

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Course record information

Name and level of final award:	<b>MSc Architecture and Environmental Design</b> The MSc Architecture and Environmental Design is a MSc degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma in Architecture and Environmental Design Postgraduate Certificate in Architecture and Environmental Design
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Faculty of Architecture and Environmental Design, Marylebone Campus
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	1 year F/T or 2 years P/T
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</a> :	
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	
Date of course validation/review:	April 2010/ April 2014
Date of programme specification approval:	November 2013
Course Leader:	Dr Rosa Schiano-Phan
Course URL:	<a href="http://westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate">westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate</a>
Westminster Course Code:	AEDPAED
JACS Code:	K110
UKPASS Code:	P044597

## 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

The main objectives of the MSc Architecture and Environmental Design award are:

- To empower the current and future generations of architects, engineers and building professionals with the knowledge and the tools required to apply an environmentally responsive approach to current architectural practice and to make informed design decisions which are evidence based
- To prepare students with a robust methodology in environmental design which relates to the various stages of architectural design, emphasizing the generative potential of a combined bioclimatic and occupant focused approach
- To foster a critical learning approach and develop a range of presentation/communication skills which are complementary to the graphical ones
- To promote an interdisciplinary and international breadth to the course
- To form students which ultimately have a thorough understanding of the principles and methods of environmental design to a degree that will modify their approach to and perception of architecture.
- To offer the values and pragmatic tools for our graduates to actively participate in the current discourse on environmental architecture and to make a contribution to society by delivering better performing and more sustainable built environments.

## 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

## Learning outcomes

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

## Knowledge and understanding

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

- Conceptual and theoretical framework of the subject area
- Past and current context of development of the discipline
- Principles of passive design and performance analysis tools applied to design practice
- Fundamentals of building physics and energy flows between the built environment and its inhabitants
- Appropriate application of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools to evaluate performance of existing buildings and of new design proposals
- Critical appreciation of environmental requirements and performance of various building typologies and built precedents
- Correlations between climatic & microclimatic factors, buildings and their mutual interactions

### **Specific skills**

Upon successful completion of this Course, students will have developed appropriate subject specific skills which will allow them to demonstrate:

- Critical, reflective and synthetic skills leading to a problem definition approach to the wider as well as specific technical aspects concerned with environmental performance of buildings and the built environment
- Critical review of existing literature and information already available in the field
- Ability to plan, carry-out, process and interpret fieldwork and monitoring data from in and around buildings using specialist equipment and data collection protocols
- Well-developed presentation skills through variety of media ranging from oral, written, graphical, three-dimensional, virtual, etc.
- Use specialist computational tools and analytical methods to assess and predict building performance
- Formulate research questions and hypotheses relevant to the context of interest and undertake architectural research leading to guidelines of applicability of studied solutions and research outcomes

### **Key transferable skills**

Each module defines the respective transferable skills that a student will encounter:

- Group working

A student will be capable of working effectively with a group as leader or member. In addition, a student must demonstrate an ability to clarify a task and make appropriate use of the interests, skills and knowledge of group members as well as being able to successfully negotiate potential contradictions and conflicts with confidence.

- Learning resources

The ability to effectively utilise the full range of learning opportunities and resources including:

Self-evaluation: A student must clearly display an ability to reflect and evaluate their own work at every stage of a module.

Information management: Through careful research, a student must be capable of identifying relevant source material, or other references, and competently manage and use this information with the minimum of guidance.

**Autonomy:** A student must be capable of independent thought and self-critical analysis and, where appropriate, be able to share their learning in aiding others in seminars, tutorials and workshops.

**Communication:** A student must be able to engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently.

**Problem-solving:** Throughout the Course, a student should demonstrate the capability of independent learning commensurate with continuing professional study.

## **Learning, teaching and assessment methods**

### **Learning**

Apart from lectures and other similar presentations, a studio-based, student-centred learning environment will be created with the intention of encouraging inter-disciplinary discussion and cross-pollination of ideas. This will emulate the integrated working practises of the building industry and the associated challenges of architectural and environmental design. Such a model will provide diversity of academic debate and a catalyst for the exchange of views, as well as formative criticism from practising professionals, consultants and academic staff. However, an increasing degree of autonomy will be required as a student progresses through the Course.

Thesis development work, synthesising both analytical and design investigative elements, will be undertaken both in studio groups and individual assignments. Members of the core teaching staff will tutor and supervise the students at each stage of the thesis' development. Development of project-based learning methods, interpersonal student learning and group information exchanges will also be encouraged.

