Programme Specification

Architecture {Foundation}[Frenchay]

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Architecture {Foundation}[Frenchay]

Highest award: BSc (Hons) Architecture

Interim award: BSc Architecture

Interim award: DipHE Architecture

Interim award: CertHE Architecture

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: Yes

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:

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

Modes of delivery: Full-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website.

For implementation from: 01 September 2025

Programme code: K10R13

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The BSc (Hons) Architecture programme at UWE Bristol is a dynamic undergraduate degree designed to equip students with the critical, creative, and technical skills necessary for contemporary architectural practice. With a distinctive focus on the relationship between design ambition and material reality, the programme delves deeply into the principles of construction, materials, and the integration of innovative building technologies. This approach ensures that students not only conceptualise impactful architectural designs but also understand the practicalities of how these visions are realised, fostering an appreciation for both the craft and the science of building. As a foundational stage for professional development as an architect, this four-year course emphasises sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation, preparing graduates to respond effectively to the pressing environmental, societal, and cultural challenges of the built environment while equipping them with the expertise to navigate the technical and material complexities of contemporary construction.

This programme fosters a reflective and innovative approach to design, encouraging students to integrate technical expertise with an understanding of ethical and environmental responsibilities while pursuing their own interests. Students engage with concepts such as climate resilience, regenerative design, and urban inclusivity while developing their ability to conceptualise and realise architectural projects that meet the needs of diverse communities. With an emphasis on hands-on learning and real-world application, the course blends studio-based pedagogy, technical workshops, and live projects with theoretical and contextual studies.

The BSc (Hons) Architecture is designed to meet the requirements for prescription and validation by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) as a Part 1 qualification in architecture, while serving as a foundational qualification for achieving Architects Registration Board (ARB) recognition following further study at the Master's level.

The programme addresses the Themes and Values established by RIBA and works

toward the Competency Outcomes for Architects defined by ARB, encompassing essential areas such as design, technology, sustainability, cultural context, and professional practice. These standards are echoed in the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architecture, ensuring that students graduate with a robust foundation in the discipline and the ability to meet professional expectations. The alignment with these criteria supports not only academic rigour but also the professional relevance of the programme, equipping students with the competencies required to advance toward the ARB Academic and Practice Competencies, RIBA Part 2, and beyond. By embedding these professional standards into the course design, the programme ensures that graduates are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of architectural practice while contributing to the profession's evolving needs, particularly in addressing climate literacy, ethical practice, health, and fire and life safety.

Students can (subject to the option being available in any given year) apply to spend a year abroad after Year 3. In such a case students would take a compulsory 15 credit module during year 4 when abroad (and be required to fund it) before then undertaking their final year (Year 5) of study. The 15-credit module would be taken in addition to the compulsory 360 credits required for the award of the degree and would need to be passed in order for it to be recorded as a successful year of study. This option (should it be available in any given year) is subject to the making of a successful application which is assessed through a competitive process as the number of places available is limited. Only students who have passed all level 4 and 5 modules and are successful in their application are eligible to study abroad. There is therefore no guarantee that any student who so desires can automatically undertake a year of study abroad.

Features of the programme: Professional Alignment: The programme is aligned with RIBA Themes and Values and ARB Competency Outcomes for Architects, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for professional progression. This includes achieving ARB Academic and Practice Competencies through further study and practical experience.

Sustainability Focus: Climate resilience and sustainable urbanism are integrated into

all aspects of the design process, emphasising environmental responsibility and forward-thinking practices.

Hands-On Learning: Studio-based teaching is complemented by live projects, real-world engagements, and community-based collaborations, providing students with practical experience in addressing architectural challenges.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Students engage with related disciplines such as environmental design, planning, and construction practices, fostering teamwork that mirrors professional architectural practice.

Global and Local Perspectives: The programme encourages students to tackle architectural challenges at both community and international levels, developing solutions that are meaningful and context-sensitive.

Digital Literacy: Students develop practice-facing digital skills, such as CAD and BIM, alongside an understanding of construction technologies and material systems, ensuring they are equipped to navigate the technical complexities of contemporary design.

Educational Aims: The programme aims to:

Provide a robust foundation in architectural design, history, theory and technical knowledge, fostering an understanding of how these elements interact within broader societal and environmental frameworks.

