co-ordinator, AIA, from Australian Institute of Architects, "Architecture Schools of Australasia" 2000 to 2011 editions, November 2011. Supplemented by data from the 2012 edition and 1987 to 1999 editions supplied by the AIA. Note: data pre-2000 is less reliable than post 2000 as reporting protocols differed between Schools. We have tried to cross-check this data by requesting information from the graduate offices of individual universities. We have not received enough data to make a more definitive chart, but the general trend of rise and levelling off has been confirmed.

² The data for this observation is difficult to obtain for Australia but it has been documented for other English speaking countries. See Gill Matthewson 'Take it to the Limit: Women and the Architectural Profession,' in Harriet Edquist & Hélène Frichot (eds) *Limits*, Melbourne, Australia: Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand, 2004, pp 319-325; and Errol John Haarhoff, *Practice and Gender in Architecture: A survey of New Zealand Architecture Graduates 1987-2008*, Auckland: University of Auckland, 2010.

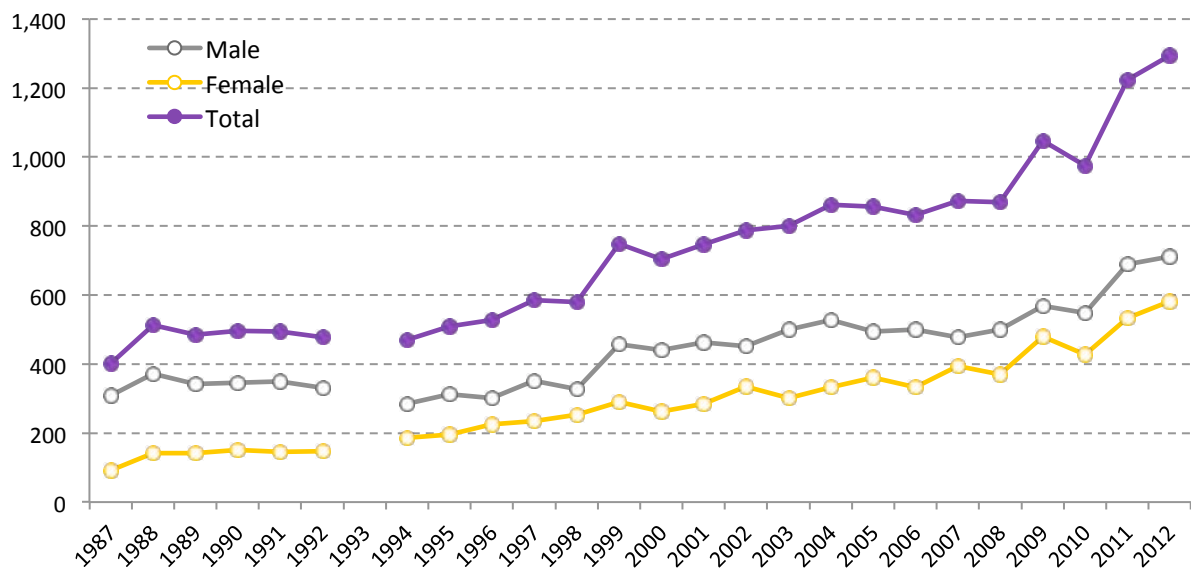
³ Data from the ASA books and only as accurate as the Schools provide to the ASA.



Proportion of women at different levels in all Schools of Architecture, 1987-2010

It should be noted that individual schools have quite different patterns to the country-wide pattern. But taken overall the trend is of increasingly equitable attrition.

2.2 Gender balance amongst graduates

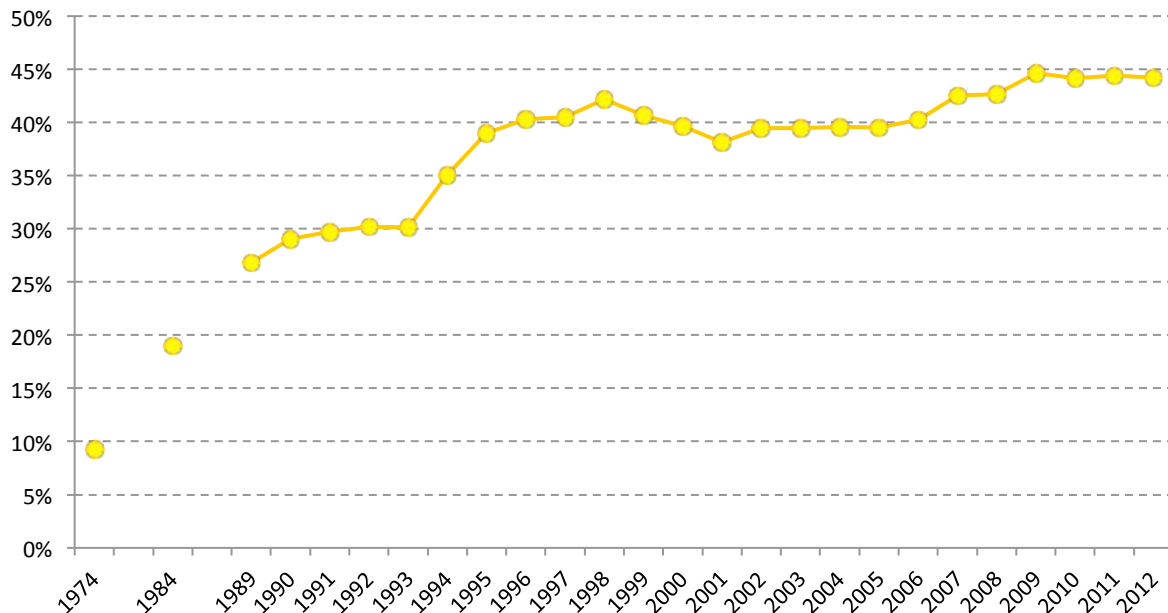


Numbers of Graduates from all Schools of Architecture, 1987-2012

There are two degrees for architecture. Graduating from the second degree at the end of 2010 were 975 students, 427 of whom (44%) were women. This proportion is consistent with the previous five years.

The proportion of women graduating from Architecture Schools increased rapidly from the mid-eighties to the mid-nineties. It then levelled off.

- Women averaged 41% of all graduates from 2000-2010.
- Women averaged 40% of all graduates from 1990-1999.



