University of Sheffield

Programme Specification

This specification provides a summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

The content of our courses is reviewed annually to make sure it's up-to-date and relevant. Individual modules are occasionally updated or withdrawn. This is in response to discoveries through our world-leading research; funding changes; professional accreditation requirements; student or employer feedback; outcomes of reviews; and variations in staff or student numbers. In the event of any change we will inform students and take reasonable steps to minimise disruption.

Programme Details

1. Programme title	Architecture		
2. Award type	Bachelor of Arts		
3. Programme details	**FHEQ Level:** 6	**Mode of Study:** Full time	**Duration:** 3 years
4. Faculty	Faculty of Social Sciences		
5. School	**Owning:** School of Architecture and Landscape		
6. Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Architects Registration Board (ARB) Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)		
7. HECoS code *Select between one and three codes from the HECoS vocabulary.*	**Code:** 100122 **Percentage:** 100	**Code:** **Percentage:**	**Code:** **Percentage:**
Programme code (internal use)	ALAU002		

9. Programme aims

The programme aims to:	
A1	To support students in developing intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and independent judgement.
A2	Progressively to develop architectural competencies in a wide range of transferable, employment related skills.
A3	To provide a thorough introduction to architectural design.
A4	To develop skills in communication which allow students to express their ideas orally, visually and through writing.
A5	To provide the historical and cultural background within which architecture is considered.
A6	To provide an introduction to the technologies employed in architecture.
A7	To develop an understanding of sustainable aspects which affect architectural design, including an awareness of environmental issues.
A8	To introduce the professional and social context of architecture, and to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to develop appropriate architectural designs for these contexts.

10. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding (K) On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:	
K1	A systematic understanding of the design process, and the way that this is informed by analysis, research, context, budget and brief.
K2	A conceptual understanding of the historical and cultural context of architectural design, and the way this may inform the design process.
K3	A knowledge and understanding of the representational conventions in architecture and landscape as well as the ability to use them appropriately.
K4	A knowledge and understanding of how buildings are designed and built in the context of architectural and professional practice, as well as the wider construction and regulatory framework.
K5	Knowledge and ability to implement architectural technologies, environmental design and construction methods, and the way that these may be integrated in a design.
K6	Knowledge and understanding of environmental issues which inform the design and production of architecture, including an awareness of sustainable issues.
K7	Awareness and understanding of key histories, theories, philosophies and methodologies of architectural design.
K8	Awareness of the professional context of architecture.

Skills and other attributes (S) *When considering the skills and attributes developed in this programme, please refer to the Sheffield Graduate attributes (SGAs). SGAs can be found here* On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to:	
S1	Ability to engage as a designer with issues of site, scale, environment, context, programme and users' needs.
S2	Ability to develop both a design brief and a design proposal in response to that brief, with an awareness of the needs of the potential users.
S3	Ability to produce coherent architectural designs that integrate historical, theoretical, practical, technical, environmental and professional aspects of the programme.
S4	Ability to make informed judgements about the spatial, aesthetic, technical, intellectual and social qualities of a design within the scope and scale of the wider environment.
S5	Ability to use a range of visual, written and verbal techniques, and an ability to use these appropriately in order to communicate and critically appraise architectural designs and ideas to a variety of interest groups.
S6	Ability to conduct independent investigation as well as to work in groups, including the ability to manage and appraise working practices in these contexts.
S7	Competence in design-based software and multimedia applications.
S8	Further transferable skills, valuable for employment in a variety of areas, including information gathering, the development of individual resourcefulness, time management, analytical thinking and the ability to identify problems together with logical and lateral ways of resolving them.
S9	The ability to listen to, and respond appropriately to the views of others, as well as the ability to acknowledge the limits of one's own skills and knowledge.

11. Learning and teaching methods *(this should include a summary of methods used throughout the programme, including any unique features and should be written with a student focus as this information will display to current students and applicants i.e. prospectus)*

The programme uses a wide range of teaching techniques:

(a) Approximately half the programme is based in the design studio, with problem-based learning, delivered through frequent small group and individual tutorials: these are complemented with reviews, where design work is discussed by student peers, members of staff and invited reviewers. The number of people involved in any review is kept small (10-12) in order to encourage discussion and reflection on the review as a learning process. The design studio is promoted as a place of integration of skills and knowledge; thus all of these teaching and learning methods combine to develop the design understanding, research, analytical and communication skills of the students in order to meet the appropriate programme learning objective.

