Programme Specification

Architecture and Environmental Design [SriLanka]

Version: 2026-27, v2.0, Validated

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Architecture and Environmental Design [SriLanka]

Highest award: MArch Architecture and Environmental Design

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Affiliated institutions: CSA

Teaching institutions: CSA

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: Not applicable

Modes of delivery: Part-time

Entry requirements: City School of Architecture's entry requirements for the CSA Graduate Diploma in Architecture and Environmental Design (Part 2) apply. This typically includes:

Successful completion of the UWE BArch Architecture programme, or an alternative qualification recognised as equivalent to the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA) Part 1; and
Confirmation of exemption from the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA) Part I examination; and
A minimum of 52 weeks' practical training experience under a Chartered Architect; and
Successful completion of the interview process conducted by CSA.

Full details are available on the CSA website:
https://www.csacolombo.edu.lk/admissions/part-02-criteria-and-admissions-checklist

Applicants whose first language is not English and whose previous qualifications were not taught and assessed in English, must demonstrate an appropriate level of English language proficiency, established through CSA entry requirements and the interview process. Further information on acceptable English language qualifications can be found on the UWE website:
https://www.uwe.ac.uk/courses/applying/international-applications/english-language-requirements#afc50d09d-85cb-4986-bb92-b4382b5b9c2b

For implementation from: 01 September 2026

Programme code: K10F10

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: This degree is designed to equip students with the theoretical, philosophical, and applied research skills necessary for contemporary architectural practice. It emphasises practice-based learning in architecture, with a particular focus on environmental design, ensuring students engage with real-world challenges and sustainable solutions. Directed at an advanced level of learning, the programme integrates a philosophical approach to architecture with specialist input in key areas of design orientations, encouraging students to pursue academic research, specialisations, and advanced degrees.

The programme is structured as a three-year, part-time work and study programme to support practice-based education. During the first two years, students apprentice in trainer practices for three days of the week while attending classes on three days a week.

As a practice-based programme, it prioritises hands-on learning and the real-world application of knowledge through an integrated approach that combines real life practical work experience and studio-based pedagogy, theoretical inquiry, environmental and economic sustainability, urban contextual analysis, and professional ethics and practice skills, ensuring that graduates are fully prepared for postgraduate-level architectural practice, with the possibility of alternative professional alignment to engage in Change Making – to develop critical and proactive thinkers, policy makers, visionaries, Consulting – to connect academic knowledge with real-world professional practice, Research & Development – evidence-based architectural practice, and Capacity Building – to strengthen institutional and professional capabilities within the built environment.

This programme is the second of the two degrees needed to become an Architect in Sri Lanka and is designed to meet the requirements for prescription and validation by the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA) and Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) as a Part 2 qualification in architecture.

The programme addresses the competency profile and key learning outcomes stipulated by the Board of Architectural Education of the SLIA and the Themes and Values established by the RIBA. The programme ensures that graduates develop a strong disciplinary foundation and the capacity to meet professional expectations as a Part II Graduate while meeting the standards of the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architecture, and Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) to equip students to respond to evolving professional demands, societal and environmental challenges, technological advancements, and ethical considerations, grounded in contemporary best practices and the core objectives of architectural education.

Successful completion of the programme leads to the award of Master of Architecture (MArch) Architecture and Environmental Design, which is conferred by UWE Bristol.

The programme CSA Graduate Diploma in Architecture and Environmental Design conferred by City School of Architecture, is designed to meet the requirements to be validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and gain exemption from

the RIBA Part 2 as a programme delivered in Sri Lanka. The validation is sought by the City School of Architecture as an independent process.

Features of the programme: Professional Alignment: The programme is aligned with the competency profile stipulated by SLIA, and the RIBA Themes and Values, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for professional progression.

The Programme reinforces CSA's distinctive practice-based identity and its commitment to sustainability, and positions it within a growing global discourse of environmental sustainability with a strong emphasis on environmental design.

The robustness of the programme is supported by a focus on the following guiding principles:

Global Relevance and Local Context: The programme develops advanced capabilities in negotiating the interplay between global architectural discourse and local contextual imperatives. It encourages graduates to critically engage with regional identity, vernacular traditions, and explore their reinterpretation within contemporary practices. Through research-led design, advanced construction methods, and contextually responsive strategies, graduates are encouraged to generate solutions that are research informed, innovative, culturally grounded, and aligned with international standards and accreditation frameworks, while addressing complex social, environmental, and urban conditions, maintaining a strong cultural and regional relevance through focusing on cultural heritage, local materials, and craftsmanship.

