

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

MRes Architecture

Final award	<i>MRes</i>
Intermediate awards available	<i>PGCert, PG Dip.</i>
Mode of delivery	<i>UEL on campus</i>
Details of professional body accreditation	<i>N/A</i>
Relevant QAA Benchmark statements	<i>N/A</i>
UEL Academic School	<i>Architecture, Computing and Engineering</i>
Date specification last updated	<i>February 2017</i>

Alternative locations for studying this programme

Location	Which elements?	Taught by UEL staff	Taught by local staff	Method of Delivery
<i>N/A</i>				
<i>N/A</i>				

The summary - Programme advertising leaflet

Programme content: MRes Architecture

Built environment professionals require sophisticated linguistic ability to articulate design, policy and strategic ideas to a number of different audiences: authorities, clients, peers, juries, in some cases review panels, commissions and even courts. The benefits of being taught rigorous techniques of research, language structure, editing and articulating propositions are huge. The ability for practitioners to write eloquently and persuasively, with intellectual rigour, to publication standard is clearly desirable.

MRes Architecture: is aimed at working professionals, but is equally a means for practitioners seeking new employment pathways or re-entry to the job market, to improve their skills base in critical thinking and writing - both vital to successful practice. The compact attendance commitment and flexibility of tutorial engagement within the **Production of Place** module is specifically aimed at working professionals and as such fits within their practice, providing a blended learning part time module.

The programme will offer a critical perspective on the development of cities, challenging conventional orthodoxies with regard to growth and critiquing concepts such as 'regeneration' and 'sustainability'. The area of study will focus on London's Docklands from the 1980s through to the developments associated with the London 2012 Olympics. It will contrast the roll-out of neo-liberal policies with the impact on social justice and offer lessons for cities around the UK and internationally.

MRes Architecture

- a taught credit based programme leading towards a higher research degree
- a critical programme which challenges conventional orthodoxies about cities, using London case studies such as Docklands to derive lessons with international relevance
- a compact programme which allows student/professionals the freedom to continue in employment whilst pursuing their studies with a one day per week attendance.
- a responsive online platform for idea development, critical feedback and resource sharing across the 60 credit modules: *'the Production of Place'* and *'Thesis'*
- has the option of intermediate awards at certificate and diploma level for students who do not wish to, or are unable to, complete the programme
- provides the flexibility to pay for modules on an individual basis

Entry requirements

Applicants are normally expected to hold a first degree in a professionally accredited architecture or built environment qualification. In the case of non 'Built Environment' graduates some relevant experience or a substantial element of text based study should involve architecture or place based subjects. A candidate with an architecture background will have a good pass at Diploma/RIBA part 2, with RIBA part 3 qualification is an advantage.

The applicants should hold a British award classification of no less than a lower second class honours (2:2). Alternatively, a degree qualification of a standard equivalent from a recognised university outside the U.K is expected.

Applicants having appropriate professional experience will be considered if they are able to provide a satisfactory outcome based on the process of Assessment of Experiential Learning (AEL).

Applicants whose first language is not English, and their first degree is not from a University where English is the official teaching language, need to supply evidence of proficiency in English equivalent to IELTS 6.5 or TOEFL 250/600.

Students that apply to enter stages of the programme may be admitted through normal Accreditation of Experiential Learning (AEL) or Accreditation of Certificated Learning (ACL) processes, or through an approved articulation agreement. Therefore such applicants must be able to demonstrate and evidence that they have the required learning outcomes as listed in the modules for which they are seeking exemption.

In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, the University's English Language requirements as detailed on the website at time of application must be met – see

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/international/application/english-language-requirements/>

At UEL we are committed to working together to build a learning community founded on equality of opportunity – a learning community which celebrates the rich diversity of our student and staff populations. Discriminatory behaviour has no place in our community and will not be tolerated. Within a spirit of respecting difference, our equality and diversity policies promise fair treatment and equality of opportunity for all. In pursuing this aim, we want people applying for a place at UEL to feel valued and know that the process and experience will be transparent and fair and no one will be refused access on the grounds of any protected characteristic stated in the Equality Act 2010.

