

**Architectural Association
School of Architecture**

**Academic
Programmes**

AA Prospectus

2026–27

AA Prospectus 2026–27
Edited and produced by
AA Communications Studio

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Welcome

Welcome to 2026–27 at the Architectural Association (AA) School of Architecture. These pages describe a wealth of pathways into architecture, one of the world’s oldest professions. The AA has educated leaders in this field for well over a century, but we have always extended beyond the confines of our ever-evolving profession. The process of architectural qualification is long, and while our work may seem practical and even useful, architecture is also instrumental in shaping the wider contexts for everything we do. As a result, we need a much more complex understanding of the world if we are to contribute something meaningful to it. By cultivating broad curiosity and actively engaging with the environment around us, we can add some intelligent delight.

The AA provides a platform for new voices to be heard and new approaches to be tested. Located at 36 Bedford Square in London, the school sits at the heart of one of the world’s most cosmopolitan cities, and behind our unlocked door is a space for experimentation by students and staff alike. This is a place to try almost anything, to take risks and to reckon with failure as well as success.

We come together within the school in both structured and chance encounters. The AA, like London, is a site for multiple, layered conversations that take place across a multitude of scales, from the intimate and material to the global and conceptual.

We make space for collective action and welcome creative outliers, understanding that bigger and more urgent questions emerge from ongoing debate. The conversations that start here or in our Hooke Park woodland campus resonate worldwide through our community. They proliferate and are carried forward to the many international locations that our students and staff call home.

While we know architecture has the potential and the responsibility to shape the world for the better, we also understand that its definitions are fluid and that the world we inhabit is perennially changeable. The range of topics and methods outlined in this prospectus describe an area of study that is one of the very last comprehensive interdisciplinary forms of education. This equips students with the intellectual agility to embrace the unknown challenges that lie ahead. Our international and multigenerational community has a rare opportunity to support, promote and realise architectural ideas with the potential to effect real change.

All of this starts in our labyrinth of spaces in central London, whose scale obliges us to converse with one another. These spaces enable everyone to be heard. We come together in the bar and on the terrace, in the Lecture Hall and in the studios. Most importantly, we are in a public space. We are part of the city. There is no bell to ring, lock to turn or log to sign. Our door is open.

Ingrid Schroder
AA Director

Introduction

The AA is the oldest independent school of architecture in the UK. It was founded in 1847 as a student-centred collective that aspired to radically transform architectural education. Since then, it has fostered an environment that encourages students to speculate without limits, take risks with confidence and cultivate individual, radical research that shapes the future of our discipline. The identity of the AA is informed by the contributions of its students, through its structure as a participatory democracy and as a result of their critical engagement with cultural discourse in London and beyond.

Today, the AA comprises approximately 800 full-time students, 9,000 members, 320 tutors and 140 administrative staff. It occupies ten Georgian houses in central London – eight in Bedford Square and a further two on nearby Montague Street – as well as a 350-acre woodland site at Hooke Park in Dorset. The school offers a broad range of flexible, self-directed programmes that empower students and staff to challenge established methods within contemporary architectural education and professional practice.

The school offers a Foundation Programme, the Intermediate and Diploma Programmes which form the five-year course in architecture, the AA Transfer programme and nine Taught Postgraduate Programmes as well as a PhD Programme. We also accept applications throughout the year for two RIBA Part 3 courses and a range of Visiting Schools that take place around the world, as well as a Summer School held at Bedford Square each July. Together, these courses, programmes and initiatives allow students from different backgrounds and with varied interests and ambitions to find their own path through the school.

The AA curriculum is enhanced by the Public Programme, which focuses on the unique opportunities and challenges of the present through a series of free lectures, exhibitions, workshops, symposia and book launches, and by the Communications Studio, a media, publishing and graphic design studio. Publishing and cultural production are integral to AA life, and the school generates a range of digital and print-based initiatives including the creation of new AA Publications that disseminate architectural discourse to a global audience; *AA Files*, the school's journal of record; the student-led *AArchitecture* magazine; and AirAA, a podcast and media platform.

Our programmes, public events and publications exist alongside spontaneous discussions, unexpected encounters and vibrant exchanges that take place throughout the academic year. This confluence of activity keeps the AA in a constant transformative flux that permeates the spaces of the school, and the projects, ideas and ambitions of the students.

Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) and Office for Students (OfS)

The Architectural Association (AA) School of Architecture is a private Higher Education Provider with Taught Degree Awarding Powers. The AA is an Approved Provider registered with the Office for Students (OfS) and a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) registered Student Sponsor. The AA is an Approved Institution and Affiliated Research Centre of The Open University (OU), UK. The OU is the awarding body for PhD degrees at the AA.



Right: DRL Phase 2 Jury, January 2026.
Photo by Mohammad Hassan Habibi
Dehkordi.

Spaces of the AA

The collision of productive and social space within the AA encourages constant interaction between programmes, students and tutors. The school occupies a series of idiosyncratic spaces that enable experimentation and exchange: from Georgian bedrooms, terraces, attics and crawlspaces in London to workshops, shelters, footpaths and student-built architectures within a working forest in Dorset.



Bedford Square and Montague Street

The AA resides in a row of Georgian terraced houses on Bedford Square in central London that form the core of the Association and its operations, as well as a set of spaces directly behind these main dwellings and two further Georgian buildings on nearby Montague Street. Much of the character, tradition and diversity of the school can be found within the stately rooms and domestic spaces of our homes in London.

