## Programme Specification 2015-16 BA (Hons) Architecture (RIBA Part 1)

**NOTE:** This specification provides a concise 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 s/he takes advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detail on the specific learning outcomes, indicative content and the teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found (1) at [Faculty web site address], (2) in the Module Specifications and (3) in the Student Handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked within independent review processes undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency.

Awarding Institution / Body: Birmingham City University

Teaching Institution: ADM/Birmingham School of Architecture

Interim Awards & Final Award: Cert HE @ 120 credits

DipHE @ 240 credits

BA @ 300 credits (RIBA Part 1 not awarded) BA(Hons) @ 360 credits (RIBA Part 1 awarded)

Programme Title: BA (Hons) Architecture (RIBA Part 1)

Main fields of Study: Architectural Design, Technology and Environment,

**Cultural Context, Management Practice & Law,** 

Communication

Modes of Study: Full Time (3 Years)

Part Time (4 Years)\*

Language of Study: English

UCAS Code: K100

JACS Code: K100

## Professional Status of the programme (if applicable):

The programme fully meets and exceeds the joint criteria set out by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Its scope is commensurate with the guidelines for RIBA validation and ARB prescription. This programme also meets the requirements of Article 47 of the European Directive on the recognition of Professional Qualifications.

The programme leads to the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Architecture and exemption from RIBA Part 1 Examination.

\*Should there be fewer than three acceptances onto the PT programme in any year the programme will not run. Accepted candidates will have the option of taking certain individual modules as Continuing Professional Development modules at the normal PT fee rate. If they pass they will have the option of transferring the credits to the award-bearing programme.

## Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external reference points used to inform programme outcomes:

The programme fully meets and exceeds ARB/RIBA Part 1 criteria to BA(Hons) level. Its scope is commensurate with the guidelines of the Joint Validation Panel for RIBA Part 1 and ARB Criteria, with the Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement: Architecture; National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and with Article 47 of the European Commission Architects Directive.

The programme leads to the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Architecture and exemption from RIBA Part 1 Examination.

On successful completion of the programme students may apply for the Birmingham School of Architecture's M.Arch architecture programme (with RIBA Part 2 Examination exemption). This normally comprises a year of appropriate practical experience and 2 years full time or 3 years part time academic study, followed by further practical experience together with academic study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Architectural Practice (with RIBA Part 3 Examination exemption). Successful graduates of the full programme qualify for Chartered Membership of RIBA and admission to the National Register of Architects under the Statutory Control of the Architects Registration Board (ARB).

As well as this route to professional qualification the School offers the following higher degrees:-

- > Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture
- > Master of Arts in Urban Design (awaiting revalidation)
- > Postgraduate Diploma / Master of Arts in Landscape Architecture
- > Master of Arts in Conservation of the Historic Environment
- > Master of Arts in Zero Carbon Architecture & Retrofit Design
- > MPhil and PhD degrees by research

The BA (Hons) Architecture programme was last validated by University Internal Review in 2009, and unconditionally approved under the 5-year cycle of inspection by the Joint Validation Panel of RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) and unconditionally prescribed under the 5-year cycle of the Architects Registration Board in January and March 2014 respectively.

#### Further information:

QAA: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statement-Architecture.aspx

RIBA: http://www.architecture.com

ARB (Architects Registration Board):

http://www.arb.org.uk/qualifications/information\_for\_students/default.php.

The ARB/RIBA Joint Criteria: http://www.arb.org.uk/qualifications/arb\_criteria/default.php

The programme is due to be revalidated by University Internal Review in May 2015.

## Programme philosophy and aims

#### **Philosophy**

- > The programme enables the student to become independent, critically reflective and creative.
- > The programme embeds employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship across the curriculum.
- > The programme inspires students to face the challenges of the world in which we live.
- > The programme introduces and extends knowledge in the subject of architecture and its cultural, technical and ideological context.
- > The programme is delivered through a variety of modes, exposing students to a range of methods of iteration and understanding.

- > The programme is dynamic, absorbing new ideas and responding to external changes and opportunities.
- > The programme encourages and enables interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration.
- > The programme synthesises design based activity, cultural context and technology.
- > The programme explores the limits of architectural practise.

