Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	**Course Title**	Bachelor of Architecture with Honours
2	**Course Code**	US1565
3	**Awarding Institution**	Birmingham City University
4	**Teaching Institution(s)** (if different from point 3)	N/A
5	**Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation** (if applicable)	The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) RIBA Part I

6	**Course Description**
	First founded in 1908, as the Birmingham School of Architecture, education in architecture, currently located in the Department of Architecture and Built Environment, has been at the heart of the profession in the city and across the region for over 100 years. This synergistic and interdisciplinary link between architectural education, industry, and the city's wider history of making, continues to be part of the ethos of the course – building professionals that are adapted to the unique challenges of contemporary practice, and of the city we are rooted in. The BArch (Hons) RIBA Part 1 course reframes architectural education as a tool for equity, civic responsibility, and cultural transformation. The course aims to equip our students with the skills to be creative, ethical, and entrepreneurial – capable of rising to 21st century challenges. We encourage our incredibly diverse student body to bring their lived experiences into studio generating design responses that reflect their own backgrounds. We empower students to radically respond to the urgent issues facing our city and the world, from climate crisis, to urbanisation, and the changing landscape of our cities. We seek not only to diversify the profession but to change what architecture is and does in our own communities. The programme is scaffolded over three years to help students grow and build confidence, specialist knowledge, professional literacy, and critical agency, to go out into the world as change makers. Each year includes design studio, professional studies, history/theory, and technology/environment modules that are taught as holistic interrelated topics. Here students have an opportunity to come out with their own unique set of skills, style, and approach as they develop and take ownership over their own design process and agendas. Through a mixture of industry activities, live clients, real world scenarios, and engaging with our professional networks in Birmingham and beyond, students can be sure they have the skills they need for a professional practice that is rapidly changing. We have a long tradition of fostering entrepreneurship, with multiple award-winning practices having been founded by our entrepreneurial graduates. With many of our visiting lecturers coming from architectural practices with active experience working on projects that are helping to define our growing city and region, and with major projects and development on our doorstep, there are lots of great opportunities for our students and graduates to learn from and participate in the design that will radically change the way the entire region functions. Through engaging with live clients and projects, local site visits, guest lectures, and engaging with local visiting critics you will be offered ample opportunities to be a part of the future of Birmingham and beyond.

7	Course Awards		
7a	**Name of Final Award**	**Level**	**Credits Awarded**
	Bachelor of Architecture with Honours	6	360
7b	**Exit Awards and Credits Awarded**		
	Certificate Higher Education Architecture Diploma Higher Education Architecture Bachelor of Architecture	4 5 6	120 240 300

8	Variation from the University Regulations
	This course has approved variations to the University's Academic Regulations. These can be accessed via the student contract page: https://www.bcu.ac.uk/student-info/student-contract.

9	Delivery Patterns			
Mode(s) of Study	**Location(s) of Study**	**Duration of Study**	**Code(s)**
Full-time	City Centre	3 Years	US1565
Full-time with Placement Year	City Centre	4 Years	US1566
Full-time with Foundation Year	City Centre	4 years	US1565F

10	Entry Requirements
	The admission requirements for this course are stated on the course page of the BCU website at https://www.bcu.ac.uk or may be found by searching for the course entry profile located on the UCAS website.

11	**Course Aims**
	The degree course enables students to achieve Undergraduate Honours degree level education and competence in architecture, which meets RIBA Part 1 exemption through engaging with differing structured course modules that expose and develop themes, ideologies and skills in a focused and iterative pattern. By the end of their degree, students will be able to: • Apply analytical techniques and problem-solving skills to different types of architectural questions, understanding a complex body of knowledge, some at the current boundaries of the discipline • Use the principles of collaborative and interdisciplinary work to critically evaluate evidence, arguments, and assumptions to reach sound judgements, communicated creatively and effectively • Demonstrate ethical design proposals in the context of the climate emergency with an understanding of the relevant building physics informing zero carbon design standards Through design projects and written work on the course, students will be able to show knowledge, understanding, and abilities that reflects the following RIBA themes and values: 1. Health and life safety: demonstrating authoritative knowledge of statutory frameworks to safeguard the community and end user 2. Ethical and professional practice: acquiring professional and communication skills to ensure projects are delivered with integrity and accountability within global, national, and professional climate targets 3. Structures, construction, and resources: demonstrating climate literacy, responsible specification, and ethical sourcing to enhance wellbeing, minimise embodied carbon, waste, and pollution, and reduce demands on energy and water 4. Histories, theories, and methodologies: critically analysing and researching narratives and cultural, environmental, and social values in architecture to understand and extend architectural pedagogy 5. Design pedagogies and architectural expression: critically evaluating authentic aesthetic, compositional, and spatial principles to synthesise socially, ecologically, and environmentally sustainable integrated studio projects 6. Business skills: developing capability in business skills relevant to working in practice and practice management