Design projects are carefully constructed to facilitate incremental learning and skill building over the duration of the programme. Following Bruner's spiral curriculum ideas, key learning concepts are repeated in design projects across the programme, with growing levels of complexity and in different situations. In pace, structure and content, the programme is empiric and iterative and designed to closely reflect professional architectural practice.

In the early stages of the programme project size and complexity is intentionally kept small and students focus on a limited number of design priorities. As students progress through the programme the size and complexity of the projects increase and students will both reinforce knowledge and skills already learned and develop new knowledge and skills required to meet the project brief.

Throughout the programme the design modules are 'scaffolded' by the other modules that provide the required knowledge and skills to support them. As students acquire learning throughout the programme the scaffolded learning builds in depth and complexity, alongside the design projects. Previously learned knowledge and skills are 'descaffolded' as students begin to confidently integrate these into their design work.

The remainder of the modules employ a variety of techniques, including:

(b) Lecture series, used frequently at all Levels in order to impart essential knowledge.

(c) Workshop sessions, used at all Levels to introduce and develop key skills; but also includes model making, computer graphics and drawing/presentation skills.

(d) IT based courses, which introduce and develop ability to use design-based software and multimedia applications, library research skills and databases.

(e) Seminars, which are usually student-led and designed to reinforce and develop information imparted through lectures by allowing students to work through, analyse, understand and respond to that information, developing key skills and knowledge.

(f) Tutorials. Aside from the frequent individual tutorials in the design studio mentioned above, small group and individual tutorials are used infrequently at all Levels. When they are used, they generally address the preparation for written assessments and address the programme learning outcomes.

(g) Independent study, which is essential to the successful completion of the programme. New students are introduced to study skills through practical experience in all Level 1 modules. Independent study is important to both the work undertaken in the design studio and in the supporting modules; in the former it has a central role in the design process, where a student's own design proposals develop around issues identified in small group and individual tutorials; in the latter, it is generally geared towards the assimilation and further clarification of material gleaned from lectures, the preparation for assessments, and the broader development of knowledge of the field of study. Provision exists at Level 3 for supervised independent study leading to the writing of a project (the 'Special Study'). Independent study thus contributes to the development of all the programme learning outcomes.

(h) Field trips and site visits, used at all Levels to expand the range of students' experience of architecture. Visits are made to particular buildings and to sites of more general urban, natural and historical interest. Such visits support both analytical and design work, and again contribute to the development of all the programme learning outcomes.

This range of teaching methods used helps the student to develop a whole range of transferable employability-related skills, which will enable them to provide a reflective and informed response to the range of issues, both design and technical, facing an architect.

12. Assessment and feedback methods *(this should include the range of types of methods used and should be written with a student focus as this information will display to current students and applicants i.e. prospectus)*

Studio based modules make up at least 50% of the total credits taken in each Level.

The learning and assessment processes mirror one another, and take place and develop concurrently. Formative assessment occurs through dialogue with oneself, with other students, with and among tutors, where judgments concerning quality are reached by consensus. Summative assessment will generally occur through the submission of coursework, usually in the form of a portfolio. This will, in particular, address the design and technical aspects of the programme, but students are also expected to demonstrate awareness of cultural, theoretical, historical and professional aspects in their design. Integration of all these aspects is also covered through design work).

Whilst the studio course does not directly assess the transferable skills noted in the programme learning outcomes, the ability to express these skills is inherent in the submission of a successful portfolio of work. Much of the preparatory work in the design studio involves either independent study or group work, and without this the later work would not show signs of the required development. The design portfolio is often seen as an exemplar of the expression of transferable skills, in as much as it necessarily integrates a diverse set of skills and broad range of knowledge into a single, but complex, document.

Assessment of modules in supporting subjects (Humanities, Environment and Technology, etc.) uses appropriate combinations of the following:

- Essay writing and coursework designed to test subject knowledge, communication skills, increasing autonomy in student learning, and the development of transferable skills); as well as demonstrating evidence of knowledge of, and a critical attitude towards, the components covered in the programme objectives.

- Written examinations designed to test subject knowledge.

In accordance with University regulations, extra weighting is given to third year grades when determining degree classifications. Grades at Level 3 (FHEQ Level 6) are weighted 2:1 compared to grades at Level 2 (FHEQ Level 5). Grades at Level 1 (FHEQ Level 4) are not included in the final degree classification. All assessment components of all core modules must be passed for purposes of professional validation.

Version Number:	**Purpose / Change:**	**Cohort affected: (academic year and level)**	**Date change approved:**
1			September 2012
2			March 2023
3			August 2023
4			March 2024
5	Programme Simplification	26/27 - Year 1	June 2025

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