Hooke Park

In Dorset, the AA inhabits a 350-acre working woodland owned and operated by the school. Hooke Park is a growing educational space set within designated Ancient Woodland that forms part of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The trees inside the park provide the primary source of timber for student-led construction projects that are manufactured and assembled on site. Hooke Park is occupied year-round by the students and staff of the Design and Make Taught Postgraduate programme, and hosts short residential workshops for units and programmes across the school.

Academic Programmes

The AA offers a range of full-time academic programmes. Prospective students can apply for the Foundation Programme leading to the AA Foundation Award in Architecture, Art and Design (FHEQ Level 4); the Intermediate Programme (years one to three of the five-year course in architecture) leading to the award of BA (Hons) and the AA Intermediate Examination (RIBA Part 1); the AA Transfer programme leading to a Graduate Certificate; the Diploma Programme (years four and five of the five-year course in architecture) leading to the award of Master of Architecture (MArch), the AA Diploma and the AA Final Examination (ARB Master's Level/RIBA Part 2); nine Taught Postgraduate Programmes leading to PGDip, MA, MSc, PG MArch, MFA and Taught MPhil awards; and the PhD Programme.



Foundation Programme

AA Foundation Award in Architecture, Art and Design

One year, full time

The Foundation Programme is a one-year introduction to an architecture, 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 and intellectual resources at the AA, Foundation students are given access to the tools, strategies and methodologies that are developed within the school. The programme draws on different educational practices and the knowledge of experienced tutors and visiting consultants to offer dynamic, cross-disciplinary teaching within the context of a specialist architecture school. [Read more](#)



Right: Foundation workshop in the AA Archives, 2019.

Intermediate Programme

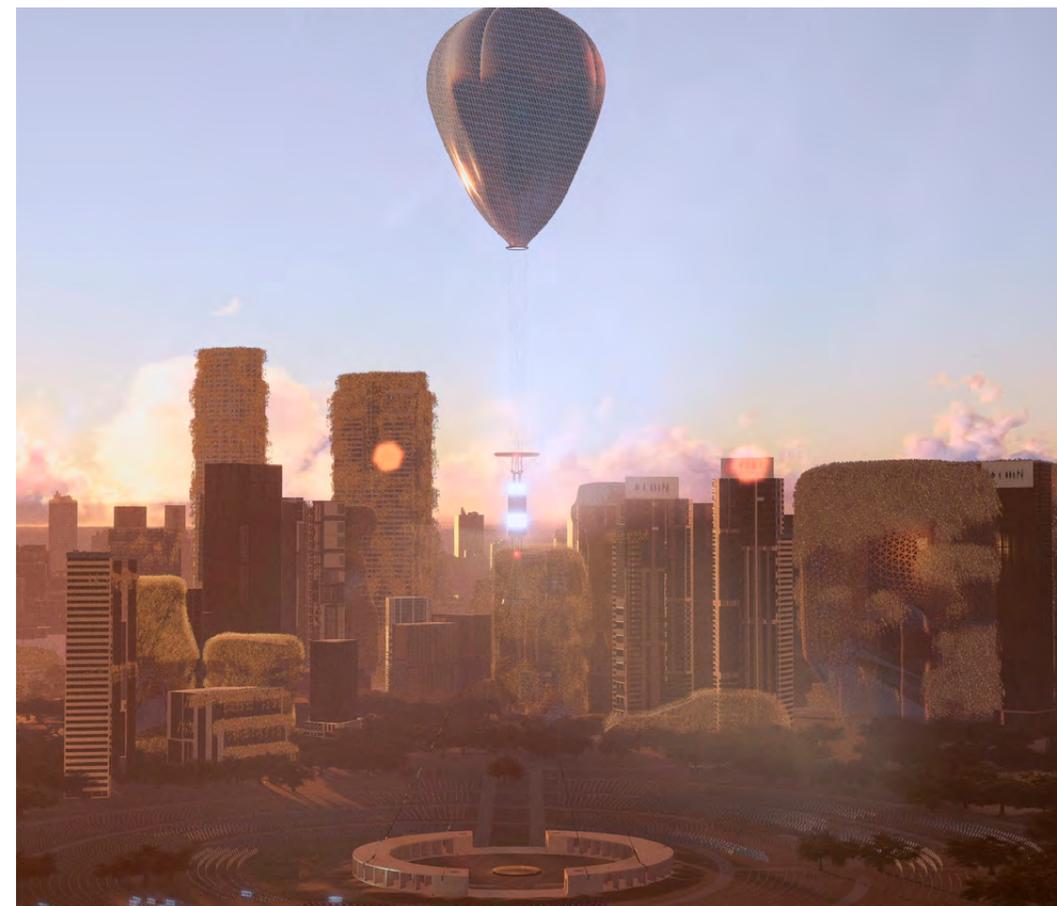
BA (Hons) in Architecture

AA Intermediate Examination (RIBA Part 1)

Three years, full time

The Intermediate Programme empowers students to question how architecture manifests in the world. The first year focuses on learning through making within a shared, open studio, and provides students with the academic and technical tools to develop their interest in architecture. Students are encouraged to focus on the challenges of the 21st century, while interrogating the foundational principles of architecture. They create an end-of-year portfolio comprising work in a range of media that is informed by various modes of argumentation and representation.

In the second and third years, Intermediate students learn within the AA unit system, in which small year-long design studios bring together approximately 12 participants from both year groups. Students explore different approaches to the study of architectural form, typology, programme, site and fabrication alongside analysis of critical theory, environmental issues, structural design and modes of professional practice. [Read more](#)



Right, top: Bowen Tan, *Breathable Gizmologies*, Intermediate 3, 2024.



Right, bottom: Documenting models in the AA Photo Studio, 2025.