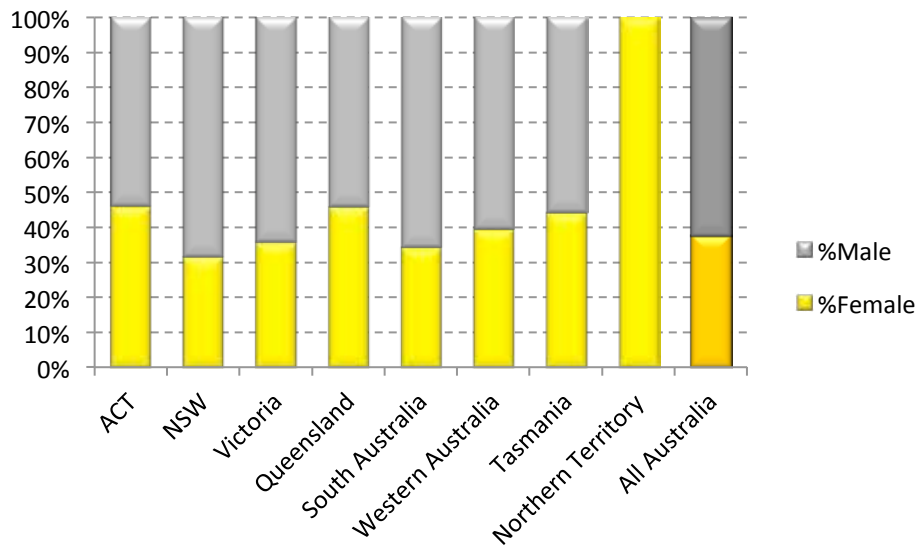
Graduates from all Schools of Architecture, 1987-2012

Data 'smoothed' by taking averages for previous three year period, so not the same as chart in 2.1
 1974 & 1984 data from Bronwyn Hanna, "Three feminist analyses of the built environment," *Architectural Theory Review* 1, no 1 (1996)

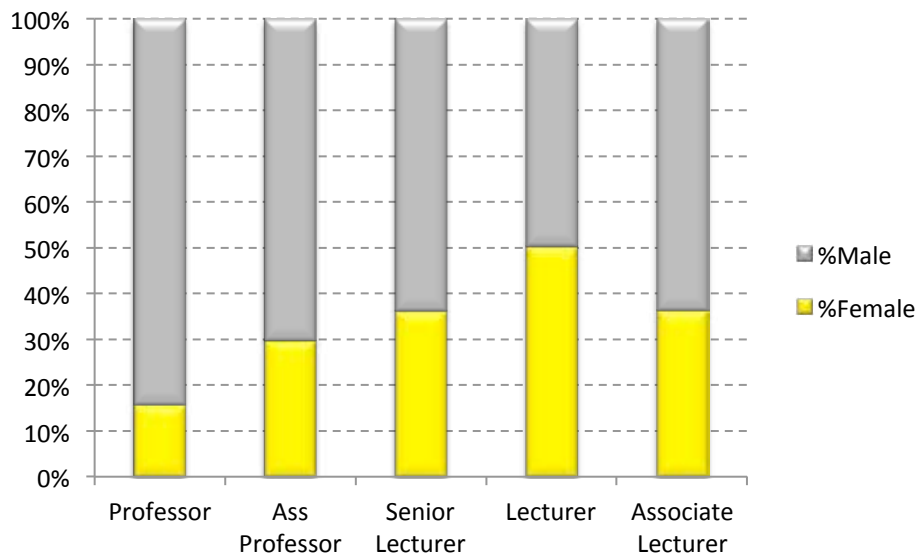
2.3 Gender balance amongst teaching staff

Once again individual schools vary considerably from 18% to 62% female in their teaching staff. Overall, they are 37% of the teaching and research staff.⁴ Note sessional staff have not been included in these statistics as they vary considerably from school to school and semester to semester.

⁴ Data obtained initially from the 2011 ASA book supplemented by School websites. This was collated and sent to the Schools for confirmation. Four of the eighteen Schools are yet to confirm their data.

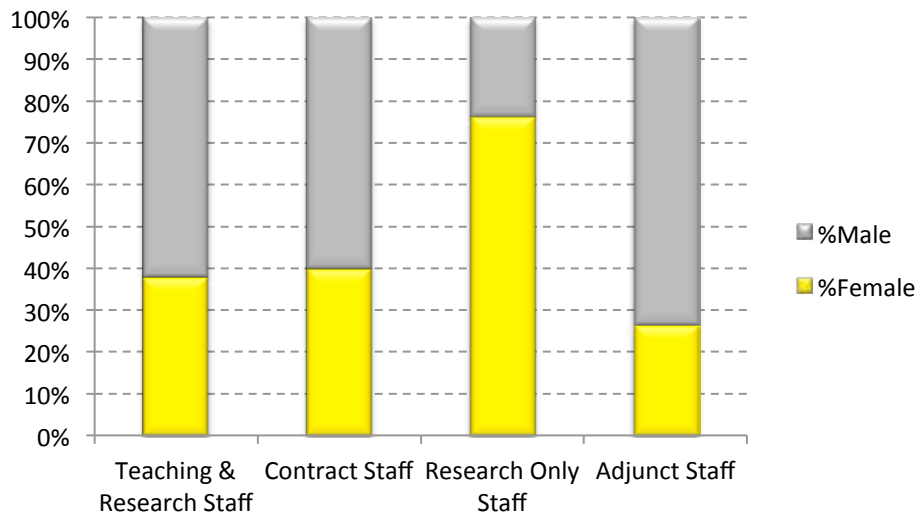


Women Teaching Staff in Architecture Schools State by State



Women Teaching Staff in Architecture Schools by Level

Women are concentrated in the lower levels of the teaching staff.



Women in Architecture Schools by Position Type

Where schools have Research Only positions (five out of the 18 schools) these are dominated by women. Research only position are often not full-time and also have more flexible hours.

3. Women in the Australian architectural workplace

3.1 Women's participation in architecture as measured by registration

If we take registration as a measure: as of October 2012 there are 9,956 practicing registered architects in the Commonwealth and 2,079 of them are women (21%).⁵ (In 2004, women were 14.3% of registered architects.⁶)

Until recently the counting of registered architects has been hampered by the fact that each State Register is separately maintained. To be the signing architect in a State you must be registered there as well as your home State, therefore there are many architects registered in a number of different States. This doubling up has distorted figures. Our previous attempts to remedy this involved extracting out those not resident in a State. However, a significant number of people are registered in one State (perhaps where they first obtained a job) but are now resident and working in another but not registered in their new State. This meant that our attempts at adjusting the count again caused distortions.

In September 2012 the AACA published a combined Register for Australia. This is still not perfect (see Parlour posting) but for the first time it is possible to eliminate multiple State registrations and count that architect only once. The combined Register has over 12,500 entries and 11% of them (1425) are multiple registrations. Men are more likely to be multiply registered than women (1310 men and 115 women – 8%).

Our current picture of Registration State by State is:

	Total	Male	Female	%Female
ACT	217	179	38	17.5%
NT	91	67	24	26.4%
NSW	3126	2389	737	23.6%
QLD	2102	1685	417	19.8%
SA	595	489	106	17.8%
TAS	251	216	35	13.9%
VIC	2702	2122	580	21.5%
WA	872	730	142	16.3%
	9956	7877	2079	20.9%

Although there has been a significant increase in numbers and percentages of women who are registered architects, these are figures lower than what might be projected from the graduation rates, and lower than the professions of law (46%)⁷ and medicine (36%)⁸ with which architecture is often compared.

