

**Architectural Association  
School of Architecture**

**PROGRAMME GUIDE**

**FOUNDATION**

**2018/2019**

**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

More than a school, throughout its history the Architectural Association has been the referent – when not the origin – for the production of new and relevant forms of inquiry, discourse, and radical practice in architecture schools, cultural institutions, and offices worldwide. The AA is the oldest independent school of architecture in the UK because it always, fearlessly and critically, looks into the future. 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.

The challenges that we all face today as citizens and as architects, are growing in scale and complexity. While some architectural questions span hundreds of years, the emergence of new technologies and changing power structures, combined with growing conflicts and the ethical imperatives of our contemporaneity, make architecture today a radically new, exciting, and challenging discipline. This year at the AA – 2018/19 - presents a series of pedagogical agendas and cultural programmes that articulate what architecture can contribute to the world we live in, from social, political, and cultural points of view. We are to serve and to challenge a society that wants, needs, and desires better ways of living together.

The AA comprises a Foundation Course, a five-year Undergraduate programme, nine Postgraduate programmes, a PhD programme, a series of Special Courses and Part-Time Studies, including Professional Practice Part 3, the AA Summer School, and more than 50 worldwide Visiting School courses. The broad scope of research and work at the AA facilitates different topics and agendas to be developed independently and in parallel to one another.

Embedded in the academic calendar, the Public Programme provides opportunities for students and academic staff to develop research and work via exhibitions, symposia, and publications. Term One focuses on a seminal lecture series hosted by alumni, members, and academic staff under the theme of *Directions*. These lectures aim to address issues of urgency by pointing towards new spaces of action. The first lecture in 2018/19 will be given by Wolfgang Tillmans, whose work in relation to Brexit, has awoken an entire generation of artists and designers to develop new forms of activism and political engagement. Also, in Term One, *Analysis: Drawing Out Practice* is a new talks series co-curated by Parveen Adams and Mark Cousins where artists and architects are invited to present their work and then discuss the wider themes, embedded ideas, and underlying agendas in conversation with Mark Cousins. Another new series begins in Term Two; *New Canonical Histories*, as a way to question and broaden the spaces of reference within our discipline. Project and exhibition: *Letters to the Mayor: London*, brings local and international architects together in conversation with the decision makers and the different political spheres in the city. Students, staff, members and visitors can learn more about the breadth of our Public Programme and what's happening throughout the year at the AA, through the weekly online AA Events List.

We are pleased to announce the launch of several new units in the Undergraduate Programme and the appointment of new teachers at every level of the ARB/RIBA Part 1 & Part 2 accredited course. This year, in the Intermediate and Diploma School we offer 33 units, each one of them with an average size of 12 students, led by two (occasionally three) teachers for a student-teacher ratio no other school matches. Unit briefs engage with topics ranging from housing to fashion, politics to ethics, sustainability to representation, business models to play, and from codes to chaos.

The AA's postgraduate programmes are a hotbed for experimentation and postgraduate architectural studies. In 2018/19 the PhD programme is organising a series of symposiums and debates, including *Table of Contents*, which discusses issues of research and methodology, and *Domestic Frontiers*, organised by our PhD by Design programme, *the City as Project*, led by Pier Vittorio Aureli and Maria Shéhérazade Giudici.

2018/19 also sees the inauguration of a series of initiatives with the aim to produce transversal conversations throughout the school, offering multiple spaces for focused collective debate. These include: *Tools and Agendas*

commencing in the First Year Studio, *Open Seminars* emerging from the Diploma School, and the *Positions* series that brings together postgraduate programmes, alumni and external experts. These three initiatives will bring important issues to the forefront of the school's collective agenda and contribute to the development of its ambitious pedagogical project.

**Eva Franch i Gilabert**

## 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.

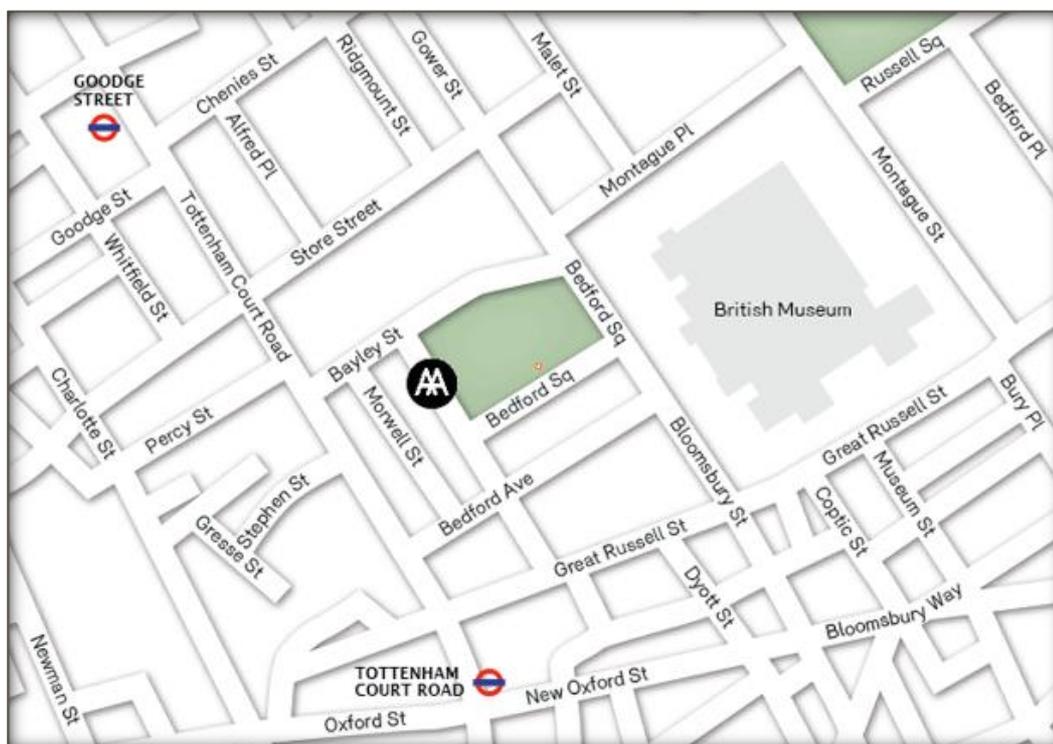
This guide also provides an introduction to terms and definitions, common principles of content and assessment, the way that the programmes are structured, how each unit and course is organized, credited and regulated, and what you, as a student, will be expected to do.

