Module Specification

Practice Studio

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Approved

Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Practice Studio

Module code: UBLL4L-30-M

Level: Level 7

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Arts, Technology and Environment

School: CATE School of Architecture and Environment

Partner institutions: None

Field: Architecture and the Built Environment

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: The Practice Studio module combines applied architectural design with critical professional reflection, allowing students to gain hands-on experience within a real or simulated practice setting. This studio emphasises the development of design skills through a work-based project alongside a critical examination of professional, ethical, and environmental responsibilities.

Students undertake an architectural project, either as part of a practice placement or

through a simulated design brief, that spans the lifecycle of design stages, client engagement, and social sustainability. In addition, students are required to produce an independent Design Study that complements the main project, encouraging a personal, reflective approach to design. Throughout the module, students develop a Project Case Study to document their experiences, insights, and professional growth, aligning their work with industry standards and ethical frameworks.

This module prepares students to operate responsibly within the industry, addressing RIBA's focus on business management, resource planning, and client relationships (E3 and E6). Students learn the principles of safe, sustainable project management and client-centred architectural practice, ensuring alignment with RIBA's ethical and professional standards.

Features: Applied Work-Based Learning: Students develop design solutions within a practice-based or simulated project environment, offering exposure to real-world professional contexts.

Independent Design Study: Alongside the primary project, students undertake an independent design task, building on knowledge gained from the main project and demonstrating a critical and creative approach to architectural design.

Reflective Professional Development: Students produce a Project Case Study, contextualising their work within broader professional, regulatory, and ethical frameworks while reflecting on their personal growth and professional insights.

Educational aims: The Practice Studio module aims to develop students' capacity to apply practice-based learning through the development of creative architectural design solutions that integrate social, ethical, and environmental considerations. By the end of the module, students will:

Develop comprehensive design solutions that address social, environmental, and technical challenges, aligned with ethical and sustainable practice principles.

Engage proactively with clients, users, and other stakeholders to set project agendas, refine design briefs, and produce outcomes that reflect a high standard of

inclusivity and social value.

Produce an independent Design Study that demonstrates flexibility in addressing design problems and creative integration of insights gained from the main project.

Reflect critically on inclusivity, climate responsibility, and professional collaboration, preparing them to work responsibly in interdisciplinary and client-facing contexts.

Outline syllabus: The Practice Studio syllabus combines applied project work with independent design exploration, supported by seminars and tutorials on professional practice and critical reflection.

1. Professional Project Development and Brief Analysis

Students begin by analysing and developing a design brief within a real or simulated practice context, taking account of client and user requirements, site constraints, and contextual factors. Emphasis is placed on understanding the architect's role in addressing project requirements while upholding professional ethics and social responsibility.

2. Iterative Design Development and Stakeholder Engagement

Students progress through iterative stages of design, integrating client and stakeholder feedback. This process involves critical analysis and creativity, refining solutions in response to social, environmental, and technical demands. Topics include techniques for stakeholder engagement, brief refinement, and strategies for navigating professional challenges in real-world design projects.

3. Independent Design Study

Parallel to the main project, students complete an independent Design Study that builds on themes explored in the primary project. This study allows students to explore alternative approaches and broaden their design thinking beyond immediate client or practice constraints. The Design Study encourages experimentation and

reflective practice, helping students develop a unique, personal approach to design while deepening their understanding of project-based learning.

4. Reflective Project Case Study

Throughout the module, students document their experiences in a Project Case Study, providing an account of their design process, critical decisions, and stakeholder interactions. This reflection contextualises the design project within broader professional frameworks, discussing topics such as building procurement, regulatory compliance, ethical responsibilities, and the role of sustainability in practice.

5. Professional Skills and Ethical Standards

Seminars cover core aspects of professional practice, from the architect's duty of care to sustainable and inclusive design. Topics include business management, contracts, risk management, and the ethical obligations of architects. Discussions also address social sustainability, social value, and inclusive design, core principles mapped to ARB competencies CK3 and D6, preparing students to respond creatively and responsibly to the ethical demands of architectural practice.

Alignment to ARB Competency Outcomes

The ARB Competency Outcomes listed below are assessed to a passing standard as required under ARB's Accreditation Standard 1.1.