## The aims of the programme are:

- > The degree programme is designed to equip students with a knowledge and understanding of architecture fully meeting and exceeding ARB/RIBA Pt1 criteria to BA(Hons) level. Its scope is commensurate with the guidelines of the Joint Validation Panel for RIBA Part 1 and ARB Criteria, with the Quality Assurance Agency benchmarks for architecture, and with Article 47 of the European Commission Architects Directive.
- > To equip students with a range of critical and cognate skills to facilitate participation in both academic and professional environments at undergraduate honours degree level.
- > To enable students to identify and develop a propositionally based position with regard to the study and practise of architecture.
- > To enable students to succeed within the profession of architecture, the construction industry and allied fields of employment
- > To explore the possibilities of architecture as a cultural practise.
- > To explore the possibilities and limits of urban space.
- > To explore the meanings, definitions, ramifications and limits of sustainability.

The programme embodies the Part 1 graduate attributes as prescribed by the ARB and RIBA and maps these onto its structure. These are:

GA1 With regard to meeting the eleven General Criteria at Parts 1 and 2 above, the Part 1 will be awarded to students who have:

- > .1 ability to generate design proposals using understanding of a body of knowledge, some at the current boundaries of professional practice and the academic discipline of architecture;
- > .2 ability to apply a range of communication methods and media to present design proposals clearly and effectively;
- > .3 understanding of the alternative materials, processes and techniques that apply to architectural design and building construction;
- .4 ability to evaluate evidence arguments and assumptions in order to make and present sound judgments within a structured discourse relating to architectural culture, theory and design;
- > .5 knowledge of the context of the architect and the construction industry, and the professional qualities needed for decision making in complex and unpredictable circumstances; and
- > .6 ability to identify individual learning needs and understand the personal responsibility required for further professional education.

## The programme provides learners with:

- > an educational framework that supports a rigorous and intellectually demanding academic and vocationally pertinent experience
- learning opportunities for progressive and integrated accomplishment, understanding and experience in architecture to enable creative and critical participation in discourse and practice with self confidence, enthusiasm and commitment to the profession
- a curriculum which provides a rigorous framework emphasising the development of independent judgment, accountability and responsibility in the discipline of architecture towards the realisation of socially and physically sustainable designed environments
- > a supportive environment encouraging confidence, competence and independence in learning, maximising opportunities for individual development, grounding further academic study and progression to full professional qualification
- a structure of undergraduate study supporting students with traditional and non-traditional

education, experience and qualifications appropriate to the broad scope of architectural studies, addressing educational and professional diversity.

## Intended learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated:

## Learning Outcomes<sup>1</sup>

- 1. Supported by its design, structure and implementation, the degree programme enables students to achieve Undergraduate Honours degree level education and competence in architecture, meeting ARB/RIBA Part 1 exemption through engaging with differing structured programme modules that expose and develop themes, ideologies and skills in a focused and reiterative pattern.
- **2.** Students gain a systematic understanding in the subject area, its associated skills, techniques and knowledge by engaging in a range of study modes and output types responsive to the programme requirements and the professional, technical and cultural context of architecture.
- **3.** Students develop and construct a comprehensive academic and design portfolio of their coursework that demonstrates creative and critical accomplishment in exploratory and integrated design practice and academic study.
- **4.** Students prepare for appropriate employment and further learning through engagement with international, national and regional best practice and interdisciplinary working. This includes engagement with professional bodies, professional practice and aligned cognate disciplines.

## Learning, teaching and assessment methods used

Modules are delivered through a combination of the following modes of learning and teaching dependent on the most appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes. Each requires different inputs from students who must ensure that they are fully prepared. Part of the induction process will explain these various delivery modes and the expectations placed upon the students for each. Students are required to attend all timetabled teaching and learning sessions in each module in order to maximise their learning experience and to enable them to meet the professional criteria. Learning that takes place in the all modes of delivery requires attendance and must be supplemented by other reading and exploratory practice. Sessions are also the point at which students receive vital oral, written or other formal and informal feedback on their work as it progresses.

When unable to attend a session for a legitimate reason, students are required to follow the procedure detailed in the Programme Handbook.

#### **Design studio**

The Design Studio forms 50% of the programme as required by the RIBA. It facilitates the synthesis of theoretical and practical concerns through the vehicle of the design project. It explores design as a cultural act, mapping technology onto ideology. Design issues and briefs cover a diverse range of situations, and connect with research areas within the school. They may sometimes involve 'live' projects with external agencies.

