

ACADEMIC
PROGRAMMES

ARCHITECTURAL
ASSOCIATION

SCHOOL OF
ARCHITECTURE

2019–20

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2019 Diploma Honours candidates with the AA Director, Eva Franch i Gilibert, on the steps of 36 Bedford Square, June 2019

I INTRODUCTION TO THE AA

The Architectural Association is committed to producing and disseminating ideas that challenge and advance the design of contemporary architecture, cities and the environment. We are focused on 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, practise 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 social, technological and cultural challenges of the current era. During its 172-year history, the AA has cultivated a relentless impetus to discover and communicate new architectural ideas and projects that inspire educational, cultural and professional practices around the world.

The AA offers a five-year course composed of the Experimental Programme (Years 1–3, ARB/RIBA Part 1) and the Diploma Programme (Years 4–5, ARB/RIBA Part 2), as well as RIBA Part 3, nine postgraduate programmes and a PhD programme. Additional programmes include a Foundation Course, a set of semester-long experiences and the AA Visiting School – an array of intensive workshops that take place both in London and around the world. The AA school is made up of approximately 800 full-time students and 250 tutors from more than 80 countries, supported by 100 administrative staff and sharing eight Georgian houses in the centre of London, as well as a 350-acre woodland campus at Hooke Park in Dorset.



Sounds of a Manifesto, AA Interprofessional Studio, November 2018



First Year jury presentation, May 2019

The AA is an active, dynamic and noisy place, with events constantly taking place throughout the school. This Prospectus is just one of many communication channels through which you can get to know us better. Our website, www.aaschool.ac.uk, as well as our online 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 school over the past half century. Finally, many of the books and journals produced by AA Publications, including *AA Files*, feature the work of our units, programmes and teachers.

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.

EXPERIMENTAL AND DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES

The combination of the Experimental and Diploma programmes fully equips students with the requisite practical and theoretical tools to make informed and responsive projections into the future. Through exposure to many different cultural, geographical, material and temporal scenarios, the undergraduate course enables and empowers students to become the architects of tomorrow, meaningfully contributing to the betterment of life.

It provides a breadth of knowledge of the world we inhabit today, its history and the circumstances that have led to the present global condition, as well as looking forward to the pressing issues that the planet as a whole must confront and the evolving concerns of contemporary society. Through the identification of and reflection on the complex cultural and social contexts of architectural projects, briefs and agendas, students situate themselves within an on-going global and critical discourse. These ambitions are supported and expanded by the AA Public Programme.

Both the three-year Experimental Programme and the two-year Diploma Programme are comprised of unit-based design work and Core Studies modules. At Diploma level, students may choose to take additional, Elective courses to pursue their personal interests and objectives. The distinct and varied briefs of the unit system, in combination with Core Studies, work to support and encourage students to develop their individual voices and critical identities. All programme components operate a Pass/Fail system.

The AA Experimental and Diploma programmes are validated by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and prescribed by the Architects Registration Board (ARB). Students who successfully complete the Experimental Programme obtain the AA Intermediate Examination leading to exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 1 after three years of full-time study and students who successfully complete the Diploma Programme obtain the AA Final Examination leading to exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 2 after two years of full-time study. The AA Diploma certificate (AADipl) is awarded at the end of fifth year.

The AA Academic Regulations, Student and Staff Handbooks, Quality Manual, Programme Guides and annual Academic Calendar can be found online at www.aaschool.ac.uk

IV EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMME

(YEARS 1–3) ARB/RIBA PART 1

The AA Experimental Programme is a three-year, full-time course. The First Year course takes place in a collective studio environment, with a vertical unit system operating in the second and third years.

FIRST YEAR

The first year of the Experimental Programme is characterised by its shared, open studio and defined by a learning-through-making approach, providing students with the tools and methods to foster an exploratory and intellectual interest in architecture. The studio encourages young architects to focus on the challenges of the twenty-first century, while learning and challenging the foundational principles of architecture. The study of architecture at the AA not only absorbs influences and information, but also critically affects societal change and generates culture.

