Programme Specification

Architecture {Apprenticeship-UWE}[Frenchay]

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Architecture {Apprenticeship-UWE}[Frenchay]

Highest award: MArch Architecture

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CATE School of Architecture and Environment, College of Arts, Technology and Environment

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies:

Architects Registration Board (ARB)

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

Apprenticeship: ST0533 (Version 1.1)

Modes of delivery: Full-time

Entry requirements:

For implementation from: 01 September 2025

Programme code: K10N12

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: MArch at UWE is designed to empower students to become ethical future practitioners and catalysts for positive change in the built environment. This programme emphasises the importance of collaboration beyond traditional disciplines, encouraging students to work with local communities and industry professionals to address societal challenges and transform cities, places, and spaces for the benefit of both people and the planet.

The course offers a holistic design education, covering a diverse set of subjects related to the future of the built and natural environments. We take a student-centred approach where our students shape their studies to become future-ready practitioners in their emerging area of specialism, equipped with the ability to tackle 21st-century challenges through knowledge and techniques at the forefront of architecture. The programme provides a rigorous understanding of contemporary professional practice, framed within an approach to architecture and design that challenges traditional disciplinary boundaries. We encourage students to integrate this knowledge with their individual interests, life learning and experiences, empowering them to become autonomous agents of positive change.

The curriculum is aligned with the ambition for a fair transition, focusing on achieving net zero and climate resilience while ensuring a fair and equal society. This includes integrating the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the program and a deep understanding of climate literacy and regenerative processes. Our School is an inclusive community that celebrates diverse skills and perspectives, engaging with the city and region through design, research, and knowledge exchange to foster sustainable and inclusive futures. Students gain professional and real-world experience through opportunities for live projects, placements, and industry partnerships. Additionally, the course connects with our research centres and groups, allowing students to engage with internationally acclaimed research and practice and participate in cutting-edge design research.

The programme recognises the crucial role of fire and life safety in architectural design and practice. Students are encouraged to balance architectural quality,

sustainability, and occupant safety, addressing the complex interplay between design aspirations, regulatory compliance, and cost considerations. This programme includes instruction on integrating fire safety standards and life safety principles. By exploring case studies, evaluating regulatory frameworks, and integrating these principles into their own designs, students gain a nuanced understanding of how to create safe and sustainable buildings that protect both users and the public.

Features of the programme: Features

- Student-Centred Specialisation: Flexible structure allows students to tailor their studies to personal interests and emerging areas of practice.

- Sustainability Focus: Curriculum aligned with UN SDGs and climate resilience, emphasising regenerative design and sustainable urbanism.

- Industry Engagement: Real-world learning through live projects and collaborations with industry professionals.

- Integration with Research Centres: Access to UWE’s cutting-edge research on 'Digital Design and Construction', 'Sustainable design, materials and building performance', and 'Place and Society' through alignment with The Centre for Advanced Built Environment Research (CABER) and The Architecture Research Group.

- Collaboration: Modules designed to foster partnerships beyond traditional architectural disciplines, promoting broader problem-solving skills.

Educational Aims: 1. Foster Advanced Design Thinking: Cultivate innovative approaches to design that integrate technical proficiency with sustainability and aesthetics.

2. Develop Ethical Practitioners: Equip students with a grounding in ethical practice, ecological responsibility, and social equity.

3. Promote Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Prepare students to engage effectively with professionals across disciplines, encouraging adaptable and creative problem-solving.

4. Bridge Theory and Practice: Provide practical experience through live projects and industry collaborations, bridging academic knowledge with real-world applications.

5. Encourage Specialisation and Autonomy: Support students in shaping a personal area of specialisation, developing expertise for professional autonomy.

6. Prepare for Professional Readiness: Ensure graduates meet the standards required by regulatory bodies (ARB and RIBA) to practice as architects, with competencies in technical, fire and life safety, ethical, and managerial areas.

7. Integrate Fire and Life Safety in Design: Instil a robust understanding of fire and life safety standards in students, equipping them to incorporate these critical considerations into their design solutions.