Design studio facilitates the synthesis and embodiment of knowledge and skills from the rest of the programme into the practice of design. This integrates the different taught aspects of the Programme, as well as developing different methods and processes of design. Each design studio module will contain one or more projects and will involve several of the teaching and learning

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Guidance on the specification of learning outcomes is available from the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching.

methods described here.

A combination of programme delivery and presentation methods extend the learning experience and are essential to developing communication skills. These may include project related lectures and workshops, site visits, pin-ups, and reviews of work in progress. Techniques of communication may include verbal, graphic, 3D physical models, constructed objects, digital media, installation, exhibition and written components, and any other forms of representation or media deemed appropriate.

At appropriate points within the programme students may opt for bespoke assessment of their design project work by negotiation with teaching staff.

Written feedback is given through the Tutorial Feedback Form which requires the student to set an agenda for the tutorial in advance of the meeting and the tutor to provide advice for specific work to be attempted prior to the next tutorial. The sheet is signed by tutor and student.

#### Lectures

These include lecture series, individual and guest lectures and project-related lectures. Lectures provide a knowledge base, introducing, theories, principles, concepts and issues relating to the subject area and the learning outcomes for the programme, and motivating students towards independent study. Students will also be encouraged to attend certain lectures for other cognate and aligned disciplines which are offered across the Faculty.

#### **Seminars**

Seminars take different forms depending on the level of study and the objectives of the module. They provide an opportunity to gain self-confidence in discussing and developing ideas and theories from lectures, reading, research and design projects. They develop intellectual skills, including understanding, analysing, reasoning, critical judgment, and oral presentation. They provide an opportunity to develop specialist interest and knowledge and examine a subject in depth.

## Research & Independent Study

This may take a number of forms. Effective research underpins practice in all its forms. Research and independent study enables students to develop personal interpretations of knowledge, critical skills and specialist interests as well as being an integral part of all studies and a preparation for professional life. It is essential to develop self-motivation, curiosity and a well-organised personal research library of references.

#### **Tutorials**

Tutorials typically take place both individually and in groups which may vary in size depending on the mode and context of study. This facilitates development of interpersonal skills and encourages independence and self-confidence by providing a forum for discussion and critique of work with staff and peer group, helping in the development of ideas, presentation and communication skills. Tutorials are key teaching and learning experiences that enable students to receive feedback, guidance, and criticism of their work at every stage of a module.

#### **Elective studies**

## Collaborative Practice - Co.LAB

This Level 5 module enables students to choose areas of study, which encourage the development of individual interests and knowledge to a considerable depth, and development of independence, self confidence and autonomy in their studies. Where appropriate, the elective may take the form of a shared project between cohorts of students of different disciplines and different levels. This ensures students understand the cross disciplinary context as well as the potential of cross disciplinary practice. Many of the options involve collaboration with various individuals and groups, communities, manufacturers, users and clients giving students experience of the responsibilities and realities of practice

#### **Critical Study in Architecture**

This Level 6 module enables students to choose a subject of study of personal interest for in depth investigation with guidance from tutors resulting in a 5-6000 word dissertation.

## Level 6 Design Studio

Students at Level 6 are able to choose which design grouping they wish to join, each run by a tutor with a particular emphasis within the overarching design project brief set by the Level co-ordinator.

#### Workshops

These provide an opportunity for hands-on experience of learning techniques and skills across a range of areas. Demonstrations may form part of the workshop. Workshops focus on specific applications of theoretical knowledge and skills and in so doing develop approaches, attitudes and methods to integrate theoretical knowledge into the design process.

## **Study Visits**

Student-led national and international study visits expose connections between theory and practice, provide opportunities to experience the physical and cultural context of design, and to illustrate and reinforce taught material through case studies and targeted visits. All module types may involve focused student- and tutor-led site visits that may vary in length, including regular visits to construction sites, manufacturing plant, exemplar buildings and project site visits. Students unable to attend will be offered an equivalent learning opportunity by negotiation.

#### **Work Placement**

All Level 5 full time students participate in a two week work placement in architectural practice or allied disciplines such as interior design and construction.

#### **Online Learning Support**

All modules include online learning support using Moodle Virtual Learning Environment, blogs and online software tutorials. More information will be provided by programme tutors and in the relevant module descriptions.