The academic year is structured around the combination of studio-based design work and Core Studies; the crossover between seminars, workshops and debates allows students to learn collectively and think independently, constructively engaging with different audiences by sharing their discoveries in a year-long portfolio. Composed of a range of media and informed by various modes of argumentation and representation, this comprehensive body of work, successfully completed, forms the basis of each student's progress into the second year of study at the AA.

SECOND AND THIRD YEAR

Years two and three introduce students to the AA unit system, in which small design studios (12–14 students) operate a vertical structure of second- and third-year students. Innovative approaches to the study of form, typology, programme, site, material, craft and fabrication sit side-by-side with the study of critical architectural theory, environmental and technical considerations, speculative studies and different modes of architectural practice.

The Experimental Programme allows students not only to broaden the horizons of how architecture is physically manifested in the world, but also to holistically consider how we design our cities, to imagine a future for our environment and to redefine how we want to live together.



Students in the AA Workshop, November 2018



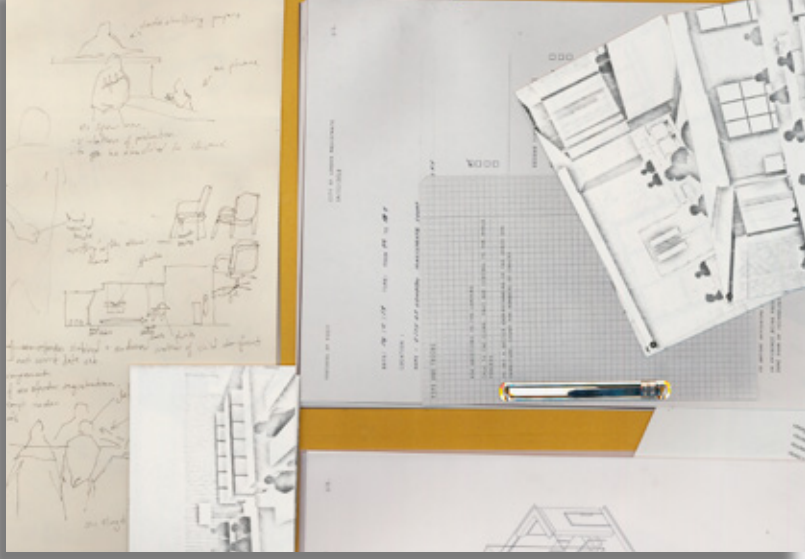
Diploma Honours candidates pinning-up work for final presentations, June 2019

v DIPLOMA PROGRAMME (YEARS 4–5) ARB/RIBA PART 2

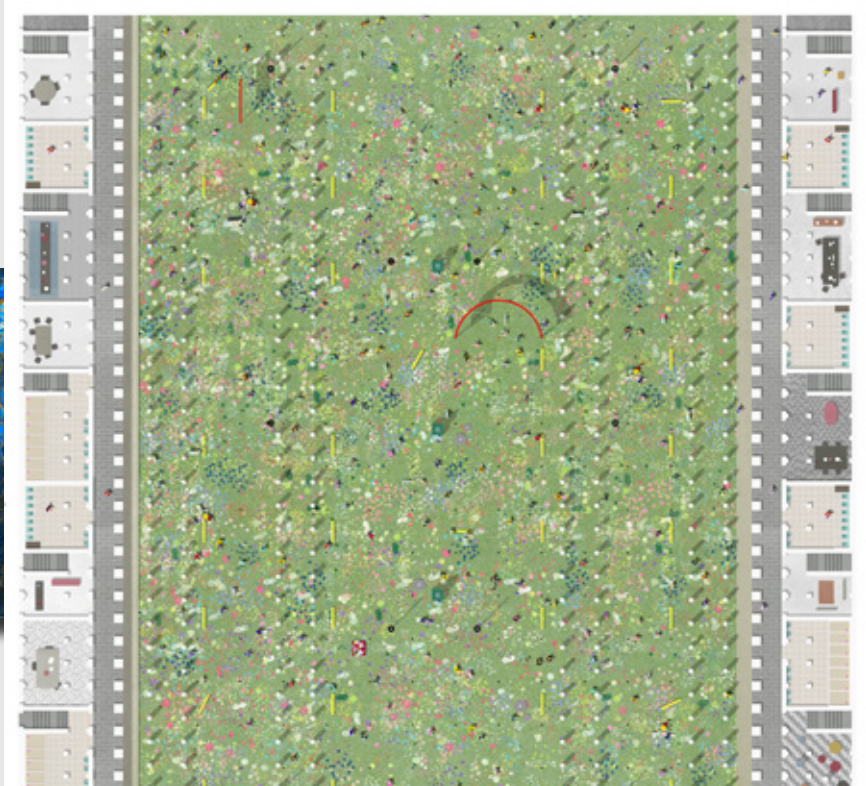
The two-year Diploma Programme introduces successful AA students from the Experimental Programme, as well as eligible new students to the school, to the study of advanced forms of research, design practices and speculative thinking. Long acknowledged as a global innovator in architectural education, the AA Diploma Programme has, throughout its history, fostered some of the most innovative, challenging and experimental thinking in architecture.

