

Programme Specification

Master of Architecture (full-time)

PFTZMARCHXHM

For students entering in 2027/28

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	Master of Architecture (full-time) - 22 months
Accreditation	Prescribed by the Architects Registration Board (ARB); Validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
Programme Start Dates	September
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Architecture

Programme information and content

The Master of Architecture (MArch) is the second stage of the 3 stages (Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3) to become a qualified Architect in the UK.

Informed by the debate around contemporary architectural practice and research, the MArch programme focuses on research-informed design, exploring the value of research and its impact upon the practice of architecture and the built environment industry. The programme offers a collaborative model of education which focuses on design as a research practice that critically engages with places and communities. It operates in a dynamic, research-driven, and project-based learning environment, providing a platform for the exploration of diverse modes of architectural production, communication, and forms of practice. It aims to prepare graduates able to respond to societal, environmental, and technological challenges, and to explore professional opportunities.

The curriculum builds on expertise from architecture, urban planning, social sciences, arts, and other related disciplines, encouraging and facilitating the interdisciplinary nature of design as well as creating synergies with other master courses across UoR. It is conceived as an integrated curriculum, in which skill-based connections and thematic alignment between different modules are key. Students develop and apply creative, research, technical, and professional skills and knowledge in a series of architectural Design Research Units (DRU), which define the unique character of the MArch programme. The Design Research Units are based on collaboration between tutors, students, and external partners (practitioners, policymakers, industry partners, local institutions, stakeholders, and communities) and are supported and enriched by taught courses, specialised lectures, seminars, and workshops (both compulsory and optional). The design curriculum builds thematically on existing research and expertise within active research groups at UoR as well as partnerships with architecture practices, providing an environment of applied research and debate.

The content of the programme is organised under three main curricular areas: 1. Architectural Design; 2. Architectural Technologies; 3. Research & Professional Skills. It comprises seven core modules (220 credits) and a series of optional modules (20 credits) delivered across UoR to provide the students with some options in relevant associated built environment subject specialisms and to foster cross-disciplinary exchanges.

The programme has a global outlook using research themes, projects sites, case studies and practices from across the world, applied and taught with a UK professional context. In addition to key professional skills, the MArch Programme provides a strong foundation in research methods to prepare students to join PhD programmes in both traditional and practice modes in Architecture and related disciplines as well as to join research-led practices.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-Master of Architecture (full-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Ability to generate complex design proposals showing understanding of current architectural issues, originality in the application of subject knowledge and, where appropriate, to test new hypotheses and speculations.
2	Ability to evaluate and apply a comprehensive range of visual, oral, and written media to test, analyse, critically appraise, and explain design proposals.
3	Ability to evaluate materials, processes and techniques that apply to complex architectural designs and building construction, and to integrate these into practicable design proposals.
4	Critical understanding of how knowledge is advanced through research to produce clear, logically argued and original written work relating to architectural culture, theory and design.
5	Understanding of the context of the architect and the construction industry, including the architect's role in the processes of procurement and building production, and under legislation.
6	Problem solving skills, professional judgment, and ability to take the initiative and make appropriate decisions in complex and unpredictable circumstances.
7	Ability to identify individual learning and understand the personal responsibility required to prepare for qualification as an architect.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information

The programme comprises 240 credits (120 credits each year), allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Compulsory modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AAMAD1	Architectural Design 1	20	M
AAMAD2	Architectural Design 2	40	M
AAMAT	Architectural Technologies	20	M
AAMSPR	Architectural Skills for Professional Resilience	20	M

Remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the School of the Built Environment or modules from elsewhere in the University from an approved list.

Year 2 modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
AAMAD3	Architectural Design 3- Thesis Design	60	M
AAMPS	Professional Skills	20	M
AAMRM	Research Methods: Dissertation	40	M

The curriculum has been designed to provide students with the required key skillset, addressing the ARB (Architects Registration Board) and the RIBA (The Royal Institute of British Architects) criteria. The mapping of Learning Outcomes against these criteria for each module is indicated in the relevant module description.

As a requirement for prescription and validation with the ARB and the RIBA, all compulsory modules must be passed to demonstrate that the professional validation criteria are met.

Any modules with more than one element of assessment will require a pass in each element to ensure compliance with the criteria required by professional bodies (ARB/RIBA).

Part-time or flexible modular arrangements

N/A

Placement opportunities

In the second year, you will be provided with the opportunity to undertake a credit-bearing professional practice experience as part of the Professional Skills Module (AAMPS). You will be required to find and secure a professional practice experience opportunity, with the support of the University and upon agreement with the Professional Study Advisor.

Study abroad opportunities

N/A

Optional modules

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery

Teaching will be delivered through a combination of lectures, seminars, tutorials, project work, workshops, and on- and off- campus field work and visits.

Assessment will take a variety of formats and will involve both summative assessment and systematic formative (non-graded) assessment, including tutorials and project reviews, which will provide you with regular opportunities for feedback and reflection, progressively preparing you for summative assessment.

Written assignments will be formatively assessed by submission of your work prior to the date of the tutorial meeting; project work and workshops will be primarily assessed via portfolio and carrying out oral presentations.

The assessment of students' work, progression through the programme as well as degree classification are governed by the University's policies and regulations.

Delivery will be full-time, primarily on campus, enabling you to access the full range of University and School facilities and services.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

The Master of Architecture course is prescribed by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

This course is the second stage (Part 2) towards qualification as an architect in the UK. After this course, you will be required to complete a period of professional experience as

well as Professional Studies (Part 3) and the related examination, to be eligible to achieve statutory registered status as a UK architect (ARB) and be eligible for Chartered Membership of the RIBA.

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of portfolio and coursework. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

As part of the final assessment, all graduating students will be required to attend an interview with an External Examiner.

Progression

In order to progress to the second year, students are required to:

- i. Achieve a mark of at least 50% in each individual compulsory module.
- ii. It is a requirement of the professional bodies that all compulsory modules on this course must achieve a minimum pass mark (50%) in all components of core modules: AAMAD1, AAMAD2, AAMAT, AAMSPR.

Classification

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Master's Degree

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Master of Architecture degree:

Award of a Master's degree

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 240 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 240 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 50%
- (iv) a mark of 50% or more for the Dissertation or the Thesis Design Project

In addition, for all classifications, as per requirement of the professional bodies (ARB/RIBA):

(v) students must achieve a minimum pass mark (50%) in all compulsory modules, and in all components of core modules.

(vi) in any modules with more than one element of assessment students must achieve a pass in each element to ensure compliance with the ARB/RIBA criteria.

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Master's degree, the following **further** conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 240 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 240 credits and marks of 70% in at least 120 credits

AND

Where the dissertation is included in the conditions for the award of a Master's degree, a mark of at least 60% in the Dissertation or the Thesis Design Project

AND

No marks below 50% in each compulsory module.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 240 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 240 credits and marks of 60% in at least 120 credits

AND

No marks below 50% in each compulsory module.

For Postgraduate Diploma

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

(i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits

(ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits

(iii) no credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Certificate

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate:

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

(i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 60 credits

(ii) No credits with a mark below 40%.

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 19: Awards: Postgraduate Master's, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Please note that there may be a specific version for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

The additional costs for the programme are around £750 per year for essential textbooks, printing, drawing- and model-making materials. Required and recommended textbooks may often be available second-hand at lower costs, and some copies are usually available in the University Library.

Travel costs of the required field trips will be covered. There might be additional costs for trips which are optional.

There is access to computers with specialist software, however, students may also wish to buy their own computers.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant

**module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the
University of Reading.**

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23 July 2026

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