Transfer Programme

Graduate Certificate (GradCert)

One year, full time

AA Transfer (GradCert) is a graduate access programme in architecture. Designed for graduates from non-architecture disciplines who wish to transition into architectural study and practice, it offers an intensive, design-led curriculum that prepares students for direct entry into the AA Diploma Programme (MArch) or other postgraduate pathways.

The programme encourages applicants to bring a wealth of knowledge and skills from their previous fields to bear in the context of architecture and offers a new pathway into the AA School. Through research, experimentation and collaboration within the AA's studio culture, students reinterpret prior experience while developing core competencies in architectural design, research and communication. The programme is built around a year-long building design project, supported by active dialogue with leading UK practices. [Read more](#)

*Work in Progress, courtesy of
Of Architecture. Photo by Jay
Yang and Ryan Barriball.*



Diploma Programme

Master of Architecture (MArch) and AA Diploma

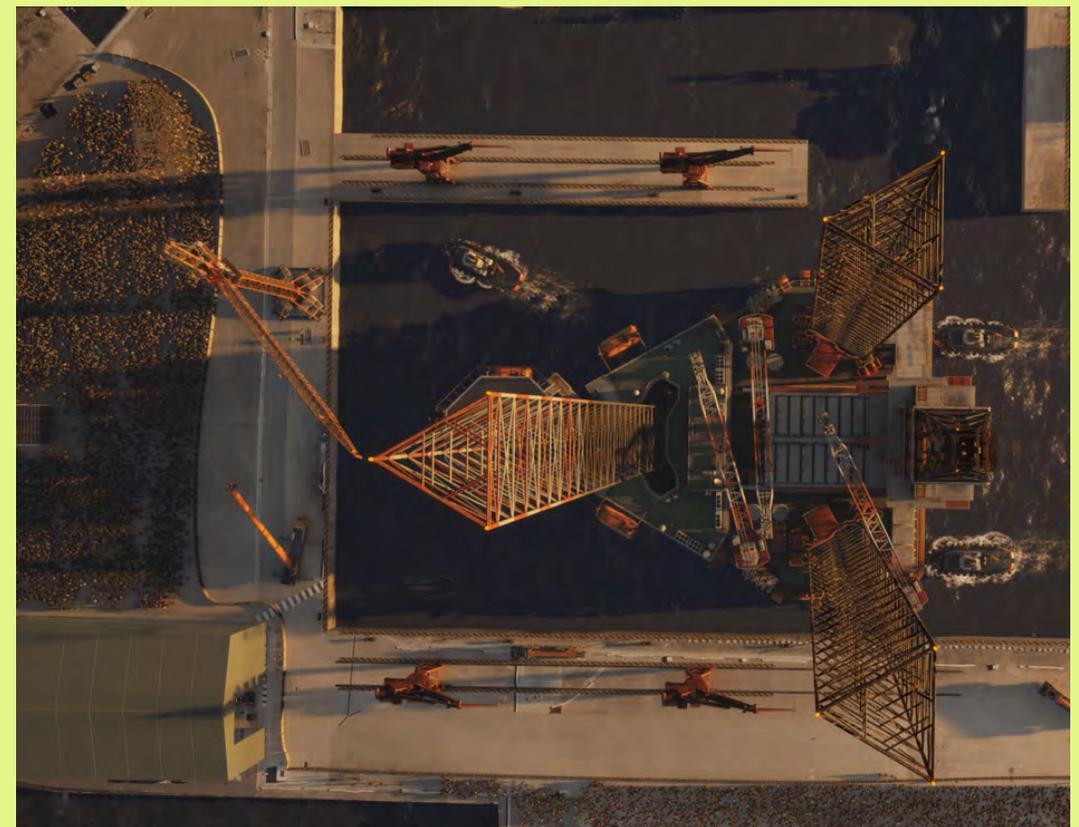
AA Final Examination (ARB Master's Level/RIBA Part 2)

Two years, full time

The Diploma Programme introduces students to the study of advanced research and design methods, and new approaches to practice. Throughout its history, the Diploma Programme has fostered some of the most innovative, challenging and progressive thinking in architecture.

As projects are developed within the Diploma Programme's year-long studio units, students work to improve their technical proficiency and engage with a critical agenda relating to broader societal questions with which architecture intersects. Lively, informed debate permeates life in the Diploma Programme, inspiring students to develop rigorous, inventive design and research projects. This process allows students to find their voices as architects, but also offers a means of articulating ideas that they can carry with them into their professional careers. [Read more](#)

Hantao Li, *Giants Anatomy*,
Diploma 12, 2025.



Core Studies

Core Studies is part of both the Intermediate Programme and the Diploma Programme, and is a suite of compulsory course requirements that are central to the study of architecture. Its lectures, participatory seminars and workshops are designed to develop expertise in four key areas:

- Environmental and Technical Studies (ETS)
- History and Theory Studies (HTS)
- Media Studies (MS)
- Professional Practice (PP1) / Architectural Professional Practice (APP2)

Environmental and Technical Studies (ETS) offers a complete and coherent technical training that provides students at all stages of their architectural education with the capacity to materialise their ideas, concepts and ambitions. History and Theory Studies (HTS) includes courses that develop historical and theoretical knowledge related to architectural discourses, concepts and ways of thinking through writing. Media Studies (MS) introduces students to the media used by architects through engagement with practices such as drawing, physical model-making, 3D modelling, programming, filmmaking and photography. Professional Practice (PP1) prepares students in the final year of the Intermediate Programme for their year of practical experience, typically undertaken following the completion of RIBA Part 1, while Architectural Professional Practice (APP2) develops and expands on the themes encountered in practice with students in their final year of the Diploma Programme.