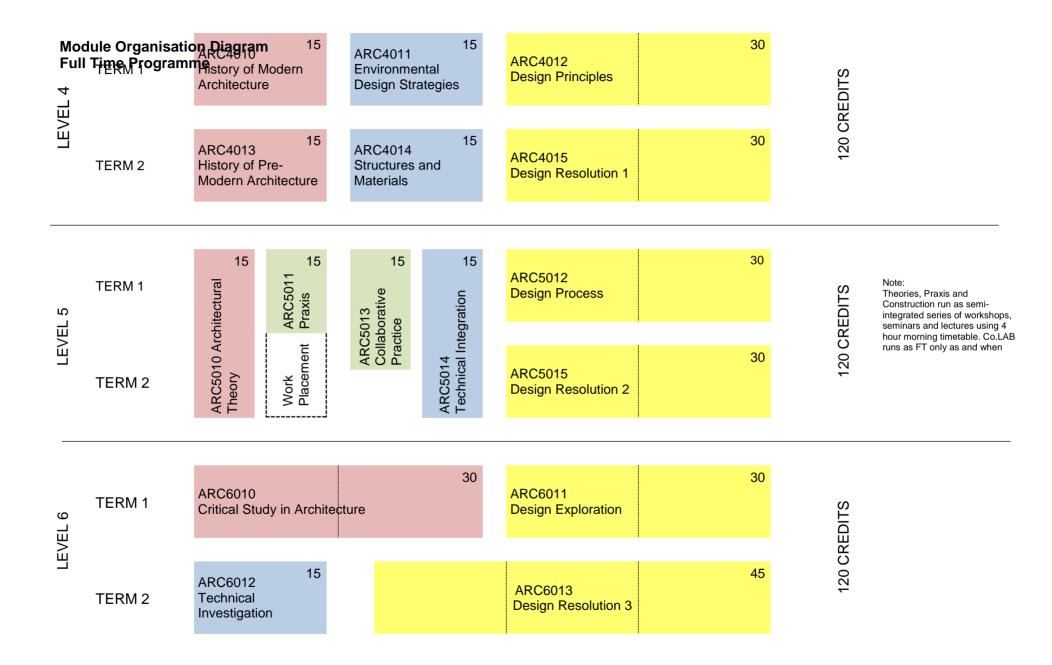
#### **ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**

This programme is subject to exemptions from the Standard Undergraduate Assessment Regulations Version 5 (SUAR 5) in the following areas:

J14.1 Number of Attempts at a Module Students are permitted 4 attempts in total to pass each module before being withdrawn from the programme

"A student on a programme of study governed by these regulations will be permitted to be reassessed in a failed module or modules on three occasions provided the re-assessment can be completed within the permitted registration period for the award."

J17.2 The Classification of Honours Awards: The weighted average mark for the modules at Level 6 [only] will determine the classification for the award.



	e <b>OFGAMis</b> ation me Programm TERM 2		ARC5011 ARC5014 Structures an Materials	15 15 d	ARC5012 Design Principles	30	90 CREDITS	
YEAR 2	TERM 1	ARC5010 15 History of Modern Architecture			ARC5012 Design Process	30	90 CREDITS	
	TERM 2	ARC5013 1 History of Pre- Modern Architecture			ARC5015 Design Resolution 2	30	90 CR	
YEAR 3	TERM 1	ARC5010 Architectural Theory companies and companies are companies are consistent are companies are	ARC5013 Collaboration and Practice 51	ARC5014 Technical Integration	ARC6010 Critical Study in Architecture (commences)		90 CREDITS	Note: Theories, Praxis and Tech Investigation run as semi- integrated series of workshops, seminars and lectures using 4 hour morning timetable. Co.LAB runs as PT only in afternoon semi- integrated with studio
	TERM 2	ARC5010 Architectura Work Placement	AR <sub>C</sub> Col		ARC6010 Critical Study in Architecture	30		
YEAR 4	TERM 1 TERM 2	ARC6011 Design Exploration  Technical Investigation  15		30	ARC6013  Design Resolution 3  (AROBOTOSES)  Design Resolution 3	45	90 CREDITS	Totally integrated on the FT full studio day

## Support for Learning including Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Students are encouraged to identify and, with guidance, to reflect on their own learning needs and are offered the following support as appropriate to meet those needs:

Training to become an architect is a long process and without establishing targets along the way it can be a daunting prospect. PDP is a structured and supported process undertaken over a number of years enabling critical reflection upon learning, performance and achievement and facilitating planning for personal, educational and professional development. It complements structured and self directed activities as part of the programme, building upon the learning objectives of module briefs to give an overview of studies.

