

**Architectural Association  
School of Architecture**

**PROGRAMME GUIDE**

**FOUNDATION**

**2016/2017**

**FOUNDATION**

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**This guide is to be read in conjunction with the current edition of the AA School Academic Regulations.**

## **SECTION 1 : THE SCHOOL**

### **ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE**

#### **WELCOME**

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Architectural Association School of Architecture, which has, since 1917, been located in the Georgian buildings of Bedford Square, central London. For decades, the School has raised students and teachers who have grown into leading architects and educators internationally. In the last ten years AA graduates have been awarded three Pritzker Prizes, eight RIBA Stirling Prizes, four RIBA Gold Medals as well as providing several winners of UK Young Architect of the Year and RIBA President's Medals Students Awards.

Founded in 1847 by two architectural apprentices, the AA was established to provide independent and self-directed education for aspiring architects. The School was first recognised by the RIBA in 1906 and in 1919 a full-time course was extended to five years and the award of Diploma introduced. The School carries on its founding mission as an independent academic institution and a learned society. The AA is an independent registered educational charity, without operational affiliation to any UK or other university or educational institution, and is one of only two independent schools of architecture in the UK.

The School understands the critical role of a multi-disciplinary approach to an architectural education, now made ever more essential in today's global environment. While embodying big ambitions, the School values its small size and sense of intimacy as a community of high calibre tutors, students and administrative support staff, with an exceptionally high tutor-to-student ratio.

The Foundation and Undergraduate School, comprising, First Year, Intermediate School and Diploma School, is at the centre of a unique learning context that includes students from all over the world. It offers academic programmes in architecture that include the AA Foundation Diploma, AA Intermediate Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 1) ; AA Diploma and AA Final Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 2), and AA Professional Practice and Practical Experience Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 3).

In addition to the Undergraduate School there are 11 programmes in the Graduate School offering MSc, MArch, MPhil programmes as well as a PhD programme. Many of the topics explored by the Undergraduate School relate to work being undertaken in the Graduate School and there is opportunity for constant exchange between programmes and with specialist partners outside the School. The AA Public Programmes and Membership events both provide further opportunities for students across the School to gain valuable knowledge, experience and contact with others of similar interest. Details of all courses and events are available on the AA website.

All the staff in the School recognise the energy and commitment, skills and knowledge, required to not only qualify for studies in higher education but to produce work of the highest quality. The School offers an educational framework that places the students at the centre of a rich and challenging design culture. This stimulating and supportive environment aims to underpin each student's academic development and build confidence, enabling ideas to develop both within the academic context of the AA and beyond, out in the wider professional world of architecture.

Today, architectural schools are part of a world being propelled forward in the early years of the 21st century by sweeping social, technological and communication revolutions that profoundly challenge every aspect of an architect's life. Ours is a time for challenging and expanding the aims, imperatives and expectations of our students, so that their learning abilities better align with present and future needs of the profession.

I would like to offer all students my best wishes at the beginning of your studies here at the AA and invite you to stop by my office to discuss your progress and continue a dialogue that will help ensure that our School not only continues to maintain the highest standards but remains at the cutting edge of debate.

**Brett Steele, Director of AA School**

## 1. 1 THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to provide information regarding the way in which the School and its programmes are organised. Familiarising yourself with this document will provide you with insight for the reasons we do the things we do.