Taught Postgraduate Programmes

The AA offers nine Taught Postgraduate Programmes – advanced studies for students with prior academic and professional experience. The degrees offered include PGDip (12 or 24 months), MA (12 or 24 months), MSc (12 months), MArch (16 months), MFA (18 months) and Taught MPhil (18 months) options for a range of topics.

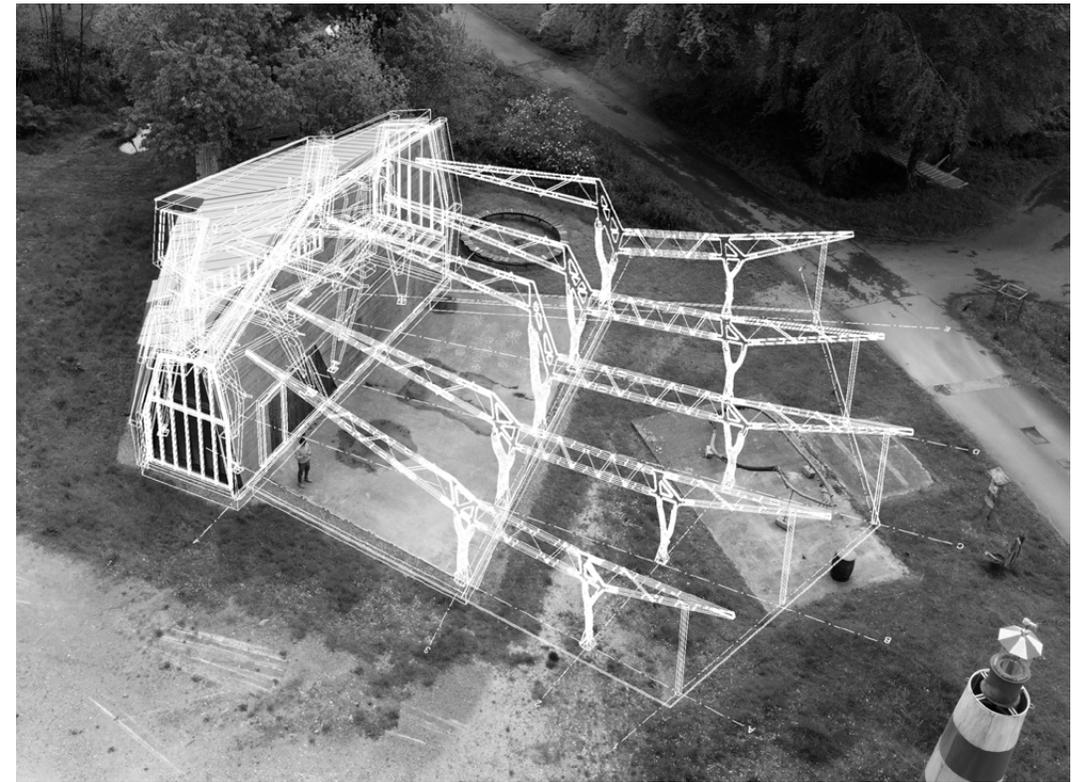
Architecture and Urbanism (DRL) MArch (16 months), full time

The Design Research Laboratory (DRL) is a 16-month programme that interrogates the broader relationships within and beyond architecture by considering the futures of living, work and culture through advanced methods in design, computation and manufacturing. DRL has been at the forefront of design experimentation for almost 30 years, and is based on an evolving framework of three-year research cycles that interrogate architecture and urbanism from the city-scale to the nanoscale. DRL is led by innovators in architecture, design and engineering, and pursues an interdisciplinary approach to design that extends beyond architecture, fostering collaboration with companies such as Ferrari, Festo, Autodesk, AKTII, Reider and Odico Robotics. The Lab is a space of co-operation and curiosity that develops the next generation of architects who actively engage with and influence the field.

Four terms of study are divided into two phases. Phase 1, a three-term academic year beginning each autumn, introduces design techniques and topics through a combination of team-based studio work, workshops and seminar courses. In Phase 2, which begins the following autumn, teams develop their Phase 1 work into a comprehensive design thesis project. In early January, these projects are presented to a panel of distinguished visiting critics. [Read more](#)

Conservation and Reuse MA (12 months full time or 24 months part time)/ PGDip (12 months full time or 24 months part time)

The Conservation and Reuse programme approaches working with existing things from the perspective of climate change, driven by an urgent need to cultivate the careful use and reuse of materials and spaces – from the cathedral to the car park. This is central to a set of school-wide strategies at the AA that ask how innovation in materials and fabrication can address problems of relative value, resource conservation and cultural significance. The programme's emphasis reaches beyond buildings to include landscapes, environments and wider material culture, both tangible and intangible. Its curriculum explores historical and theoretical frameworks of conservation, encouraging students to engage with questions of value and heritage from a critical standpoint and grounding their work in awareness of the 'spheres of implication' in which objects and buildings are embedded. This enquiry takes



The Tree and the Truss,
Design and Make 2023–24
cohort, Hooke Park.

place alongside practical investigations into new and established construction techniques for making and remaking, and a focus on developing practical skills. The programme fosters future-orientated practice by considering how regulatory frameworks, commercial attitudes and practical actions could be transformed by a better understanding of the factors that influence what we choose to conserve, and how we do so. Students synthesise theoretical, technical and practical knowledge in a design thesis targeting a situation of their choice, taking responsibility for a rich existing environment and exploring how it could change.

