Get ready for BSc (Hons) Architecture (with Foundation Year)

Welcome to all students starting the **BSc (Hons) Architecture** (with Foundation Year) at UWE Bristol this year from your Programme and Module Leaders Sally Daniels and Joe Laybourn.

Architecture and Design Foundation will include all students from all the following programmes:

Architecture + Design Foundation

BSc (Hons) Architecture (with Foundation Year)

Beng (Hons) Architecture and Environmental Engineering (with Foundation Year)

BA (Hons) Architecture and Planning (with Foundation Year)

BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology & Design (with Foundation Year)

These 4 programmes share modules that include the two design-based elements of Design Studio and Design Communication; an energetic, collaborative and creative learning atmosphere where you all begin to explore the common themes and practice of Architectural education and design thinking. This not only gives you a firm grounding for your future forward learning but also establishes important friendships and connections.

Starting Block

We welcome you to UWE on the 14th September for Starting Block Week 1 and on the 21st of September for Week 2 and our Foundation welcome and for the beginning of your programme.

Starting Block will help you settle into university, introduce you to your teaching team, course mates and some of the themes and processes of learning that you will be engaging with. We will help you find your way around, get used to our systems, and practise the skills you need to make a strong start. Look out for further emails and explore the Starting Block website with more details.

We warmly look forward to meeting you soon,

Your Module Leaders **Sally Daniels** and **Joe Laybourn** and the Teaching Team.

Preparing and arrival

You can find everything you need to know about enrolment, Starting Block and the start of teaching, on our Preparing and Arrival webpage. Take a look at our website to familiarise yourself with our

facilities and services such as the library, study skills, academic support, health and wellbeing support and much more.

Our study skills workbook introduces you to essential services as well as key skills.

You can also explore our support for careers and enterprise. UWE Careers & Enterprise provide a range of workshops, appointments and a huge range of online resources to support students in realising their future ambitions. The Careers Toolkit is our online portal to finding vacancies, booking onto events and accessing a range of resources.

Enrolment

Once you have satisfied all admissions requirements, we'll send you your login details for our IT systems to enable you to activate your university email account. Once your account has been activated, you'll gain access to the MYUWE platform where you can enrol. Note that your login details for MYUWE are different to those used for the UWE Welcome website. Enrolment for September programmes will only be open from August onwards. You can find guidance and further information on our Enrolment website.

ID card - upload your photo now

We can only print your ID card if you have added your photo to MYUWE. To avoid delays, upload your photo as soon as you receive login details. For help, go to our student card guidance.

Timetables

Your timetable will be available to you via MYUWE (login required) once you have started the enrolment process. Please visit the 'Understanding your teaching timetable' website to find out when your timetable will be published.

Your Foundation Architecture and Design Programme

As you progress through the year, we will introduce you to many of the common challenges and opportunities for architecture, placemaking, buildings & design in 'our times'.
We will engage in the design process, visual communication, design research, technical and theoretical practice to build your skills, knowledge and creative problem-solving abilities.

We will introduce and develop theoretical and practical techniques for:

- Engaging in project-based 'design thinking'
- Materials resourcing, processing and form finding
- Exploring responsive, responsible and regenerative environments and places
- Engaging with 'User Behaviours' and 'User Experience' in the design process
- Spatial analysis, inhabitation and 'place-making'
- Design for wellbeing, community, biodiversity and happiness

There are some key ground rules to embrace:

- There is no one 'right or wrong answer' but a spectrum of possibility to test and explore
- Design is not linear; it is 'iterative'; continually developing
- Everyone is together here to learn (staff and students)
- We take architecture seriously AND playfully
- We work cooperatively, sustainably, inclusively and support each other's learning
- We respect and celebrate difference and diversity
- We work together to foster a collegiate environment

Through all these activities, we will converse, invent, test and share ideas through the common language of design.

Start your learning

Have a go at these activities to start preparing for your programme:

1. **Sharpen your observation/feed your curiosity about people and places!**
   People are, after all, who we are making buildings for!
   If you have not already done so, start looking at architecture and record how it is used.
   This can take the form of quick sketching. You could keep these individually or in a sketchbook.

2. **Read around your subject, listen to podcasts, watch presentations**
   To succeed within your chosen programme, you will need to seek out the aspects of Architecture that interest and arouse curiosity. You will begin to think critically about key issues and practices. To give you a taste of the sort of conversations, experiences and activities we will be engaging with over the academic semesters.
   Please view the library reading list.

It would be really good to see some of your sketches, and we can talk in a group about things we've listened to or watched from the list or your own research.

Access support

Check the information on our Disability web pages so you know what you need to do. If you need any urgent additional mobility or other support to fully access all activities during your studies, contact me as your programme leader.

If you're struggling to meet the financial demands of your course, please contact the Student Money Service team for advice and guidance.

Get equipped

The University has computers on all our campuses for you to use during your studies. These provide access to our core digital learning tools and any specialist software required for your course. You may have scheduled sessions in computer labs or other specialist facilities, and you will be able to use open-access PCs for self-study.

UWE Bristol licenses many specialist software packages for use on personal laptops for the duration of your course. **It is important to note that we will not be using Computer Aided Design** (CAD e.g. AutoCad, Revit.) **software in Foundation Studio**; digital work will mainly involve word processing, image manipulation, graphic design and slide presentations.

See the UWE website for detailed information on choosing your IT equipment including recommended specifications.

We recommend that you have access to a device with the following minimum specifications:

- Windows 10 or later operating system
- For the foundation year and level 1 (year 1 and 2): **Enhanced Specification**
- By the start of level 2 (year 3): **Intensive Specification** with a minimum screen resolution of 1920 x 1080 pixels. A 'DirectX 11' capable graphics card with 'Shader Model 5' compatibility with a minimum 1GB GPU is also recommended to run industry standard software. However, it should be noted that the university is equipped with computers with these capabilities.

  If you have an iPad/tablet; these can be really useful for sketching (using e.g. the 'procreate' App and preparing collages, montages, sketches in context.

We require ALL students to have drawing supplies for their course. These items are available at reduced prices from **Artway Creative Supplies** who will deliver it to UWE for you.
If you do not wish to purchase the Artway kit, you are welcome to assemble your own, with items of a similar or equivalent specification.
Access this specific course kit.

You will also sometimes need to use a drawing board. The UWE Project room will have A2 boards to purchase or rent for the year. You may reserve one once you have enrolled on the Project Room website (small deposit required). The boards will be first come first served, so we highly recommend that you reserve as soon as you confirm your place.

International students

The Global Student Support Team offer information and advice to ensure you receive all the support you need to get the best from your time at UWE Bristol. They are here to help you to settle in when you first arrive at UWE Bristol and organise social events to help you to adapt to your new environment.

Who to contact if you have questions

For any questions about the programme, please contact us:
Sally Daniels via email at sally.daniels@uwe.ac.uk
Joe Laybourn via email at joe.laybourn@uwe.ac.uk

Please note: this information has been provided on the assumption that you will meet the conditions of your offer and be eligible to take up your place.

Entry: September 2026 Last updated: Spring 2026