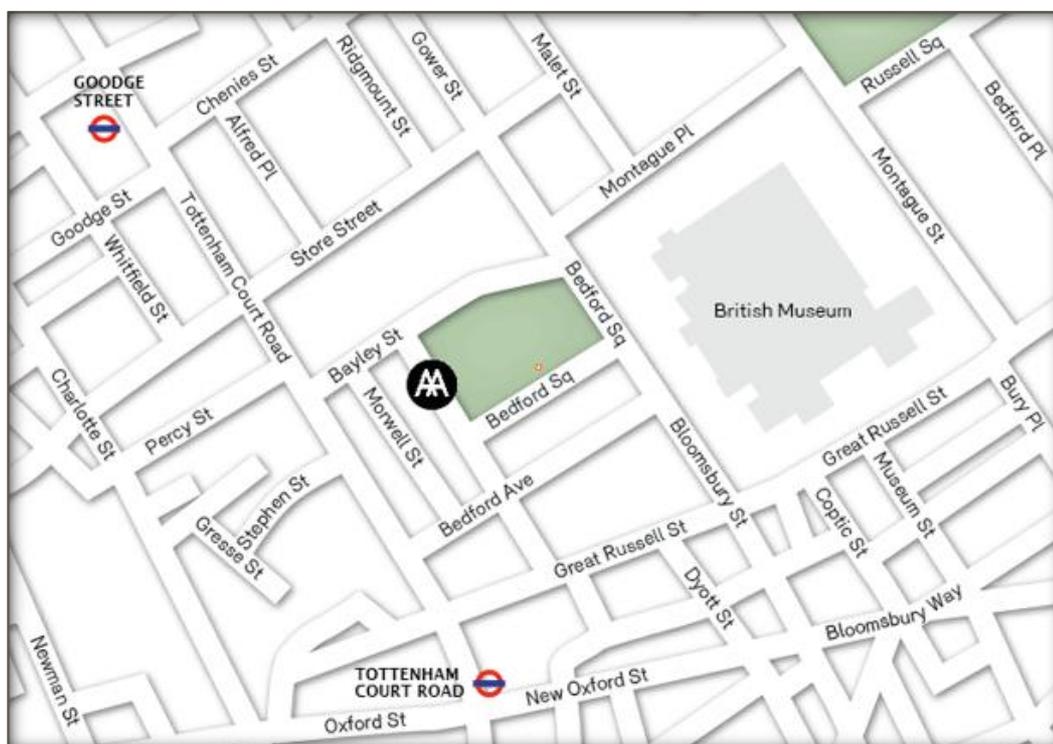
This guide also provides an introduction to terms and definitions, common principles of content and assessment, the way that the programmes are structured, how each unit and course is organized, credited and regulated, and what you, as a student, will be expected to do.

Other documents you will find essential in orienting yourself within the Undergraduate School include the following:

- The AA School Academic Regulations 2016-2017

## WHERE WE ARE

Our principal buildings are at 34-36 Bedford Square Bloomsbury central London. We occupy additional premises at 32, 33, 35, 37, 38 and 39 Bedford Square, and 4 and 16 Morwell Street. Additional teaching and learning centres are located in the AA's Hooke Park, in Dorset.



### Address

AA School of Architecture  
36 Bedford Square  
London WC1B 3ES

### Telephone:

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7887 4000

### Contact Details

	Role	Location	Telephone
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## 1.2 ACADEMIC ORGANISATION & MANAGEMENT

### Overall Academic Organisation

The AA School is an independent school of architecture governed by the Architectural Association (Inc.) The AA Undergraduate School offers a five-year course in architecture prescribed by the Architects Registration Board and validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects. The AA School of Architecture consists of approximately 750 full-time equivalent students, who study in the Foundation, Undergraduate and Graduate Schools.

The AA School is made of four distinct parts:

- **The Foundation Programme**, for one-year, for students contemplating a career in architecture and design
- **The Undergraduate School**, a five-year ARB/RIBA validated course that is recognised within Europe under Article 46 of the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC). AA Intermediate Examination provides, after three years' full time study, exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 1 and after five years' fulltime study the AA Final Examination provides exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 2. The AA Professional Practice and Practical Experience Examination, a further one-year ARB/RIBA validated course leading to graduation providing exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 3 and to UK professional qualification as an architect. This course is open to graduates who have successfully obtained their Part 1 and Part 2 qualifications or their equivalents. A minimum period of 24 months appropriate professional experience is a requirement at Part 3, at least 12 months of which must have been undertaken after obtaining Part 2.
- **The Graduate School**, comprising 11 distinct programmes of advanced studies, 10 of which are validated by the Open University (OU). There are full-time Masters programmes offering degrees, including a 12-month Master of Arts and a Master of Science, a 16-month Master of Architecture and a 20-month taught Master of Philosophy. The BB Interprofessional Studio offers a full-time one-year or part-time two-year course leading to a Postgraduate Diploma. The AA Doctor of Philosophy programme combines advanced research with a broader educational agenda.
- **The AA Visiting School (AAVS)** is held on five continents in dozens of cities, territories and remote regions. The diverse courses that make up our AAVS programme provide teaching and learning opportunities for students, professionals and other international participants to engage with AA tutors and other experts on a number of the world's urgent challenges, in not only architecture but in the wider context of culture and the environment. The short-course offerings in the Visiting School are open to visiting students enrolled at schools throughout the world, currently enrolled AA students, recent graduates, architects and other creative individuals and professionals who wish to further their knowledge, practice and skills in architecture.

