Get ready for Architecture and Planning

Hello, we are the leaders of the BA(Hons) Architecture and Planning degree and are writing to welcome you to UWE Bristol and give you some information about your degree course. You can of course contact us directly with any questions not answered in this letter.

Allison Dutoit and Elahe Karimnia
Programme Leaders

Welcome

We are looking forward to welcoming you in the week commencing 14 September for Starting Block and the beginning of your programme.

Starting Block is two weeks of activities and sessions to help you settle into university and to help you get to know your teaching team and course mates. We will help you find your way around, get used to our systems, and practice the skills you need to make a strong start. Look out for further emails and explore the Starting Block website with more details. Starting Block is the start of your course, and it is important to join these activities.

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.

Before you Start: 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.

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.

Engage with your programme

Start your learning
Architecture and Planning is all about improving the quality of places we live in. A very useful thing to do is to start developing your awareness of these qualities. There are several ways to do so, but an effective and popular way is sketching. We recommend that you get into the habit of using a sketchbook as a visual diary of places you visit. Sketch what you observe including buildings or parts of them, green spaces, movements, or anything that attract your attention. This is an important practice to develop and will be part of the course. There are other ways to capture places and qualities such as short sound or video recordings on your phone, or photography. Keep a journal of thoughts, quick notes, or narratives about spaces to deepen understanding beyond visuals. It would be good to bring this along when you join us in the autumn.

Read around your subject
To succeed within your chosen programme, you will need to think critically about key issues and practices. Start now by regularly looking the following sites:

- Dezeen magazine -lots of architecture news
- The Academy of Urbanism - Urban design organisation for professionals
- RIBA – UK architecture professional body
- RTPI - UK urban planning professional body
- Archdaily.com - Up to date architecture news for professionals

Connect with others
You will be able to join the architecture and planning societies and take part in their activities throughout the year: uwearchsociety

Be prepared

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.

Get equipped

Drawing kit: We require ALL students to have core drawing and modelling supplies for their course. These are things you will use for the whole course, over four years. These items are available at reduced prices from Artway Creative Supplies who will deliver it to UWE. You are welcome to assemble your own kit, with all the items of a similar or equivalent specification.

You will also need your own drawing board, either buying one or using one you may already have; it needs to be at least A2 size. 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. The boards will be first come first served, so we highly recommend that you reserve as soon as you confirm your place. The rental cost will be roughly equivalent to the purchase price but will be refunded upon return of the board in good shape at the end of the year. Access this specific course kit: https://art-kits.co.uk/uwe-architecture

Computers: 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.

Most students find it beneficial to purchase a laptop. UWE Bristol licenses many specialist software packages for use on personal laptops for the duration of your course. If you're struggling to meet the financial demands of your course, please contact the Student Money Service team for advice and guidance.

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

The core software used in your course includes:

- Adobe Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign)
- AutoCAD
- SketchUp Pro+ VRay
- Rhino + VRay + Grasshopper3D
- Escapee
- Revit (+ Grasshopper WIP or Dynamo)
- Twinmotion

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

- Windows 10 64-bit operating system
- For Year 1: i5 or Ryzen 3 processor, 8GB memory, 256GB solid state storage
- By the start of year 2 you will need: i7 or Ryzen 3 processor, 16GB memory, 512GB solid state storage 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.

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:

Allison Dutoit - allison2.dutoit@uwe.ac.uk
Elahe Karimnia – elahe.karimnia@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: Autumn 2026 **Last updated:** Spring 2026