The programme defines a set of core values, competencies, capabilities, and purpose, that guide our graduates' development:

Competencies
Design: Ability to create functional and innovative spaces.
Sustainability: Integrating ecological sensitivity in every design.
Communication: Effective articulation of ideas through various media.
Technology: Leveraging cutting-edge tools and systems in architecture.
Ethical Practice: Responsible and ethical decision-making within professional frameworks.
Cultural Competence: Understanding and respecting diverse cultural contexts.

Capabilities
Critical: Analytical thinking and problem-solving in complex situations.
Self-Reflective: Continuously improving through feedback and self-assessment.
Global-Local: Designing with both global insights and local contexts in mind.

Inclusive: Ensuring diversity and inclusivity in architectural practice.

Collaborative: Working effectively within teams and with stakeholders.

Systems Thinker: Understanding architecture as part of broader systems.

Purpose

Competent, Creative, Ethical Designers: Shaping the built environment with professionalism and imagination.

Socially Responsible Global Citizens: Architects who are intellectually mature, environmentally conscious, and socially responsible.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1. Produce advanced architectural design solutions that integrate environmental, social, artistic, spatial, and technical aspects of architecture, with a commitment to sustainable, responsible, and inclusive design that considers the well-being of users, communities, and the environment.

PO2. Employ research, enquiry, and experimentation techniques to develop effective, innovative solutions to architectural problems, informed by historical, culturally contextual and contemporary architectural knowledge grounded in innovative, ethical, regulatory, and sustainable practices.

PO3. Exhibit leadership, project management, and collaboration skills in interdisciplinary settings, effectively coordinating with stakeholders and team members to ensure timely and effective project delivery, while maintaining professional conduct in alignment with project requirements.

PO4. Develop professional judgement in the consideration of ethical frameworks, regulatory standards, and professional conduct to produce safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible designs that promote social value, environmental stewardship, public health and safety.

PO5. Engage proactively with industry professionals, communities, and stakeholders, demonstrating accountability, professional responsibility, and effective communication throughout project lifecycles.

PO6. Adopt a forward thinking and reflective approach to professional development, identifying and addressing learning needs to stay current with evolving standards, best practices, and industry advancements.

PO7. Articulate sophisticated architectural ideas to diverse audiences, including clients and stakeholders, adapting communication styles to ensure clarity, engagement, and impact across professional and academic contexts.

PO8. Develop a critical practice that integrates both digital and analogue design skills to create, model, process, and present design solutions that meet complex project requirements, leveraging technology for analytical, research, and presentation purposes.

PO9. Integrate advanced structural, environmental, and technological strategies into design solutions that meet relevant performance, fire and life safety, and sustainability standards, considering resilience and long-term environmental impact.

PO10. Produce spatial designs that prioritise human needs, inclusivity, and experiential quality, ensuring an integration of spatial, cultural, and environmental insights to create meaningful and accessible spaces.

Assessment strategy: The MArch is assessed using the Integrated Masters Classification as follows:

An integrated Bachelors/Masters degree with merit shall be awarded when an overall average mark of at least 60% has been achieved across 210 credits at Level 6 or above. This average will be calculated based upon the marks for all of the Level M modules together with the highest marks for the Level 6 modules, which are required to make up the credit total.

An integrated Bachelors/Masters degree with distinction shall be awarded when an overall average mark of at least 70% has been achieved across 210 credits at Level 6 or above. This average will be calculated based upon the marks for all of the Level M modules together with the highest marks for the Level 6 modules which are required to make up the credit total.

A student who achieves less than 40% in Level 3 modules will fail. A student who achieves less than 50% in Level M modules will fail.

The calculation will be based on 210 credits but the algorithm will only take into account the number of credits where there are numerical marks available.

Assessment Strategy

The MArch programme employs a programmatic assessment strategy that aligns with UWE's goal of making assessment an integral part of the learning process. This approach promotes assessment as learning, where students continuously engage with assessments that build critical professional skills, reinforce key competencies, and provide opportunities for reflection and improvement. The strategy incorporates authentic, varied, and practice-oriented assessments designed to emulate professional architectural practice, enhancing employability and skill relevance.

