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Dear Future Architecture Student!

This is a document to assist you in preparing a portfolio as part of the application to studying architecture at the University of Lincoln. This will be useful for both undergraduate and post-graduate study. I have also included the answers to some frequently asked questions, that are, well, frequently asked! Also included is an optional portfolio building project that you may want to do for your portfolio or in between applying for architecture and beginning study in September.

BArch Architecture, Master of Architecture and the Part 3 are all accredited and validated by the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) ARB (Architecture Registration Board).

I am the programme leader and happy to answer any questions. Please email me at bgriffin@lincoln.ac.uk . If you would like to visit again please do feel free. We have regular student presentations that you may want to watch and I am more than happy for you to come to those if you would like to.

Kind regards,

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Frequently asked questions!

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Q: Do you offer part time and full time study?

A: Yes we do. Part time study offers students a little more flexibility in timetables and deadlines. It also gives the student opportunity to be working in practice and achieving the qualifications to be an architect. Some students are sponsored by their employer to study. It does take longer however, usually 5 years rather than 3 for BArch.

Q: What needs to be included in the portfolio?

A: Everything creative! Anything that demonstrates your skills to us, as well as communicating to us about your individual personality and interests. Further information is available to support you in the portfolio preparation.

Q: How many times a week do students see their tutors?

A: All our students have 2 two and a half hour sessions a week with the studio tutor. This is where students get one to one feedback every week about their work. They also have two pastoral care tutor meetings a week so we can ensure all our students are happy and healthy. We have lectures in architectural design, technology and construction, history and theory in four separate lectures. We also provide technical training in CAD, model making and hand drawing, the skills then applied to the studio projects. We are very excited to include for the first time this year a true engagement with industry through me and our staff. This includes working with other departments in the University (computer science, games designers, history, psychology to name a few). This also includes the City Council who we will do workshops with exploring the heritage of our beautiful city, Lincoln and treating it as a testbed to understand architectural and cultural history (I can't wait for this as this is what I do when I have a architectural project in the city! A time to investigate). Also this year for the first time the students will visit the Wren Library in the Cathedral and look at unique artefacts and drawings of the cathedral to help them understand the different ages of architecture embedded within it.

We are strong believers in mentoring and this extends beyond students and staff. We also work with our students and alumni to support students in the undergraduate as well as providing valid experience for students in the post graduate in being mentors.

We also believe that students being able to practically apply their learning through live projects, interactions with professionals, projects that specifically ask them to apply their new skills develops our students into confident, skilled and articulate future architects!

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So what do you learn/do/get from studying architecture

In addition to learning how to respond to site, environment and the social and cultural context you learn so much more!

This year we have secured a site on campus where we are running live construction sites. Year 1 and 2 students have time doing practical hands on training this year!

Year 1 –

Learning skills and applying them through projects.

Learning through making architecture.

Theory – why am I doing this?

Students improve interpersonal skills– get confident through crits

Designing, making and building 1 to 1 scale architecture

Building and building site visits

Model making and drawing skills (both hand drawing and computer aided design)

Architectural design, structural and environmental design

Concept through to detailed design

Year 2 –

Live projects, working with real clients

There is a focus on sustainable design embedded within design

Introduction to profession through careers week

Some mentoring roles with year 1

Building and building site visits

Architectural design, structural and environmental design

Concept through to detailed design

Year 3 –

Students define their own interests and pick studios

RIBA mentorship scheme

Engaging with industry and specialist consultants about your work

Building and building site visits

Architectural design, structural and environmental design

Concept through to detailed design

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Portfolios

We don't have a limitation on the size for the portfolio that you send us. We know that if you are applying to numerous schools of architecture you may be asked for a number of different formats therefore, for us I would suggest that if you already have a portfolio prepared that addresses the guidance below please send it to us. Portfolios we usually receive are between 7 and 15 pieces of work. We will accept your portfolio in the following formats:

- PDF attached to email.
- PDF or Jpegs uploaded to a Dropbox folder you share with us.
- A link to your online portfolio.