Human-Centric Design: The programme emphasizes developing expertise in designing spaces that prioritise human wellbeing, inclusivity, and social equity while encouraging critical engagement with diverse cultural, social, and physical needs. Graduates are trained to produce socially responsive architectural solutions that promote community engagement, and address issues of accessibility, safety, and cultural sensitivity at a postgraduate level.

Sustainability and Resilience: The programme develops a rigorous understanding of

environmental design, grounded in building physics, passive design principles, and climate-responsive strategies. Students engage with the historical and contemporary evolution of the discipline in the context of the climate emergency, net-zero obligations, and shifting professional standards. Graduates gain expertise in sustainable and resilient design strategies, circular economy principles, and advanced approaches such as zero-carbon, net-positive, regenerative design, adaptive reuse, biomimicry, resilient and adaptive urban interventions. Competence in performance analysis tools enables them to evaluate and optimize the environmental performance of both existing buildings and new proposals. An integrated understanding of the correlations between microclimate, urban morphology, and building ecology equips graduates to design place-specific, climate-responsive environments. Research-driven projects foster innovation, preparing them to create architecture and urban spaces that are ecologically responsible, socially equitable, and resilient over time.

Technological Integration: The programme emphasizes critical application of technology for design innovation, performance optimisation, and interdisciplinary problem-solving, enabling students to explore complex geometries, material experimentation, and integrated building systems within research-informed design processes and emerging construction technologies, emerging technologies, including smart materials. It further equips graduates to develop proficiency in advanced digital and computational design tools, including parametric modelling, BIM, fabrication/simulation.

Business Skills in Architecture: The programme prepares graduates to engage strategically with professional practice, emphasising leadership, project management, construction economics, value engineering, financial planning, real estate investment and development, and risk assessment, addressing current global economic and financial scenarios, including real estate ventures and property development strategies. Graduates develop competencies in entrepreneurial thinking, navigate real estate markets, innovative business models, marketing, branding, entrepreneurship, and build their own professional identity. Emphasis is placed on critical decision-making and strategic leadership in complex architectural, urban, and infrastructure projects. Graduates develop competencies in professional

communication, and presentation to academic and professional audiences, including structured training in presenting design proposals to clients, stakeholders, and specialist audiences.

Ethics and Responsibility: Graduates cultivate a refined understanding of ethical responsibility in architecture. Emphasis is placed on sustainability, social accountability, cultural heritage, and environmental stewardship, fostering the capacity to evaluate the broader societal, cultural, and ecological impact of design decisions. Graduates are expected to demonstrate professional integrity, accountability, and ethical judgment in complex and multi-scalar design challenges. Graduates are trained on the responsible and ethical use of AI in line with the prevailing global scenario.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration: The programme promotes collaborative, cross-disciplinary engagement, exposing graduates to diverse perspectives from allied fields such as urban planning, landscape architecture, engineering, infrastructure, environmental science, ecology, and social sciences. Graduates develop skills to work effectively in multicultural, interdisciplinary teams, applying integrated, systems-based thinking, and evidence-based approaches to complex architectural and urban challenges. The programme cultivates these competencies through exposure to international case studies, collaborative academic initiatives, and practical exercises with peers, industry specialists, and exchange students. This is strengthened with the work-and-study mode, where graduates engage in real-world practice environments during postgraduate Practical Training modules, working within registered trainer practices on live projects. Active engagement with clients, consultants, and all members of the industry gives a broad, practice-based learning experience. Experience in client handling, developing, and presenting design proposals to clients, preparing construction documents, and engaging with construction administration under supervision enables students to link theoretical knowledge with actual scenarios, thus preparing them for professional practice of architecture.

Innovation and Applied Research: The programme fosters advanced research-led design and critical inquiry, with a focus on Research for Design paradigm,

encouraging experimentation, theoretical exploration, and innovative problem-solving. Graduates are trained to apply rigorous analysis, design thinking, and empirical research to formulate design strategies, and apply them to generate pioneering innovative architectural solutions, and to contribute to the advancement of architectural knowledge, critically evaluate emerging trends, and lead innovation in both practice and scholarship. This approach aligns with the practice-based pedagogy, preparing students for the real-world practice, where research is not undertaken as an end in itself, but in support of the development of methodologies that engage research in the generation of imaginative and rigorously determined architectural outcomes. Possible partnerships with relevant external organisations to be explored.