The programme offers Master of Arts (MA) and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) pathways, with two modes of study for each: a 12-month programme for full-time students and a 24-month programme for part-time students. Each pathway comprises six core modules of lectures, seminars, clinics, workshops and tutorials. The MA pathway concludes with a seventh module, the design thesis. The programme welcomes students from a range of professional or academic backgrounds, including architects, historians, archaeologists, artists and engineers, as well as those with multidisciplinary experience. [Read more.](#)

Design and Make MSc (12 months)/MArch (16 months), full time

Design and Make is based at the AA's woodland campus at Hooke Park in Dorset, a rich context which serves as an immersive laboratory for architectural research. The programme explores design at the point of physical production, demonstrating a vision for architectural education in which making is central to the design process. Students study within a working forest and inhabit a unique environment in which landscape, studio, workshop, forestry and 1:1 fabrication are interwoven. This landscape is critical to the design process,

providing both the material library and the site, and students' experimental constructs are nested into the working forest. In this way, the Hooke Park campus acts as a perpetual prototype for new approaches to building, unbuilding and rebuilding.

Design and Make students investigate how forest produce and other locally sourced materials can be used sustainably, both to build projects and drive new forms of research. The campus contains a diverse array of resources for design and fabrication, and students are expected to spend most of their time in the workshop developing an in-depth material understanding. The programme deploys technologies such as 3D scanning, advanced modelling, robotics and CNC production to augment traditional craft knowledge, developing agile ways of negotiating between computational and physical methods. [Read more](#)

Emergent Technologies and Design

MSc (12 months)/MArch (16 months), full time

The Emergent Technologies and Design (EmTech) programme is open to architecture and engineering graduates seeking knowledge and skills in architectural design science, who want to experiment with how these can be applied within new production paradigms. Students investigate new synergies of architecture and ecology at the intersection of computational design and advanced fabrication, with a focus on the potential these offer for new architectural, urban and ecological design solutions within emerging biomes. The programme stimulates critical thinking through research-driven design projects developed in a rigorous and creative studio environment. Projects develop iteratively through hypothesis, experimentation, fabrication and evaluation; students reflect upon this work in verbal presentations and group discussions, and document their findings in analytical papers.

The programme has two phases: the Studio and the Dissertation. Both phases are supported by the research of the programme team and the expertise of EmTech tutors, alumni and research colleagues in practice and industry. Design research is central to the programme's agenda, and student work develops from the understanding that nature and artifice are connected, that the cultural production of artefacts and systems exist as part of other active systems, and that these systems are subject to change. The programme acknowledges that the causality of change is complex and multi-scalar, and that its dynamics are disrupted and accelerated by human activity. Our work critically examines the consequences of such changes within society and the natural world, and we develop architectural interventions that align with these shifting material, environmental and socio-technical flows to support resilient and habitable spatial futures. [Read more](#)

History and Critical Thinking

MA (12 months), full time

History and Critical Thinking (HCT) interrogates architecture through history, theory and criticism. It examines how buildings, cities, spatial practices and their histories intersect with politics, environments, technologies and disciplinary and social structures. The programme nurtures and disseminates critical voices and forms of knowledge that connect contemporary issues with systematic historical enquiry, redefining what architecture is and what it means to write and teach history today.

At stake in the writing of history is a political engagement with the exigencies of the present, so architectural histories can be critically examined for the ways they negotiate sources; construct evidence and perspectives; appropriate, augment and exclude voices; and shape our ways of thinking and making. HCT students are encouraged to identify and explore missing and marginalised voices and topics, as well as to engage with recent scholarship and emerging forms of knowledge production. The programme understands writing as a practice of thinking. We explore different genres of writing throughout the year alongside drawings, photographs, films and literature, and consider how relationships between the textual, the visual and the graphic are negotiated.

The programme is organised around seminars, debates with guest speakers, collaborations with major archives, and critical writing and publishing workshops, all of which allow students to expand their disciplinary knowledge and develop new communicative skills. A diverse range of expertise is brought into the programme through the annual HCT and PhD Debate series 'Writing-with', which this year will invite writers and thinkers from architectural history, political ecology and environmental history. [Read more](#)

Housing and Urbanism

MA (12 months)/MArch (16 months), full time

Housing and Urbanism (HU) focuses on the key contemporary issues that drive urban transformation and on the role of architecture in supporting critical change. Each year, the programme identifies the most urgent challenges confronting cities worldwide, taking these as the starting point for studio work, lecture courses and student research. Design learning and investigation form the core of our programme, with the broader aim of deepening students' grasp of the politics and practicalities that shape today's cities. Students develop projects that initiate or contribute to the positive transformation of urban areas, working across a range of scales from detailed plans of contemporary housing to the mobility infrastructure of the regional metropolis. The aim is to nurture graduates with outstanding design leadership skills and critical judgement.

The programme's curriculum focuses on design-led research that develops into individual theses. The central element of the coursework is driven by a collaborative Design Workshop during the first two terms, supported by lectures and seminars. The final term is devoted to the development and completion of students' individual design theses. The programme examines the opportunities for leadership, responsibility and innovation that arise within the current urban situation, and demonstrates the role that architecture can play to encourage ambitious work by political and civic leaders. [Read more](#)

Spatial Performance and Design (AAIS)

MA (12 months)/MFA (18 months), full time

The AA Interprofessional Studio (AAIS) explores practices of spatial performance and design that reach beyond standard definitions of architecture and performance. Spatial performance uses live projects and engagement with networks spanning different disciplines to explore how creative practitioners work and how design functions in specific contexts. The studio fosters a learning environment that encourages students to build connections within and between different creative fields.

