

Programme Specification 2023-24

Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture

Awarding body	University of Cambridge
Teaching institution	University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education/Faculty of Architecture & History of Art
Accreditation details	60 Credits at FHEQ Level 7
Name of final award	Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture
Programme title	Professional Practice in Architecture
UCAS code	N/A
HECoS code(s)	100122 (architecture)
Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)	Architecture
Qualifications framework level	FHEQ level 7
Date specification produced	April 2021

Update June 2020: From mid-March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in all course teaching switching to emergency remote delivery, using video-based teaching methods and the Virtual Learning Environment. Learning outcomes were unaffected and assessed appropriately.

Introduction

The Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture is delivered by the Faculty of Architecture and History of Art in partnership with the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE). The Postgraduate Certificate forms part of the Institute's programme of credit-bearing professional development qualifications offered at FHEQ Level 7 to part-time adult students. In the UK, the training of an architect culminates with the Part 3 examination. Passing this examination qualifies the candidate to register with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and thereafter be called an architect, and take up corporate membership of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Thus, it is the formal entry into the profession. The Part 3 Examination is recognised by the Architect's Registration Board and the Royal Institute of British Architects as the final qualifying examination for obtaining registered status and professional membership.

The Postgraduate Certificate is aimed at individuals who have completed RIBA/ARB Parts 1 and 2 with at least two years' practical training experience in architectural or related practice under the direct supervision of an Architect registered in the EU. At least 12 months of this supervised practice must be undertaken in the UK, under the direct supervision of a UK-registered Architect.

Students may apply to the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture in their second year of practical experience, but must have 2 years of supervised practice in order to undertake the examinations.

Educational aims

The programme aims to:

- prepare students for the examination which leads to registration as an Architect and entry to the profession;
- develop students' knowledge and judgement regarding practice, law and management within architecture;

- act as a forum to engender debate about the major concerns for the profession and the construction industry, both in the UK and further afield.

Learning outcomes

The programme is based on the ARB document *Prescription of Qualifications: ARB Criteria*, revised in June 2011. These criteria are 'held in common' by the RIBA and describe the requirements for recognition of Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 courses in architecture in the UK. It is at Part 3 that the candidate has to demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skill and judgement to:

Knowledge and understanding

A successful candidate should be able to demonstrate authorship, knowledge, and effective communication skills, and reasoning and understanding in relation to all issues within the Professional Criteria outlined below.

1. Professionalism
2. Clients, users and delivery of services
3. Legal framework and processes
4. Practice and management
5. Building Procurement

Potential candidates should view the full text of the Criteria before embarking on any Part 3 course; this can be seen on the ARB website (<http://www.arb.org.uk/>¹)

Skills and other attributes

Cognitive/Intellectual Skills

By the end of the course the students should have the ability to:

1. critically evaluate theories and concepts underpinning the profession as an applied area of study as evidence to support recommendations made, reviewing reliability, validity and significance
2. identify and define a concept or idea with potential for independent scholarly research and application in a new context
3. apply principles underlying the law relevant to architectural practice and building procurement
4. analyse the appropriateness and completeness for its purpose of forms of documentation including written and graphic communication
5. assess the architectural services required to deliver a project effectively and the establishment of appropriate scope of works for all members of the project team; to co-ordinate and integrate the work of other consultants and have an awareness of the terms of their appointments
6. analyse new situations or abstract data using objective and logical criteria to make informed and critical judgements
7. act in accordance with the requirements of professional conduct and the concept of 'professionalism'
8. follow codes and standards regulating the profession of architecture
9. demonstrate that health and safety matters are integral to every stage of the design process and execution for those aspects of design for which the architect is responsible

¹ Note that this website is external to the University; though accurate at the time of publication, future accuracy and applicability of content is outside of our control.

10. prepare, in consultation with the client, and others where appropriate, an acceptable brief and budget; to effectively communicate with the client at every stage
11. assess the architectural services required to deliver a project effectively in all aspects

Transferable Skills

1. self-evaluation, through demonstrating confidence in the application of their own criteria of judgement, challenging received opinions, and reflecting on action. They will seek and make use of feedback
2. autonomy, through taking responsibility for their own work, and critically analysing it
3. strategic thinking, through demonstrating their ability to apply a strategy to an idea, project or problem to achieve an effective conclusion
4. situational analysis, through demonstrating their ability to analyse a situation or information and competently undertaking reasonably straight-forward research tasks with minimum guidance
5. communication and presentation skills, through engaging effectively in debate in a professional manner and producing detailed and coherent project reports presented in a professional and confident manner
6. problem-solving skills, through identifying and defining complex problems and applying appropriate knowledge, tools, and methods to their solution
7. leadership, management, and team work skills, through interacting effectively within a team learning group, and recognising, supporting and being proactive in the various aspects of leadership; they will demonstrate ability to negotiate in a professional context and manage conflict

Programme structure

The programme is offered at FHEQ Level 7 and attracts 60 credits.

The programme consists of 3 workshops and the curriculum is designed to facilitate in-depth study, independent research and critical analysis of the subject areas to present an overall understanding of architectural practice. Thus, there are interlinking themes which appear in more than one course session. The three course sessions comprising the Postgraduate Certificate are designed to cover the major elements of the ARB document Prescription of Qualifications.