In addition and complementary to the PDP process the programme offers the opportunity for a portfolio review with the Head of School at Level 4; and interview at Level 5 with the Head of School and the Director of Professional Practice to negotiate their work placement; and an "Into Work" interview with the Head of School and year coordinator at Level 6. All students have a personal tutor to whom they can turn for advice and guidance.

The PDP review is an opportunity to discuss issues, personal or academic, outside formal learning activities in a confidential environment.

#### Aims

- > To bring a clearer focus to learning,
- > Use personal motivation to achieve goals,
- > Develop skills in self-management,
- > Develop greater personal independence and confidence as a learner,
- > More awareness of how to apply learning to new problems and contexts,
- > Reflective, strategic, analytical and creative thinking skills that strengthen academic performance.

## **Objectives**

Although it is important to spend time thinking about academic subjects and career progression, sometimes bigger issues get left out. For example:

- > Lifetime goals
- > Work location
- > Personal values
- Work/life balance
- TERM 2 > What is success?
- > Personal sacrifice

#### **Extra-curricular activities**

The academic programme provides an environment within which to gain knowledge and expertise in a subject. However, it needs to be balanced by wider skills applicable in the workplace and beyond. Students are encouraged to develop a wide range of skills and experience that support employability and further study and are encouraged to develop beyond the programme by demonstrating they can:

- Take on responsible roles.
- > Lead projects.
- > Have had work experience.
- > Have taken on challenges and can describe how they learnt from them.
- > Have problem-solving skills to cope with new roles and contexts.
- > Get on well with other people.
- > Be confident in communicating with a wide range of people.
- > Be creative thinkers.
- > Be good at finding solutions rather than focusing on the problem.
- > They may have undertaken an Erasmus exchange, independent study trips or participated in the University's OpportUNIties programme
- > The work placement and the Collaborative Practice module encourage enterprise and the building of professional networks

#### What?

The PDP works together with the Passport to Practice and consists of a paper based progress file including the following:

- > Personal records of learning and achievement
- > Records of specific skills in software gained during study
- > CV and personal statement towards career planning
- > University transcript of academic performance

Students take ownership of this file. It forms the basis of discussions with the programme team/tutor during the PDP session. Action points and key issues will be used to prompt further research, training and development opportunities. Achievements will be monitored from session to session.

## Why?

#### Individual:

Personal records contain details of personal goals, plans, reviews and achievements. They are a source of material to draw upon to monitor progress and provide evidence of learning

## Programme:

The School and the University require students to follow and manage the process of personal development. It allows the programme team to offer focused support and references.

#### Career:

The PDP and Passport to Practice files form the basis of personal information that will be useful throughout professional and academic life. The PDP is a valuable aid in producing an effective CV as it records personal achievements. As such it aids employability.

#### When?

PDP reviews take place at appropriate times during the academic year to allow goals to be assessed, monitor performance and issues arising during studies. Students are required to come prepared for the reviews, ensuring records are up to date, and have pre-prepared questions or comments.

#### Structure

The PDP and Passport to Practice is a professionally formatted file with suggested sections as follows:

#### 1. Introduction

- Title Page with Student Name, Programme and Year
- Contents Sheet

## 2. Work Plan

- Student planning timetable, showing deadlines and work-plan.
- Tutorial/studio Sheets (in date order) with commentary for further action
- Project Self-Review Sheet (on completion of module)
- Reflections on lectures, visits, background reading etc
- Work Placement

## 3. Self-Assessment sheets

- Priorities for personal development including an action plan
- Extra-curricula activities
- Current goals and achievements

#### 4. CV and Personal Statement

Records of achievement in software skills

#### 5. University Transcript

Extra areas can be added if deemed personally desirable. The contents build up over time and need to be organized to ensure it is kept in order and up to date.

PDP review dates will be timetabled. Year leaders will prepare more detailed schedules for these sessions nearer to the time.

#### References

www.palgrave.com/skills4study moodle.bcu.ac.uk – click on 'Central PDP'

#### Criteria for admission

Candidates must satisfy the general admissions requirements of the programme, which are as follows:

Details of the application process and entry requirements are available at http://www.bcu.ac.uk/courses/architecture-riba-part-i-exemption-ba-hons

Birmingham School of Architecture welcomes applications from a wide range of student backgrounds to contribute to the rich diversity within the student community.

