

**Architectural Association
School of Architecture**

**AA PROGRAMME GUIDE
FOUNDATION CERTIFICATE
2019/2020**

FOUNDATION

CONTENTS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1: THE SCHOOL

ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Welcome from the School Director

AA Life

1.1 THIS GUIDE/WHERE WE ARE

1.2 ACADEMIC ORGANISATION & MANAGEMENT

Overall Academic Organisation

Enhancing Quality of Learning: Reviews and Monitoring

Academic Management & Governance

2 PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

3 FOUNDATION DESIGN STUDIO

SECTION 1: THE SCHOOL

ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

WELCOME FROM THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The Architectural Association is committed to bringing issues of contemporary architecture, cities and the environment to a broad public audience. We remain focused on the highest possible standards for the education of architects and are recognised for our students, teachers and graduates – the core of our legacy – and the many ways in which our courses and activities have contributed to improving the conditions of modern architectural learning, practice and knowledge.

‘Expanding Horizons’ and ‘Shaping the Future’ define the ethos and ambition of the AA School of Architecture. Our flexible, self-directed curricula, combined with our institutional independence and truly global organisation, afford us a rare degree of awareness in confronting the sweeping social, technological and cultural challenges of the current era. During its 172-year history, the AA has cultivated a relentless impetus to produce, discover, communicate and disseminate new architectural ideas and projects in ways few other institutions – offices, schools or cultural centres – could ever equal.

The AA offers a five-year course (ARB/RIBA I, II) composed of the Experimental Programme (Years 1-3) and the Diploma Programme (Years 4-5), nine taught postgraduate programmes, RIBA Part III, and the PhD programme. Additional programmes include a Foundation course, semester-long experiences, intensive workshops in London and around the world as part of the AA Visiting School. The School has around 800 full-time students from over 80 countries and 250 tutors, supported by 100 administrative staff, sharing eight Georgian houses in the centre of London and a 350-acre woodland campus at Hooke Park in Dorset.

AA LIFE

The AA School is active, dynamic and noisy, amplified by a range of communication channels. Please make full use of them. This Programme Guide is just one of many means through which you can get to know us better. Our website at aaschool.ac.uk, as well as our on-line and social media platforms, make it easy to follow what’s happening at the school. Our evening lectures and Public Programme events are recorded and streamed online, and our AA Conversations website features current student projects and ideas, together with an archive of recordings by architects and other illustrious visitors to the AA over the past half century. Finally, many of the books produced by AA Publications, including *AA Files*, feature the work of our units, programmes and teachers.

At the AA students learn about architecture and its relationship with associated professional and political issues by embedding these realities within the scope of a design portfolio. Individual undergraduate student projects and portfolios are reviewed at the end of each academic year by a panel of unit tutors who assess, discuss and debate the quality of each portfolio.

Unit studios provide the environment for design, research and experimentation. Here, the design portfolio is shaped and resolved into a definitive project, and where the architectural prototypes of the future emerge. Each studio is a small, highly focused group led by a single tutor or small team. It defines its own set of cultural contexts and the means by which a design project is described and executed. Each studio offers a year-long engagement with collaborative research, experimentation, debate and discussion. Within this, the unit's intellectual ambitions are expressed through a specific set of methodologies and bibliographies, along with references to buildings, landscapes, literature, film, music, politics and economics.

The AA is more than a school of architecture; it is also a thriving association of members. Currently it has 7,000 members internationally, including many of the world's leading architects. The interaction of this diverse cast of writers, curators, artists and educators with our own students and staff plays a vital role in shaping the identity of the School.

1.1 THIS GUIDE/WHERE WE ARE

The purpose of this Programme Guide is to provide information regarding the way in which the School and its programmes are organised. It 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 organised, 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 School include the following:

- **The AA School Academic Regulations**
- **The AA School Quality Manual**
- **The Core Studies Course Handbook**

Our principal buildings are at 32-39 Bedford Square and 4 and 16 Morwell Street in Bloomsbury central London. Additional teaching and learning centres are located in the AA's Hooke Park, in Dorset.

