Programme Specification

Architectural Design {Foundation} [GCET]

Version: 2026-27, v1.0, Validated

Contents

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Architectural Design {Foundation} [GCET]

Highest award: DipHE Architectural Design

Interim award: CertHE Architectural Design

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Affiliated institutions: Global College of Engineering and Technology (GCET)

Teaching institutions: Global College of Engineering and Technology (GCET)

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: Full-time

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

For implementation from: 01 October 2026

Programme code: K13G14

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The DipHE Architectural Design at the GCET is a technician level oriented programme that prepares students for careers in the design and delivery of high-performance buildings. Rooted in the science and practice of architectural technology, the course equips graduates with the technical, environmental, regulatory, and digital skills essential to contemporary construction and design practice.

Combining creative problem-solving with a deep understanding of materials, structures, and sustainability, the programme emphasises the integration of design, production, and procurement processes. Students develop the ability to analyse and address technical design challenges, delivering functional, buildable, and environmentally responsive solutions within regulatory frameworks and global construction industries.

The course fosters independent thinking alongside collaborative practice. Students work through studio-based projects, technical workshops, and real-world simulations that reflect the complex, interdisciplinary nature of professional environments. Core skills include digital design and modelling, construction detailing, specification writing, contract administration, fire and life safety, and sustainable design integration.

Graduates of the programme are well-prepared for technical design roles in architectural practice, consultancy, construction firms, and product development.

Features of the programme: Professional progression: The course meets the educational standards expected for a technician of architectural technologist. The curriculum is designed to support graduates in gaining the professional competencies required for technical design and project delivery roles across the built environment sector.

Design and Technical Integration: The programme places architectural technology at the core of the design process. Students work through studio-based projects that develop their ability to take designs from concept to detailed technical resolution, gaining skills in material specification, environmental performance, and construction

detailing.

Teaching Resources: Students benefit from dedicated studio spaces, digital fabrication facilities, and practical demonstration facilities based in GCET, Muscat campus. These learning environments support hands-on exploration of materials, technologies, and sustainable construction practices.

Digital Literacy: Students are equipped with industry-relevant digital skills including 2D/3D CAD, BIM, visualisation, and performance simulation. The integration of digital tools throughout the design process supports advanced technical analysis and communication across multidisciplinary teams.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration: As part of the wider built environment industry, students learn alongside peers from architecture, planning, engineering, surveying, and construction management. The programme encourages collaboration through shared modules, live projects, and cross-disciplinary design activities.

Global and Local Perspectives: Students are encouraged to tackle design challenges rooted in both local communities and global contexts.

Industry Engagement: The course maintains strong connections with industry through guest lectures, live briefs, and site visits. These partnerships provide insight into current practice and offer pathways to internships, mentorship, and graduate employment.

Educational Aims: Aim 1 – To develop technical level graduates who possess the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required to practise as technical level architectural technologists, capable of delivering robust, buildable, and sustainable design solutions from concept to construction.

Aim 2 – To develop technical level graduates who are collaborative and inclusive in their approach, able to work effectively within multidisciplinary teams, and aware of their responsibilities in promoting ethical, diverse, and equitable working environments.

Aim 3 – To develop technical level graduates who are reflective in their thinking and communication, committed to lifelong learning and the continuous development of their professional skills and judgement.

Aim 4 – To develop technical level graduates who are technically innovative and sustainability-focused, able to integrate the latest materials, methods, and digital technologies to address climate and performance challenges in the built environment.

Aim 5 – To develop technical level graduates with strong transferable skills including digital literacy, problem-solving, and communication—skills that enable them to thrive across a wide range of roles within the construction and design industries.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

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

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1. Professional Practice: Demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours associated with the latest in professional practice in the field of architectural technology as defined by recognised industry bodies; and demonstrate an ability to work independently as problem solvers in a professional context.

PO2. Collaborative Practice: Discuss the alternative points of view that the typical stakeholders may have in the process of developing buildings; and conduct a simulated group-work exercise focusing on the communication skills.

PO3. Ethics: Identify and describe examples of unethical behaviours in the process of developing buildings; and demonstrate an ability to complete a design project within a policy framework defined by the latest code of ethics considerations for equality, diversity, and inclusion.

