PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	Master of Architecture (MArch), RIBA Part 2
	The MArch is an undergraduate masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	-
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Marylebone Campus
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	Two years full time, Levels 6 & 7. September start.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s):	Subject Benchmark Statement for Architecture 2010 UK Quality Code for Higher Education Parts A-C, October 2015 review qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/qualifications-frameworks.pdf
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
	Architects Registration Board (ARB)
Date of course validation/review:	2014/ 2019
Date of programme specification approval:	2016
Valid for cohorts:	2016/17 Level 6, and 2017/18 Level 7
Course Leader:	Darren Deane
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster Course Code:	W50
JACS code:	
UKPASS code:	004374

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

Consisting of two years full time study (levels 6 & 7), the MArch fulfils the RIBA / ARB Criteria and regulatory framework for architectural registration which allows it to offer Exemption from the Part 2 Examination. It also gives academic enhancement to the vocational requirements set out by these professional bodies.

The core aims of the Master of Architecture are:

- To meet the professional requirements of architecture with a broader knowledge and understanding of the subject than that gained at undergraduate / Part 1 level, as well as to enable critical reflection by students on the experience that they gained in their first period of practical training;

- To meet the intellectual aspirations of the subject of architecture, and to impart a deeper knowledge and understanding and ability that allows students to engage in increasingly self-directed and mature study, including aspects of subject specialism and original research;

- To include and teach knowledge and skills which enable the successful student to transfer to a further period of practical training experience and professional registration, and/or to progress to an MA course or higher degree in a specialist area of architecture or a cognate subject.

The course has holistic purpose and legible shape, which broadly speaking distinguishes between two types of learning (cognitive and tacit knowledge) acquired in parallel via aligned but not necessarily integrated studio and non-studio modules (named hereafter as 'Architectural Productions' and 'Architectural Reflections'). Comprehensive understanding interaction between these two domains of learning is the culminating ambition of the course. This learning ambition fulfils the QA code descriptor for Masters courses and Subject Benchmark Statement for integrated Masters programme in architecture.

What can you expect to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU).

- **Graduate attributes** are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA).

- **Professional and personal practice learning outcomes** are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

- **Key transferable skills** that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Course Learning Outcomes

Course learning outcomes act as the general unifying framework for all modules. As such they express the ethos of the March course and are identified below by keyword descriptors (in the left hand column).

March Course Learning Outcomes	
Descriptor	**Upon successful completion of the course you will be able to demonstrate the following:**
Knowledge of Design Principles (KU)	1. Develop theoretically-informed knowledge of conventional and emerging principles of architectural design, together with a broad range of technological, professional and historical subjects associated with architecture culture, and an ability to evaluate and interpret their relevance and currency with a professional and disciplinary context.
Awareness of Professional Standards (PPP/KU)	2. Assimilation of prescribed criteria and subject benchmark statements into reflective and critical practice.
Design-research (PPP)	3. Ability to translate all conceptual, research-based inquiry into disciplinary-specific design work.
Testing Hypotheses (KTS/PPP)	4. Ability to formulate research-led design processes, and to test these against emerging cultural, technological and environmental needs of society and professional practice.
Communication and use of Integrated Media (KTS/GS)	5. Ability to constructively absorb feedback from tutors, peers and experts into coherent arguments and proposals, either in the form of oral presentations, written reports or through a range of visual and material practice.
Leadership and Research (GA)	6. Ability to undertake self-directed study, and engage with group activities, providing communication, direction and organisational input as and when required.
Professionalism and Employability (PPP/GA)	7. Ability to compare and judge individual academic outputs against prescribed criteria,

	subject benchmark statements, and professional standards, and to identified gaps and opportunities within existing disciplinary practices.
Ethical Practice (GA)	8. Compliance with ethical research practices as stipulated by the University of Westminster when undertaking self-directed research projects or independent study.

Level 6 and 7 Learning Outcomes

Course learning outcomes are delivered more specifically through levels 6 and 7 learning outcomes. These more specific learning outcomes are set out below, once again identified by keyword descriptors (in the left hand column). (Note also that individual modules have module-specific outcomes as identified in the module proformas published in the course handbook.)