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AA School of Architecture

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Contact Details

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1.2 ACADEMIC ORGANISATION & MANAGEMENT

Overall Academic Organisation

The AA School of Architecture is an independent school governed by the Architectural Association (Inc.). It consists of c. 800 full-time students, who study in the Foundation, Experimental, Diploma and Postgraduate programmes. The AA School is made of four distinct parts:

- A one-year **Foundation Certificate** for students contemplating a career in architecture or related arts subjects. The Foundation Certificate is separate to and does not form part of the 5-Year ARB/RIBA Course but offers a place in the First Year of the five-year course upon application and interview, and successful completion of Foundation studies.
- The **Experimental and Diploma Programmes** offering the five-year ARB prescribed and RIBA validated full-time course in architecture:
 - The AA Experimental Programme leading to the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and providing exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 1 after 3 years of full-time study;
 - The AA Diploma Programme leading to the Master of Architecture (MArch) providing exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 2 after 2 years of full-time study.
- The **postgraduate programmes** comprising 10 distinct Programmes of advanced full-time studies:
 - 9 taught Master level programmes (MA/MSc/MArch/MFA/Taught MPhil) validated by the Open University (OU);
 - A PhD degree. The AA is an Affiliated Research Centre (ARC) of the OU for the delivery and validation of the PhD degree.
- The **AA Professional Practice and Practical Experience Examination** leading to exemption from the ARB/RIBA Part 3 Examination, the entry requirement to professional registration as an architect. The course and examination are open to anyone who has successfully obtained their Part 1 and Part 2 qualifications (or equivalency from overseas schools of architecture) and also to qualified practitioners for the purpose of Continuing Professional Development.

Enhancing Quality of Learning: Reviews and Monitoring

At the core of how we study architecture strong emphasis is placed on enhancing and assuring high standards and qualities of learning experience. All programmes and courses in the AA School are subject to systematic internal and external review on a regular basis. This includes review by the School's academic committees and board (see details below), annual monitoring and periodic review for each programme, annual feedback from the External Examiners, student feedback as. Annual and periodic reviews from external regulatory bodies the Office for Students and the Quality Assurance Agency, annual and periodic review from the School's professional bodies and validation partners the Open University, ARB and RIBA.

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 (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

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	
Award and titles	Award	Title
Final award	Foundation Certificate	AA Foundation Certificate in Architecture
Credits	120 credits (FHEQ Level 4)	
Intermediate award	N/A	N/A
	Duration of study (standard)	Maximum registration period
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 2019	
Course codes/categories		
UCAS code	N/A	
CATS points for course	N/A	
QAA Subject Benchmark	2010	
Admissions agency		
UCAS	N/A	
Direct to School		
Admissions criteria		
Requirements	Refer AA School Academic Regulations	
Language	Refer AA School Academic Regulations	
Contacts		
Programme Head	Saskia Lewis	
Registrar	Belinda Flaherty	

2.1 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 Methods

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. FOUNDATION DESIGN STUDIO

FOUNDATION DESIGN STUDIO			
Level	FHEQ Level 4	Status	Compulsory
Programme Head	Saskia Lewis	Terms	1, 2, 3
Programme Staff	Juliet Haysom/George Massoud	Credits	120
Co-requisite	None	Pre-requisite	None
Barred Combinations	None	Professional Body Requirements	None
Learning Methods	Lectures/seminars/tutorials/ Juries/self-directed learning		

SYNOPSIS

AA Foundation: Who Do We Think We Are and What Do We Think We're Doing?

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, documentation, survey, inventory, scale, materiality, interpretation, representation, site, scenario, and inhabited structures.

Term 1 focuses on the development of skills through the forensic examination of the self, the corporeal body, image veneer, collected hinterland, habits and tempo. 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 during periodic juries.

Term 2 will focus more substantially on site, place, space, material assemblage, appropriation, extension and occupation of the built form. It will move from survey to proposal where 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. In addition to the completion of the portfolio and summative assessment Term 3 will focus on the opportunity to reflect on work to date and make a synoptic or exploratory one minute film

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

- Research, methods and documentation used as inspiration and contextualisation
- Self Portrait – image as veneer, hinterland and habit – inventory and time survey
- Anatomical Models- material translations of structure and movement
- Narrative – written text and development of ideas
- Object/Field – examination of an object and its genesis – model making and material investigation
- Body/Prop/Interface, exploring form, function, intention and subversion. Examination of the relationship between a garment/prop and a body
- Volume, site and contemporary architecture experienced and interpreted – 3-D/2-D
- Colour theory and studies – light and pigment
- Fragment to Site – extrusion of habitable form, catching and provoking atmospheres
- Development of Portfolio
- Narrative – written text and development of film/moving image – content/context
- Installation – proposals to appropriate and extend
- Narrative – written text and development of film/moving image – content/context
- 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

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
- 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 generally timetabled to meet the students at least twice a week for individual tutorials, seminars, lectures, workshops, pin-ups and/or juries as scheduled.

OUTPUTS

- 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:

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