PO4. Economic: Demonstrate a knowledge of management and procurement aspects of building development; and put into practice economic skills associated with tendering and administrating construction contracts.

PO5. Technical: Demonstrate a robust knowledge of the techniques and technologies associated with building design; and put into practice technical design skills relating to materials, structures and environments for case study sites.

PO6. Legal: Demonstrate a robust knowledge of how government health and safety regulations impact the process of building design; and put into practice design techniques associated with fire and life safety considerations in complex buildings.

PO7. Sustainability: Demonstrate an awareness of the environmental context of architectural technology and how it is influenced by the political, economic, social and technological aspects as part of the wider sustainability agenda; and compare and contrast different architectural designs for a given client's brief in terms of sustainable performance indicators.

PO8. Digital: Demonstrate an ability to work with numeric measurement techniques required to represent real world buildings in a digital environment; and put in practice the digital skills required to undertake a wide range of computer aided design tasks using industry standard software.

Assessment strategy: This programme employs a rigorous and industry-informed assessment strategy that reflects the interdisciplinary and practice-oriented nature of architectural technology. Emphasising real-world relevance, technical precision, and design integration, the assessment approach ensures students develop the knowledge, behaviours, and transferable skills needed to thrive in contemporary practice.

Integrated Assessment Components

1. Design Portfolios and Digital Submissions- Portfolios document students' progression in technical design, construction detailing, and environmental performance across all levels of study.
Assessments require the use of industry-standard digital tools (e.g., CAD, BIM, environmental analysis software) to produce comprehensive and professional documentation.

2. Technical and Design Integration Projects - Students complete projects that simulate real-world design and construction processes, combining specification writing, procurement strategies, and technical design.

Submissions include detailed technical drawings, environmental strategies, and appraisals of buildability and performance.

3. Laboratory and Workshop-Based Reports - Practical investigations assess students' understanding of material properties, construction methods, and building performance systems.
Reports focus on the ability to analyse data, test hypotheses, and communicate findings relevant to construction science and sustainability.

4. Oral Presentations, Vivas, and Technical Reviews - Design reviews and technical vivas are used throughout the programme to assess students' ability to communicate ideas clearly and justify design decisions.
These sessions develop confidence, clarity, and professional presentation skills.

5. Computer-Based Assessments - digital tests assess foundational knowledge in construction technology, fire safety, legal frameworks, and environmental systems. These are used particularly at earlier levels to establish core technical and regulatory competencies.

6. Live Projects and Real-World Case Studies - Students engage with real or simulated briefs involving external stakeholders or community needs.
Deliverables include feasibility studies, stakeholder reports, and technical design proposals grounded in regulatory and economic contexts.

7. Collaborative and Group-Based Assessments - Group work is embedded within inter-professional and design studio modules to simulate the collaborative nature of industry.
Assessments focus on both individual contributions and collective outcomes, promoting teamwork, communication, and shared responsibility.

8. Final Design Studio Project - In the final year, students undertake a capstone design project that synthesises learning across the programme.
Outputs include a detailed technical portfolio, digital models, construction specifications, and a final review presentation assessed by staff and industry

professionals.

Transferable Skills and Professional Attributes
The assessment strategy fosters key graduate attributes including:

Communication – through written reports, technical drawings, and oral presentations.

Collaboration – via group projects and peer critique activities.

Digital Literacy – by embedding CAD, BIM, and analytical software throughout assessment tasks.

Time Management – supported by carefully scheduled deadlines that avoid assessment clustering and promote steady progression.

Inclusivity and Feedback Literacy
1. Formative Feedback Opportunities - Formative feedback is embedded in studio tutorials, interim reviews, and draft submissions, supporting iterative improvement and confidence building.

2. Diverse Assessment Formats - A balanced mix of design submissions, technical reports, oral presentations, and examinations ensures accessibility and inclusivity for diverse learning styles.

3. Feedback Integration Support - Students receive guidance on how to interpret and act on feedback, with clear links between formative and summative assessments to support ongoing development.

Student support: The programme at GCET is committed to supporting students throughout their academic journey, ensuring they are equipped to succeed both personally and professionally. A comprehensive range of support structures

underpins the learning experience, fostering student wellbeing, academic development, and professional readiness.