12	**Course Learning Outcomes**
	Knowledge & Understanding
1	Analyse precedents from architecture, the built environment, and wider creative professions, to inform design thinking and response.
2	Construct arguments through the analysis and research of wider theoretical, social, cultural, political, and environmental contexts in the study of architecture and urban design.
3	Demonstrate climate literacy in the evaluation and proposal of projects minimise embodied carbon, waste, and pollution, and reduce demands on energy and water.
4	Apply structural and technological principles in the design of architecture to create safe, comfortable and appropriate buildings for a given user group.
5	Evaluate the impact of legal and regulatory frameworks on design proposals, to safeguard the community and end user.
	Skills & Attributes
6	Develop an iterative design process, which includes research, interpretation, proposition, reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.
7	Employ a variety of 2D and 3D skills, media, and techniques to appropriately communicate architectural design and process.
8	Formulate design responses that consider aesthetic, compositional, and spatial principles to create socially, ecologically, and environmentally sustainable designs.
9	Propose ethical and climate considerate design solutions to a given brief within the contexts of global, national, and professional climate targets.
10	Demonstrate the ability to work with autonomy and self-motivation in both individual and collaborative contexts.
11	Employ skills of reflection and self-reflection to adapt and respond creatively to design challenges, limitations, and contexts.
12	Engage collaboratively in the studio environment, with both peers and tutors, to develop skills of formal and informal communication.
13	Formally present a design proposal, and decision-making process, through both visual and verbal means.

13	**Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**
	Teaching on the course aims to help you develop a wide range of skills to empower you with competence and confidence across the four tenets of Architecture: Design, History & Theory, Technology, and Professionalism. These skills develop holistically across your three-year journey, building up your knowledge and self-confidence each year to prepare you for practice and further study. The wide-ranging nature of design education and practice requires diverse skills, competencies, and awareness. So, the teaching requires a correspondingly wide range of teaching and learning methods. At the heart of your learning and teaching on this course is studio – your creative home and a space for collaboration, exploration, and expression. It's where projects come alive, skills are put into practice, and ideas are tested. Studio culture at BCU is dynamic and supportive: you'll learn from your tutors, your peers, visiting critics, and – most importantly – from the process of making and reflecting. You'll sketch, model, draw, debate, build, and make, but above all, you'll grow – as a designer, a thinker, and a person. In design studio, you can expect weekly 1:1 or small group tutorials with your studio tutor paired with a variety of dynamic lectures, workshops, site visits and study trips where you are taught the design tools, critical thinking, and professional skills you need to produce the work. Students are required to make progress in-between sessions and bring in their work-in-progress weekly for discussion with their tutor. Studio activity by its very nature provides formative assessment and continuous feedback through verbal advice, peer review, and documented feedback advising students on their progress and performance. To best engage with learning, particularly in studio, but across all modules, you should bring all work with you to all sessions, be that models, drawings, sketches, or other explorative work – and you may be asked to print for tutorial or reviews. Alongside these weekly tutorials students will have several moments across each semester where they are expected to formally present their work to tutors, peers, and sometimes guests. These may take the format of gallery style pin-ups, verbal presentations in small groups, or desktop reviews. At the end of the module students will submit the collection of the work they have been producing, usually curated into a digital portfolio. These design studio modules are supported by the learning in the other modules which teaches you skills, techniques, and ways of thinking that will become integral parts of your developing design practice. These modules tend to pair lecture delivery with focussed seminars and workshops, where you can apply your learning with peers, in a supportive tutor-led environment. Active student involvement in the learning process is regarded as vital and some of this learning and reflection will be student led, so it is essential that you engage with any prior reading or watching of module content, along with continued working on in-class assignments, to help you keep on track and stay engaged across the course of the module. As with studio, there are built in points for formative feedback within all modules, where you can get guidance on the work you are submitting whether through 1:1 or group tutorials, peer review, or presentation of a portion of the module submission. Assessment types vary from module to module but may include formal presentation of work (either through live or recorded verbal presentations), collated portfolios or booklets of weekly tasks, the writing of illustrated essays or reports, production of analytical models and drawings, or reflective writing. As the nature of the architectural profession is one of interdisciplinary and collaborative working, some modules will have group components to submission.

15	Course Requirements

15a

Level 4:
In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ARC4040	Design Communication	30
ARC4041	Architectural Histories in Context	30
ARC4042	Design Fundamentals	30
ARC4043	Architectural Technologies in Context	30

Level 5:
In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ARC5052	Adaptive Reuse	30
ARC5053	Creative Ethics and Collaboration	30
ARC5054	Design Negotiation	30
ARC5055	Theories of the Built Environment in Context	30

Level 6:
In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling ___ credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ARC6122	Radical Proposals	30
ARC6123	Creative and Critical Practice	30
ARC6124	Resilient Futures	60

15b	Structure Diagram

Level 4

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Core ARC4040: Design Communication (30 credits) ARC4041: Architectural Histories in Context (30 credits)	Core ARC4042: Design Fundamentals (30 credits) ARC4043: Architectural Technologies in Context (30 credits)

Level 5

Core ARC5052: Adaptive Reuse (30 credits) ARC5053: Creative Ethics and Collaboration (30 credits)	Core ARC5054: Design Negotiation (30 credits) ARC5055: Theories of the Built Environment in Context (30 credits)

Level 6

Core ARC6122: Radical Proposals (30 credits) ARC6123: Creative and Critical Practice (30 credits)	Core ARC6124: Resilient Futures (60 credits)

16	Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment

Level 4

Workload

20% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	243
Directed Learning	222
Private Study	735
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	95%
Exam	0%
In-Person	5%

Level 5

Workload

20% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	240
Directed Learning	230
Private Study	730
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	87.5%
Exam	0%
In-Person	12.5%

Level 6

Workload

21% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	252
Directed Learning	230
Private Study	718
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	86.6%
Exam	0%
In-Person	13.3%