Level 6	
Descriptors	**On successfully completing programme Level 6, you will be able to demonstrate the following:**
Problem Solving in Design (PPP)	L6.1 Precise articulation of a question, problem or hypothesis, derived from broad and logical investigation into a broad range of abstract and concrete data.
Conceptual Agenda Building (KU)	L6.2 Ability to identify specific entry points into creative practice and research inquiry.
Material Technique (KU/PP)	L6.3 Utilise the digital fabrication laboratory to foster interaction between ideas, research and new techniques of making.
Multi-Media Approach (GA)	L6.4 An ability to combine verbal and visual media to articulate the link between design thinking and traditional scholarship.
Cultural Context (KU)	L6.5 Understand the relevance of background cultural inquiry, and to translate this into a disciplinary-specific language that is comprehensive to different audiences.
Critical Practice (GA/PPP)	L6.6 Ability to critique and develop received formal, graphic and professional conventions.
Digital Practice (PPP/KU)	L6.7Ability to use Digital Media as part of a design process
Technical and Environmental Strategies (KU)	L6.8 Use technological and environmental resources to re-calibrate spatial and material performance and standards of interior comfort.

Level 7 Learning Outcomes

Level 7	
Descriptors	**On successfully completing programme Level 7, you will be able to demonstrate the following:**
Synthetic Judgement (PPP)	L7.1 The ability to translate cognitive, abstract knowledge into tacit understanding, situated know-how, and real-world problem-solving.
Resolution and Thesis	L7.2 The final portfolio must provide evidence of a clearly development design thesis.
Agenda Building II	L7.3 Ability to analyse current trends and deficiencies in a cultural or technological context, and to identify potential opportunities for intervention and active experimentation.
Coherent Processes (KU/PPP)	L7.4 An ability to construct sophisticated and complex arguments, expressed through illustrated text.
Cultural Context (KU)	L7.5 Ability to develop original conclusions through independent study to support the dissertation.
Ethical Practice (PPP/GA)	L7.6 Ability to use the design thesis agenda as a basis for predicting alternative way of accessing cultural capital; creating resilient institutional and environmental structures, and to understand the ethical impact of design on common sustainable resources.
Critical Practices II (PPP)	L7.7 To use all modules as an opportunity to generate future-oriented paradigms that explore the boundaries of existing disciplinary practices.
Direct Participation in Material and Civic Processes (PPP)	L7.8 To employ where possible live material projects and research-driven agendas in studio, and to use these projects to access a broad community of producers, stakeholders, public funding streams and entrepreneurial initiatives.

Graduate Attributes

The University of Westminster Graduate Attributes fall into five general categories that frame academic and professional learning in terms of the personal characteristics specified below.

GA.1 Critical and creative thinkers
- Graduates should have a strong foundation in critical thinking in their discipline/field and be able to demonstrate the capability to think creatively

GA.2 Literate and effective communicator
- "Graduates should be digitally literate, able to apply to IT and other technologies within their subject context and should be effective communicators"
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GA.3 Entrepreneurial
- "Graduates should be entrepreneurial, enterprising in outlook and be active problem-solvers able to work collaboratively as part of a team"
- "Graduates should be able to self evaluate and manage their own performance and digital identity"

GA.4 Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- "Graduates should have a global perspective and respect diversity"

GA.5 Social, ethically and environmentally aware
- "Graduates should understand environmental, economic, social
and/or cultural issues and impacts of practice in their field"
- "Aware of the finite nature of resources and systems"
- "Future and Resilience Focussed"

Key Transferable Skills

KTS.1 Define and appraise one's own ideas/designs in relation to others

KTS.2 Identify and manage individual learning needs

KTS.3 Work as part of a team when required

KTS.4 Research and produce clear, analytical and logical reports

Learning and Teaching

1. How, and what will you be taught?

The 'studio' environment is central to the teaching of architecture, and all design projects are carried out within its context. Design Studio projects do not aim to mimic proposals in the commercial world (clearly impossible), but to take advantage of their setting within the academic world to offer a learning vehicle, which, while informed by the world outside, allows for exploration of values, and experimentation with processes. A broad range of design projects are offered – and a broad range of responses encouraged. The level and nature of outcomes for Design Studio Year 1 modules are intentionally different to those in Design Studio Year 2, even though students from both years work alongside each other. The patterns of teaching/learning on the MArch, and through which the Professional Criteria are met, are classifiable into generic types:

- Design Studio, know as 'Architectural Productions I & II'. Typically this consists of reviews, seminars, 1:1 and group discussions, tutorials, and portfolio instruction.