⁵ Data obtained from AACA <http://www.aaca.org.au/architect-rolls/>

⁶ Paula Whitman, RAIA and QUT, *Going Places: The career Progression of Women in the Architectural Profession*, Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology, 2005,

⁷ Heather Moore and Kate Potter, "Advancement of Women in the Profession," The Law Society of New South Wales (2011)

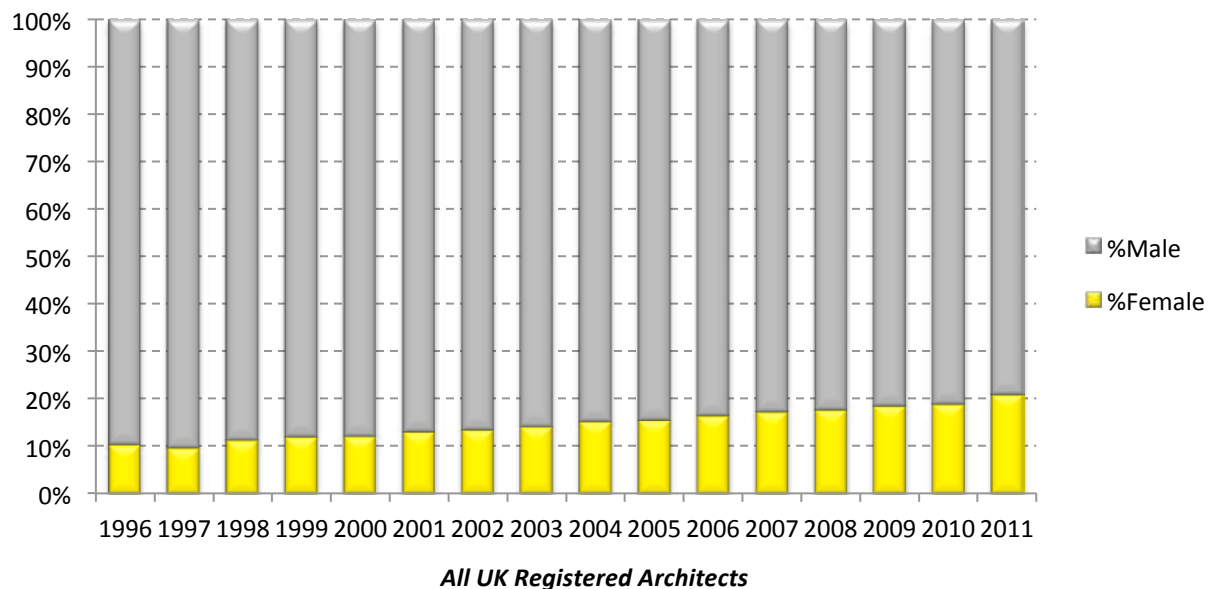
⁸ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4819.0>

3.1.1 A comparison with registered architects data from the UK

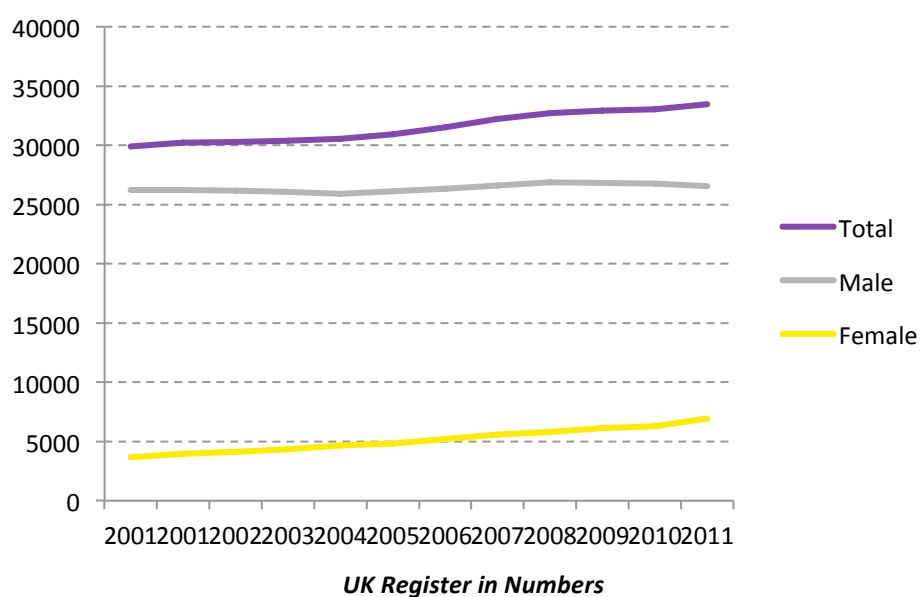
The proportion of women registered as architects in Australia is very close to the UK (the UK data is far easier to access). For 2011, the proportion was 21% female on the UK Register (although 20% for UK resident only architects).⁹ Since 2000

- The overall UK Register has increased by 12%.
- The number of men on that Register has increased 1%
- The number of women has increased by 89%.

Such dramatic growth in the number of women is partly caused by low numbers of women in 2000 when women were 12.3% of the Register (they were 8% in 1991). The year on year increase of women to the UK Register is impressive and parallels growth in Australia.

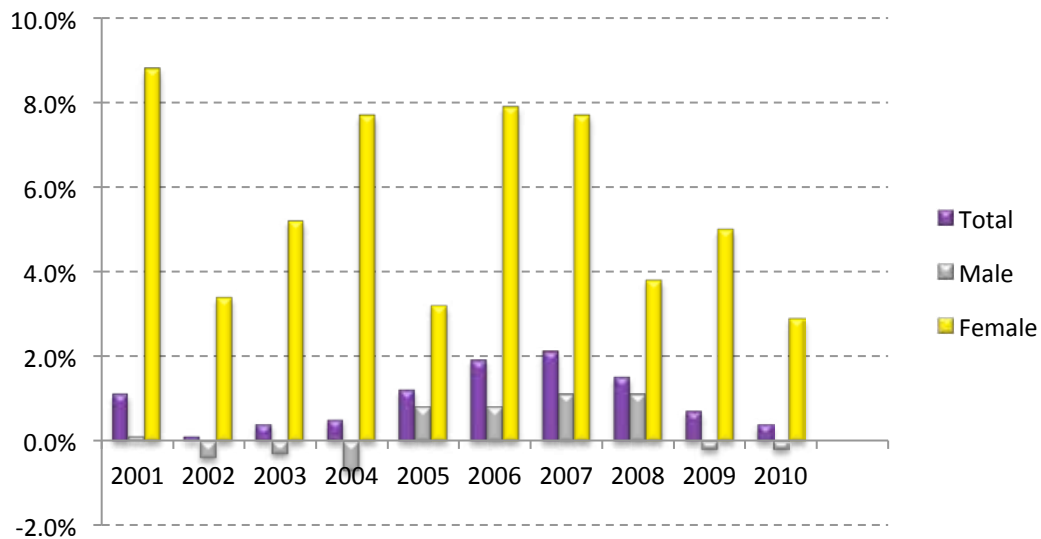


It should also be noted that the growth in total numbers on the Register seems to be supplied by the entry of women. The number of men has remained relatively static over the last ten years.