AAIS explores the boundaries between art, architecture and performance to reveal unseen networks between professions, products and methodologies. The studio operates as an interdisciplinary creative studio for knowledge exchange, allowing students to develop a language with which to communicate between disciplines. Participants in the programme research, design and produce a series of genre-defying spatial performances and installations through which they examine the ways in which creative work and design overlap during the development of projects and events. Students work with visual art, the performing arts, design and media practices, aiming to challenge rather than uphold the accepted divisions between them. [Read more](#)

Sustainable Environmental Design MSc (12 months)/MArch (16 months), full time

The Sustainable Environmental Design (SED) programme engages with real-life projects and problems that affect living, work and climate change in every city and built environment. The course is research-led, evidence-based and practice-oriented: students undertake collaborative group research and individual thesis projects that contribute to a carbon-neutral future and promote inhabitant comfort, health and wellbeing.

The programme consists of two phases. In Phase 1 (Terms 1–2), students work in groups to engage in experimental fieldwork and computational studies, applying the knowledge and tools introduced in weekly lectures and workshops. Refurbishing the City, a continuing SED research agenda, provides briefs for case studies of buildings and outdoor spaces around London and in other major cities. We use data to explore different projected climate scenarios, with a focus on how the urban morphology and materiality of cities can create unexpected environments and effects. Students also work with computational models and run simulations that highlight how climatic conditions can offer creative opportunities. In Phase 2 (Terms 3–4), thesis projects address design research that benefits local communities and engages with global environmental issues, assessing their performance using local and international standards and benchmarks. MSc projects explore the applicability and architectural potential of this research across a range of climates and building types. MArch research culminates in a specific design application for a given site and brief. [Read more](#)

Architecture and Urban Design (Projective Cities) Taught MPhil (18 months), full time

The Taught MPhil in Architecture and Urban Design (Projective Cities) is a research and design programme that examines questions at the intersection of architecture, urban design and planning. The programme undertakes systematic analysis, design experimentation, theoretical speculation and critical writing, all of which focus on the contemporary city. Student projects combine design with traditional forms of research, while challenging disciplinary boundaries and contributing to emerging spatial design practice and knowledge. The programme recognises the need for multidisciplinary understanding and new design research training to meet the demands of contemporary architectural and urban practice.

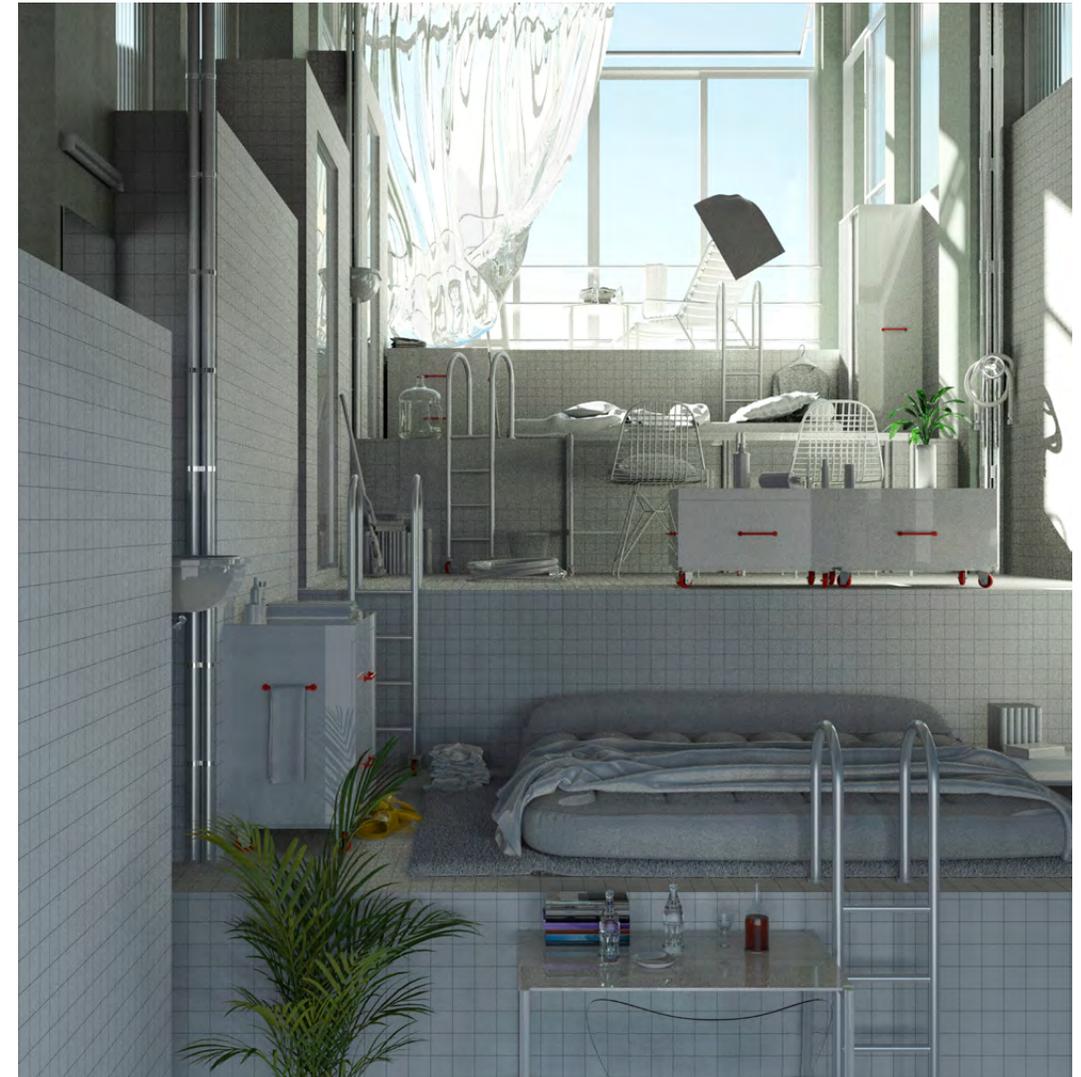
Each cohort addresses a shared theme which they take as the starting point for individual research. The current theme, The Architecture of Welfare, has

been developed in collaboration with The Autonomy Institute. Its focus is on using comparative analysis to investigate how the architecture of welfare can be defined through different organisational, formal, programmatic and material terms, and how it manifests in urban, territorial and infrastructural contexts. Through this, students are engaging with an evolving landscape of welfare services – from housing to national food hubs and care facilities – and reimagining the spatial and social interfaces between citizens and state services. [Read more](#)