Equip students with the ability to critically analyse and respond to complex design briefs, integrating sustainability, inclusivity, and technical proficiency into architectural practice.

Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, enabling students to work effectively across professional and cultural contexts.

Support academic and professional development through reflective, research-

informed, and practice-led learning approaches.

Foster an appreciation for the craft and science of architecture by combining design ambition with an understanding of materials, construction methods, and technical systems.

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. Develop innovative, sustainable design propositions that address and integrate social, cultural, and environmental challenges across diverse contexts.

PO2. Analyse contemporary designs within their social, historical, and theoretical contexts, demonstrating the application of critical thinking.

PO3. Examine the complexity of interdisciplinary practice by evaluating the arguments, assumptions, and behaviours that underpin productive collaboration.

PO4. Explore ethical practices and assess the designer's role in advancing justice, social equity, and sustainable approaches in the context of the climate emergency.

PO5. Analyse statutory frameworks and evolving industry standards for stages of development, planning, procurement, health and safety, and wellbeing, demonstrating application through reflective and simulated practice.

PO6. Demonstrate a curiosity-driven approach to design by engaging with diverse cultural perspectives, backgrounds, and activities, fostering continuous learning and innovation to develop a unique design identity and address architectural challenges.

PO7. Communicate complex architectural ideas and design concepts effectively through visual, verbal, and written methods, demonstrating clarity, creativity, and critical thinking.

PO8. Utilise digital and analogue techniques, including CAD, BIM, and emerging technologies, to articulate and present design concepts with clarity and impact.

PO9. Demonstrate a knowledge of sustainable and resilient architectural solutions by integrating structures, materials, and building systems with considerations for fire and life safety, environmental impact, and climate resilience.

PO10. Apply spatial design strategies to enhance the relationships between space, form, and human experience across social, cultural, and environmental contexts.

Assessment strategy: The BSc (Hons) Architecture programme employs a comprehensive, programmatic assessment strategy that aligns with UWE Bristol's commitment to making assessment an integral part of the learning journey. This approach ensures that assessments build critical skills, reinforce key competencies, and provide structured opportunities for reflection, growth, and professional readiness. By employing authentic, varied, and practice-oriented assessment methods, the programme supports students in developing the skills and confidence needed to succeed in both academic and professional contexts.

Integrated Assessment Types and Alignment with Learning Outcomes

Assessments in the BSc (Hons) Architecture programme are intentionally diverse and carefully aligned with the knowledge, skills, and competencies that graduates are expected to demonstrate. Core assessment types include:

Portfolio Development: Portfolios are a central assessment method, capturing students' design progression and technical mastery across all levels of study. They enable students to showcase their understanding of key architectural principles, including sustainability, cultural responsiveness, and technical proficiency. By documenting their learning journey, students develop reflective insights and demonstrate their growth over time. The portfolio format supports assessment for learning, allowing students to refine their work iteratively based on continuous feedback.

Design Projects and Reflections: Design-based assessments challenge students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical, creative contexts. These projects often involve responding to real-world briefs, fostering skills in problem-solving, stakeholder engagement, and ethical decision-making. Reflective components encourage students to analyse their design process critically, integrating feedback to improve their problem-solving strategies and professional understanding.

Oral Presentations and Design Reviews: Regular presentations help students articulate their ideas effectively to peers, tutors, and industry professionals. These sessions are designed to simulate professional environments, enabling students to

develop their communication and critical thinking skills. Immediate feedback from presentations fosters assessment as learning, helping students refine their designs and adapt their approaches.

Written Assessments and Case Studies: Written assessments encourage students to explore architectural theory, sustainability, and historical contexts in depth. These tasks develop research skills, critical analysis, and evidence-based reasoning, which are essential for making informed design decisions. Essays and case studies also support students in understanding architecture’s broader societal and environmental implications.

Authenticity and Professional Relevance

The assessment strategy is designed to mirror professional architectural practice, ensuring that students are well-prepared for industry expectations. By incorporating tasks that align with practice roles and responsibilities, assessments promote both employability and professional relevance.

Live Projects: Live projects and collaborative assignments are integral to the programme, allowing students to engage with community and industry stakeholders. These experiences deepen their understanding of architecture’s ethical and social dimensions, preparing them for professional challenges.

