

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	MA Architecture MA Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation) MA Architecture (Digital Media) MA Architecture (History and Theory)
	The Masters degrees named above are Bologna FQEHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma in Architectural Studies Postgraduate Certificate in Architectural Studies
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Marylebone Road
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	1 Year full time, or 2 Years part time. September start January 2021 start only for 2020-21 year
QAA subject benchmarking group(s) :	n/a
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	n/a
Date of course validation/review:	November 2019
Date of programme specification approval:	June 2020
Valid for cohorts:	2020-21
Course Leader:	Nasser Golzari
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Course Code:	PMARC01F (FT) PMARCO1P (PT)
HECoS Code:	100122
UK Pass Code:	P045984

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: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply
westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/your-studies/forms-and-procedures/recognition-of-prior-certified-learning-rpcl

Aims of the course

The MA Architecture course is designed to offer a unique programme for graduates looking to further their education and enhance their employability by acquiring new knowledge and skills in Architecture with originality and creative approach beyond the remit of standard architectural education. The course combines high-level investigations into design & critical theoretical ideas along with innovative contemporary design approaches, all set within a challenging intellectual environment. It offers a firm grounding for those seeking to pursue further in architectural practice, specialized research or an academic career. The course is based within the School of Architecture, which in turn sits within the larger School of Architecture and Cities in Marylebone Campus.

The MA Architecture provides a course that is wide-ranging, facilitating alternative modes of study with creative and original outcomes, including both design or written-based thesis. The programme allows for specialism through its three pathways: Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation); Architecture (Digital Media) and Architecture (History and Theory). Alternatively, students can also create their own individual pathway, under the title MA Architecture, by selecting and combining relevant modules that meet their individual requirements.

The primary aims of the MA Architecture programme are:

- To stimulate graduates in architecture fields to develop culturally-sensitive design, critical and intellectual vision through the use of a wide range of media and in order to create design-oriented proposals with a high level of spatial, material and formal resolution;
- To encourage graduates to analyse contemporary design and theoretical trends in architecture, and to use these insights to produce high quality written work in a scholarly manner;
- To enable students to determine appropriate methodologies for design, and research by design in architecture and to use these techniques to formulate intellectual and creative work which investigates specific aspects or issues within the subject;
- To encourage students to develop systematic and critical ways of understanding that can expand and enhance the level of discourse about architecture practice and design.

MA Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation) Pathway

The overall aim of the Pathway – concentrating on Design and Practice -- is to promote graduates who are culturally and socially sensitive designers with critical and innovative mind. Graduates who are able to develop their own position within the contemporary design & theory discourses in architecture. The pathway constructs conditions, using design and live projects, for the graduates to gain critical knowledge, skills and understanding of role of architecture design in responding to socio-economic condition and cultural identity (race, gender, ethnicity, etc). Using design-orientated approach, within an increasingly globalised context the pathway encourages development of project briefs systematically and creatively.

In addition, the Pathway aims to:

- support the comprehension and critical analysis of concepts of cultural identity and globalisation in relation to architecture design and urbanism in a systematic, coherent and intellectual manner.
- foster a systematic and critical understanding of ways in which processes and concepts of cultural identity and globalisation can be utilised for architectural design.
- provide the methodological understanding and skills required to identify, access, engage, and interpret sites with complex cultural contexts and communities. We raise questions that radically challenge perceived notions of truth, power, beauty and form – to name a few.
- We believe these are central to architectural design and research and therefore, we offer an opportunity for students to participate in this stimulating and increasingly relevant body of knowledge.
- encourage synthesise of knowledge gained through creative proposals with a high level of spatial, material, and formal resolution.

MA Architecture (Digital Media) Pathway

This pathway provides the opportunity for students already conversant with conventional digital design tools and architectural theory, to develop those skills; to form a critical understanding of their application; and to explore the further possibilities for the integration of computer technology into design praxis. In addition, it aims to provide the scope for new research and innovation in design – beyond the remit of standard architectural education

In addition, the Pathway aims to:

- encourage originality in design through the application and integration of digital media technologies both as part of the design process and as integrated into the architectural fabric;
- foster a systematic understanding and critical awareness of the spatial, material, social and cultural implications of digital media in architecture;
- provide practical skills in the use of digital design and presentation techniques. encourage the development of intellectual, organisational and creative abilities with respect to independent research and the innovative use of new technologies.