Offering learning opportunities across a broad spectrum of interests and agendas through a variety of different teaching methods, the aim of the Diploma Programme is to deploy progressive strategies of representation within a diverse range of media, in parallel with the development of technical proficiencies and critical agendas.

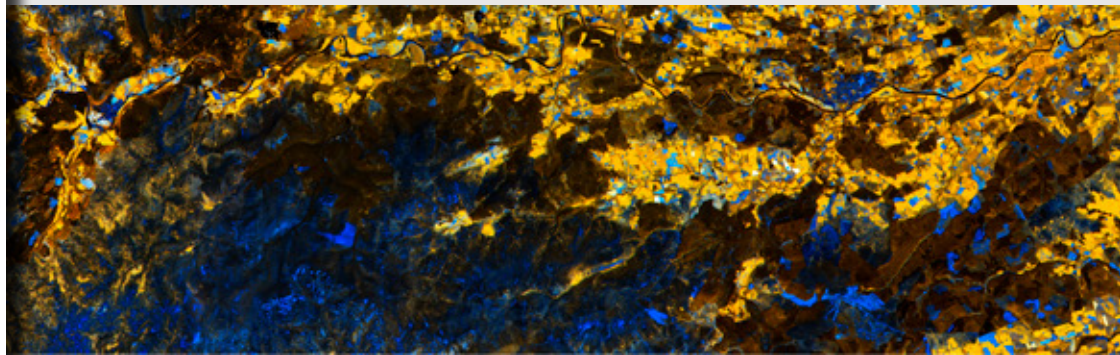
Lively, informed debate permeates life in the Diploma Programme and as students hone their research skills, developing proposals into high-level design portfolios, they begin to refine not only their voices as designers, but also ways of individually articulating their own academic agendas to carry with them into their future professional careers.



OCCUPY – A user's manual for the occupation of public space, Caroline Esclapez, Diploma Honours 2019



Stages of Recovery, Samuel John Little, Diploma Honours 2019



Design or Default, Eva Ibanez Furtres, Diploma Honours 2019

EXPERIMENTAL AND DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES: CORE STUDIES AND ELECTIVES

Core Studies comprises a suite of courses that are central to the study of architecture and the way it manifests physically and intellectually in the world. Through lectures, participatory seminars and workshops, these courses are designed to develop expertise and experimental methods in five key areas:

- Communication and Media Studies (CMS)
- Environmental and Technical Studies (ETS)
- History and Theory Studies (HTS)
- Professional Practice (PP) /
Architectural Professional Practice (APP)
- Speculative Studies (SS)

These courses focus on how the interactions of culture, technology, climate, ecology and forms of practice impact upon spatial and material production, and ways of thinking in architecture.

Speculative Studies, a new course for 2019–20, introduces a variety of topical seminars to the curriculum that expand upon the Core Studies modules and the culture of the AA school in general. Sessions on politics, law, philosophy, ethics, art history, poetry, dance, social technology and microbiology (among others) will be launched in Term 3, showcasing new voices, new areas of expertise and new methodologies.

