Programme Specification

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	School of Architecture and the Built Environment Marylebone site
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Stephen Brookhouse RIBA FCIArb
Course URL:	
Mode and length of study:	Part-time 12 months
University of Westminster course code:	PPAPPPA
JACS code:	n/a
UCAS code:	n/a
QAA subject benchmarking group:	n/a
Professional body accreditation:	Prescribed by the ARB RIBA Part 3 Examination
Date of course validation/review:	2001/2007/2013
Date of programme specification:	2014/15

Admissions requirements

Students applying for the course must have normally passed RIBA Parts 1 and 2 from a recognised School of Architecture or have successfully passed the ARB assessment for RIBA Parts 1 and 2. Applicants must also be in full-time employment. In exceptional circumstances students may be accepted on the course without meeting the full admissions criteria at the time or enrolment and subject to the prior agreement of the University.

Applicants who have not had their secondary or tertiary education through the medium of English should normally have attained an IELTS score of at least 6.5.

Aims of the course

The Programme prepares postgraduate Architectural students with exemption from the RIBA Parts 1 and 2 Examinations for the final RIBA Part 3 Examination.

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 Diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture is a professional qualification leading to registration as an Architect and professional membership. Students who have successfully completed the course have obtained senior positions in architectural practice, taken more responsibility in architectural practice and used the qualification to develop their own architectural practice and also work overseas. Former students have also developed a specialism in Construction Law.
  - The Diploma may also form a platform for continuing study in academia and research and may lead to study for an MPhil/PhD degree.

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.

The Learning Outcomes for the Course are designed to meet the Professional Criteria for the Part 3 Examination (2010) held in common by the RIBA and the ARB. These are summarised under the following subject headings:

PC1 Professionalism

PC2 Clients, users and delivery of services

PC3 Legal framework and processes

PC4 Practice and Management

PC5 Building procurement

The Professional Criteria are detailed and comprehensive and are integrated into the learning outcomes of the four core modules as listed below and in Section 9.0 of the Course Handbook: (PC1), (PC2), (PC3), (PC4) and (PC5)).

Knowledge and understanding

Upon completion of the course students will have achieved the requisite knowledge and understanding expected of an architect as follows:

ENGLISH LAW, REGULATIONS, CONSTRUCTION PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS MODULE

1. a current and systematic understanding of the legal context within which an architect must operate (PC3)

2. a deep and systematic understanding of the processes undertaken and methodological approaches to ensure compliance with legal requirements or standards (PC3)

3. a current understanding of the statutory and private bodies that affect the delivery of projects. (PC3)

4. a deep and systematic understanding of the relevant law, legislation, guidance and controls relevant to architectural design and construction and how these affect the way the knowledge is interpreted and applied. (PC3)

5. an understanding of current theoretical and methodological approaches to contract and construction law and construction procurement processes (PC5)

6. a systematic understanding of the obligations of an architect acting as contract administrator (PC5)

7. an understanding of the theoretical and methodological approaches to the resolution of construction-related and professional disputes (PC5)

PROFESSIONAL CASE STUDY

1. a current and systematic understanding of the range of services offered by architects and delivering those services in a manner prioritising the interests of the client and other stakeholders. (PC2)

2. a current and systematic understanding of forms and terms of appointment, the means of professional remuneration, relevant legislation, the execution of appropriate programmed and coordinated project tasks. (PC2)

3. a current understanding of the methodological approaches to establishing client needs and the briefing process, appropriate communication, programming, coordination and competent delivery. (PC2)

4. a current and systematic understanding of the business priorities, management processes required and risks of running an architectural practice (PC4)

5. a current and systematic understanding of the nature of legal business entities, office systems, administration procedures and the relevant legislation. (PC4)

6. a current understanding of the methodological approaches to the processes undertaken to ensure compliance with legal requirements or standards. (PC3)

7. a current and systematic understanding of the interaction with statutory and private bodies or individuals to competently deliver projects within diverse legislative frameworks. (PC3)

8. a current and systematic understanding of UK construction and contract law, construction procurement processes and the roles of built environment professionals. (PC5)

9. the ability to identify, evaluate and plan project-related tasks, coordinate and engage in design team interaction, execute effective contract communication and resolve construction-related challenges and disputes.(PC5)

10. the ability to evaluate and develop critical responses contractual relationships, the obligations upon an architect acting as contract administrator, job-related administrative systems and the management of projects in the context of the candidate's professional experience. (PC5)

ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

1. a systematic understanding of the business priorities, management processes and risks of running an architectural practice;(PC4)

2. a systematic understanding of the relationship between the practice of architecture and the interrelationship with the UK construction industry;(PC4)

3. a systematic understanding of business administration and the resourcing, planning, implementing and record project tasks to achieve stated goals, either individually or within a team;(PC4)

4. a systematic understanding of the nature of legal business entities, office systems, administration procedures and the relevant legislation. (PC4)

5. a systematic understanding of the range and delivery of services offered by architects prioritising the interests of clients and other stakeholders , forms and terms of appointment, means of remuneration (PC2)

6. an understanding of current methodological approaches to client needs, briefing,

   communication, coordination and delivery of project tasks and how these are

   interpreted and implemented (PC2)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERIENCE MODULE

1. an overall competence and ability to behave with integrity, in the ethical and professional manner appropriate to the role of architect. (PC1)

2. a critical understanding of the ethical dimension to their practice and the architect's obligation to society and the profession (PC1)

3. a deep understanding of the limits of their competence and professional experience to ensure they are unlikely to bring the profession into disrepute. (PC1)

4. a systematic understanding of the range of services offered by architects (PC2)

5. a systematic understanding of the legal context within which an architect must operate (PC3)

6. a systematic understanding of the management processes and risks of running an architectural practice (PC4)

7. a systematic understanding of the roles of built environment professionals and the obligations of an architect as contract administrator (PC5)

8. a systematic understanding of the management of projects in the context of their experience (PC5)

9. the use of personal reflection to analyse their own actions and make connections between known and unknown areas, to allow for adaptation and propose changes in future practice.