Educational Aims: The programme aims to:

1. Cultivate advanced critical and synthetic capacities that enable graduates to interrogate, position, and implement architectural design propositions at a macro level across urban, contextual, and societal scales, fostering intellectual independence, imaginative ambition, and innovative design thinking to shape the built environments that are analytically rigorous, socially responsive, and professionally impactful.

2. Cultivate advanced scholarly and practical competencies in architectural theory, history, and practice, to synthesize design interventions that are innovative, culturally grounded, contextually adaptive, environmentally responsible, and ecologically sustainable design solutions, applying relevant statutory standards.

3. Produce graduates who can design innovative, sustainable, and resilient architectural solutions that anticipate evolving societal needs, ecological balance, technological innovation, and long-term environmental impact, applying the principles of circular design, designing for net-zero and regenerative design, instilling a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, heritage conservation, and the need for adaptive reuse of existing building stock.

4. Equip graduates with advanced technological, computational, and research-driven

skills and a thorough understanding of the principles and methods of environmental design required to apply an environmentally responsive approach to make evidence-based design decisions, to modify their perception and approach to architecture, and to make a contribution to society by delivering sustainable built environments that perform better.

5. Prepare graduates with a robust methodology in environmental design, which relates to the various stages of architectural design, emphasizing the generative potential of a combined bioclimatic approach focusing on the health and well-being of occupants.

6. Foster a critical learning approach to analyse and interpret ideas through original written and visual work that contributes to academic and professional discourse, and develop a range of effective communication and presentation skills that are complementary to the graphical representational methods.

7. Prepares graduates for interdisciplinary engagement, to collaborate across diverse professional, cultural, and academic contexts, integrating perspectives from urban planning, engineering, social sciences, and environmental studies to enrich architectural practice.

8. Prepares graduates for a critical understanding of architectural practice within the profession and construction industry, with a deeper theoretical engagement, environmental design integration, and research-informed design exploration, strengthening the idea of Research for Design, to create innovative design solutions.

9. Foster integration of global architectural trends with local identities and traditions, promoting inclusivity, social responsibility, and wellbeing, developing leadership, project management, and strategic professional capabilities to operate effectively in competitive local and international contexts.

Graduates are encouraged to demonstrate self-direction and originality, cultivate critical reflection, and uphold ethical practice, enabling them to engage with complex architectural challenges creatively and responsibly.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

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

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of theoretical knowledge streams of architecture and environmental design, integrating advanced technology, environmental sustainability, society and culture, professional practice, and research as specified under the SLIA Part II Curriculum.

PO2. Demonstrate critical awareness and analysis of contemporary local and global architectural issues, deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, make sound judgments, and develop contextually responsive architectural design solutions through critical inquiry, reflective practice, and formulate competent, innovative design solutions.

PO3. Create innovative, environmentally responsible, and resource-efficient complex architectural design solutions that effectively integrate materials, processes, technologies, and construction techniques and relevant statutory standards to achieve sustainability and resilience.

PO4. Make informed, ethical, and contextually appropriate decisions through critical awareness that balances design quality with considerations of health, safety, well-being, environmental performance, socio-cultural values, economic viability, and technical feasibility.

PO5. Apply a rigorous methodology in environmental design across all stages of architectural design, integrating bioclimatic principles with occupant-focused approaches to generate design solutions that prioritize health, wellbeing, and environmental responsiveness.

PO6. Critically analyze, interpret, and articulate architectural ideas through original written and visual work that contributes to academic and professional discourse.

PO7. Demonstrate how boundaries of architectural knowledge are advanced through research-led enquiry and critical analysis of cultural, environmental, and social narratives, synthesizing complex spatial and sustainability challenges with originality and informed judgement.

PO8. Demonstrate an understanding of the architect’s ethical and professional responsibilities within legal, regulatory, and contractual frameworks, promoting integrity, inclusivity, and accountability in the built environment within global, national, and professional climate targets.

PO9. Apply knowledge of business management, project delivery, and professional leadership to support the effective, ethical, and sustainable operation of architectural practice, and effectively communicate decisions to multiple stakeholders.

PO10. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and problem-solving skills, and the ability to plan and implement tasks independently that reflect attitudes, values, and critical reflection.