Programme structure

The programme is available one year full time, or two years part time, with part-time students undertaking the 'Critical Writing' and 'Critical Studies' modules in Semesters A and B or the first year, during the second year the 'Production of Place' module in Semester A and B followed by the Thesis.

The programme is modular in construction and consists of four core (compulsory) modules.

Learning environment

The teaching year is divided into two semesters of equal length, plus the Summer of supervised self study for the thesis. A typical student registered in a full-time attendance mode will study the equivalent of a 60 credits across two modules per semester, together with the advanced independent research module (Thesis), agreed with a chosen supervisor during Semester B - completed at the end of the Summer study period.

The minimum period for completion of the MRes is 1 calendar year full-time. Students will have full access to UEL's Architecture lecture programme, library, learning resources and studio spaces. Seminars will be held within the Architecture studios seminar spaces.

The 'Production of Place' module has an integral European workshop will be held in Semester B and will require a minimum of five days attendance in a European city, where workspace and dedicated events will be provided.

The learning environment consists of:

- a series of lectures and seminars on writing skills and research methodologies at M level
- a lecture programme on contextualising critical architectural practice in relation to the city
- tutorials and group seminars on theorising and investigating the modern city
- field trips focussing on regeneration/place based critique
- web based tutorial and group collaboration during study periods

Assessment

The focus on iterative learning and web based interaction will support a wide variety of learner-types through an interactive process of skills acquisition and application, with the study skills modules supporting and reinforcing the development of short investigative pieces of original research that builds the content of the final thesis.

All assessments are conducted, arranged and managed in compliance with UEL policies. All course work and examinations are internally moderated at UEL before they are sent to the relevant external examiner. At the end of each academic year, each external examiner is requested to submit an end of year report. It is proposed to appoint a new external examiner with recognised standing in the field of architectural research.

At the end of each semester there is an assessment board for the programmes, which are delivered at UEL, which is chaired by a senior member of staff and attended by all the external examiners, module leaders, and programme leaders. The outcome of the assessment board is then fed through the School's (ACE) Award Board – where appropriate credits and awards are made.

Prior to each Assessment Board the external examiners are able to observe a sample of all marked assessment tasks submitted by students. The sample size is in accordance with UEL's policy and complies with the Assessment Policy. All students' work (except the Final Research Thesis) is anonymously marked and a sample second marked in accordance with the

Assessment Policy. Feedback on assessments will be provided in line with UEL Assessment Policy (<http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/assessmentpolicy.htm>).

Students with disabilities and/or particular learning needs should discuss assessments with the Programme Leader to ensure they are able to fully engage with all assessment within the programme.

Relevance to work/profession

The programme is suitable for practitioners who wish to develop critical writing and thinking skills, to shift their architectural practice into and urban scale, to extend their understanding of contemporary regeneration to a European context, or to empower them within their current employment marketplace to overcome cultural impediments such as glass ceilings for women in practice.

The teaching staff are a team of independent but like minded professionals and academics who bring a critical perspective to urban discourse that comes from both academic research, social policy development and the practice of architecture and urban regeneration.

The European Workshop is an opportunity to experience working strategically on live urban projects with influential collaborators from practice, communities and administrations that are stakeholders in the project.

Any practitioner contemplating a part time or full time career in teaching would benefit from this course, and existing academic staff on fractional contracts within built environment programmes will benefit from a sound academic writing qualification valued by Universities.

Dissertation/project work

The **MRes Architecture** provides an opportunity to develop original ideas on the critical operation of cities, their development and regeneration, both individually and as part of research teams. Supported by focussed research skills teaching, the student will be enabled to define, organise and execute original urban research.

On-going assignments and outputs allow for critical and stimulating feedback and learning opportunities that provide the substance of the final thesis.