1. Integrated Assessment Types and Alignment with Learning Outcomes
The assessment methods in the MArch programme are intentionally varied and closely aligned with the holistic competencies and capabilities that graduates are expected to demonstrate. Core assessment types include:

- Portfolio Development: As the central assessment method, portfolios provide a comprehensive overview of each student's progression and mastery of skills across modules. Students document and present a range of competencies—such as design innovation, critical thinking, and cultural competence—demonstrating both technical skills and reflective insights. Portfolios support assessment for learning, as students can continually refine and enhance their work based on feedback received throughout the programme.

- Project Reports and Reflections: Authentic, real-world projects allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in practice-oriented settings. Reporting and reflection tasks encourage students to articulate their learning from practical experiences, enhancing their professional identity and ethical decision-making skills. Reflective components promote assessment as learning and self-reflection, where students critically analyse their process, problem-solving approaches, and responses to project feedback to develop their capabilities as future practitioners and global citizens.

- Oral Presentations: Presenting design ideas to peers, faculty, and industry

professionals helps students hone their communication skills and receive formative feedback. Presentations and design reviews allow for assessment for learning by providing immediate feedback that students can incorporate into their design process, fostering adaptability and resilience in their approach.

- Research Essays and Case Studies: Written assessments deepen students' analytical and research skills, challenging them to explore architectural theories, sustainability practices, and design precedents in detail. By engaging in scholarly inquiry, students develop evidence-based reasoning and critical judgement, equipping them to make well-informed decisions in future professional settings.

2. Authenticity and Professional Relevance

To prepare students as professionals in the making, assessments in the MArch programme are designed to reflect tasks that graduates will encounter in architectural practice. Through live projects, collaborative assignments, and technology-integrated tasks, assessments aim to simulate the realities of professional work. The authentic nature of these tasks supports students in developing a strong professional identity, as they understand how each assessment relates to real-world roles and responsibilities.

- Digital and Technological Skills: Portfolio and presentation assessments incorporate digital tools (e.g., digital modelling, rendering software, BIM), fostering digital literacy that meets industry standards. Students gain hands-on experience with cutting-edge tools, enhancing both their employability and confidence in professional practice.

- Stakeholder Interaction and Responsibility: Assessments often involve working with community or industry partners, reinforcing the programme's commitment to ethical practice and cultural competence. Students learn to consider stakeholder needs, ethical concerns, and sustainability in their designs, building a foundation for socially responsible practice.

3. Support for Student Development and Feedback Literacy

The programme prioritises feedback literacy, ensuring students learn to appreciate,

interpret, and act upon feedback effectively. Regular feedback opportunities, from portfolio reviews and critiques to self-reflection exercises, empower students to take control of their learning. Specific support mechanisms include:

- Peer Review and Collaboration: Peer assessment is incorporated in studio settings, allowing students to give and receive constructive feedback. This builds a collaborative learning environment, reinforcing the values of teamwork and shared learning.

- Formative and Summative Balance: The MArch programme balances formative (e.g., interim reviews, peer feedback) and summative (e.g., final portfolios, project reports) assessments, providing structured opportunities for students to implement feedback before final evaluations. This approach fosters ongoing development and helps students build resilience and confidence in their abilities.

- Explicit Guidance on Feedback Use: Modules provide explicit guidance on incorporating feedback and feedforward into subsequent work. For instance, feedback on early portfolio submissions is integrated into final assessments, enabling students to demonstrate growth and refinement in their design skills over time. Students are also encouraged to document how they've acted on feedback within their portfolios, demonstrating a proactive approach to continuous improvement.

4. Holistic Progression and Inclusivity

The programme is structured to support progressive learning across modules, ensuring assessments align with students' growing skills and knowledge. An overarching assessment timeline avoids clustering of major assessments, reducing student stress and enabling effective time management. This progression is designed to support students through key transitional stages, from foundational knowledge in the 1st Year to specialised expertise and professional readiness in the 2nd Year.

- Distributed Assessment: Assessments are strategically distributed across semester allowing students to plan and focus on each stage of their learning journey. This

structured timeline fosters a cohesive experience, supporting students to stay organised and engaged.

- Inclusive Assessment Design: The variety in assessment types—portfolios, presentations, reports, and reflections—caters to diverse student needs and learning preferences. Flexible approaches within each assessment, such as the choice of media for portfolio submissions, ensure accessibility and inclusivity. By prioritising assessment for learning through diverse, practice-oriented assessments, the programme supports all students to achieve their potential and develop skills that are personally and professionally meaningful.