⁹ Data from UK ARB Annual Reports published http://www.arb.org.uk/publications/annual_report/default.php

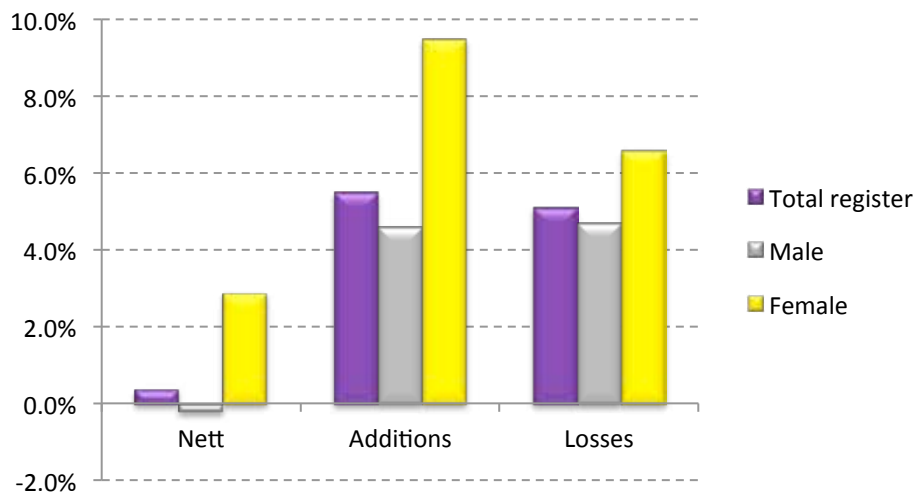
Of note is the actual decline in the number of men on the UK Register for some of the years as below.



Growth of UK Register of Architects 2001-2010

Note: from 2005-2008 the actual *number* of men and women added to the Register overall in each of these years was similar. But as a percentage, the same number of women represents a higher growth. This is once again because of the lower numbers of women to begin with.

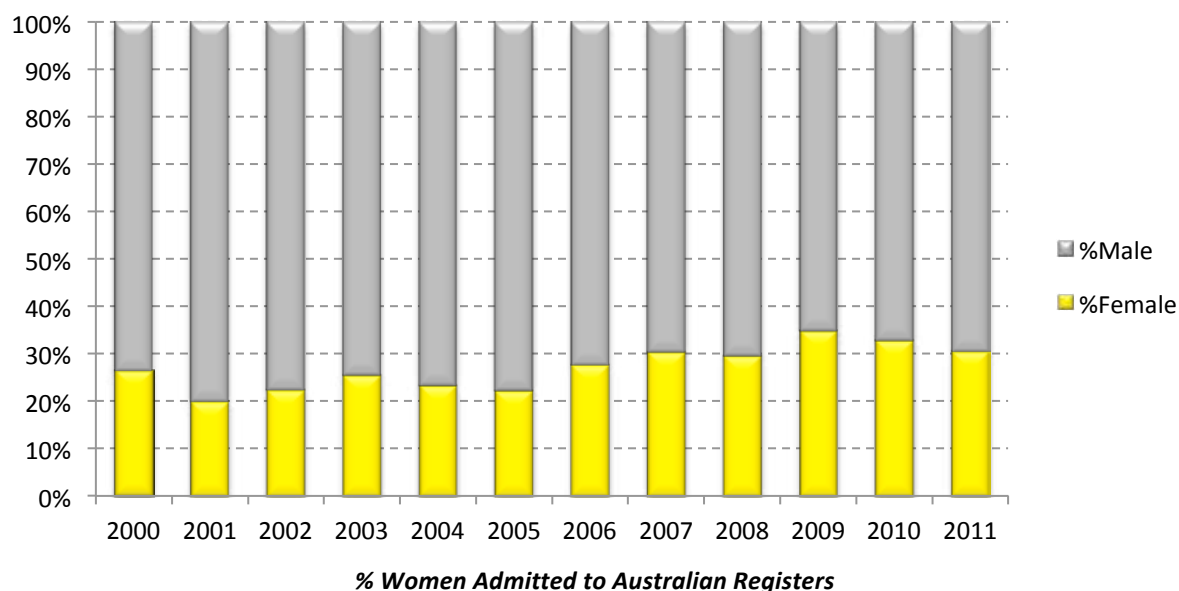
But this dramatic growth may possibly be masking something else: a revolving door whereby although women are coming on to the Register in great numbers, many are also leaving. For the year 2009 to 2010 the loss of women to the Register each year as a *percentage* of the total number of women was higher than that for men and the Register overall. There is, however, not enough data available to study if this is a consistent pattern over time.