MA Architecture (History and Theory) Pathway

The History and Theory (Theory and Critical Practice) Pathway offers students a platform for critical examination of architecture within the current socio-political context. The pathway promotes unpacking of the historical development of architectural theory and practice

concentrating on more contemporary architecture and space beyond individual iconic forms. Students are encouraged to develop a strong critical and theoretically informed position in their design research and practice, with concepts and debates from architectural theory and aligned disciplines used as a framework for research and design. The pathway is open to a variety of research methods and representation tools, including writing, film, photography, installation amongst other mediums. In addition, the Pathway aims to:

- foster an advanced knowledge of current debates in architecture as well as an ability to situate them within a wider social and cultural context;
- encourage the development of critical and creative research approaches to architecture informed by contemporary theories;
- provide a series of conceptual tools for investigating and interpreting architecture through design, written, and visual media;
- stimulate an understanding of architectural and urban experience with a particular focus on London's global and local buildings, and urban spaces and their representations.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills 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 students.

The MA Architecture aims to further the education of design graduates who will find employment in architectural practice, or related disciplines. The specialist options offered within the MA Architecture course are intended to provide students with further employability skills related to traditional architectural design, urban design and multidisciplinary practices. Our graduates have been the lead architectural expert on a multidisciplinary team, NGO's Municipalities or government organisations in regeneration and reconstruction work as specialists in the field of urban design, urban renewal strategies and historical conservation. Or experts in Digital media, web/media, graphics, creative design practice including exhibition design/curatorship.

The MA Architecture may also form a platform for continuing study with a career in academia or a specialist research subject. The School of Architecture offers suitable applicants the opportunity to study for MArch (RIBA Part 2) or an MPhil/PhD degree, or a PhD by Design/by practice where architects & practitioners can continue their subject of interest from the MA Thesis and consolidate their skills to become experts on the subject on a Doctorate/PhD by

Design level. Our graduates have worked in architectural practices in the UK, or in their home countries. Some set up their own practice and some have picked up academic teaching posts.

Course Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These statements of achievement are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

For all the learning outcomes for each module on the MA Architecture course and associated pathways, refer to the module descriptors included in the Course Handbook.

Knowledge and understanding (KU)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have acquired the requisite knowledge and understanding to demonstrate:

- KU1- the ability to utilise a wide range of media to develop their aesthetic and intellectual vision within the field of creative practice, intellectual, critical and creative abilities and capacity for independent study;
- KU2- the ability to conduct advanced self-directed research through appropriate methods of examination, analysis and presentation;
- KU3-the ability to investigate selected design issues through the formulation, analysis and application of relevant advanced research;
- KU4 -a thorough theoretical understanding of the key concepts underpinning the course, and their relevance to architectural culture and design;
- KU5 -the ability to apply a broad range of relevant sources to support a critical and reasoned position.

Additionally, the students of the MA Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation) will be able to:

- critically appraise key concepts relating to impact of globalisation in socio-cultural and ecological conditions in architectural design and representational practices.
- situate architectural designs within wider cultural, political and economic contexts.
- evaluate alternative investigative and design methodologies in order to appraise 'best-fit' approaches to examining and responding to complex cultural contexts.
- to synthesise the knowledge gained through creative proposals with a high level of spatial, material, and formal design resolution and design output.

Additionally, the students of the MA Architecture (Digital Media) will be able to:

- critically appraise and interpret new media technologies in relation to existing representational practices and conventions.
- assess the social and cultural impact of specific digital media technologies with respect to the built environment and their historical and cultural context.

- evaluate and select appropriate digital media techniques, concepts and theories for the explorations of architectural themes and ideas.
- make original and creative use of digital media applications in the context of formal/spatial design.

Additionally, the students of the MA Architecture (History and Theory)-Theory of Critical Practice will be able to:

- demonstrate critical understanding of the contemporary practice and theory in which architects and cognate designers operate.
- discern key issues in architectural discourse and practice, and comprehend their social and cultural implications.
- apply a reflective approach to architectural research and practice by means of advanced design-based explorations and/or critical-interpretive modes of investigation.
- conduct architectural research supported by theoretical and historical sources, and critically assess the information about a given subject of interest.

Specific Skills (SS)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have developed appropriate subject-specific skills that will allow them to demonstrate:

- SS1-an ability to engage in a high level of self-motivated independent study and research;
- SS2-an ability to synthesise coherently the knowledge and understanding gained in the course in a written thesis and/or if a design component is included as part of the thesis, an ability to produce design projects of considerable conceptual, spatial, material, formal and technological resolution;
- SS3-an ability to apply information research skills in a wide range of contexts;
- SS4- an awareness of how the knowledge and skills gained in the course has resulted in the ability to develop a sustained programme of architectural investigation and resolution driven by the individual student's interests/background in a complex, sophisticated and critical manner.

Additionally, the students of the MA Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation) will be able to:

- formulate original and creative design and research methodologies and concepts to develop originality in design which reflect and/or critique complex socio economic, ecological and cultural contexts.
- conduct self-directed ethnographic research within the built environment contexts and interpret findings to inform architectural design concepts;

- Deploy critical research skills to inform basis of complex and innovative architectural design and live projects.