Added value

*As a 12 month programme, the **MRes Architecture** provides an opportunity for original intellectual enquiry to be develop in collaboration with leading figures in architecture based research in a compressed and practice compatible format. The use of online contact structures allows for only one day work release during full time study mode.*

Your future career

An MRes is a serious qualification that denotes the holders ability to plan and execute original and relevant critical thinking and writing. Communication within the practices around the 'built environment' field is intrinsic, and the skill to write and speak persuasively and with authority, backed up by rigorously prepared research is fundamental to progression and career management. In an industry notorious for glass ceilings impeding the advancement of women practitioners, the confidence to use purposeful insights delivered in a precise way is an effective tool to equalise the built environment workplace.

How we support you

Research is an individual pursuit, however the subject of the City requires an engagement with complex social and interpersonal relations. The **MRes Architecture** provides individual focus with group working, debate, presentation and workshops, managed carefully to bring the dynamics of both reflection and interaction successfully together.

The University of East London and the School of Architecture, Computing and Engineering have in place a number of mechanisms to support students throughout their studies. A personal tutor is allocated to each student at the start of the programme. The personal tutor is available to help you in your academic progress as well as in any general issues that you might face during your studies. An appropriate supervisor is also allocated to every student taking the thesis module to provide support and knowledge throughout the project duration.

For each module there is a module leader who can help with any issues around that module. They will facilitate a module based online forum to share ongoing ideas, resources and feedback. There is also a programme leader to help with any issues students might have with the programme. Counsellors are also available for consultation through the student services.

On enrolment, you will be provided with introductory materials on the use of the UEL Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and UEL Direct.

During your studies, you will be supported by academic, support and technical staff from your academic school.

Bonus factors

Working with internationally recognised supervisors who combine critical research and practice. Understanding the relationship between political, social, architectural and economic drivers that lay behind the regeneration of European cities.

Work and network with leading European practitioners in a direct engagement with urban development projects in London and mainland Europe.

Be part of a unique critical writing programme that empowers practitioners interested in architecture, planning, critical social history and urban geography.

Programme aims and learning outcomes

What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give the opportunity to enhance the students' current thinking, writing and communication skills to a level suitable to commence doctoral study. The precision that this requires is an asset in the professional marketplace, and by focussing the themes of urban regeneration and the political mechanisms of the city, the course delivers invaluable insights into urban practice.

Through active participation in the course, students will:

- *Acquire critical insights and practical experiences of urban regeneration in its widest sense.*
- *Develop a rigorous personal research methodology*
- *Learn to express ideas critically, and to support/develop them through precise research.*
- *Develop a balance between professional practice skills and acute critical thinking.*
- *Communicate advanced and critical concepts to a wide, public audience.*

What will you learn?

Knowledge

- A comprehensive understanding of the political, economic, social and historic drivers behind modern urban regeneration
- An in-depth understanding of how to structure original, supported and critical writing
- Understanding the importance of contextualising urban regeneration strategies and their consequences within a wider European context

Thinking skills

- Evaluate complex information in varied formats to structure a critical argument
- Apply appropriate research methods to conduct research in complex urban situations
- Critically evaluate current methods, tools and techniques employed in the research and writing on contemporary cities

Subject-Based Practical skills

- Apply relevant theories to the development of original and critical understanding of urban situations
- Contextualise architectural and urban planning concepts through a demonstrable awareness of their effect and consequences
- Understand 'Place' as a complex physical manifestation of political, economic, social, environmental and architectural influences
- Deliver complex ideas persuasively and with authority

Skills for life and work (general skills)

- Autonomously perform research on contemporary architectural and urban issues
- Write a literature review in a scholarly style appropriate to critical writing and dissertations at Masters level
- Plan and successfully deliver an original piece of critical writing that will be considered for publication
- Demonstrate the ability to work effectively autonomously or in a group based situation
- Manage learning, own development and time management

The programme structure

Introduction

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 3 equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 4 equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 5 equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 6 equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 7 equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

Credit rating

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 180 credits.