Elective courses extend the range of Core Studies into broader creative and radical practices in the arts and sciences, as well as social politics, philosophy and new technology. Offering participants a means of engaging with the cultural and scientific discourse in new ways, these courses deepen students' understanding of interdisciplinary processes and provide a mechanism for integrating self-selected knowledge into their individual development in architecture. Diploma students can access courses hosted by the postgraduate programmes and vice versa.

VII TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

The AA offers nine full-time Taught Postgraduate programmes – advanced courses of study for students with prior academic and professional experience.

- Architecture and Urbanism (DRL) MArch
- Design + Make MSc/MArch
- Emergent Technologies and Design MSc/MArch
- History and Critical Thinking in Architecture MA
- Housing and Urbanism MA/MArch
- Landscape Urbanism MSc/MArch
- Spatial Performance and Design (AAIS) MA/MFA
- Sustainable Environmental Design MSc/MArch
- Taught MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design (Projective Cities)

More information on all of these courses can be found in the AA Taught Postgraduate Programmes and PhD section of the prospectus. All students join the school in September at the beginning of each academic year, however the duration of these programmes varies.

MA/MSc programmes take place over 12 months, beginning with three terms of taught courses concluding in late June. This is followed by an independent writing period prior to the submission of a final dissertation in September. These courses are open to applicants with professional qualifications in architecture, engineering or other related disciplines. Dissertation projects are expected to combine design research with case study work related to students' backgrounds.

MArch programmes include two phases of study, undertaken over 16 months. Phase 1 consists of three terms of studio-based design and taught coursework concluding in late June. Following a summer break, all students return in September and commence Phase 2 Thesis Design projects. These are then presented and submitted the following January. MArch courses are open to applicants with a five-year professional degree in architecture.

The MFA and MPhil courses are similarly divided into two phases of study, with a longer Phase 2 that concludes in March/May of the second year. The MFA course in Spatial Performance and Design (AAIS) takes place over 18 months and is open to professionals in a number of creative fields who collectively realise projects between architecture, art and performance. The Taught MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design (Projective Cities) takes place over 20 months and is open to applicants with a four or five-year degree in architecture (BArch, Diploma or equivalent).

The AA is a Partner Institution and Affiliated Research Centre of The Open University (OU), UK. All taught graduate degrees at the AA are validated by the OU.

VIII TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES: ELECTIVES

Elective courses extend the range of Core Studies into broader creative and radical practices in the arts and sciences, as well as social politics, philosophy and new technology. Offering participants a means of engaging with the cultural and scientific discourse in new ways, these courses deepen students' understanding of interdisciplinary processes and provide a mechanism for integrating self-selected knowledge into their individual development in architecture. Postgraduate students can access courses hosted by the Diploma programme and vice versa.

The Big Shed, Design + Make, Hooke Park, 2018



The PhD programme at the Architectural Association is a full-time, three-year course that aims to train scholars and researchers in the fields of architectural History and Theory, Urban Studies, and Technology.

The ambition of the programme is to learn from architectural knowledge and its history in order to understand the built environment at large. As Walter Benjamin noted, the great advantage of architectural knowledge is that it constitutes the possibility of pursuing a material history of the world. Architectural knowledge is here understood not as a static set of principles, but rather as an ever-changing, conceptual and practical apparatus that manifests itself in concrete objects and spaces.

The programme encourages risky, rigorous and speculative dissertations that ultimately question architecture itself and its history, as well as its professional and disciplinary mandate. Parallel to the development of their individual theses, candidates will be provided with a background of intense historical and theoretical thinking through weekly discussions with their Director of Studies and supervisor, monthly seminars with guest scholars and a yearly symposium that gathers invited guests and current candidates in a collective discussion.

The AA is a Partner Institution and Affiliated Research Centre of The Open University (OU), UK. The OU is the awarding body for research degrees at the AA.