Alongside design sits is a series of seven discrete subject-led, non-studio modules (four in year one, three in year two) clustered together as 'Architectural Reflections I & II' respectively:

- Digital Design: Representation; exploration of digital media and graphic communication, all outputs
- Critical Practices: Professional Studies; writing essays and reports
- Applied Technical Studies 1 and 2: involvement in 'live' technological and environmental
  debates, technical reports

- History and Theory, followed by the Dissertation: seminars, writing essays, dissertation
- Strategic Report; exploration of how ideas can be enabled within the current building legislation frameworks.

2. How will you learn?

The MArch fosters a caring learning environment in which students are encouraged to:

- question received knowledge
- evaluate issues within a critical and theoretical framework
- think in a reflective way, and be increasingly capable of projective and speculative thought
- learn through practice (as in the sense of 'learning by doing' referred to here as "tacit knowledge" and "reflective practice")
- make decisions at the appropriate time
- be multi-skilled and flexible in their approach
- be good communicators, both verbally and textually
- work in teams whenever necessary

How will you be assessed?

Assessment for each piece of coursework is co-ordinated by the relevant Module Leader. In accordance with University Regulations, the pass mark for Level 6 modules is 40%, and 50% for Level 7.

There is an extensive process of cross-reviewing (leading to formative feedback), inter-studio marking, moderation, and synoptic assessment, combinations of which lead to summative feedback. The course thus offers a combination of assessment types that aims to support student progress. Also, all March II students are required to attend a viva interview with an RIBA external examiner as part of the final assessment.

All assessment mediates between learning outcomes and professional standards. As such assessment vehicles measure knowledge acquisition and understanding of pedagogical principles related to the primary goal of the MArch programme – reflective practice.

Employment and further study opportunities

Most students who complete the Master of Architecture with ARB/RIBA Part 2 Exemption progress on to working in architectural offices, and, subsequent to taking the Part 3 Examination, become registered architects. Some students progress to take Masters or PhD degrees, and then go into research and/or teaching. Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The MArch course is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring students benefit from the following:

- Career development skills which are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision•

- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to student

University of Westminster graduates will also be able to demonstrate the following five Graduate Attributes:

- Critical and creative thinkers
- Literate and effective communicator
- Entrepreneurial
- Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- Social, ethically and environmentally aware

University of Westminster courses capitalise on the benefits that London has to offer as a global city and a major creative, intellectual and technology hub to the learning environment and experience of our students.

Course structure

This section shows the core modules and components available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year, with a pass mark in all modules of 40% in year 1, rising to 50% in year 2. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Credit Level 6				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
6ARCH001W	**Architectural Productions I** (incorporating 2 equally-weighted elements or components as indicated below)	Core	60	30
	Design & Research 1			
	Design & Research 2			
6ARCH002W	**Architectural Reflections I** (incorporating 4 equally-weighted elements or components as indicated below)	Core	60	30
	Digital Design			
	Critical Practices			
	Applied Technical Studies 1			
	History and Theory			
Award of Certificate of Higher Education available: Yes				
Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
7ARCH022W	**Architectural Productions II** (incorporating 2 elements or components indicated below weighted 40-60% - *tbc*)	Core	60	30
	Design Hypothesis			
	Design Thesis			
7ARCH023W	**Architectural Reflections II** (incorporating 3 Elements or Components indicated below weighted 50-25-25% - tbc)	Core	60	30
	Dissertation			
	Applied Technical Studies 2			
	Strategic Report			
Award of Diploma of Higher Education or Foundation Degree available: tbc				

Professional Body Accreditation or other external references

Part 2 recognition.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

The MArch runs a vibrant student rep system that provides regular feedback, and you are mentored by personal tutors. Academic content is managed by a Course Leader supported by Module Leaders and Design Studio Coordinators.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students[1] can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing

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[1] Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in *20XX*. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey which seeks the opinions of students about their course and University experience. Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.