Typical duration

The duration of this programme is one calendar year full-time if enrolment is in September, and two calendar years part-time. It is possible to move from full-time to part-time study and vice-versa to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

How the teaching year is divided

The teaching year is divided into two semesters of roughly equal length, plus the summer period. A typical student registered in a full-time attendance mode will study the equivalent of 60 credits per semester, and a typical student registered in a part-time attendance mode will study one module per semester.

The thesis may be undertaken during the summer period.

What you will study when

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Distance Learning (Y/N)	Credit	Status*
7	AR7301	Critical Writing (Semester A)	N	30	Core
7	AR7302	Critical Studies (Semester B)	N	30	Core
7	AR7303	Reading the Neoliberal City (Semester A+B)	N	60	Core
7	AR7304	Thesis (Summer period)	N	60	Core

Students must complete 180 credits in one year for a full time award. In part time mode students must complete 60 credits in year one, and the 120 credits allocated to the 'Production of Place' module and the research thesis module in year two.

**Please Note - A core module for a programme is a module which a student must have passed (i.e. been awarded credit) in order to achieve the relevant named award. An optional module for a programme is a module selected from a range of modules available on the programme.*

Requirements for gaining an award

In order to gain a Postgraduate Certificate, you will need to obtain 60 credits at Level 7.

In order to gain a Postgraduate Diploma, you will need to obtain 120 credits at Level 7.

In order to obtain a Masters, you will need to obtain 180 credits at Level 7. These credits will include two 30 credit level 7 core modules of advanced writing skills, a 60 credit subject specific study module ('The Production of Place') and a 60 credit independent research module culminating in a research thesis.

Masters Award Classification

Where a student is eligible for an Masters award then the award classification is determined by calculating the credit-weighted arithmetic mean of all marks on the current enrolment and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification:

70% - 100%	Distinction
60%- 69%	Merit
50% - 59%	Pass
0% - 49%	Not passed

Further information

- The UEL web site (<http://www.uel.ac.uk>)
- The student handbook
- Module study guides
- UEL Manual of General Regulations (<http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/policies/manual/>)
- UEL Quality Manual (<http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/policies/qualitymanual/>)
- School web pages(<http://www.uel.ac.uk/ace/>)

Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning

Key teaching and learning methods:

Knowledge is developed through

- Guided reading
- Knowledge-based activities with feedback
- Online discussions and activities

Thinking skills are developed through

- Reflective activities with feedback
- Collaborative workshops and presentations
- Online discussions and activities

Practical skills are developed through

- Writing activities with feedback
- Research skills-based activities with feedback
- Regular group debate

Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through

- the demands of the study medium (i.e. research methodologies)
- Planning activities with feedback
- Critical judgement about content, relevance and originality of ideas and an understanding of the subject

Assessment

The assessment methods that are used on the **MRes Architecture: *Critical Cities*** programme:

Knowledge is assessed by

- Coursework
- Essays
- Case Studies

Thinking skills are assessed by

- Coursework
- Project work

Practical skills are assessed by

- Coursework
- Writing Portfolio completion

Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by

- Project work
- Group work

How we assure the quality of this programme

Before this programme started

Before this programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information, programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the Quality and Standards Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the quality assurance procedures.

The role of external examiners

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

The external examiner reports for this programme are located on the UEL virtual learning environment (Moodle) on the school notice board under the section entitled 'External Examiner Reports & Responses'. You can also view a list of the external examiners for the UEL School by clicking on the link below.

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminersystem/currentexaminers/>

Listening to the views of students

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

- *Module evaluations online*
- *Student representation on programme committees (meeting 3 times a year)*
- *Student/Staff consultative committee (meeting 3 times a year)*

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- *circulating the minutes of the programme committee*
- *providing details on the online programme notice board*
- *Individual responses to students as required*
- *Postings on our online discussion forums*

Listening to the views of others

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards)
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate)
- student feedback