The AA Foundation Course is a one-year introduction to an art and design education. Students are encouraged to develop their conceptual ideas through experiments with a wide range of media in an intimate, studio-based environment. Through exposure to the wealth of academic offerings at the AA, from the First Year course to the PhD Programme, Foundation students are given broad access to the tools, strategies and methodologies developed within the school at large. Drawing on a number of different pedagogical practises and the knowledge of highly-experienced tutors and visiting consultants, the Foundation Course offers dynamic, cross-disciplinary teaching within the context of a specialist architectural school.

The AA Visiting School is a worldwide architecture network that encompasses myriad forms and agendas. The workshops are built around agenda-driven project briefs, pursued and shaped by students working intensively in small groups led by AA tutors.

Central to each AA Visiting School programme is the idea that experimental, new and provocative forms of architecture are best learned by doing. We promote, test and challenge global interests in architectural learning and exchange by embedding a diverse group of creative students and tutors in an array of unique rural, urban and internationalist contexts. From Continental Europe to the Middle East, Asia, Australia and the Americas, the AA Visiting School offers new and unexpected learning opportunities across the global stage.

Courses are open to all currently enrolled AA students, as well as those studying elsewhere, recent graduates, architects and other creative individuals worldwide who wish the further their knowledge, practise and skills in architecture.

The AA Summer School presents a programme of design studios, seminars, lectures and field studies that emphasise the importance of both practice and theory in contemporary architecture. Based on the AA unit system, it offers participants a varied selection of design approaches, techniques and agendas, representing a uniquely intensive and intimate educational environment that aims to expand students' formal and intellectual resources.

Tutors, lecturers and critics include past and present AA unit masters, as well as professionals from a diverse range of disciplines such as fashion, art, graphic design, industrial design, urbanism and film. The course is for current and prospective students of architecture from around the world. It offers an approach to design for motivated individuals interested in exploring architecture as an extended field of research.

AA Summer Sessions will bring together renowned practitioners, philosophers, critical theorists, artists and designers in a three-week series of projects and seminars for small, select groups of participants seeking a unique intellectual and creative experience in relation to architecture, the arts, the media and other cultural arenas. These sessions pursue an advanced, cross-disciplinary inquiry that examines the foundations and significance of emerging currents in contemporary thought and architectural practice, directed by leaders in their fields.

Teaching in the AA Summer Sessions is research-led and strives for an open, public discourse by addressing not only specialists in a given field, but more broadly those seeking creative approaches to the fundamental questions facing contemporary society and the built environment.

Professional Practice Part 3 is a course and examination that allows successful candidates to register as Architects with the Architects Registration Board (ARB).

The Part 3 course is accredited by the ARB and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and is offered in two formats, each taking place once during a given academic cycle. The examination process and syllabus are the same for each format. The autumn session each year constitutes a full-time course, conducted intensively over two weeks. Alternatively, for candidates who would prefer to take more time to study or for whom weekday attendance may be difficult, the spring session is taught as a part-time course on Saturdays over a ten-week period. Part 3 examinations take place at the end of each session and are registered-for independently from the course itself. Pre-registration for both course formats is highly recommended.

It is open to AA graduates with RIBA Part 2 and eligible non-graduates, as well as to registered professionals who may wish to refresh their knowledge of architectural practice through Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

View from the AA Terrace, April 2018



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HOW TO APPLY / ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

WHO WE SEEK

We are a school that imagines – indeed, assumes – that our students will go on to shape the architectural profession and the wider world through their own highly focused, totally dedicated and personal approach. The AA therefore looks for students who take learning to be the essential activity of any truly committed, engaged human being. We seek individuals with the confidence to leave former lives behind and the combination of curiosity and ambition that is required to define their own unique path through a school that fosters a multitude of pedagogical methods and agendas.

Above all, we seek independent people who can demonstrate initiative in entering into the very public forms of presentation, discussion and debate that permeate the AA School, the architectural community and the world at large.

OPEN DAYS AND OPEN EVENINGS

Throughout the year and alongside a regular schedule of student presentations and public events, we hold Open Days and Open Evenings for prospective undergraduate, postgraduate and visiting students. Please join us.