Digital and Technological Competency: Assessments incorporate the use of industry-standard tools, including CAD, BIM, and digital fabrication technologies. These tasks help students develop digital literacy, ensuring they are proficient in the technologies shaping modern architectural practice.

Sustainability and Inclusivity Focus: Assessments require students to integrate ecological considerations, climate resilience, and accessibility into their designs. This emphasis on sustainability and inclusivity ensures that students develop a socially responsible approach to architecture, aligned with professional standards.

Support for Student Development and Feedback Literacy

Feedback is central to the BSc (Hons) Architecture programme's assessment strategy, helping students develop resilience, adaptability, and self-directed learning habits. A range of mechanisms supports students in engaging with and acting upon feedback effectively:

Formative Feedback Opportunities: Students receive regular formative feedback through one-to-one tutorials, interim reviews, draft submissions, and peer critiques. These opportunities allow students to refine their work and address challenges before final assessments, promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

Peer Review and Collaboration: Peer assessment encourages students to give and receive constructive feedback, fostering a collaborative learning environment. This approach builds teamwork skills while encouraging students to reflect critically on their own and others' work.

Guidance on Feedback Integration: Modules include explicit guidance on how to use feedback to improve future work. For example, feedback on early portfolio submissions is carried forward to final assessments, allowing students to demonstrate how they have responded to critiques and refined their designs.

Holistic Progression and Inclusivity

The assessment strategy supports progressive learning across the three years of the programme, ensuring students develop the competencies needed for professional readiness. Assessments are designed to align with the increasing complexity of the curriculum, allowing students to build on their skills and knowledge systematically.

Structured Assessment Timeline: Assessments are strategically distributed across semesters, avoiding clustering and ensuring that students have sufficient time to focus on each task. This structure promotes effective time management and reduces stress, supporting student well-being.

Inclusive Assessment Design: A variety of assessment types, portfolios,

presentations, written work, and collaborative projects, caters to diverse learning styles and preferences. Flexibility within assessments also ensures accessibility and inclusivity. These approaches support all students in achieving their potential, regardless of background or learning needs.

Programmatic Alignment with Professional Standards

Assessments are designed to align with the ARB Competency Outcomes and RIBA Themes and Values, ensuring students are well-prepared for Part 2 studies and eventual professional recognition. The emphasis on sustainability, ethical practice, and technical proficiency ensures that graduates meet the expectations of contemporary architectural practice.

By embedding authentic, inclusive, and practice-oriented assessments throughout the curriculum, the BSc (Hons) Architecture programme prepares students to navigate the complexities of the profession with confidence, adaptability, and responsibility.

Student support: The BSc (Hons) Architecture programme at UWE Bristol is committed to providing a comprehensive student support system that promotes academic success, professional development, and personal well-being. Key support elements include:
Academic Personal Tutors (APTs): In line with the National Union of Students (NUS) Charter on Personal Tutors, every student is assigned an Academic Personal Tutor (APT). APTs provide individualised academic guidance, monitor student progress, and act as a first point of contact for any concerns or challenges. Regular meetings with APTs help students reflect on their learning and set goals for their academic and professional growth.

Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity: The programme emphasises a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Students have access to mental health resources, including counselling services, success coaches and stress management support. Peer mentoring schemes encourage students to share experiences and foster a

sense of community within the programme.

Students from diverse backgrounds are supported through accessible materials, activities, and assessments designed to accommodate varying abilities, geographic locations, and levels of digital access. The strategy integrates diverse cultural perspectives, ensuring all students feel represented and can explore their identities. Scaffolding helps students from different educational pathways build skills progressively, with explicit training for unfamiliar tasks like group work and presentations. Inclusive teaching fosters mutual respect, addressing microaggressions and biases, while varied assessment options allow students to play to their strengths. Continuous feedback, co-creation opportunities, and tailored support sessions empower students to succeed academically and professionally in a respectful and equitable environment.

Skills Workshops and Digital Training: Regular skills workshops are integrated into the curriculum, ensuring students stay up-to-date with the latest design software, including CAD, BIM, and visualisation tools.

Feedback and Reflective Learning: UWE places a strong emphasis on feedback literacy, ensuring students understand how to interpret and apply feedback effectively. Feedback is provided through portfolio reviews, critiques, and progress tutorials. Students are encouraged to document their growth and development, fostering reflective learning habits.