Applications from students to study onto this programme will be considered on the basis of personal, professional and educational experiences, which will provide indications of your aspirations and ability to meet the demands of the programme. Throughout the admissions process you will be given an equal opportunity to demonstrate your skills, achievements and potential via the assessment methods noted below. You will be treated on an equal and fair basis and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or age.

You can expect to receive timely correspondence in respect to your application with admissions decisions being made as quickly as possible.

If Birmingham School of Architecture is unable to make you an offer on your original choice of programme, the University will consider your application for an alternative or related programme.

Applications for the full-time undergraduate programme should be made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), except for applications from part time students or from those applying through the Socrates/Erasmus scheme, which should be made direct to the University.

It is recommended that for International students, an application is made direct to the International Office using either our own direct application form or a photocopy of your UCAS form. You can expect to receive timely correspondence in respect to your application with admissions decisions being made as quickly as possible.

Before offering you a place at Birmingham School of Architecture, we have to be satisfied that you have the potential to complete the programme to the required standard. For all programmes we use the information you supply on your application form, such as formal academic qualifications and previous experience, to assess your suitability for study. We also use a confidential reference from a previous school or college, from an employer or from another person qualified to comment on your capabilities.

For the Architecture programme we offer an opportunity for an electronic portfolio of written and visual work providing evidence of practical and visual ability appropriate to the Architecture course to be reviewed by a member of the academic staff. Since architecture is not a subject generally offered in secondary education the School is aware that candidates may not be able to evidence

appropriate achievement through portfolio. Selected candidates are invited to attend for an applicant visit day at the School.

International applicants should note that we will normally accept relevant and equivalent qualifications to those awarded in the UK. Overseas applicants will be selected on the basis of the electronic portfolio and application form.

The minimum qualification requirements for the Higher Education awards we offer are summarized below:

## **Minimum Entry Requirements**

See: http://www.bcu.ac.uk/courses/architecture-riba-part-i-exemption-ba-hons; click on 'Entry Requirements:

- Normally minimum age 18 by 31 December of year of entry
- Five GCSE passes at Grade C or above, including English Language and Maths and a mix of science and humanities/arts subjects.
- Normally 340 tariff points from three or more GCE/VCE A-level subjects are required or equivalent. We prefer a mix of science/maths and humanities/arts subjects; with at least one subject in which assessment is essay-based.
- Business Studies, Computer Studies and Design Technology are discouraged.
- General Studies, NVQ (National vocational qualifications), advanced modern apprenticeship, BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND), BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC), and 2-year Foundation Degrees are not accepted.

Equivalent grades, points and subjects in SQA Higher, ILC Higher, IB, Arbitur and other overseas qualifications are accepted

Proficiency in written and spoken English is essential; IELTS of 6.0, with at least 5.5 in writing, or TOEFL equivalent

Alternative Qualifications: Applicants who have completed a Foundation Diploma in Art and Design are welcome to apply. Mature students may apply on the strength of a portfolio and previous experience (or advanced standing).

## Applicants with exceptional circumstances

Consideration will be given to any applicant with a verifiable exceptional circumstance such as illness, bereavement, disrupted education, and poverty or refugee status. The programme Admissions Tutor may decide to offer a place to an applicant whose academic performance may have been affected by such circumstance and who might otherwise have been expected to do better.

## **Disabled students**

Applications from students with disabilities are considered on the same criteria and principles as all other applicants. All students with a disability are encouraged to indicate this on their application form in order that advice can be offered on the facilities and services available. Prospective students with a disability will be encouraged to visit and discuss their requirements with the Disability Support Manager

# Methods for evaluation and enhancement of quality and standards including listening and responding to views of students

The main objective is to ensure fitness for purpose and considerable emphasis on student feedback is taken by the programme team in responding to issues.

Annual programme monitoring, after the exam boards a statistical review of all modules is undertaken and analysis of all modules will reveal any issues that require addressing by the programme team.

- > Programme team meetings
- > UG Programme Director's Forum
- > National Student Satisfaction Survey
- > Student Feedback Forum
- > Examination Board
- > Faculty Academic Board
- > Faculty Student Experience, Learning and Teaching Committee
- > Review and validation events
- > Accreditation / Validation by professional bodies (ARB/RIBA)
- > Annual Monitoring Report
- > Student module feedback forms
- > External Examiners Reports
- > Academic planning
- > School Academic Board