Additionally, the students of the MA Architecture (Digital Media) will be able to:

- Conduct and document self-directed learning and research with respect to new media technologies and their application.
- Successfully apply digital media tools and techniques to generate architectural design. Integrate key interactive and computer controlled technologies into architectural design and fabrication.
- Coherently communicate complex theoretical/design propositions and conclusions in both verbal and written form.

Additionally, the students of the MA Architecture (History and Theory)-Theory of Critical Practice will be able to:

- Conduct theoretically-informed independent research into architecture with a critical awareness of its historical and cultural contexts.
- Apply a range of theoretical and practical tools to the analysis, investigation, and interpretation of architectural issues.
- Exercise criticality in the development of design ideas and research and coherently convey their work in appropriate verbal, written, and visual forms.

Key Transferable Skills (KTS)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have developed respective transferable skills that will provide them with;

KTS1-Group working

The ability to work effectively in a group, as a leader or a member. The ability to clarify the task and make appropriate use of the capacities of group members and to negotiate and handle conflict with confidence.

KTS2-Learning resources

The ability to work effectively and be able to utilise the full range of learning resources offered by the course.

KTS3- Self-evaluation

The critical awareness to clearly reflect, evaluate and take lead of their own work at every stage of different modules.

KTS4-Information management

Expertise to identifying through careful research relevant source material and competently manage the use of this information with the minimum of guidance.

KTS5- Autonomy

Competence to become independent thinker and self-critical in analysis, and where appropriate, be able to lead and share learning in aiding others.

KTS6-Communication

The faculty to be able to engage confidently in academic and professional communication, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently.

KTS7-Problem-solving

Ability to demonstrate the capability in independent learning and commensurate with continuing professional study at higher level.

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

Learning

The pedagogical offer is based on a combination of studio-based and seminar-based activities that are aimed at ensuring a diverse and interactive learning environment.

The seminar and studio-based sessions are the main setting where students engage with key theoretical and design issues. This system fosters the development of personal transferable skills through discussion, presentation, and group work. By operating in conjunction with lectures and tutorials, the seminar – studio system encourages students to participate in peer learning – studio collective culture and undertake independent learning tasks, both in relation to specific modules and in preparation for the Major Thesis Project.

For design work, the studio system facilitates student-centred learning, transferring an increasing degree of autonomy to the student throughout the course. It encourages diversity in academic debate providing a platform for the exchange of views and additionally provides opportunity for external, vocational criticism from practising professionals and academics.

The student's individual thesis projects are undertaken in the context of the thematically-led research groups, or 'labs' associated with each of the pathways. Each group is supervised by a member of the core teaching staff, supported as necessary by other full-time, or part-time, staff. Development of the project-based learning facilitates interpersonal student learning and group exchange of information. The studio system also promotes variety in project work. Students are encouraged to set their own agendas within the specific pedagogical parameters set out by the project staff. Learning is 'goal-centred' and related to individual student programmes. Project work will reflect contemporary issues or, where appropriate, draw upon historical, social or cultural aspects in architecture and spatial design.

Teaching

Teaching practices are wide ranging but the student will be exposed to the following pedagogical methods:

- Task-based Project Workshops: project working provides both a focus and a structure against which the pedagogical demands of the course can be articulated.
- Individual and Group Tutorials: where the students and tutor will discuss the detailed progress of a particular project, its problems and possibilities.
- Lectures: supporting lectures in specialist topics delivered by invited visiting speakers.
- Seminars: conducted in small groups to disseminate material from lectures and student material.

- Jury reviews: this is group based and requires students to present in public (to course staff, peers and invited critics) their project work to date; such continuous assessment of the project base is by jury criticism only, affording students an opportunity to advocate their ideas directly to the assessment panel.
- Self-Directed Private Study: Students are expected to underpin their learning by private study. In order to assist students, the University provides a variety of support including libraries, workshops and computing facilities (see the appropriate sections in the Course Handbook).
- Web-Based Distance Learning: This will be used where appropriate through an array of interactive tools such as Blackboard, wikis, blogs, etc. in order to add another integral part of the wider pedagogical offer, as demonstrated by successful examples of online platforms like the Westminster Open Study at <http://openstudio.org/>

Assessment

The module-specific assessment requirements are described within each module description and the criteria for assessment are related to the overall expected standard of achievement.

The nature of the creative and intellectual areas of expertise with which the course is concerned, demands a variety of assessment types. These will depend on the module choices that you make and may include: written assignments (including essays and dissertation), reports, portfolio, oral assessment/presentations, and other kinds of project output (including the assessment of practical skills). The relative weightings for each vary, from module to module, depending upon the underlying strategy and learning outcome of the module.

Learning and Communication skills are vital within architecture and design therefore assessment formats and presentation sessions are designed to add value to the learning experience in terms of the development of effective visual, verbal and written communication techniques.

All assessments of the modules on the course will be continuous.