Technology-Enhanced Learning: UWE leverages digital platforms such as Blackboard and MS Teams to provide students with access to lecture recordings, assignment submissions, and collaborative workspaces. This ensures students can engage with course materials flexibly, catering to diverse learning preferences.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

Students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules
Students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLLFA-30-0	Context of Design 2026-27	30
UBLLFB-30-0	Foundations of Applied Mathematics and Engineering 2026-27	30
UBLML7-30-0	Foundation Design Studio 2026-27	30
UBLMYM-30-0	Foundation Design Communication 2026-27	30

Year 2
Students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules
Students mut take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL6T-30-1	Making Sustainable Architecture 2027-28	30
UBLL4S-30-1	Studio 1.1 - Form and Context 2027-28	30
UBLL4Y-30-1	Studio 1.2 - People and Environment 2027-28	30
UBLL58-15-1	Contexts of Architecture 1 - Cities and Society 2027-28	15
UBLL5S-15-1	Professional Principles and Digital Practice 2027-28	15

Year 3
Students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Year 3 Compulsory Modules
Students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL7D-15-2	Contexts of Architecture 2 - Histories and Theories 2028-29	15
UBLL7C-15-2	Collaboration and Coordination 2028-29	15
UBLL7B-30-2	Environmental Design Strategies and Innovations 2028-29	30
UBLL75-30-2	Architecture Studio 2.2 2028-29	30
UBLL74-30-2	Studio 2.1 - Living 2028-29	30

Year 4
Full time delivery:
Full-Time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 4 (excluding International Academic Year module).

International Academic Year:
Students taking the International Academic Year take only the 15-credit International Academic Year module in Year 4.

Year 4 Compulsory Module (International Academic Year)
Students taking the International Academic Year must take 15 credits from modules in Year 4.

Students have the opportunity (subject to the option being available in any given year) to apply to spend a year abroad after Year 3. Students would take a compulsory 15 credit module (International Academic Year module) during Year 4 when abroad before undertaking their final year (Year 5) of study.

This option (should it be available in any given year) is subject to the making of a successful application which is assessed through a competitive process as the number of places available is limited. Only students who have passed all Level 4 and 5 modules and are successful in their application are eligible to study abroad. There is therefore no guarantee that any student who so desires can automatically undertake a year of study abroad.

The 15 placement credits will be in addition to the 360 credits required for the award because 360 credits are required to meet the PSRB requirements.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLLQ1-15-3	International Academic Year (Architecture) 2029-30	15

Year 4 Compulsory Modules (Full-Time)
Full-Time students must take 120 credits from Compulsory Modules in Year 4.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL7Y-60-3	Architecture Studio 3 2029-30	60
UBLL7T-15-3	Critical Contexts 2029-30	15
UBLL7K-15-3	Employability, Ethics, and Enterprise 2029-30	15
UBLL7W-30-3	Connected Construction and Digital Design 2029-30	30

Year 5
Students on the International Academic Placement Year must take 120 credits in Year 5.

Year 5 Compulsory Modules
Students on the International Academic Placement Year must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL7T-15-3	Critical Contexts 2030-31	15
UBLL7Y-60-3	Architecture Studio 3 2030-31	60
UBLL7W-30-3	Connected Construction and Digital Design 2030-31	30
UBLL7K-15-3	Employability, Ethics, and Enterprise 2030-31	15

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Graduates of this programme will have developed critical, creative, and technical skills essential for architectural practice. They will possess expertise in sustainable design, construction technologies, and material systems, with the ability to conceptualise, communicate, and realise innovative, environmentally responsible architectural solutions. Through hands-on learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, they will be adept at addressing complex societal and environmental challenges, demonstrating ethical and professional competence. Equipped with digital and technical literacy, they are prepared to navigate the demands of contemporary practice with creativity, inclusivity, and technical precision.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The programme incorporates RIBA's 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 is also 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 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.

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 UNSDGs 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

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures: Academic regulations and procedures - Academic information | UWE Bristol

It is the Award Board's responsibility to determine whether the student's attainment at Level 3 is sufficient to progress to Level 4.

The requirements below, reflecting the preference of the accrediting body are permitted within the regulations:
No compensation is permitted on this programme from Level 4 onwards.
Compensation restrictions do not apply to a Level 3 Foundation Year.