UK Architects Register 2009 to 2010 Changes

3.1.2 Tracking the proportion of architects new to the register

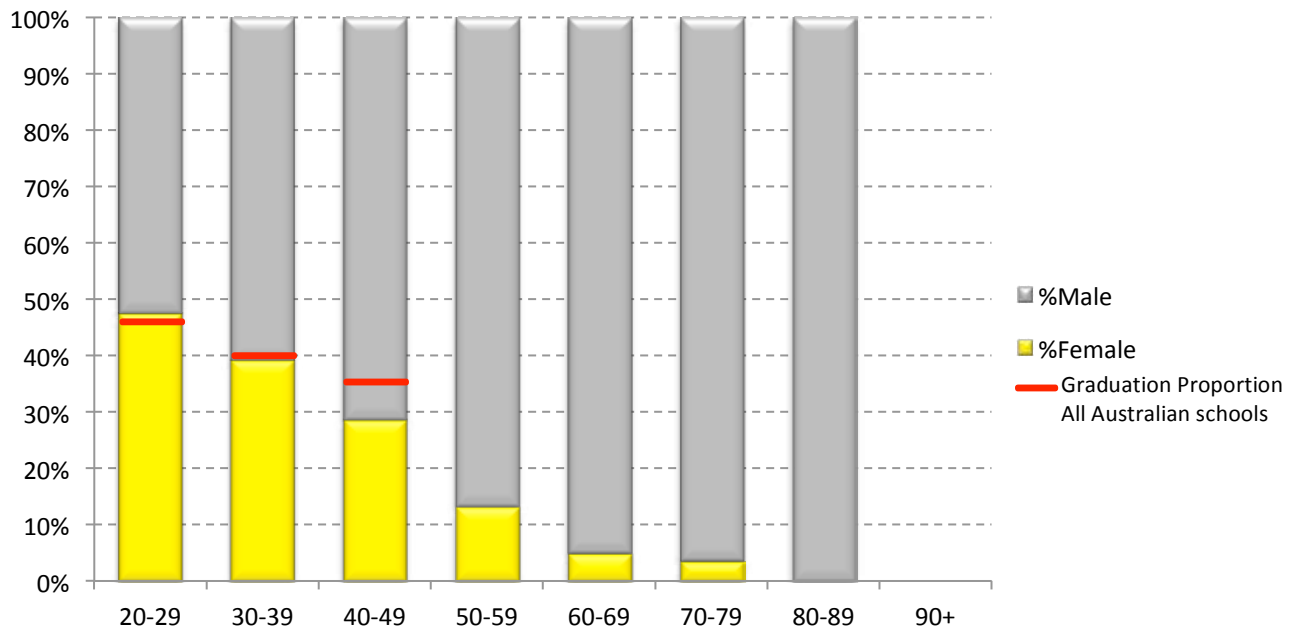
Perhaps of more relevance is the *proportion* of women of those who become newly registered each year. In Australia, the proportion of successful registrants has been 32% averaged for the last five years (1053 women, 3330 total, 2007-2011).¹⁰ Markedly less than the average graduation rate of 41%. It is still, however, a high enough rate to be increasing the percentage of women on the Registers year on year.



The UK rates of registration for women are higher, averaging 36% for the last five years. The graduation rates from UK schools are currently unknown to us.

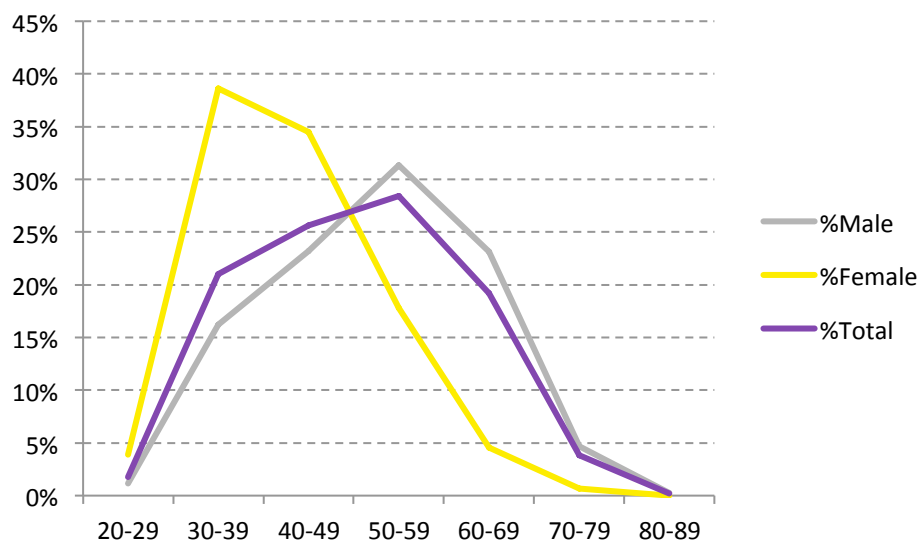
There is also a pattern in the declining proportion of women in age groups in current data from the NSW Registration Board data for active registrants. This would be a reflection of the proportion of graduates for the age groups, but there does also appear to be additional attrition. Although the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups track well alongside graduate proportions. The 40-49 age group at 29% tracks less than the graduate proportion of 36%. The graduate proportions for over 50s is unknown at this stage. However, this it needs to be noted that the age groupings are not clear cut because a certain percentage of graduates each year are mature students. The chart below has not made an adjustment for this. Also the NSW Register has a higher than national percentage for women.

¹⁰ Data not available from TAS. Limited data for SA (2010 only), and NT (2008-2011 only). Given the low numbers altogether on the NT, SA and TAS rolls, their lack of data is not numerically significant.



Percentage of Women Registered Architects By Age Group vs Graduation Rates – NSW Register

Significantly, in NSW the greater proportion of women are in the younger age groups: 77% of the practising registered women are *under* the age of 50, and 60% of the men are *over* the age of 50.



Percentage of Registered Architects By Age Group – NSW Register

Overall, it looks as if women may be increasingly a significant proportion of the profession numerically as measured by registration.

3.2 Women's participation in architecture as measured by Census data

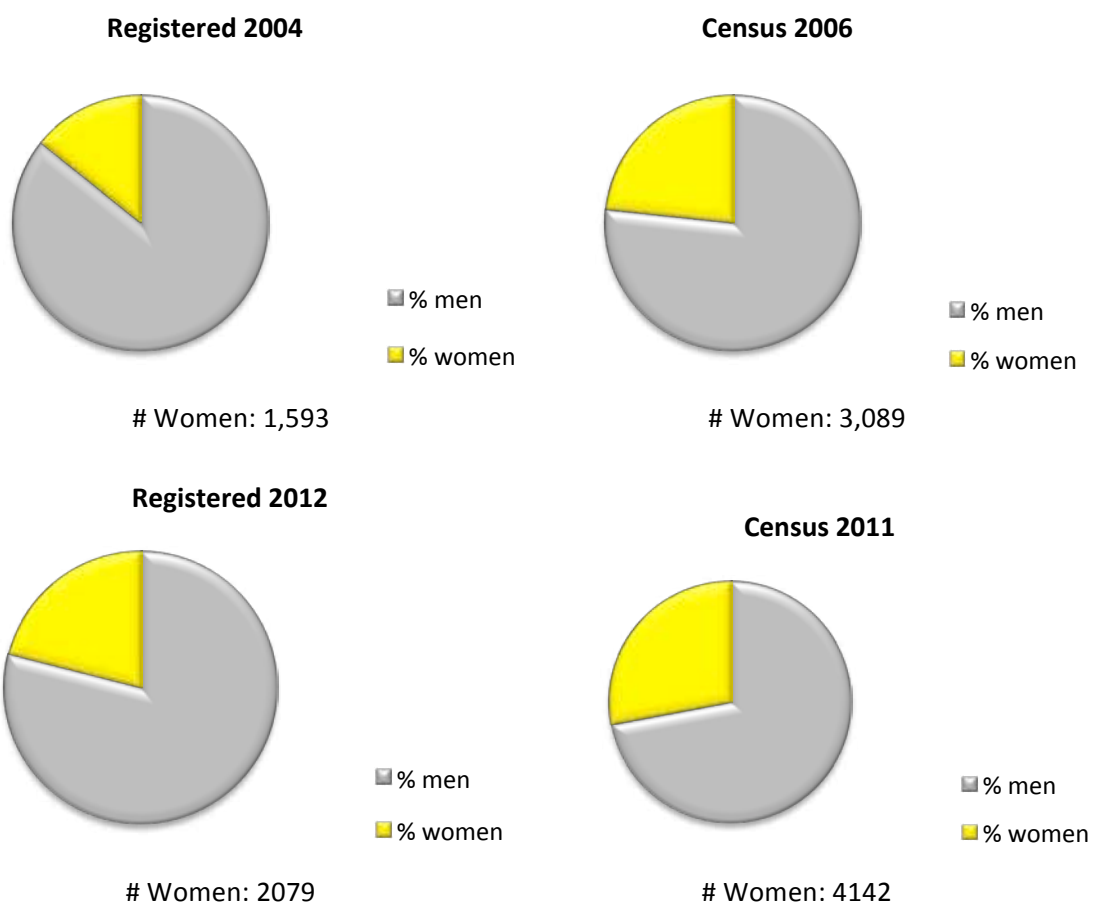
However, not every graduate of an architecture school who is working in the profession chooses to register. In New Zealand, research¹¹ has discovered that less than 50% of graduates ever register; Australia is likely to be similar. Some graduates consider the process of becoming registered laborious, expensive, and of little assistance or relevance to either their career progression or the