### Annual Unit and Course Review and Action

All programmes and courses in the School are subject to internal and external review on a regular basis. This includes review by the School's relevant Academic Committees and Boards, feedback from the External Examiners, student feedback, and annual internal and external monitoring processes by and including the regulatory and professional bodies, ARB and RIBA and the government's regulatory body for Higher Education, the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency).

### Academic Management and Governance

**The Academic Board (AB)** is the sovereign academic body charged with responsibility for the academic governance of the AA School and its programmes of study. It is chaired by the Director of the AA School. The Academic Board delegates responsibilities to, and monitors the progress, effectiveness and recommendations of the AA School's academic committees, the Undergraduate Management Committee (UMC), Graduate Management Committee (GMC) and Teaching Committee. The Academic Board demonstrates its accountability to the AA Council by submission of quarterly reports.

**The Senior Management Team (SMT)** comprises the School Director, School Registrar, Company Secretary, Head of Estates, Chair of Graduate Management Committee, Chair of Undergraduate Management Committee, Head of Visiting School, Director of Finance & Resources, Director of Development & External Engagement and Head of Human Resources. Each member of the team is responsible for the operational actions of one of ten areas of the AA School that impact on its management and resourcing.

## SECTION 2

### 2.0 FOUNDATION PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

FOUNDATION PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION		
PART A: PROGRAMME SUMMARY INFORMATION		
Awarding body	Architectural Association School of Architecture	
Partner institution(s)	N/A	
Location of Study/campus	36 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3ES	
<b>Award and titles</b>		
Final award	Foundation Diploma – 120 credits	AA Foundation Diploma
Intermediate award	N/A	N/A
<b>Duration of study (standard)</b>		
Full-time	1 year	2 years
Sandwich	N/A	N/A
Part Time	N/A	N/A
Distance	N/A	N/A
Start date for programme	September 2016	
<b>Course codes/categories</b>		
UCAS code	N/A	
CATS points for course	N/A	
QAA Subject Benchmark	2010	
<b>Admissions agency</b>		
UCAS	N/A	
Direct to School		
<b>Admissions criteria</b>		
Requirements	Refer AA School Academic Regulations	
Language	Refer AA School Academic Regulations	
<b>Contacts</b>		
Programme Head	Saskia Lewis	
Registrar	Belinda Flaherty	

#### 2.1 Terminology

The terms *knowledge*, *understanding*, *ability* and *skills* are used to indicate the level of achievement required; FHEQ Level 4.

#### 2.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Foundation Programme offers a full-time, one-year studio-based programme for students who wish to pursue architecture and related arts subjects. A hands-on course of creative design, thinking and learning, it is intended for individuals with limited previous experience in creative fields, but with an interest in exploring, and preparing for, a future academic or professional career in architecture or the arts. On the successful completion of the Foundation Programme students are awarded an AA Foundation Diploma. Students in the Foundation Programme are required to produce a final portfolio for assessment and must successfully complete the

programme in order to be eligible for progression to First Year at the AA or equivalent course elsewhere. The Foundation Programme is separate from, and does *not* form part of, the Undergraduate School academic programme.