Assessment strategy: This programme employs a holistic, programme-wide assessment strategy that integrates assessment seamlessly into the learning journey.

This approach ensures that assessment at the master's level builds critical thinking skills, provide structured opportunities for critical reflection, advance knowledge and investigative skills, high level of theoretical engagement, guided independent study and professionalism. By employing authentic, varied, and practice-oriented assessment methods, the programme supports students in cultivating the specialised skills, sophisticated critical thinking, confident design judgment, that reinforce advanced professional competencies, and support students' professional maturation and reflective practice.

Opportunities for formative assessment are embedded in the module teaching and take a variety of forms, including: presentations, group discussions and reflections, and instructor feedback on presentations. These activities will help prepare for the tutorial/assignments. The design studio module will be further enhanced by integration of coursework wherever applicable.

Integrated Assessment Types and Alignment with Learning Outcomes

Assessments are intentionally diverse and strategically aligned with the knowledge, skills, and competencies that graduates are expected to master.

Assessment for each year in the Design Studio is conducted through continuous studio-based assessments with academics and practitioners from the field who

provide critical feedback to support students to refine their work for the final assessment. 40% of the assessment is through continuous assessment, while 60% is for the final review, placing adequate importance on the continuous learning process, rather than focusing only on the final product. The design portfolio review establishes the standard and confirms the assessments at the end of the first and second years. At the end of the programme, a comprehensive design project assesses students' integrated design responses, bringing together the theoretical, environmentally sustainable, technical, economic, and professional dimensions developed throughout the programme.

Assessment of Theoretical Modules will be done through coursework and written examinations to assess students' mastery of architectural theory, environmental theory, sustainability, and architectural research. Coursework allows students to integrate this knowledge with their design work, while controlled exams test their analytical rigor and conceptual understanding. 40% of the assessment is through coursework assessment, while 60% is for written examinations. Some selected modules will be assessed through 100% assignments.

Core assessment types include:

Design Projects and Reflective Critique: Students take on design-based assessments that require them to apply theoretical knowledge in real, historical, regional, and urban complex contexts. These projects often address professional brief formulation and emphasize problem-solving, stakeholder engagement, and ethical decision-making. Students are required to develop their own design philosophy, and with a series of interim design reviews, students critically examine their own process and incorporate feedback to refine their design strategies, enhancing both their creative and professional maturity.

Oral Presentations and Design Reviews: Regular presentations (group or individual) help students articulate their ideas effectively to peers, tutors, and industry professionals. students to develop their communication and critical thinking skills. Immediate feedback from presentations fosters assessment as learning, helps students reflect on their approaches, refines design strategies and designs, enabling

iterative improvements to improve their approaches.

Portfolio: This assessment method captures students' design progression at the end of each academic session. It enables students to showcase their understanding of architectural theory and how it informs design development and conceptual growth, cultural relevance, advanced technological skills, and environmental sustainability. By documenting their learning trajectory, students not only demonstrate their progress but also reflect on their own processes and decisions, facilitating self-directed improvement.

Assignments: Written Assignments, essays, research reports, case studies and presentations of findings, encourage students to strengthen theoretical knowledge and critical awareness of current issues, precedents, and contemporary practices. These tasks strengthen their knowledge and investigative skills, critical analysis and evidence-based reasoning, stakeholder engagement, and effective communication, which are essential for making sound judgments in decision-making. Case studies and design research also help students demonstrate a deeper understanding of theoretical knowledge and historical precedents, display critical awareness of current issues related to culture and context, make appropriate urban responses, examine sustainability frameworks to make sound judgments, and apply techniques relevant to the professional practice environment in depth.

Examinations: written examinations under controlled conditions to assess knowledge and understanding of core theoretical and environmental design concepts. These exams test analytical reasoning, application of theory to hypothetical or real-world scenarios, and clarity of thought in the written format. This method provides an equitable environment to measure each student's mastery of knowledge at a postgraduate level.

