



Module Specification

Contexts of Architecture 2 - Histories and Theories

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Contexts of Architecture 2 - Histories and Theories

Module code: UBLL7D-15-2

Level: Level 5

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

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: This module builds on the foundational principles introduced in earlier years, extending students' knowledge of architectural history and theory while emphasising the cultural, political, and technological forces that have shaped contemporary practice. Students will explore key theoretical frameworks and architectural movements. The module provides an interdisciplinary lens through which students analyse the interplay of architecture, urbanism, and cultural identity, fostering a deeper understanding of architecture's historical and theoretical

dimensions.

Through lectures, seminars, and independent research, students will critically investigate themes such as the global exchange of architectural ideas, postcolonial and feminist theories, and the role of identity in shaping the built environment. Assessments are designed to encourage both academic rigor and creative expression, culminating in outputs that combine visual, analytical, and written components.

This module addresses history, theories, and methodologies by exploring global architectural movements, cultural identities, and theoretical frameworks. Students critically engage with historical and social dynamics, linking them to contemporary design practice to foster a deeper understanding of architecture's cultural and intellectual foundations.

Features: Global Contexts: Examines architectural movements and theories within a global framework, addressing cross-cultural influences and historical exchanges.

Interdisciplinary Approach: Integrates cultural, political, and philosophical perspectives into architectural analysis.

Diverse Outputs: Allows students to produce a historical study or creative output, such as an essay, visual analysis, or model, alongside a reflective written commentary.

Application to Design Practice: Encourages students to connect theoretical insights to their studio projects.

Educational aims: The aim of this module is to enable students to critically analyse historical and theoretical influences on architectural practice. By the end of the module, students will:

Understand how cultural, social, and intellectual histories and theories influence architecture.

Develop skills in methods of articulating theoretical arguments such as diagramming, critical reading, and visual representation.

Explore the thematic relationships between architecture, identity, and societal change.

Communicate critical and creative insights through diverse media, including written and visual outputs.

Outline syllabus: This module introduces students to architectural history and theory through a thematic approach, encouraging critical engagement with a range of key concepts and movements. Students will examine global architectural movements, analysing their cultural, political, and technological drivers, with a focus on the global exchange of architectural ideas and their influence on contemporary practice.

The module delves into theories of identity and place, exploring how architecture reflects and shapes cultural identities through lenses such as postcolonial and feminist theories. This encourages students to critically analyse how historical and social dynamics influence the built environment and inform architectural expression.

An exploration of urban and cultural forces investigates the impact of societal changes, such as industrialisation, migration, and urbanisation, on architectural and urban forms. Students will learn how these forces shape both the physical and cultural landscapes of cities and influence the evolution of architectural typologies.

Through exploration of diverse methods students are encouraged to study architectural traditions and typologies across different regions and historical periods. This approach fosters a nuanced understanding of how architectural ideas and forms evolve in response to diverse cultural and historical contexts.

The module also emphasises representation and communication, focusing on the development of skills in diagramming, critical reading, and visual representation. These skills enable students to effectively articulate theoretical arguments and

demonstrate a clear understanding of architectural history and theory.

Finally, students will explore intersections with studio practice, connecting their historical and theoretical analysis to design thinking. This integration provides valuable insights that inform and enrich their design projects, helping them to establish a strong conceptual foundation for architectural practice.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module employs a combination of lectures, seminars, and independent study to foster critical engagement with the subject matter:

Lectures: Introduce key theoretical frameworks, historical movements, and cultural contexts.

Seminars: Provide opportunities for discussion, critical analysis, and collaborative exploration of the material.

Workshops: Focus on diagramming, visual representation, and effective communication of historical and theoretical ideas.

Independent Research: Encourages students to explore specific topics of interest, preparing them for assessments that align with their strengths and learning preferences.

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

MO1 Explore and critically analyse global historical contexts and architectural traditions to develop curiosity-driven insights that inspire innovative architectural thinking.

MO2 Investigate and compare architectural typologies and cultural precedents using interdisciplinary approaches to inform architectural theory and practice.

MO3 Communicate historical and theoretical insights effectively using visual and written media.

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Face-to-face learning = 36 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/70691969-6413-490D-A537-1910480ED9EC.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Assessment Type: Portfolio

Rationale: Each student submits an academic portfolio that will include a Lecture Notebook, Historical Study and Written Commentary. The details of these are as follows:

The Lecture Notebook comprises notes and diagrams made contemporaneously with the lecture series.

The Historical Study takes one of a variety of forms to suit the student's preference. The format may include models, short films, photographic studies, hand-drawn studies or written pieces. The variety of formats are agreed and finalised by the Module Team and their scope and extent should be adjudged as equivalent to a 1500-word essay - or indeed, a 1500-word essay may be one of the study formats.

The Written Commentary is a short (maximum 500-words), written statement summarising the ideas and sources explored by the student in their Historical Study, and reflecting on this academic scholarship and mode of learning.

Assessment Objectives: The assessment evaluates students' ability to critically analyse architectural movements, exploring their cultural and historical contexts and articulating how these influences shape architectural theory and practice. Students are required to develop and communicate structured arguments, demonstrating their understanding through a combination of visual and written media. Reflection on the relevance of historical and theoretical concepts to contemporary architectural practice is a key aspect, ensuring that students connect their analysis to current design challenges. Additionally, the assessment encourages students to integrate diverse perspectives, showcasing an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates cultural, political, and philosophical insights into their work.

Formative Opportunities: Weekly seminars and feedback sessions provide students with iterative guidance on their assessment development, enabling them to refine their work and align it with module objectives.

Plagiarism Prevention: Originality is ensured through the diversity of outputs (e.g., models, visual analysis, or essays) and the reflective commentary, which requires personal engagement with the material.

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 revised submissions that meets the original assessment objectives.

Assessment tasks:

Portfolio (First Sit)

Description: Portfolio comprising Lecture Notebook, Historical Study and Written Commentary.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: Portfolio comprising Lecture Notebook, Historical Study and Written Commentary

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Architecture [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2025-26

Architecture and Planning [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Architecture and Environmental Engineering [Frenchay] BEng (Hons) 2025-26