CK3: The principles and relevance of social sustainability, social value and inclusive design. (Knowledge)

CK4: The principles of climate change and biodiversity as relevant to design and construction. (Knowledge)

D6: Produce the designs that consider the relationship between people and built

environment, between buildings and their context, and the need to relate buildings and the spaces between them to human needs, inclusivity, user experience and scale. (Ability)

PE3: Work constructively with and within a broader team, exercising leadership, effective communication and personal responsibility. (Ability)

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module uses a combination of seminars, tutorials, and project-based learning to support students' development of design and professional skills:

Seminars and Case Studies: Seminars address core professional, ethical, and sustainability standards, including climate action and social value, building the knowledge base (CK3, CK4) that students apply throughout their portfolio work.

Design Tutorials: Regular tutorials guide students through iterative design stages, offering feedback on both the main project and independent Design Study, and supporting reflective practice.

Project-Based Learning: Students engage in a work-based project, applying professional skills to develop a design brief, communicate with stakeholders, and document their learning journey.

Reflective Sessions: Reflective sessions support students in understanding their roles within interdisciplinary teams and help them develop communication, leadership, and collaboration skills.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Develop advanced design solutions within a specialised pathway, integrating social, environmental, and technical considerations to address complex architectural challenges. (Mapped to ARB Outcome: CK3)

MO2 Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of climate change mitigation, biodiversity, and ecological responsibility, and explain how these relate to the role of architecture in addressing environmental challenges. (Mapped to ARB Outcome: CK4)

MO3 Produce spatial design solutions that prioritise human needs and inclusivity, showcasing expertise in integrating diverse cultural and contextual insights. (Mapped to ARB Outcome: D6)

MO4 Work constructively within a team, demonstrating leadership, effective communication, and a clear understanding of the roles, needs, and priorities of other disciplines, stakeholders, and clients. (Mapped to ARB Outcome: PE3)

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/B51A70CB-E1C2-6420-CC72-101D2F2FB892.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Integrated Design Portfolio, Independent Design Study, and Reflective Project Case Study (100%)

Students submit a comprehensive portfolio structured around three components: an Integrated Design Portfolio, an Independent Design Study, and a Reflective Project Case Study. Together, these allow students to demonstrate the full range of module

learning outcomes and ARB competencies at the required level.

Integrated Design Portfolio: This section documents the evolution of a design project developed within a specialised studio pathway. Students are assessed on their ability to develop advanced architectural proposals that integrate social, environmental, and technical considerations (CK3), demonstrating their understanding of inclusive design, social value, and sustainability principles. The work also addresses spatial resolution in response to complex design challenges, showcasing inclusive and user-centred spatial strategies that reflect the relationship between people, buildings, and their contexts (D6).

Independent Design Study: In this self-directed component, students extend their design thinking by formulating and testing an alternative design approach informed by the primary project. This study is used to evaluate their ability to engage critically with principles of climate change, ecological responsibility, and biodiversity (CK4), demonstrating how these concepts are applied in architectural design and how they shape the profession's response to environmental challenges.

Reflective Project Case Study: Students submit a written reflection on their collaborative working practices during the studio, including interdisciplinary engagement and stakeholder interaction. This case study evaluates the student's ability to work constructively within a broader team (PE3), taking leadership where appropriate, while showing personal responsibility, clear communication, and professional judgement. It also reflects on their understanding of different roles and priorities in architectural practice.

Objectives: This assessment evaluates students' ability to apply practice-based learning to develop creative architectural design solutions that integrate social, ethical, and environmental considerations. It also assesses their capacity to reflect critically on inclusivity, climate responsibility, and professional collaboration within a practice context.

Students must pass the assessment to pass this module. As per UWE Academic Regulations and Programme Specification, the pass mark for each assessment on

this module is 50%. As per the ARB requirements compensation and/or condonement are not permitted for any module that will assess ARB's Outcomes to passing standard.

Formative Feedback: Feedback during seminars, tutorials, and project reviews provides students with opportunities to refine their design work and reflect on their professional growth.

Resit Assessment: If required, the resit assessment will follow the same brief and submission format as the main assessment, allowing students to develop and submit a revised portfolio that meets the original assessment objectives.

Assessment tasks:

Portfolio (First Sit)

Description: Integrated design portfolio, including an independent design study and a reflective project case study

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: Integrated design portfolio, including an independent design study and a reflective project case study

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Architecture [Frenchay] MArch 2025-26

Architecture {Apprenticeship-UWE}[Frenchay] MArch 2025-26

Architecture [Frenchay] MArch 2025-26

Architecture {Apprenticeship-UWE}[Frenchay] MArch 2025-26