### **Teaching and Learning**

This programme is undertaken in full-time mode only. Students are taught via one-to-one tutorials, workshops, seminars and group discussions that encourage independent intellectual and practical creative development. The focus is to provide an appropriate foundation for creative and research activity in architecture and related areas. Student work is developed in conjunction with discussions on history and theory and applicable skills workshops. The development of a wide range of visual communication skills is emphasised throughout the Foundation Programme. Programme details, teaching schedules, events and staff contact times are described in the Programme Handbook. Timetables and assignments are set by the Programme Head in order to ensure parity. Detailed information on School resources and events is set out in the AA Prospectus and on the AA website.

### **Method of Assessment**

The Assessment regulations are set out in the AA School Academic Regulations. Formative and summative assessments are through presentation of a portfolio of work. The criteria for assessment is set out in the Design Studio Description and students are given oral feedback at all assessment points and written feedback following the Progress Review in January and final submission of work at the end of the programme.

#### **Formative assessment**

Continual formative assessment is provided weekly at tutorials, periodic studio pin-ups and juries. More formal formative assessment is provided through the January Progress Reviews in week 13 (week 1 of Term 2) after which written feedback is provided to assist students in the preparation for their subsequent work.

#### **Summative assessment**

Summative assessment takes place at 'Tables' in week 30. Portfolios of final drawings, images and models are presented physically and digitally to a Review Panel of Foundation, First Year and other School tutors to ensure parity of assessment. A pass at the end of the Foundation Course confirms eligibility to be considered for progression to First Year at the AA or equivalent course elsewhere.

#### **Re-Assessment**

Should a student not obtain a *Pass* standard, at the final 'Table', they will be informed of the further tasks and submission development to be undertaken for successful completion of the work by an agreed resubmission date. Resubmission cannot exceed two attempts. Should the submission not meet a *Pass* standard on the second re-submitted attempt, the submission will be recorded as a *Fail*.

### **2. 3 Award classification**

The award of the AA Foundation Diploma is classified as a *Pass*.

### **2. 4 Learning Support**

Refer to AA Academic Regulations.

### **2. 5 Admissions Criteria**

Refer to AA Academic Regulations.

### **2. 6 Regulations**

Refer to AA Academic Regulations.

### **2. 7 Monitoring and improving quality, quality indicators**

Teaching Committee/Academic Board- Annual monitoring and action  
QAA Institutional Review – Periodic

### 3.0 FOUNDATION PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Title	FOUNDATION DESIGN STUDIO	Code	
Level	Foundation	Status	Compulsory
		Terms	1, 2, 3
			120 credits
			FHEQ Level 4
Programme Head	Saskia Lewis (Director)		
Programme staff	Umberto Bellardi Ricci, Taneli Mansikkamaki, Juliet Haysom		
Co-requisite	None	Pre-requisite	None
Barred combinations	None		
Professional body requirements	None		
Learning methods	Lectures Seminars/tutorials/juries Self-directed learning		

### 3.1 FOUNDATION DESIGN STUDIO DESCRIPTION

#### SYNOPSIS

#### Lines of Enquiry through Fields of Volume

Using a series of locations students will develop individual ways of articulating their observations, analyses and documentation creating lines of enquiry through the taught curriculum. Inspired by the flat geometry of Lewis Baltz's elevations, the volumetric playfulness of Carl Andre, analysis of colour through Joseph Albers, the mundane worlds of Thomas Demand and the cut-up compositions of Hannah Höch students will, over the course of this year explore inspiration, observation, scale, site, materiality, archiving, scenario and identity..

In the first term students will develop skills through the forensic examination of micro sites, colour within volume and the exploration of industrial landscapes. They will learn to intellectually delve into research with the identification and compilation of a series of influences and progenitors identified by each student. The programme runs workshops that encourage translation from observation to material interpretation and projects range in scale from the intimacy of a spatial fragment to a journey through the city.