¹¹ Haarhoff, *Practice and Gender in Architecture*.

way they practice.¹² Within any architectural firm it is legally required only for the directors or partners to be registered and all projects within the firm occur under their registration. Without registration one is not legally permitted to call oneself an architect, or rather represent to the public that one is an architect.

Under this legislative structure, it is quite possible to be doing the work of an architect and not be registered. In this respect, architecture as a profession differs markedly from medicine and law where one *must* be registered or licensed in order to practice. The comparison to law and medicine then become problematic if we take registration as the measure, which is why Canadian research in 2000¹³ recommended instead the use of Census data.

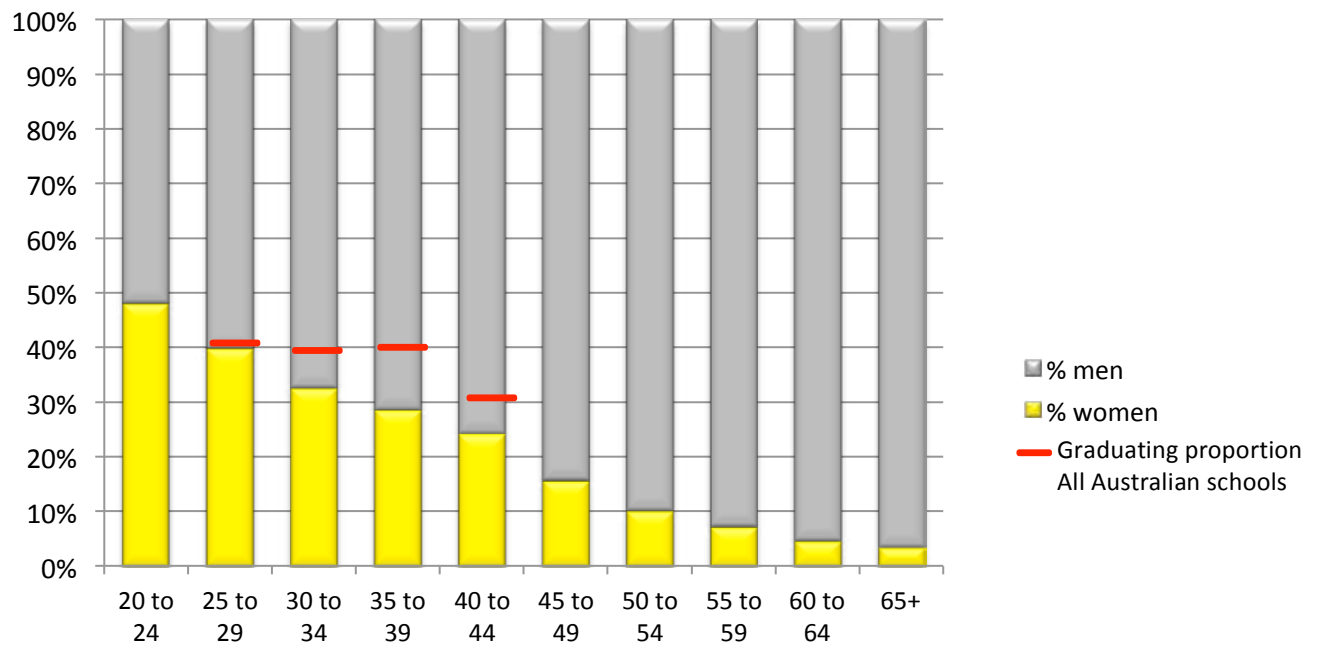
Indeed, the 2006 Australian census shows double the number of women working in architecture than were registered in 2004 and therefore a significantly higher participation figure – registered: 14%, Census 23%. For the 2011 Census women are 28% compared with 21% for registered architects in 2012.



The 2006 Census also reveals the pattern of women 'disappearing' from the profession as they age as does the NSW data. The 2011 data has not yet been processed for this category.

¹² Attitudes to registration and its desirability do change over time, see the AIA Graduate Survey <http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=29719>

¹³ Annmarie Adams and Peta Tancred, *Designing Women: Gender and the Architectural Profession* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000). The Canadian census figures provided a nearly two-fold discrepancy: registered women architects 10.1%, but in the Census 19.6%.

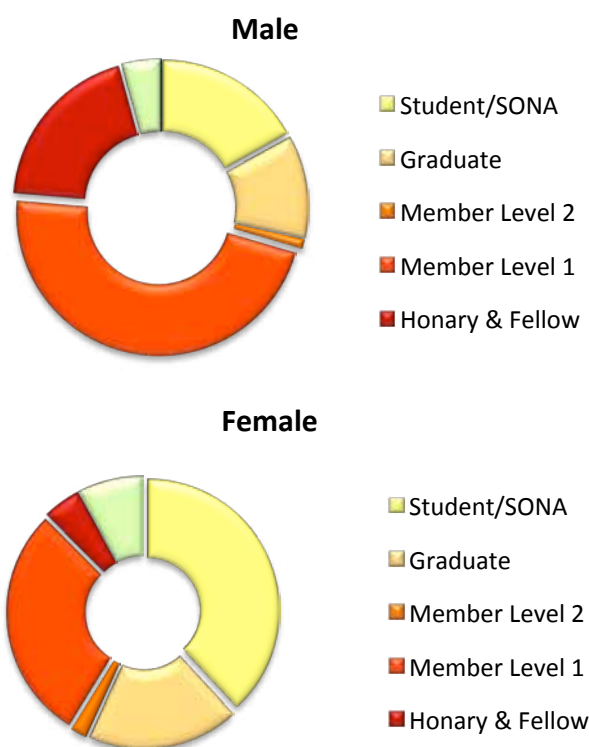


Percentage of Women in Architecture (2006 Census) By Age Group vs Graduation Rates

3.3 Women's participation in architecture as measured by membership of the Australian Institute of Architects

Membership of the Institute is another way of measuring participation in the profession, although it needs to be noted that membership is not compulsory and many architects choose not to belong.