VIRTUAL OPEN WEEK

Experimental and Diploma Programmes
Monday 7 – Friday 11 October 2019
Postgraduate Programmes
Monday 13 – Friday 17 January 2020

OPEN DAYS/EVENINGS

Foundation Course, Experimental and Diploma Programmes
Friday 18 October 2019 (evening)
Foundation Course, Experimental, Diploma and Postgraduate Programmes
Friday 10 January 2020 (day)

OPEN WEEK SYMPOSIUM: EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

Monday 28 – Thursday
31 October 2019

OPEN JURIES

Autumn Jury
Friday 1 November 2019
Winter Jury
Friday 7 February 2020
Spring Jury
Thursday 7 May 2020

For more information, full event details and to register your interest in attending an open day please visit www.aaschool.ac.uk/penday

FOUNDATION COURSE/
EXPERIMENTAL AND
DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES
Early Applications Close
Friday 15 November 2019*
Late Applications Close
Friday 24 January 2020

*Applicants wishing to be considered for a bursary (Foundation Course) or scholarship (Experimental and Diploma Programmes) must submit by this date

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES
Optional Early Applications Close
Friday 22 November 2019
Early Applications Close
Friday 24 January 2020**
Late Applications Close
Friday 6 March 2020

** Applicants wishing to be considered for a bursary (Postgraduate Programmes) must submit by this date

FOUNDATION, EXPERIMENTAL, DIPLOMA, TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE AND PHD PROGRAMMES

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The AA is a private institution and does not belong to UCAS. Anyone interested in applying to the AA must: complete the online application form; pay the relevant application fee (£50 for early applications, £75 for late applications) and submit a hard copy portfolio of design work (with the exception of applicants to the History and Critical Thinking and PhD programmes) before the deadlines stated to be considered for the 2020–21 academic year. The application procedure is the same for all applicants, regardless of where you are applying from.

Please note: all applicants must be 18 years of age or older by Monday 21 September 2020 to be eligible to enter the school for the 2020–21 academic year.

Prior to completing the form, applicants should carefully read the entry requirements for their chosen programme. The AA will not accept multiple applications and applicants cannot change their year of entry once the application has been received, assessed and a decision has been made. It is therefore crucial that you apply for the year level most suited to your experience.

Applications will not be processed until the online form has been completed, all required supporting documents have been provided and the AA has received an online portfolio (if applicable). Failure to provide the information requested will delay the processing of your application.

If there is any change in your circumstances after you submit your application (i.e. if the subjects you are currently studying change), you must inform us as soon as possible. The AA reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place if you fail to inform us of significant changes in your circumstances.

To find out more about the application process and obtain submission forms, or for further details on financial assistance, accepting your offer or deferring applications, please visit www.aaschool.ac.uk

VISITING SCHOOL

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in applying to one or more AA Visiting School (AAVS) programmes, please check the individual programme webpages (accessible from the AA homepage) to submit an online application and make a payment. If you are unable to make an online payment, please contact the Visiting School Office via visitingschool@aaschool.ac.uk for instructions on how to make an offline payment.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Most AAVS programmes have limited spaces and run on a first come, first served basis. To secure your place on an AAVS programme, please complete the full payment as detailed on the individual programme webpage. Please note that a deposit payment holds your place on the course but does not confirm it.

SEMESTER PROGRAMME

If you are applying for the autumn or spring Semester Programme, please visit www.aaschool.ac.uk/semesterprogramme for further details on entry requirements.

SUMMER SCHOOL AND SUMMER SESSIONS

Applications for the Summer School and Summer Sessions are made directly by completing an online form. Each year, we begin to accept applications from mid-November for the following summer. Sign-up to our mailing list to be the first to know when applications open.



AA DRL work exhibited in Digital Turn at the Building Centre, November 2018

RIBA Part 3 Programme, Building Contract Game, August 2018



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+44 020 7887 4000 / reception@aaschool.ac.uk
or by accessing the AA website at www.aaschool.ac.uk

All photos courtesy AA Photo Library and Digital Photo
Studio unless otherwise stated.

Front cover: Stages of Recovery, Samuel John Little,
Diploma Honours 2019





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