Wellbeing and Inclusive Learning

The programme fosters an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Students have access to a broad range of services including counselling, wellbeing support, tutor support. Inclusive teaching strategies are embedded across modules, ensuring that learning materials, teaching methods, and assessments are accessible to students from diverse backgrounds and with varying abilities.

Content is designed to accommodate different learning styles and prior educational experiences, with explicit guidance provided for tasks such as group work, design reviews, and public presentations. The programme champions cultural representation, scaffolds skill development, and addresses issues such as microaggressions and unconscious bias through a respectful and responsive learning culture. This ensures that every student feels welcomed, heard, and supported in achieving their potential.

Skills Development and Digital Competence

To prepare students for the demands of professional practice, regular workshops and drop-in sessions are offered to develop core competencies in digital design, technical drawing, and software platforms such as AutoCAD, Revit, and BIM authoring tools. Students gain confidence in navigating digital workflows, producing technician-grade outputs, and integrating these tools into their design process.

Feedback and Reflective Learning

The programme places strong emphasis on feedback literacy. Feedback is offered through studio tutorials, interim reviews, and summative assessments, helping students identify strengths and areas for improvement. Students are encouraged to reflect on their progress through self-evaluation and portfolio development, cultivating habits of reflective practice essential for lifelong learning.

Technology-Enhanced Learning

Digital platforms such as VLEs, MS Teams, and cloud-based design tools are used

to support flexible and inclusive learning. These systems provide access to learning materials, recorded lectures, submission portals, and collaborative workspaces.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLML7-30-0	Foundation Design Studio 2026-27	30
UBLMYM-30-0	Foundation Design Communication 2026-27	30
UBLMLR-30-0	Context of Design and Development 2026-27	30
UBLMY6-15-0	Building Design Futures 2026-27	15
UBLMWM-15-0	Foundation Engineering 2026-27	15

Year 2

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules

The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL4S-30-1	Studio 1.1 - Form and Context 2027-28	30
UBLL4Y-30-1	Studio 1.2 - People and Environment 2027-28	30
UBLLDD-30-1	Construction Technology and Building Services 1 2027-28	30

UBLL6V-30-1	Materials and Environmental Physics 2027-28	30

Year 3
The student must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.

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

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UBLL8R-30-2	ATD Studio 2 2028-29	30
UBLL8H-30-2	Digital Applications for Architectural Technologists 2028-29	30
UBLLDF-30-2	Construction Technology and Building Services 2 2028-29	30
UBLMRT-30-2	Procurement and Contract Practice 2028-29	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The Home programme is aligned with the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) Educational Standards, which define the core competencies required for technician practice as an Architectural Technologist. These include design process management, construction technology, technical design integration, procurement knowledge, and regulatory compliance.
Although CIAT accreditation is little recognised in Oman, the programme in GCET will still align to the same framework.

The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Architectural Technology (2022), which defines the academic expectations for honours degree programmes in this discipline. This programmes reflects level 5 expectations, partially meeting the expectations of

this level 6 document. This includes an emphasis on sustainability, technical problem-solving, the integration of digital tools, and understanding the whole-life performance of buildings. The benchmark recognises architectural technology as an applied design discipline situated at the interface between architecture, engineering, and construction.

In line with the QAA Code of Practice: Section 8 (Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance), the programme provides students with structured opportunities to reflect on their career goals, engage with employers, and prepare for a variety of career paths in architectural technology, design consultancy, and the construction industry.

The programme supports the aims of the UWE Widening Participation Strategy and the UWE Teaching and Learning Strategy, ensuring inclusive, accessible, and student-centred learning across all levels. Scaffolding, formative feedback, diverse assessment types, and reflective practice are all built into the delivery model to enable all students to thrive.

Sustainability is a central theme across the programme and is guided by the UWE Sustainability Strategy, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), and AdvanceHE's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) competencies. Students are encouraged to adopt ecological thinking in their projects, explore circular design approaches, and engage with the environmental impact of their design and technical decisions.

Together, these reference points guide the structure, content, and pedagogical approach of the programme, ensuring alignment with academic standards, professional expectations, and global challenges. The curriculum promotes progression from foundational to advanced knowledge, and embeds sustainability, inclusivity, and ethical practice throughout, preparing students for meaningful careers in architectural technology and the wider built environment.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.

It is the Award Board's responsibility to determine whether the student's attainment at level 0 is sufficient to progress to level 1.