Student support: Students are supported in their learning through field visits, and practical hands-on experiences with industry professionals. The programme is managed by the Head of School who oversees the operation of the programme and the delivery of the modules, assisted by the Associate Director (Architecture) and

Partnership Director. The University of the West of England (UWE) School of Architecture and Environment has a Link Tutor who manages the collaboration between City School of Architecture (CSA) and the University. Being part time work and study students, they have the added advantage of engaging in real live projects that help them test their knowledge and understanding. Most organised visits for an entire cohort will be organised by the school, where transport and travel insurance will be provided. However, the students will be required to self-finance other expenses. On certain occasions, the students will have to visit sites, authorities or places for research on their own. Any letters of permission etc., that may be required will be provided on request. In addition, academic support is available obtained through the UWE Link tutor and the other digital learning portals available through the Partnership.

Regular meetings of student representatives with the Head of School, Deputy Heads of School, and the Academic Registrar are held to discuss and resolve any issues.

Student well-being is supported through a structured system involving multiple layers of guidance and care. Year coordinators and mentors serve as the first point of contact for academic concerns, while an appointed academic coordinator manages lecture scheduling and related matters. Beyond academics, a Student Wellbeing Officer is available for personal approaches, and a Student Counsellor provides group sessions during orientation or mid-term to help students manage stress and personal challenges. For those needing additional support, individual counselling sessions with a qualified eastern psychologist are offered online, with up to six sessions available weekly. The Policy on Behaviour and Misconduct ensures a clear process for addressing complaints, while student class representatives regularly meet with the Head of School, Deputy Heads, and the academic registrar to raise and resolve general concerns. Additionally, students may request individual appointments with the Head of School to discuss specific issues.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1
The student must take 80 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules
The student must take 80 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLLEN-8-M	Design 5.1 (Culture and Identity) 2026-27	8
UBLLEP-8-M	Design 5.2 (Housing and Community) 2026-27	8
UBLLDR-16-M	Practical Training 5 (Practical Apprenticeship) 2026-27	16
UBLLEU-8-M	Theory of Architecture 5 (Critical Theories in Architectural Design) 2026-27	8
UBLLER-8-M	Society and Architectural Conservation 5 2026-27	8
UBLLDT-8-M	Environmental Planning and Urban Design 5 2026-27	8
UBLLE4-8-M	Technology 5 (Advanced Building Services) 2026-27	8
UBLLE5-8-M	Environment 5 (Adaptive and Resilient Built Environments) 2026-27	8
UBLLE6-8-M	Profession 5 (Legal Framework for Architects) 2026-27	8

Year 2
The student must take 80 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules
The student must take 80 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules. Students commence teaching on Urban Design 5,6 in Year 1 and complete the module in Year 2.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLLEV-16-M	Design 6 (Urban Sustainable High-rise Studio) 2027-28	16
UBLLES-8-M	Research and Communication 6 (Research for Design) 2027-28	8
UBLLE7-16-M	Practical Training 6 (Practical Apprenticeship) 2027-28	16
UBLLEG-8-M	Technology 6 (Advanced Structures and Fire Safety) 2027-28	8
UBLLEH-8-M	Environment 6.1 (Energy Sustainability) 2027-28	8
UBLLEJ-8-M	Environment 6.2 (High Performance Building) 2027-28	8
UBLLEK-8-M	Profession 6.1 (Building Economics) 2027-28	8
UBLLEL-8-M	Profession 6.2 (Profession and Practice) 2027-28	8

Year 3
The student must take 80 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Year 3 Compulsory modules
The student must take 80 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLLET-24-M	Architectural Research 7 2028-29	24
UBLLEM-56-M	Comprehensive Design Project 7 2028-29	56

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Graduates will demonstrate advanced knowledge of architectural and environmental design, integrating theoretical, philosophical, and research-based approaches to address local and global challenges. They will develop innovative, sustainable, and contextually responsive design solutions informed by critical thinking and professional judgment. Equipped with strong research, communication, and management skills, graduates will uphold ethical and legislative responsibilities, prioritizing health, safety, well-being, and environmental stewardship while effectively engaging with the business and practice of architecture.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The revised SLIA Curriculum, alongside the new Themes and Values introduced by the RIBA, has significantly influenced the programme design. It aligns with the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architecture 2026, Subject Benchmark in Architecture by Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka (December 2010), and the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) (2015), addressing shifts in the profession, evolving societal, environmental, and technological challenges, ethical considerations, and contemporary educational best practices, while maintaining the core objectives of architectural education. This framework has shaped both the overall structure and the depth of the programme's content.

Part E: Regulations

Approved variant to University Academic Regulations and Procedures.

This award is governed by assessment regulations that have been approved by UWE's Academic Board as a variation to UWE's standard assessment regulations.