Specific skills

1. Group working: as both leader and member in the workplace, enabling students to delegate and manage tasks and to negotiate and handle conflict effectively.

2. Resources: retrieving, prioritising and integrating relevant professional, legal and commercial sources of information.

3. Reflective Practice: demonstrating continuous personal development through structured self-evaluation.

4. Management and Information: competently undertaking tasks with minimum guidance and managing time.

5. Autonomy: working autonomously or with the minimum of guidance to investigate a range of subjects in depth and to reach a set of conclusions.

6. Communication: engaging competently in professional reporting verbally and in writing within an academic environment and to set standards.

7. Problem-solving: using creative and numerate skills to evaluate issues in a personal capacity and to make effective use of other professional resources when appropriate.

Key transferable skills

The Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture is designed to lead to professional registration with the ARB and membership of the RIBA. As such the course concentrates on key professional skills. These are also transferable to a number of professional and managerial contexts and also build on the transferable skills acquired by students in their qualifying undergraduate and graduate architectural programmes

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

Learning

The course is designed for students working in architectural practice and uses work-based learning as the core learning method.
Students are given reading lists for each module and introduced to the library and IT resources, including the University's VLE, Blackboard.
Students are guided in the lectures and on Blackboard towards a structured approach to self-directed learning, investigation and research of the core subject areas and encouraged by the course team, through both academic study and experience, to gain the necessary level of knowledge and understanding of the subjects covered in the lecture-based modules.
Students are also encouraged to learn from experience and to reflect on their professional development through completion of the RIBA pedr and the application of the key subject areas in the work-based Professional Case Study and Professional Development modules.
Formal and informal feedback is given on the work-based modules by the course team at regular intervals throughout the year.

Teaching

1. English Law, Regulations, Construction procurement and Contracts: this module is delivered as a weekly lecture course by expert academic and practitioner lecturers.
2. Architectural Practice Management: this module is delivered as an intensive short lecture course by expert academic and practitioner lecturers.
3. Professional Case Study: This module combines a series of lectures with seminars and tutorials with the student's professional tutor who is an experienced academic architect or an experienced practitioner.
4. Professional Development and Experience: This module combines a series of lectures with seminars and tutorials with the student's professional tutor who is an experienced academic architect or an experienced practitioner.

Assessment

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

1. English Law, Regulations, Construction contracts and procurement (Level 7): 100% written 'Open Book' Examination
2. Architectural Practice Management (Level 7): 100% written 'Open Book' Examination
3. Professional Case Study (Level 7): 70% Coursework, 30% oral examination;
4. Professional Experience and Development (Level 7): 50% Coursework; 50% Oral

Course structure

This section shows the four core modules that comprise the course and their credit value. Part-time Postgraduate students study 120 credits per year.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	**Module title**	**Status**	**UK credit**	**ECTS**
4ARC7C5	English Law, regulations, contracts and procurement	Core	20	
4ARC7C6	Professional Case Study	Core	60	
4ARC7C7	Architectural Practice Management	Core	20	
4ARC7C8	Professional Development and Experience	Core	20	
Award of Postgraduate Diploma available				

Academic regulations

The Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture operates in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster, which is available at www.westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster. The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 18: Modular Framework for Postgraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current Handbook of Academic Regulations, which is available at www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Award

To qualify for the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Practice in Architecture a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7

- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

Support for students

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the School Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

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

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.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

Reference points for the course

Internally

University of Westminster's Framework for Postgraduate Courses; Assessment Regulations; Essential Information: Postgraduate Student Guide, Course Frameworks, Regulations and Policies.

Externally

ARB/RIBA: Professional Criteria (2010) for the RIBA Part 3 Examinations.

Professional body accreditation

ARB Prescription 2013; RIBA Validation 2012.

Quality management and enhancement

Course management

Stephen Brookhouse, Course Leader, is responsible for the day-to-day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum and its delivery.

Contact details: s.brookhouse@wmin.ac.uk 020 7911 5000 ext. 66848

Professor Harry Charrington, Head of Department, holds overall responsibility for the course and other courses run by the Department of Architecture within the School of Architecture and the Built Environment.

Professor David Dernie, Dean of the School, holds overall responsibility for the course and for other courses run by the School of Architecture and the Built Environment.

Department Office support for the course

The departmental office provides the administrative support to the School as a whole, including the Department of Architecture. The Departmental administrative support is based in room M410A.

Celeste Miles Department of Architecture RIBA Part 3 Administrator
c.miles1@westminster.ac.uk 020 7911 5000 ext. 66832 or 0203 506 6838

Rita Darch Secretary for the Department of Architecture
020 7911 5000 ext. 66837

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2001. The latest periodic validation took place in 2013. The panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic course review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by the School 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 each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the School action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the Course Committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback 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 elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with review panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from course committees is part of the Schools' quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course contact the Admissions office: 020 7911 5020
mrdmark@wmin.ac.uk