This comprehensive, programmatic assessment strategy fosters a deep connection between learning and assessment, preparing MArch graduates to enter the field as capable, adaptable, and socially responsible professionals. By aligning assessments with programmatic learning outcomes, authentic practice, and UWE's commitment to inclusive and sustainable education, the MArch programme creates a cohesive and impactful educational experience.

Student support: The MArch offers a comprehensive student support structure, including:

Placement and Career Support: Dedicated guidance for students undertaking live projects and placements, helping them navigate professional environments and career development.

Research and Academic Resources: Access to UWE's extensive research centres and facilities, supporting students in exploring advanced design solutions and sustainable practices.

Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity: The programme promotes a supportive and inclusive environment, ensuring students have access to mental health resources and peer mentoring

Skills Workshops and Digital Training: Regular workshops help students stay current with technological advancements and design software, ensuring proficiency in both digital and analogue design.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

In Year 1 students will take 90 credits.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules

Students will take 90 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL48-15-3	Architectural Ethics and Agency 2025-26	15
UBLL45-30-3	Zero Carbon Design and Innovation 2025-26	30
UBLL47-30-3	Exploratory Design Studio 2025-26	30
UBLL49-15-3	Critical Architectural Practices 2025-26	15

Year 2

In Year 2 students will take 60 credits.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules

Students will take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL4B-15-M	Future Practice in Architecture 2026-27	15
UBLL4C-15-M	Critical Manifesto 2026-27	15
UBLL4L-30-M	Practice Studio 2026-27	30

Year 3

In Year 3 students will take 90 credits.

Year 3 Compulsory Modules
Students will take 90 credits of modules from Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL4A-60-M	Design Thesis 2027-28	60
UBLL4F-30-M	Ecological and Regenerative Approaches 2027-28	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Graduates gain advanced skills in sustainable design, technical proficiency, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Equipped with a strong ethical foundation, they understand the importance of fire and life safety, ecological responsibility, and cultural competence in architecture. Through experience in digital and analogue tools, problem-solving, and reflective practice, graduates can create innovative, inclusive, and resilient architectural solutions. Their ability to integrate regulatory standards with design principles prepares them to address complex challenges responsibly, ensuring their readiness to make impactful contributions in diverse professional environments.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The programme is designed in alignment with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) document Tomorrow's Architects: Competency Outcomes for Architects which outlines the threshold competencies required for registration as an architect irrespective of the route taken to registration.

The programme incorporates RIBA's newly established Education and Professional Development Framework known as The Way Ahead, which introduces a unified standard for education from pre-registration to professional practice. This framework mandates key competencies that address pressing global issues, including climate literacy, ethical practice, and social responsibility.

The programme meets the Architecture Apprenticeship Standard at Level 7, as

defined by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE). The program aligns with the latest version of the standard, Reference: ST0533, Version: 1.1, updated on 09/11/2023. This standard ensures that the curriculum addresses critical Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) required in contemporary architectural practice.

The curriculum reflects QAA's Subject Benchmark Statement for Architecture (2020), which outlines core competencies and the interdisciplinary nature of architecture as a discipline encompassing technical, environmental, historical, and social dimensions. These benchmarks emphasise the importance of aesthetic, technical, and cultural knowledge, while supporting an understanding of architectural design's evolving role in addressing issues like climate change, globalisation, and social diversity. Also providing alignment with the QAA Masters Degree Characteristics Statement (2020).

The programme also aligns with EU Directive 2005/36/EC, Article 46, ensuring the qualification meets EU-recognised standards for professional training in architecture, particularly regarding skill sets such as design proficiency, sustainability, and ethical practice. UWE Bristol's adherence to these standards facilitates graduate readiness for the international architectural profession, providing recognition that supports career mobility.

The programme has been mapped to the UN SDGs and AdvanceHE's Education for Sustainable Development competencies, ensuring sustainability is embedded throughout the course.

Together, these reference points guide the programme's structure, emphasising progression from foundational to specialised knowledge and embedding sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility at every level. This framework ensures that students meet rigorous educational standards and prepares them to address the complex, multidisciplinary challenges in contemporary architecture.

Part E: Regulations

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