Students will be assessed by means of essays, written case studies and other assignments up to 11,000 words and the Professional Experience and Development Record, in addition to two written examinations and Oral Examination.

Courses will be delivered in a blended format, consisting of required intensive residential sessions, supported by self-directed learning in Study Groups. The Course Director and Professional Studies Advisers can be contacted for advice and feed-back between the course sessions. The programme involves an estimated 75 contact hours with tutors and speakers in lecture and workshop settings, and through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). In addition there is self-managed time for preparation, assignments and further reading.

The programme is offered on a part-time basis and students will normally take up to 12 months to complete the Postgraduate Certificate.

Teaching methods

The course is organised as intensive two- and three- day sessions in September,

March and June, with submission of the PEDR, Career Appraisal and Case Study at the end of the year (in August/September) culminating in written and oral examinations in September.

The aim of the course is to provide preparation for the examination as well as to act as a forum for discussion of certain major concerns of the profession.

The teaching is delivered through a mix of lectures, seminars, debates and workshops with an emphasis on learning through engagement.

In addition to the taught sessions, candidates are grouped into Study Groups who meet and work on set problems in between the formal taught sessions. These groups meet on average two to three times between taught sessions. In addition, there is regular e-mail and telephone contact between students and the Course Director.

Candidates are also assigned an external Professional Studies Advisor who meets with them to discuss their office experience, to sign off their Professional Experience & Development Record and to advise them on their Case Studies.

Assessment methods

The programme is assessed using multiple and inter-related strategies, including written individual essays, practical assignments, a case study, and written and oral examinations. These formally assessed elements are:

- The Professional Experience and Development record (PEDR)
- A Case Study (up to 8,000 words)
- Career Appraisal (up to 3,000 words) and CV (two pages A4 only)
- Written Examinations (2 papers)
- An oral examination

The Examination

The format of the Examination is approved by ARB/RIBA and consists of

- Written Papers

There will be two written examination papers: one paper of 2 hours and another of 3 hours duration. The latter will be 'open book' i.e. references are allowed. Paper 1 examines the more general issues of the syllabus while Paper 2 includes questions on The Contract and Practice and Project Management. In preparation for Paper 2 candidates will be issued in advance with details of the scenario when they submit the other documents on which they will be examined. The questions will not be seen until the formal examination. Candidates will be able to concentrate on considering their response to the problems posed. The examination questions are set by the Chair of Examiners and the Professional Course Director, in consultation with the External Examiner and the Professional Examiners.

- Oral Examination

This is the last part of the examination during which the examiners will draw together all the information submitted by the candidate, assess their interpersonal skills, ask additional questions and make final judgments about a candidate's suitability.

Entry requirements

To be eligible for the Part 3 examination, applicants must have completed Parts 1 and 2 and have completed at least two years' practical training experience in architectural or related practice under the direct supervision of an architect registered in the EU. At least 12 months of this supervised practice must be undertaken in the UK, under the direct supervision of a UK-registered architect.

The experience should be approved by each applicant's Professional Studies Adviser. A minimum twelve months of the pre-requisite practical training experience must be undertaken after completion of Part 2; each period of practice must have lasted at least 3 months.

Students may apply to the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture in their second year of practical experience, but must have 2 years of supervised practice in order to qualify to take the examinations.

In the UK, the training of an architect culminates with the Part 3 examination. Passing this examination qualifies the candidate to register with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and thereafter be called an architect, and take up corporate membership of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Thus it is the formal entry into the profession.

The Part 3 Examination is recognised by the Architects Registration Board and the Royal Institute of British Architects as the final qualifying examination for obtaining registered status and professional membership.

Under the EU Directive for Architects, nationals of European member countries registered with ARB are also entitled to practise as architects in other member states subject to satisfying some additional local adaptation requirements. UK registration as an Architect is also highly regarded throughout the rest of the world.

Applicants to the programme will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in the English language; students whose first language is not English must be able to satisfy the current English Language Competence requirements of the University of Cambridge in the year in which they apply for admission to the course

Progression

The pass mark for the course is 60%.

Candidates who have NOT been successful in the examination may take the examination a second time only. Candidates who have failed twice will not be eligible to take the examination again at this university. The second attempt must be made during the following academic year.

Students are required to pass all elements of the examination in order to pass the programme and achieve the award of the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture.

Graduate employability and career destinations

Students completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice in Architecture will normally already be in employment; the Postgraduate Certificate will enable them to qualify for posts for architects, usually with greater responsibility and commensurate salary.

Management of Education Quality and Standards

The University ensures high quality of teaching and learning in the following ways:

1. Scrutiny of the External Examiners Reports for all teaching programmes
2. Encouraging student engagement at both the local level, through involvement in Faculty and Departmental Committees, and at a central level by participation in nationally-benchmarked surveys
3. Participation in the biennial Education Monitoring and Review Process to explore provision, share good practice and suggest constructive courses of action
4. Mentoring, appraisal, and peer review of staff, and encouraging staff participation in personal development programmes

Quality indicators

RIBA validated and ARB prescribed course.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year, any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the Reporter. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: <https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/>