AA Masters to PhD Pathway

On completion of their studies, graduates from the AA's MA, MSc, PG MArch, MFA or Taught MPhil programmes are given the opportunity to develop their Master's thesis into a proposal to apply for the AA PhD Programme. Applications to the PhD Programme through this pathway can be considered for commencement in the academic year immediately following the student's graduation from their taught postgraduate programme.

Luyao Luo, *Alternative Breathers;*
On the Modes of Comfort, Projective
Cities, 2022.



PhD Programme

Four years, full time

Mathilde Redoute, Guérande
Salt Marshes, fieldwork, PhD
Programme, 2024.

The PhD Programme at the AA trains scholars and researchers in the fields of architectural history and theory, urban studies and technology. We encourage rigorous and speculative dissertations that question architecture itself and its history, as well as its professional and disciplinary mandate. The programme is not based on the application of one specific research method, but instead provides a platform for candidates to develop their own approach. Beyond their individual lines of inquiry, however, all candidates and staff share an understanding of architectural form as an index of sociopolitical processes. This attitude provides a springboard for research that engages both with the materiality of the built world and with its cultural dimensions. We question the traditional separation of theory and design, and see thinking and practicing as activities that are intrinsically connected. This connection becomes ever more important as we face new social and environmental crises.

Each candidate is tutored by a director of studies and a supervisor for the duration of the programme, and their work is evaluated by both internal supervisors and external experts. Every year, candidates must present the results of their research in an open forum, allowing guests and staff to discuss its methodology, content and argument. In parallel with the development of an individual thesis, each participant will be provided with a background of historical and theoretical thinking through weekly discussions with their director of studies and supervisor, regular seminars with guest scholars and an annual symposium. Participation in collective activities and school-wide debate is a crucial component of the PhD experience, and is monitored and assessed as part of the candidates' yearly review process. Candidates are also encouraged to test their research by teaching at the school. The AA is a Partner Institution and Affiliated Research Centre of The Open University (OU), UK. The OU is the awarding body for PhD degrees at the AA. [Read more](#)



Professional Practice Part 3

Part time

Professional Practice Part 3 is a seminar course and examination that allows successful candidates to register as an architect with the Architects Registration Board (ARB). The course is also available to registered professionals who wish to refresh their knowledge through Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The course is accredited by the ARB and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and is offered twice during the annual academic cycle. The seminar and examination both follow the five ARB Professional Criteria and Guidance. Early registration is recommended as places are limited, particularly for the spring course.

The autumn seminar course is full-time and is conducted over the first two weeks in September. Alternatively, the spring session is offered on Saturdays over a ten-week period from the beginning of January until mid-March. The seminar course covers topics central to professional and ethical practice, including business management, culture and ethos, the regulatory framework, planning building regulations and construction and design management (CDM), procurement, fire and life safety, and environmental sustainability.

Assessment consists of three written papers based on a fictitious project with several evolving scenarios, and concludes with a viva conducted as a professional conversation with two examiners. Paper 1 is issued immediately after each seminar course with submission four weeks later. Papers 2 and 3 follow one week later, are time limited and open book. Candidates elect to sit in the session of their choosing by registering for the examination and submitting their Professional Experience Submission (PES) for consideration..

An optional two-day course, the Building Contract Game, is available for those sitting the examination, and involves teams working together to devise strategies that overcome contract issues and practical problems during a construction project.

The programme welcomes candidates from all backgrounds and levels of experience, from recent graduates to those with many years in practice. We encourage all participants to engage, ask questions and debate relevant topics with the aim of becoming knowledgeable, responsible professionals.

[Read more](#)



AA Visiting School

In addition to the AA's full-time courses, a wide range of short courses take place around the world throughout the year as part of the Visiting School. The AA also offers Autumn and Spring Semester Programmes, enabling students from other universities to experience the AA for a term, as well as a Summer School, which is accompanied by a dedicated series of Public Programme events. These courses are led by distinguished and emerging architects, designers, critical thinkers and AA tutors from around the world. They foster new forms of teaching and learning while stimulating the creative minds of participants of all ages and backgrounds.

AA Visiting School

The AA Visiting School (AAVS) is a global platform for architectural education, offering a diverse array of short programmes that explore innovative design approaches in a wide range of international contexts. Each course is crafted to provide participants with immersive experiences that combine practical workshops, theoretical discussions and collaborative projects. Led by AA tutors and experts, the programmes are designed to foster critical thinking and hands-on learning. These programmes are open to students, professionals and enthusiasts, fostering a collaborative environment where architecture is learned by doing. [Read more](#)

Summer School

The AA Summer School offers a three-week programme of design studios, seminars and lectures based on the AA unit system, introducing participants to a varied selection of design approaches, techniques and agendas within an inclusive and intimate educational environment. Summer School tutors, lecturers and critics include past and present AA staff as well as professionals from a diverse range of creative disciplines such as fashion, art, graphic design, industrial design, urbanism and film. The course is for anyone with a creative mind and an interest in design and architecture. [Read more](#)



AAVS Palimpsest Barragán,
Mexico, 2024.