There are no written exams. All assessments on the courses will be continuous.

N.B. At both interim reviews and final assessments, departmental staff external to the course, will be present whenever possible. Part-time and visiting tutors together with other departmental tutors will supplement the course team as appropriate for tutorial instruction, criticism and assessment.

Course structure

This section shows the core and optional modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time postgraduate students' study 180 UK credits in one year. Part-time students will normally complete 180 UK credits over two years.

MA Architecture

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7ARCH025W	Research and Thesis Positioning	Core	40	20
7ARCH011W	Major Thesis Project	Core	60	30
7ARCH004W	City Re-Imagined: Conceptual Design for Right to City	Option	20	10
7ARCH008W	Ethnographic Ways of Knowing: Critical and Creative Explorations of Site	Option	20	10
7ARCH012W	Reading London: Place, Experience and Representation	Option	20	10
7ARCH017W	Site and Motion	Option	20	10
7ARCH026W	Space and Identity: Design Project	Option	20	10
7ARCH027W	Theories of Critical Practices in Architecture	Option	20	10
7ARCH024W	Media Space and Network Culture	Option	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot do your first choice of modules.

MA Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation)

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7ARCH025W	Research and Thesis Positioning	Core	40	20
7ARCH011W	Major Thesis Project	Core	60	30
You must also take the following Option modules to be awarded the MA Architecture (Cultural Identity and Globalisation) award:				
7ARCH004W	City Re-Imagined: Conceptual Design for Right to City	Option	20	10
7ARCH026W	Space and Identity: Design Project	Option	20	10
You can then choose 40 credits from the following Option modules:				
7ARCH008W	Ethnographic Ways of Knowing: Critical and Creative Explorations of Site	Option	20	10
7ARCH012W	Reading London: Place, Experience and Representation	Option	20	10
7ARCH017W	Site and Motion	Option	20	10
7ARCH027W	Theories of Critical Practices in Architecture	Option	20	10
7ARCH024W	Media Space and Network Culture	Option	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot do your first choice of modules.

MA Architecture (Digital Media)

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7ARCH025W	Research and Thesis Positioning	Core	40	20
7ARCH011W	Major Thesis Project	Core	60	30
You must also take the following Option modules to be awarded the MA Architecture (Digital Media) award:				
7ARCH017W	Site and Motion	Option	20	10
7ARCH024W	Media Space and Network Culture	Option	20	10
You can then choose 40 credits from the following Option modules:				
7ARCH004W	City Re-Imagined: Conceptual Design for Right to City	Option	20	10
7ARCH008W	Ethnographic Ways of Knowing: Critical and Creative Explorations of Site	Option	20	10
7ARCH012W	Reading London: Place, Experience and Representation	Option	20	10
7ARCH026W	Space and Identity: Design Project	Option	20	10
7ARCH027W	Theories of Critical Practices in Architecture	Option	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot do your first choice of modules.

MA Architecture (History and Theory)

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7ARCH025W	Research and Thesis Positioning	Core	40	20
7ARCH011W	Major Thesis Project	Core	60	30
You must also take the following Option modules to be awarded the MA Architecture (History and Theory) award:				
7ARCH012W	Reading London: Place, Experience and Representation	Option	20	10
7ARCH027W	Theories of Critical Practices in Architecture	Option	20	10
You can then choose 40 credits from the following Option modules:				
7ARCH004W	City Re-Imagined: Conceptual Design for Right to City	Option	20	10
7ARCH008W	Ethnographic Ways of Knowing: Critical and Creative Explorations of Site	Option	20	10
7ARCH017W	Site and Motion	Option	20	10
7ARCH026W	Space and Identity: Design Project	Option	20	10
7ARCH024W	Media Space and Network Culture	Option	20	10

Academic Regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations. In some cases, course specific regulations may be applicable.

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

Course Leader, is responsible for the overall co-ordination of course and day-to-day running and overall management of the course at the School of Architecture + Cities

Pathway Leaders, are responsible for the day-to-day running and overall management of the course. They are also responsible for the development of the curriculum and its delivery.

Assistant Head of School, holds overall responsibility for the MA course, and for the other courses run by the School of Architecture + Cities within the College of Design and Creative Industry.

Head of School, holds overall responsibility for the course, and for the other courses run by the School of Architecture + Cities within the College of Design and Creative Industry.

Personal Tutor, responsible to meet and advise students of the course on their personal matters.

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 Campus Registry. 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. Further information on Blackboard can be found at westminster.ac.uk/blackboard.

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 appointment. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students¹ 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 in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services 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 multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at westminster.ac.uk/student-advice. The University of Westminster Students' Union

also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at westminster.ac.uk/students-union.

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

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in **2014**. 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 College 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 evidence of student achievement, reports from external examiners in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.

A Course revalidation 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 Revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years 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 student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College 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 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.