During the second and third terms students will use their recently developed skills to articulate their work in greater depth. The programme encourages haphazard experimentation, thinking through making and the use of a variety of techniques: photography, drawing, painting, model-making, casting, mapping, material studies, form, structure, pattern-cutting, costume, sewing, weaving, textiles, carpentry, performance, lighting and filmmaking. By the end of the year, students will have produced a comprehensive portfolio that illustrates their bespoke journey through the Foundation year.

## AIMS

- To familiarize the students with basic core skills.
- To support students to develop visual, verbal and written skills in relation to all aspects of design work and develop a constructive self-critique over the course of three terms.
- To support students to understand the synthesis between observation, documentation, analysis and how that leads from experimentation and speculation to proposals within architecture and fine art production.

## OUTLINE CONTENT

- **Fragment**, form and materiality at 1:1
- **Colour** theory and study/collection of colour palette of journey through London
- **Volume**, site and British modernism experienced and interpreted at 1:20
- **City** witnessed, experienced and documented in groups – portraits of atmosphere – London, Lugo, Naples – compare, contrast, edit and juxtapose – 1:200/1:500/1:1250
- Development of Portfolio
- **Narrative** – written text and development of film/moving image – content/context
- **Body** examination – scale and movement – developing interface
- **Installation** – carpentry/joints – deconstruction of existing prop and reconstruction of experiment at 1:1 - nominally inhabitable – experimentation/debate of rural/city and local/global
- **How to develop independent learning and create a portfolio that visually describes your working with material and ideas that represent your interests**
- **Building** an exhibition
- **Studio trips** to Italy and Hooke Park

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- LO1 Ability to identify personal interests and observations and use those interests to motivate and develop design work.
- LO2 Ability to describe observations in both 2D and 3D using a range of tools and media.
- LO3 Ability to work between scales, from the hand-held object to the cityscape
- LO4 Compose a portfolio describing the processes used to investigate lines of enquiry using observations, precedents and experiments to demonstrate critical development

## TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Students work in groups and individually with regular interaction with tutors and external collaborators in tutorials, seminars and workshops. Students and tutors constantly engage with other parts of the AA School and with external critics on specific subjects related to design through a series of tailored seminars and collaborations. In addition students experience works through site visits and workshops, including visits to various buildings, cities and exhibitions. Students learn to research, analyse and synthesise at a level appropriate to this stage of academic experience. Students make projects to explore spatial and intellectual ideas and learn to justify and communicate these through a range of media. Feedback is regularly provided in tutorials, seminars, juries and at tabletop reviews where students are required to make visual and verbal presentations of their work.

## LEARNING SUPPORT

Extensive information and physical resources are available to all students for learning support including model-making workshops for wood and metal working, digital prototyping, audio-visual lab, digital photography studio, bookshop, library, photo library, archives, Public Programme series, weekly published School events lists and Hooke Park. Design tutors are timetabled to meet the students for tutorials and seminars every week and juries as scheduled.

## ASSESSMENT

**Assessment will be based on the following:**

- An understanding of scale with reference to form, representation and occupation
- Development of visual awareness and ability to document and analyse observations to develop experiments and speculations – to develop the ability to make visual this journey in a portfolio for discussion

- An understanding of how to use a brief to stimulate a series of investigations and data from which to draw an investigation and develop work
- A demonstration of the ability to openly discuss and debate developed and developing work with peers, tutors and professionals to challenge preconceptions and open dialogues – visually and verbally

**Assessment Criteria**

All learning outcomes must be passed to achieve a pass in the Foundation Programme.

Students are required to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, ability and skills in the following areas:

**Design Development**

Understanding the parameters of a series of briefs that demonstrate specific functional and contextual requirements leading to visual manifestations increasing in complexity from observation, documentation and analysis to speculative experimental translations .

**Integration and Synthesis**

Effective use of visual, verbal and written skills in the communication of the project and the integration of feedback.

**TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**

The student will have an opportunity to practise the following skills:

	Required	Assessed
Communication:		
Verbal	O	O
Visual	O	O
Written	O	
Manage time and work to deadlines	O	O
Critical skills/ability	O	O
Work as part of a team	O	
Research precedents	O	