Semester Programme

The Semester Programme runs twice a year: in autumn, from September to December; and in spring, from January to May. The programme is a full-time, 15-week studio course open to students, architects and other creative individuals from around the world who wish to further their knowledge, practice and skills in architecture. Tutorials, workshops, lectures and reviews are central to the programme, where AA tutors and external experts are invited to discuss projects and provide personal feedback to students. The programme is integrated with the school's undergraduate Core Studies courses and is designed to allow transferable study credits. Applicants require at least two years of study in architecture or urban design. [Read more](#)



Above: AA Visiting School
Mallorca, 2023.

Right: AA Visiting School
Nanotourism, Ault, 2017.



How to Apply

We encourage applications from prospective students who can demonstrate initiative in entering the public forms of presentation, collective discussion and productive debate that permeate the AA, the architectural community and the world at large. We are keen to hear from independent, motivated and respectful individuals with the curiosity and ambition required to define their own unique path through a school that fosters a multitude of educational methods and agendas.

The AA is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and is the oldest independent school of architecture in the UK. As an Approved Provider registered with the Office for Students (OfS), England's independent regulator of higher education, the AA is a designated recognised body with the authority to grant its own taught degrees (Foundation, Bachelor and Master level), and is a licenced Student Sponsor registered with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). The AA is not a member of UCAS and all applications are made directly to the school.

The application procedure is the same for UK and international prospective students. If you would like to apply, please read the information on our website about the AA's Academic Programmes and visit the admissions pages listed opposite for up-to-date entry requirements and application deadlines. There is one point of entry each year, in September, for all our full-time programmes.

Open Days and Open Evenings

The AA hosts a series of virtual and in-person open days and events for applicants and offer holders throughout the year. For a full schedule [visit this page](#), and to register your interest to receive more information, [click here](#).

In-person Open Day: 7 October 2026

Virtual Open Day for Foundation, Intermediate and Diploma Programmes:
9 October 2026

Virtual Open Day for Taught Postgraduate Programmes and PhD:
4 November 2026

Virtual Open Day Drop-In Sessions: 18 January 2027

Day at the AA immersive events: 18 and 19 March 2027

Fees and Financial Assistance

The AA is committed to ensuring that the most talented students from around the world can study at the school, and we offer a range of bursaries for new and existing students who demonstrate exceptional promise and financial need. All applicants are eligible regardless of age, nationality or background. Find out more about [tuition fees](#) and [financial assistance](#).

Entry Requirements

To learn about academic entry requirements and for more details for each programme, please click on the relevant 'Find out more' link below, which will take you to the AA website.

Foundation Programme

The one-year Foundation Programme leads to the AA Foundation Award in Architecture, Art and Design (FHEQ Level 4). [Find out more](#)

Intermediate Programme

BA (Hons) in Architecture RIBA Part 1

The three-year BA (Hons) in Architecture RIBA Part 1 programme leads to the AA Intermediate Examination (RIBA Part 1). Prospective students can apply for entry into the first year, and applications can also be made for direct entry to the second or third year. Successful completion of the programme leads to an Unconditional Offer of a place in the first year of the Master of Architecture (MArch) and AA Diploma ARB Master's Level/RIBA Part 2 programme (Diploma Programme). [Find out more](#)

Transfer Programme

Graduate Certificate (GradCert)

The one-year Transfer Programme leads to a Graduate Certificate (GradCert). [Find out more](#).

Diploma Programme

Master of Architecture (MArch) and AA Diploma ARB/RIBA Part 2

The two-year Master of Architecture (MArch) and AA Diploma ARB Master's Level/RIBA Part 2 programme leads to the AA Final Examination (ARB Master's Level/ RIBA Part 2) and the AA Diploma (AA Dipl). Prospective students can only apply to enter the first year of the Diploma Programme. [Find out more](#)

Taught Postgraduate Programmes

The AA offers nine Taught Postgraduate programmes for students with prior academic and professional experience. All students join the school in September at the beginning of a new academic year. [Find out more](#)

PhD Programme

The PhD Programme at the AA is a full-time, four-year course and is open to students with prior academic and professional experience. The programme includes a PhD-by-design option. [Find out more](#)

Professional Practice Part 3

Applications for the RIBA-accredited Professional Practice course are made directly by completing an online form. [Find out more](#)

Applying to the AA Visiting Schools and Summer School

The short courses, workshops and part-time programmes of study offered by the AA Visiting School and the Summer School do not lead to formal qualifications or degree awards, instead promoting flexible, mobile and agile opportunities for learning. Transcripts are available upon completion of these programmes.

AA Visiting School

If you are interested in applying to one or more AA Visiting School courses, please check their individual web pages to submit an online application and make a payment. Most courses have limited spaces and run on a first-come, first-served basis. [Find out more](#)

Summer School

Applications for the Summer School are made by completing an online form. Each year, applications typically open in mid-November and will be received until the following summer, when the course begins. [Find out more](#)

Resources

Student Information

During their time at the school, students on all of our programmes benefit from friendly administrative assistance and a welcoming support service that can offer advice about all aspects of life within the AA. [Find out about student support, visas, housing advice and more](#)

Academic Resources

The extensive resources and facilities of the AA are constantly evolving to support the highest quality of contemporary architectural education. [Find out more](#)

Events

Before attending an open day or visiting the AA, we invite you to engage with some of the lectures, seminars and exhibitions that are integral to the day-to-day life of the school. The AA Public Programme is a free and accessible series of events dedicated to advancing global architectural discourse. [Find out more](#)