Students will also be required to set their own agendas within specific pedagogical parameters agreed in conjunction with the Course teaching staff. In essence, learning is to be 'goal-centred' and related to individual student programmes. Thesis work will reflect contemporary issues or, where appropriate, draw upon historical, social and cultural aspects in architecture and environmental design.

### **Teaching**

The teaching practises evident within the Course are wide-ranging and incorporate some of the following pedagogical methods:

- Lectures: supporting lectures on specialist topics delivered by invited speakers.
- Seminars: conducted in small groups to disseminate material from lectures, workshops, student research and the like.
- Case studies: invited lecturers present feedback on recently completed or current projects which represent exemplars relevant to the Course.
- Live projects: liaison with multi-professional design teams and monitoring of live projects which may necessitate Study Trips and, or, Field Trips.
- Individual and group tutorials: where students and tutors discuss detailed progress of a particular project, its challenges and possibilities.
- Task-based project workshops: project working provides both a focus and a structure against which the pedagogical demands of the Course can be articulated.

- Panel criticism for Design projects: this is group-based and requires students to present their work to, and receive advice from, a group of Course staff, peers and invited critics. This form of presentation affords students the opportunity to advocate their ideas and proposals as if to a client body, competition jury or panel of professional assessors.
- Student-centred learning: The need to develop students' skills in path-finding and decision -making has resulted in the introduction of student-centred learning. This is regarded as a vital extension of formalised teaching and learning methods. Students will be guided by the subject tutors in their development of learning methods other than the structured methods described above. Improved time management techniques and the detailed appreciation of the use of information sources towards a clearly determined objective are seen as important outcomes.
- Self-directed private study: Students are expected to underpin their learning by personal study. To assist students in this context the University provides a variety of support including libraries, workshops and computing facilities (please refer to appropriate sections of the Course Handbook).

### **Assessment**

The specific assessment requirements are described within the module descriptors and the criteria for assessment are related to the anticipated overall standard of achievement.

The nature of the creative, intellectual and professional areas of expertise with which the Course is concerned demands a variety of assessment types, thereby enabling students to express their competence in a number of ways. The relative weightings of each assessment type may vary from module to module depending on the underlying strategy and constituent learning outcomes.

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

All assessment of modules on the Course will be continuous (ie. there are no formal written examinations).

Note: At both interim reviews and final assessments other Departmental staff not directly involved with the Course may be invited to attend, in addition to other external consultants and experts. Part-time and visiting staff, together with other Departmental tutors, will supplement the Course Team as appropriate for tutorial instruction, criticism, assessment and feedback.

## Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
<u>Full time mode</u>				
<i>Semester 1</i>				
7AEVD004W	Theory and History of Environmental	Core	20	10
7AEVD003W	Principles of Environmental Design	Core	20	10
7AEVD002W	Evaluation of Built Environments	Core	40	20
<i>Semester 2 and 3</i>				
7AEVD001W	Environmental and Energy Modelling	Core	40	20
7AEVD005W	Thesis Project	Core	60	30
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>180 UK credits</b>	

<u>Part time mode</u>				
<i>Year 1 Semester 1</i>				
7AEVD004W	Theory and History of Environmental	Core	20	10
7AEVD003W	Principles of Environmental Design	Core	20	10
<i>Year 1 Semester 2</i>				
7AEVD001W	Environmental and Energy Modelling	Core	40	20
<i>Year 2 Semester 1</i>				
7AEVD002W	Evaluation of Built Environments	Core	40	20
<i>Year 2 Semester 2 and 3</i>				
7AEVD005W	Thesis Project	Core	60	30
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>180 UK credits</b>	

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

## Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations)

## How will you be supported in your studies?

### Course Management

The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- Dr Rosa Schiano-Phan, Course Leader, responsible for day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum and its delivery; Contact details: [r.schianophan@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:r.schianophan@westminster.ac.uk) (020 7911 5000 ext. 66846).
- Professor Harry Charrington, Head of Department, holds overall responsibility for the course, and for the other courses run by the Department of Architecture within the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment;
- Professor David Dernie, Dean of Faculty, holds overall responsibility for the course and for other courses run by the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment.

### 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<sup>1</sup> 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 multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

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<sup>1</sup> Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

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

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2010. 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 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.

### **For more information about this course:**

Contact the Course Leader for MSc AED: Dr Rosa Schiano-Phan, [r.schianophan@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:r.schianophan@westminster.ac.uk) or visit the University of Westminster website at <http://www.westminster.ac.uk>.

**Please note:** This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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