Module Specification

Professional Context in Architecture

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Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Professional Context in Architecture

Module code: UBLL4N-30-M

Level: Level 7

For implementation from: 2025-26

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 Professional Context in Architecture module offers an in-depth exploration of the construction industry and the architectural profession, providing a comprehensive framework of these contexts and interrelationships. It equips students to address key professionalism and leadership challenges within architectural practice, serving as essential preparation for the Professional Experience module.

Features: This module is typically delivered within two 4 day block taught deliveries, each with an associated portfolio of assessment.

The Professional Context in Architecture module is structured around a combination of lectures, seminars, and digital content delivered via a virtual learning environment, focusing on essential themes in professional practice, procurement, and contract management. The module includes contributions from members across the College as well as visiting industry speakers, offering a broad perspective on contemporary issues. Students engage with a scenario project that enables them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, linking it to their own professional experiences. This preparatory work builds toward their final career evaluation and case study report in the concluding module.

Educational aims: This module offers a comprehensive overview of the construction industry and the operating context of the architectural profession. This includes appointment, risk management, procurement methods, legislation, and contract strategies for building projects. It aims to build students' understanding of practice management principles essential to architectural business operations, as well as procedures in project management.

Outline syllabus: In this module the following ARB Practice Competency Outcomes are met and assessed to passing standard:

RE4: Locate, evaluate and apply relevant legislation, regulations, standards, codes of practice and policies related to the development of the built environment.

M1: Make use of the principles of sustainable, responsible and ethical practice, and recognise how they relate to running an architect's practice.

M2: Understand the financial and resource management aspects of running an architectural practice including the means of professional remuneration and fee setting.

M3: Recognise the ethical and legal impact of practice structures, recruitment and employment terms and their impact on work/life balance, health and the wellbeing of colleagues.

M4: Manage and structure projects, administer construction contracts and resolve common construction-related challenges.

M5: Manage the inter-relationships of individuals, organisations, statutory bodies, and professions involved in procuring and delivering architectural projects, recognising how these are defined through contractual and organisational structures.

M6: Select appropriate procurement routes and means of delivery, recognising their relative risks to contractual parties, their implications for sustainable design outcomes and how these influence the selection and management of construction contracts.

M7: Apply the principles of risk management, liabilities, and insurance to architectural projects.

M8: Apply the principles of cost management, control, and budgeting to architectural projects.

M9: Plan, manage, monitor and communicate health and safety arrangements for construction projects as required by current legislation.

M10: Resource, plan, implement and record project tasks to achieve stated goals, either individually or within a team.

To achieve the module aims, this module examines trends and issues in the construction industry and professional practice.

Syllabus Outline:

Overview of the Construction Industry

- The economic context for construction projects

- Roles and responsibilities within the construction team

- Key trends and issues in the global construction market

Professionalism and Standards of Conduct

- Concepts of professionalism and ethical practice in architecture

- Cross-professional knowledge and collaboration

- Standards of conduct and the Code of Conduct for architects

Legal Framework in Architectural Practice

- Overview of the UK and EU legal systems

- Law of Tort, negligence, liability, and intellectual property rights

- Legal forms of architectural practice and organizational structures

- Regulatory requirements for building projects, including Property Law, Planning Law, Building Control, Health and Safety, and the Equality Act
- Fundamentals of contract law: types of contracts, collateral warranties, and dispute resolution

Business Management in Architecture
- Financial management basics, including taxation and VAT considerations
- Marketing and selling architectural services
- Office resource management, covering staff allocation, time management, and Quality Management Systems
- Employment legislation and health and safety regulations in the workplace

Client Relations and Project Interaction
- Developing project briefs with a focus on sustainability
- Communication strategies for effective client and user interaction
- Fee negotiation, project budgeting, and management of architectural services

Project Execution and Innovation
- Procurement routes and evaluating the time-cost-quality triangle
- Tendering procedures and types of tenders used in construction
- Technical innovations in building design, materials selection, and off-site fabrication
- Cost management strategies, including value engineering
- Contract administration: site organization, project mobilisation, and post-completion procedures

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: Teaching and learning is structured around a series of campus-based lectures and seminars, supplemented by digital content accessed through a virtual learning environment. Together, these elements focus on the core themes of practice, procurement, and contract management. The module incorporates contributions from across the School and visiting speakers, providing a

broad and insightful perspective on the construction industry and architectural practice.

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

MO1 Critically evaluate the structure, roles, and current trends in the construction industry, with particular emphasis on the evolving responsibilities of architects and other key professionals.

MO2 Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of professionalism, ethics, and regulatory frameworks, including fiscal and Quality Management principles essential for effective architectural practice.

MO3 Identify and implement key processes in project planning, funding, procurement, and cost management, with a focus on assessing project viability, risk, and innovation across the RIBA Work Stages.

MO4 Demonstrate an ability to navigate and administer construction contracts by applying standard clauses, resolving disputes, and using negotiation strategies to address project challenges effectively.

MO5 Locate, critically evaluate, and apply relevant legislation, regulations, standards, and policies impacting the development and sustainability of the built environment.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 240 hours

Face-to-face learning = 60 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ublmdx-30-m.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: This module's assessment comprises two portfolio submissions, strategically scheduled within the teaching block to allow feedback from the first submission to inform the second. Each portfolio, capped at 4,000 words or equivalent, consists of smaller tasks designed to replicate practice-based activities centred around a scenario introduced during taught sessions.

Each portfolio also includes a personal reflection linking the student's professional experiences with a critical appraisal of a practical component from the block teaching sessions. This approach ensures the portfolios remain relevant to the dynamic and evolving nature of the industry, addressing key themes reflecting professional standards and industry practices, ensuring alignment with PSRB requirements.

Independent study before and after taught sessions is expected. Although this work will not be marked separately, it is essential for the successful completion and quality of the portfolio submissions.

The resit opportunity will typically use the same brief and scenario as the initial opportunity.

Assessment tasks:

Portfolio (First Sit)
Description: Portfolio 1 - Context of Practice (approximately 4000 words)
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Portfolio (First Sit)
Description: Portfolio 2 - Context of Construction (approximately 4000 words)
Weighting: 50 %
Final assessment: No
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4, MO5

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: Portfolio 1 - Context of Practice (approximately 4000 words)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: Portfolio 2 - Context of Construction (approximately 4000 words)

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4, MO5

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Professional Practice and Management in Architecture [Frenchay] PGCert 2025-26

Professional Practice, Knowledge, Skills and Management in Architecture {Apprenticeship-UWE} [Frenchay] PGCert 2025-26