PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (Taught Postgraduate)	

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MSc
4	**Programme Title**	Advanced Architectural Design: Architecture and Cities (2 years)
5	**Programme Code**	5384F
6	**Programme Accreditation**	n/a
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	n/a
8	**FHEQ Level**	7
9	**Last updated**	July 2021

10 Programme Aims

1. Develop the ability to generate complex design proposals showing understanding of current architectural issues, originality in the application of subject knowledge and, where appropriate, to test new hypotheses and speculations;
2. Develop the ability to evaluate and apply a comprehensive range of visual, oral and written media to test, analyse, critically appraise and explain design proposals;
3. Develop an ability to evaluate materials, processes and techniques that apply to complex architectural designs and building construction, and to integrate these into practicable design proposals;
4. Develop a critical understanding of how knowledge is advanced through research to produce clear, logically argued and original written work relating to architectural culture, theory and design;
5. Develop problem solving skills, professional judgment, and ability to take the initiative and make appropriate decisions in complex and unpredictable circumstances;
6. Develop an ability to identify individual learning needs;
7. To meet the criteria for Postgraduate Diploma and level 7 qualifications as laid down in the FHEQ, as well as complying with University policy and the QAA Quality Code.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills in all areas of Advanced Architectural Design.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the route students should:

A1. Demonstrate understanding and critical thinking of selected aspects of architecture and cities as a form of action concerned with managing and creating space and place.
A2. Demonstrate an understanding of the conflicts and complexities of the interplay between the various actors and agencies taking part in architecture and cities, and a systematic, research driven approach to addressing issues and problems of the design of space and place.
A3. Demonstrate a critical understanding of architectural theory and make appropriate connections between theory and practice.

A4. Demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding of the role of architectural design in the built environment.
A5. Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of the inter-relationship between people, buildings, landscape and the environment and an understanding of the need to relate buildings and the spaces between them to human needs and scale.
A6. Knowledge of urban design, planning and the skills involved in the planning process
A7. Understanding of the profession of architecture and the role of the architect in society, in particular in preparing briefs that take account of social factors.
A8. Knowledge of physical problems and technologies and the function of buildings so as to provide them with internal conditions of comfort and protection against the climate

Teaching and Learning Methods

Acquisition of knowledge and understanding is achieved through a combination of lectures, seminars, study visits, case studies, debates, reviews and studio based tutorials. Students are expected to augment the formal teaching sessions and readings with independent observation, analysis and reading.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment methods and their relation to learning outcomes are specified in each individual module outline. Knowledge and understanding is assessed through a combination of unseen examinations and by various forms of coursework – essays, case studies, dissertations, student presentations and design project work.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the route students should be able to:

B1. Define and critically analyse problems effectively and appropriately drawing on current research and knowledge
B2. Effectively collect, synthesise and utilise evidence and information
B3. Articulate reasoned arguments, drawing on a range of information sources
B4. Apply research skills and experience in the context of the school's research interests
B5. Show an ability to critically analyse the socio-spatial context of buildings
B6. Understand the histories and theories of architecture and the related arts, technologies and human sciences
B7. Understand the methods of investigation and preparation of the brief for a design project

Teaching and Learning Methods

The development of intellectual skills is achieved through a combination of lectures, seminars, study visits, case studies, debates, reviews and studio based tutorials. Studio design projects provide opportunities for students to develop their intellectual skills through the awareness, evaluation and application of architectural knowledge. Students are expected to augment the formal teaching sessions and readings with independent observation, analysis and reading and through informal discussion and debate with their peers.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment methods and their relation to learning outcomes are specified in each individual module outline. Intellectual skills are generally assessed in an integrative way through various forms of design project work, and through written work.

Practical Skills

On completing the route students should be able to:

C1. deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments and communicate conclusions and ideas to a range of audiences
C2. Use self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and the ability to act autonomously and at a professional level
C3. Recognize the importance of continuing to advance their knowledge, understanding and skills
C4. Create architectural designs that satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements
C5. Understand structural design, constructional and engineering problems associated with building design
C6.Have the necessary design skills to meet building users' requirements within the constraints imposed by cost factors and building regulations.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The development of practical skills is developed through lectures, seminars, and workshops, together with the integrative environment of the design studio through student reviews and presentations. Students are expected to augment the formal teaching sessions and readings with independent observation, analysis and reading.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment methods and their relation to learning outcomes are specified in each individual module outline. Practical skills are mainly assessed in an integrative way through various forms of design project work and through written essays / submissions.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1. Utilize a range of disciplinary theories and approaches in complex problem solving and decision making
D2. Communicate effectively through the use of visual, verbal and written methods and through appropriate media including sketching, modelling, digital and electronic techniques
D3. Work effectively in groups and as individuals
D4. Identify and manage individual learning needs
D5. Demonstrate self-direction, originality and creativity in tackling and solving problems
D6. Exercise initiative and personal responsibility
D7. Demonstrate academic writing skills

