

Study architecture, building and planning in the UK

Where can I study architecture, building and planning?

There are 68 architecture schools to choose from in the UK.¹ You'll also find a wide range of courses in related subjects, from building and landscape and garden design to urban, rural, and regional planning – everything you need to prepare for a career in construction and design with international relevance.

What do architects, builders and planners do?

Architects design the plans used to create buildings — from skyscrapers and social housing to historic renovations — ensuring they are functional, safe and visually appealing. Their work often includes using CAD software, collaborating with planners, managing budgets, overseeing construction, and selecting materials.

Planners coordinate building projects, making sure designs comply with local laws and regulations. Builders carry out the physical construction, assembling materials to bring designs to life.

What is the application process?

To be eligible for an architecture, building or planning degree, you generally need three A levels with grades AAB for the most popular courses. Qualifications in mathematics, science and art and design – alongside strong writing and drawing skills – are beneficial but not essential. The typical requirement for International Baccalaureate is 32 points, with IELTS usually 6.5 overall, and no lower than 6.0 in any one component.

What is the course structure?

It typically takes seven years to qualify as an architect in the UK, combining five years of study with two years of practical training.

¹ [Architects Registration Board, 2025](#)

Part 1 is usually a BA or BSc in Architecture, taking three years to complete. This is followed by Stage 1 practical experience — with 12 months of supervised work in an architectural studio or related role.

Part 2 is a two-year Master's or Diploma in Architecture that deepens your knowledge and prepares you for professional practice. You'll then complete Stage 2 practical experience, another year of supervised work, making you eligible to sit the Part 3 exam.

Passing Part 3 qualifies you for registration as an architect and enables you to gain chartered status — where you're officially registered with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and may also become a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), confirming your professional status and allowing you to legally call yourself an architect in the UK.

What will I study?

Architecture, building and planning degrees in the UK cover a broad mix of design theory, construction technology, structural engineering, environmental design, and professional practice. You'll explore how the built environment shapes human experience, while developing technical and creative skills through model-making, digital design, studio work and site analysis. Planning degrees often focus on urban theory, sustainability, policy, transport and land use, giving you a systems-level understanding of how cities and regions evolve.

Why is the UK a good choice to study architecture, building and planning?

The UK has an exceptional heritage when it comes to building – from architecture to planning and construction – and that expertise continues to shape the built environment in the UK and around the world.

With an architecture sector that contributes £4bn in UK revenue alone,² and a construction sector valued at £138bn,³ the breadth of expertise and projects means you'll have access to a strong professional network as you progress.

You'll be studying in a culture that celebrates cutting-edge design, before graduating with a respected qualification recognised in many parts of the world.

Are there any scholarships for studying architecture?

² [Creative Industries Council, 2025](#)

³ [UK Government, 2025](#)

There are often funding options available for international students who want to study architecture in the UK. These range from part-funding, for example paying part of your fees, to full-funding which covers programme fees, living expenses, and return flights to the UK.

You can search our database of scholarships at study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships-funding and check with individual university websites for institution-specific opportunities.

What are my work options after I graduate?

Architect roles are available across the public and private sectors, from small practices to large firms. You might specialise in a sector like retail or manufacturing, move into teaching or research, or work independently as a consultant.

Starting salaries average around £20,000, and many junior roles offer structured training and professional development, including support to become chartered.

The UK's Graduate route allows international students to apply to stay in the UK and work, or look for work, upon graduation. International students who have successfully completed an undergraduate, master's degree or PhD have the option to apply to stay in the UK for an agreed period, following their studies. The Graduate route does not require you to secure sponsorship.

To find out more about studying architecture, building and planning in the UK and to find a course, visit study-uk.britishcouncil.org