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

- The AA School Academic Regulations 2018-2019
- The Complementary Studies Course Booklet 2018-2019

## WHERE WE ARE

Our principal buildings are at 34-36 Bedford Square Bloomsbury central London. We occupy additional premises at 32, 33, 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

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### 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 Programme offers a five-year course in architecture prescribed by the Architects Registration Board and validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and is reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency. The AA School of Architecture consists of 779 (2018-19) full-time students, who study in the Foundation Course, Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes.

The AA School is made of four distinct parts:

- **The Foundation Course**, for one-year, for students contemplating a career in architecture and design.
- **The Undergraduate Programme**, 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' full time study the AA Final Examination provides exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 2 and the award of AA Diploma and the award of AA Diploma. 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 Postgraduate Programmes** comprise 9 distinct programmes of postgraduate studies plus the PhD programme. The AA is a partner institution and affiliated research centre of the Open University (OU). All taught postgraduate degrees at the AA are validated by the OU. The OU is also the awarding body for research degrees at the AA. 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, an 18-month Master of Fine Arts and a 20-month taught Master of Philosophy. 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 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 systematic internal and external review. This includes review by the School's academic committees and board (see details below), annual 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 Academic Committee, Teaching & Learning Committee, PhD Committee and Ethics Committee. The Academic Board demonstrates its accountability to the AA Council by submission of quarterly reports and an annual report.

### The Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team (SMT) is responsible for the management and operations of the AA School. The SMT is advisory to the School Director, undertaking such delegated duties as are defined in the AA Scheme of Delegation.

## 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>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Title</b>
Final award	Foundation Diploma – 120 credits	AA Foundation Diploma
Intermediate award	N/A	N/A
	<b>Duration of study (standard)</b>	<b>Maximum registration period</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 2018	
<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 Course students are awarded an AA Foundation Diploma. Students on the Foundation Course are required to produce a final portfolio for assessment and must successfully complete the course in order to be eligible for progression to First Year at the AA or equivalent course elsewhere. The Foundation Course is separate from, and does *not* form part of, the Undergraduate 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 Course. Course details, teaching schedules, events and staff contact times are described in the Course Handbook. Timetables and assignments are set by the Head of Foundation 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. 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 36. Portfolios of drawings, images, models, films and animations are presented physically and digitally to a Review Panel of Foundation tutors and tutors from other areas of the School 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 only as 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

FOUNDATION DESIGN STUDIO			
Level	Foundation	Status	Compulsory FHEQ Level 4
Programme Head	Saskia Lewis	Terms	1, 2, 3
Programme Staff	Juliet Haysom	Credits	120
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

#### AA Foundation: Thinking Through Making

The AA Foundation course is a one-year introduction to an art and design education. It allows students to develop their conceptual ideas through experiments with a wide range of media in an intimate studio-based environment whilst simultaneously exposing them to many of the academic offerings at the AA from First Year through to PhD. This provides Foundation students with a uniquely broad view of the issues, tools, methods and strategies developed within the school at large. Drawing on a number of pedagogical practices with experienced tutors and visiting consultants, the Foundation offers dynamic cross-disciplinary teaching within the context of a specialist architectural school.

Over the course of this year we will explore observation, scale, materiality, interpretation, representation, site, scenario, and inhabited structures. Term 1 focuses on the development of skills through the forensic examination of microsites; the analysis of colour and volume; and observations relating to the body and the city. In parallel with their studio work, students will identify and compile a series of references, and will apply critical thinking to this self-initiated research. Workshops will encourage translation from observation to material interpretation. Ongoing work will be regularly discussed within individual tutorials, group presentations and with invited critics.

In Terms 2 and 3 students will develop work in greater depth and will articulate increasingly individual lines of enquiry. We encourage speculative experimentation and methodical iteration using photography, drawing, painting, model-making, casting, mapping, material studies, pattern-cutting, life-drawing, carpentry and filmmaking. By the end of the year, students will have produced a comprehensive analogue and digital portfolio that will illustrate their own highly personal journey through the Foundation course.

## **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 art and design 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 contemporary architecture experienced and interpreted at 1:20
- Anatomical Models- material translations of structure and movement
- City witnessed, experienced and documented in groups – portraits of atmosphere – London, Florence, Venice – 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/Prop/Interface, exploring form, function and meaning. Examination of the relationship between a garment/prop and a body – deconstruction of existing garment/prop and reconstruction of experiment at 1:1 - nominally inhabitable –
- Installation - experimentation/debate of rural/city and local/global due to site Hooke/London
- Animating Ideas, exploring how to animate aspects of work in moving image
- 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 2D, 3D, and film/animation/sound 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. Tutors (AA tutors and staff and external consultants) are timetabled to meet the students at least twice a week for individual tutorials, seminars, lectures, workshops, pin-ups and/or 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 Course.

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 practice the following skills:

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