Teaching and Learning Methods

Formal teaching of key skills is through the lectures and seminars of the design research methods module. Verbal communication skills are developed through student participation in design reviews, student presentations and seminars. Visual communication skills are developed through iterative application in design project work. Computer based skills including CAD modelling are developed through the project work. Writing skills are developed though the production of reports and essays. Team working skills are developed through participation in design projects, and self-direction and initiative are encouraged through an emphasis on student centred learning where appropriate. The design thesis project or dissertation also plays an important role in the development of key skills for example through the design and planning of the research, literature search and review and conducting the research and reporting the results.

Assessment Strategy

Key and transferable skills, particularly those requiring verbal and graphic communication, are usually assessed holistically as part of the design project work. Writing skills are assessed through essays, dissertations and unseen examinations. The skills of personal time management, self-direction and independent learning are an essential component of studio design culture.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The Architecture and Cities (2 year) route consists of 240 credits. The first year is made up of 120 credits from the Architecture and Cities (1 year) route. The second year of the route is made up of 120 credits from the RIBA accredited MArch stage 5 programme.

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

The Architecture and Cities (two year) route makes use of existing modules from two programmes: the first two semesters of the Architecture and Cities (one year) route, and the first year of our two year MArch programme. The first year of the Architecture and Cities route is conceived as a foundational design year for students, and is focussed on design in transcultural urban contexts. The second year of the programme enables students to focus on particular design interests, and articulate their own architectural standpoint in a more mature and developed way, and is based in a European city. It focuses on working between cultures in a more specific way, as well as engaging with more material, and environmental issues. The programme is aimed at students who want a longer course of study but are not looking for UK professional accreditation.

During the first year the route encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of varieties of identity in cities. Students conduct detailed studies of particular urban communities, concentrating on determining strategies of appropriate development for specific urban sites. In each of the semesters of the course, developing projects presuppose devising community based urban design frameworks for selected sites that broadly consider the surrounding context. In each semester, holistic design frameworks articulating the potential character and quality of the environment initiated by the proposed project support reasonably complex building designs.

The course challenges students' preconceived notions of architecture, urban design and the city, as well as their ingrained habits of architectural conceptualization and representation. In the course, individual buildings are considered as component parts of cities, rather than as isolated objects within it. As such, tendencies to over-emphasise buildings as spectacular image, interesting form, or virtuosic technological novelty are counter-balanced by the urban, social, and tectonic qualities of projects. Within the expanded field of the city, urban buildings are emphasised as socio-cultural elements rather than primarily as abstract objects of aesthetic (or visual) appreciation.

Building on the key features of the Architecture and Cities (one year) route, in year two of the Architecture and Cities route there are core *Design* modules, which are organised into projects taken over the course of the two semesters. Although the theme and content of the design projects change regularly, Semester 1 aims to develop a critical awareness of a range of contemporary architectural issues and encourages students to research, develop, test, and articulate their own particular architectural standpoint. There is an emphasis on developing an awareness of the social, political and cultural context of design and on brief-making that responds appropriately to client needs through rigorous research and analysis. Design projects also seek to develop graphic skills and encourage an imaginative approach to design and its representation. Design projects will involve both group and individual work and will engage students in a creative dialogue with staff and their peers.

During Semester 2, design projects explore a material and practical imagination. Students are encouraged to engage with materiality and making, and through the design of architectural fragments and details demonstrate how these inform wider architectural ideas, whether formal, tectonic or theoretical. The design project integrates an awareness of issues related to technology and the environment. It engages students with some of the key design skills and knowledge that are necessary for the successful design of a major building project. These skills extend to the detailed declaration of the tectonic (including technical and legislative issues) and material aspects of proposed designs.

The design studio is underpinned and informed by related modules that aim to support the design process and to widen and deepen students understanding of the broader context of architecture. Year 2 aims to give a broad survey of contemporary theoretical and cultural issues in architecture and situates design practice within contemporary social, economic, political and historical debates.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

Programme Regulations 25-26

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available here.

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available here.

Accreditation reports
N/A

Additional mechanisms
N/A

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available here.

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/

Degree Programme and University Regulations: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.