There are, as of January 2013, 11,743 members of the Institute and 3,320 are women – this is 28%, which is higher than the registered proportion (and an increase on last year's percentage which was 26%). However, there are different categories of membership and the overall pattern of membership differs quite markedly for each gender. ;¹⁴

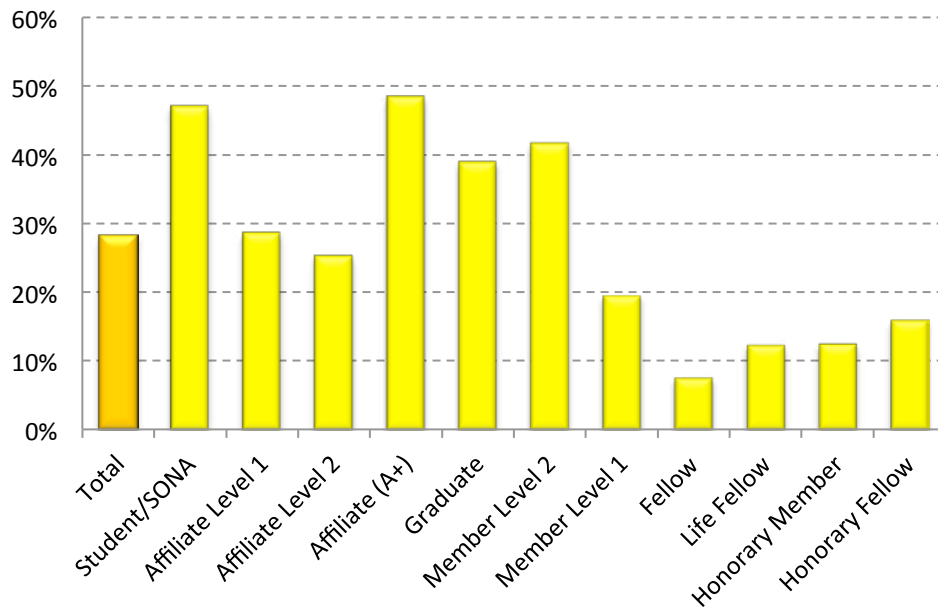


Membership Categories By Gender

A minimum 65% of the women members are definitely not registered. Membership categories where members are definitely not registered are: affiliate, graduate, and student (these categories are the three coloured green, yellow and pale orange in the above charts). But with the male membership only a minimum 33% of the men fall into these same definitely not registered categories. (Note: Member Levels 1&2 are for the registered, formerly registered, or eligible for registration so these figures of 65% and 33% not registered would be higher.)

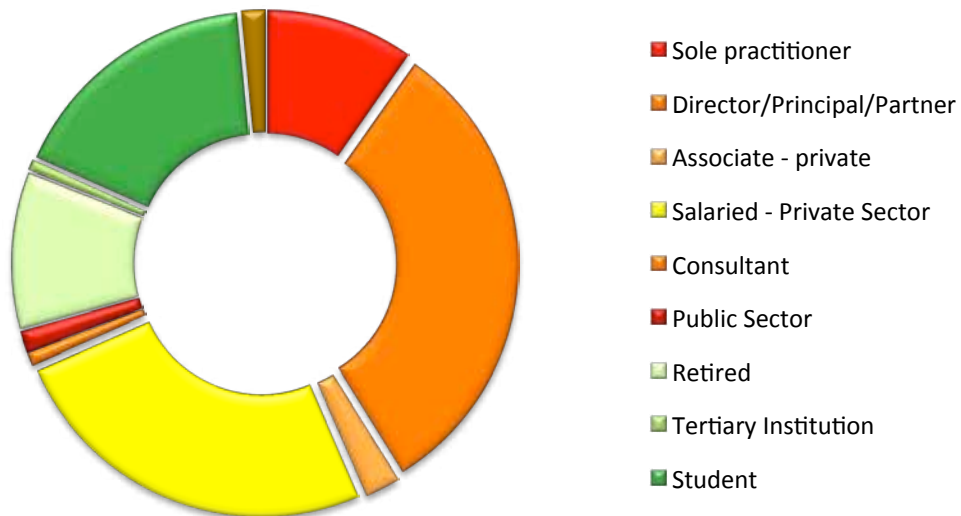
Overall, 42% of the total membership is in these definitely non-registered categories. This once again indicates that the profession is larger than any count of the registered can give us, but larger for women.

¹⁴ Data from the AIA, January 2013. Thanks to Effie Panagiotidis.

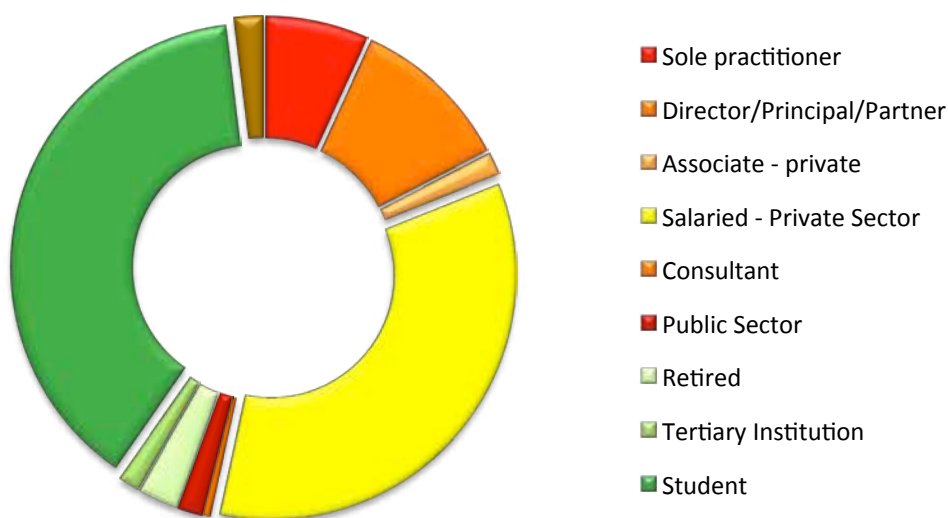


Women as a Percentage of Each Membership Category

A similar difference along gender lines is visible when one analyses the membership according to their employment category.



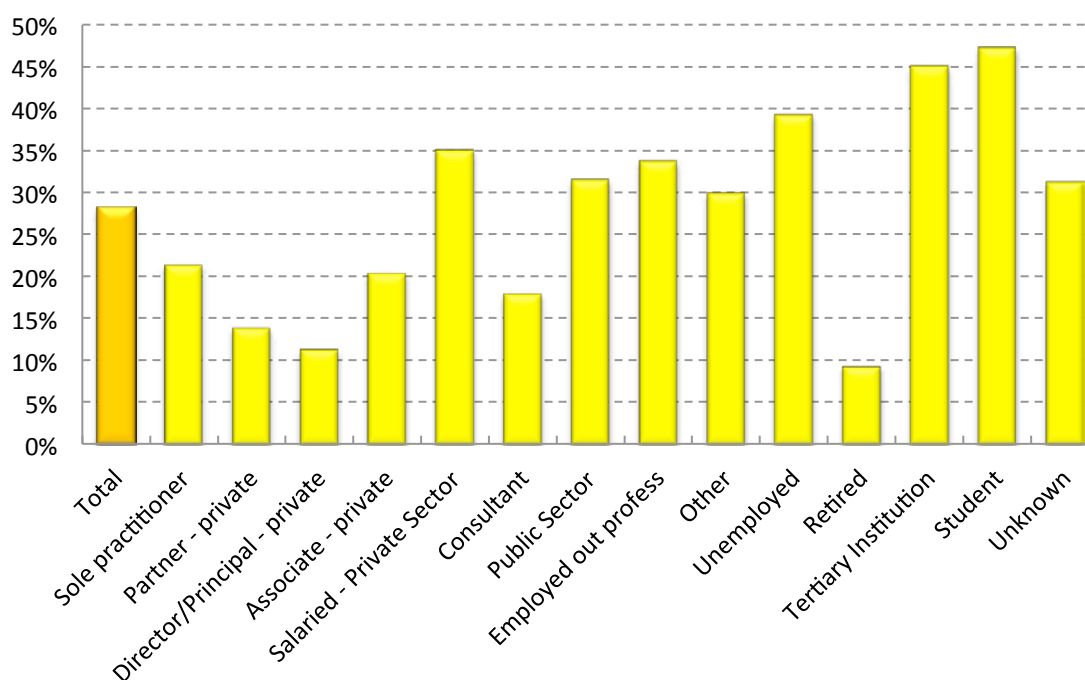
Male members of the Institute



Female members of the Institute

Membership by Employment Category

44% of women are in what might be called non-practising areas (student, retired, etc). 28% of the men are in such categories. A less dramatic difference than membership types but still a difference.

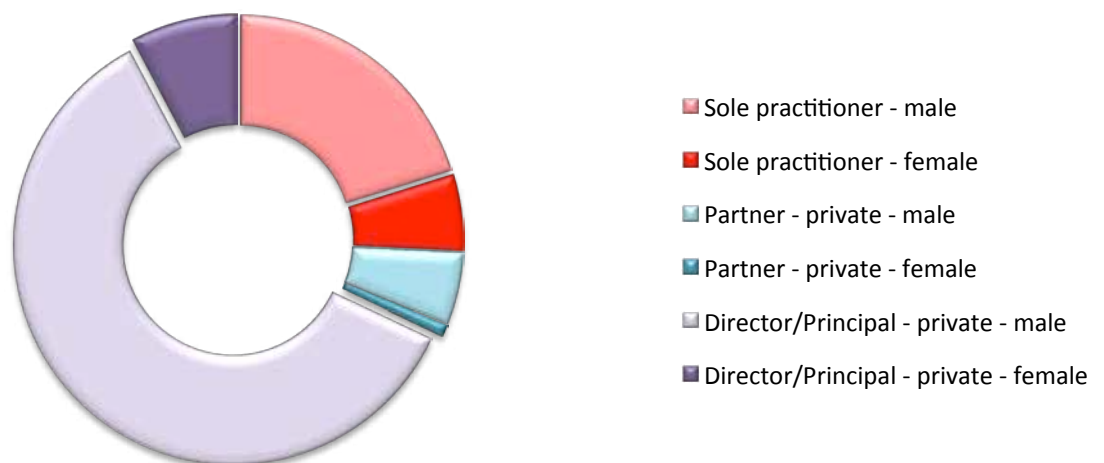
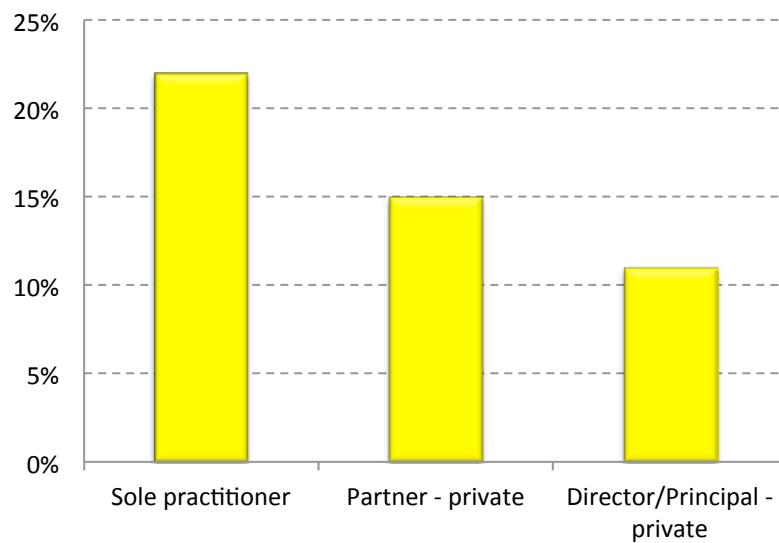


Women as a percentage of each employment category

Sole Practitioners and Partners and Directors/Principals of architectural companies are those who have reached a certain level of experience and often influence in the profession. Women constitute 14% of these categories.¹⁵ They do, however, tend to be clustered in the Sole Practitioner segment

¹⁵ Employment category was cross-checked with membership type. Retired or overseas members were removed for this calculation.

of this category rather than as Directors or Principals of larger firms. Partners are generally of smaller firms. The largest segment is the Director/Principal one and women are 11% of this category but 22% of Sole Practitioners.



Owner/Directors of Architecture Companies by Firm Size

In 2004 Paula Whitman reported that women were less than 1% of the total number of registered architects who were Directors of architecture companies in Queensland.¹⁶ These AIA statistics would seem to indicate that this figure is no longer indicative of the situation. However, AIA membership cannot be considered to be totally representative of the profession. There are nearly 9,956 registered architects in Australia and if we subtract the number of definitely not registered architects from the AIA membership then the *maximum* number of registered AIA members is 6,842. This means that a *minimum* 3100 registered architects (getting on towards a third) are not members. Any figures of women's representation in the profession currently available are therefore only ever partial.

¹⁶ Paula Whitman, RAIA, and QUT, *Going Places: The Career Progression of Women in the Architectural Profession* (Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology, 2005), p 7.