The main purpose of the portfolio for us to see what makes you an individual and what your interests and abilities are.

The portfolio should demonstrate your creative and technical skills by showing a variety of work.

- For students applying for BArch Architecture (Part 1) the portfolio should include variety of types of projects; drawing, graphic design, illustration, technical drawing, product design etc.
- For students applying for Master of Architecture (Part 2) the portfolio should show undergraduate work and examples of work in which you have had direct involvement with in architectural practice.

The portfolio should demonstrate the development of an idea and not just the finished work.

- For students applying for BArch Architecture showing the process of how a piece of design is first conceptualised and then how the conceptual work is used to inform the final outcome is important to show. We want to see your creative thinking.
- For students applying for Master of Architecture the portfolio should demonstrate how your work from undergraduate was conceptualised, site investigation, design process, brief, design resolution, plans, sections, elevations, visualisations, models, technical and environmental resolution.

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The portfolio should communicate your ideas successfully through visual medium

- Make sure that you do not confuse the presentation with over complicated graphical presentation. Keep it simple.
- Organise projects in your portfolio chronologically starting with the earliest work and finish with the projects/pieces of work that you feel are most comprehensive and /or successful. Consider how assessors will view the portfolio in its entirety.
- Keep text to a minimum. A couple of sentences that describe a project or piece of work will suffice. Tell the story as much as possible visually. Keep font size small but readable.
- Do not oversize images resulting in pixelisation. This reduces the overall quality of how the work looks and the message you are sending.
- Where necessary put multiple images on a page. However where appropriate show the importance of a particular piece of work by making it bigger. For example development work should be shown in small blocks, whilst the finished piece may take up half of that page.
- Make sure that if you are photographing models that you light them well and create an appropriate plain backdrop.
- Make sure that on one page your name appears. It doesn't need to be on every page.
- If you wish to show your talent as a photographer be really selective and keep the photography presentation to one or two pages, explain the technical aspects of the photography to demonstrate that your interest in technical aspects of photography is more than just using the camera.
- You may wish to produce an online portfolio or physical portfolio. All of this information is still relevant.

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Personal Statements

The personal statement should allow us to understand you as an individual. For both undergraduate and post-graduate study there are common areas that you should address.

- Introduce yourself. Who are you and what are you currently doing?
- Contextualise yourself. Why are you interested in architecture and why do you want to study architecture?
- Further information on your current study and additional creative experience. For applicants to Part 1 (BArch) you should further detail on your creative development both in school and in your own time. For those of you who have already completed Part 1 you can speak about areas of interest in your undergraduate study and your year out experience.
- You should also describe how you have been involved in team work and group organisations or responsibilities involving organisation of other individuals.
- Importantly we want to know what makes you an individual, your personal interests and passions relating to architecture, design and creativity.

Optional Architecture portfolio project

If you don't have a portfolio ready then you could undertake this project and submit it as an alternative.

This is an optional project you can make as big or small as you like. The brief is very open but gives you some ideas about how you can begin to build a body of reference material to kick-start your life as an architecture student and expand your portfolio of work....

'I am convinced that a good building must be capable of absorbing traces of human life and taking on a specific richness... I think of the patina of age on materials, of innumerable small scratches on surfaces, of varnish that has grown dull and brittle, and edges polished by use'.

Peter Zumthor - Architect

Using this quote as a starting point document the city you live in, the buildings you like and the home you inhabit. By looking more closely at the world around you, how it is made, the materials it is made from and the activities that occur within that space you will begin to engage in the world you will be designing in the future.

You can watch how people move through streets or internal spaces. Try to discover why people use space in certain ways through a sort of interrogation through observation. Draw those spaces and specifically, try to extract what makes those spaces special. Is it the afternoon light streaming through a window? Draw the pattern of light and how it may change that space. Is it the softness of the surface? Then describe its softness in a short film. Is there a corner in your town where people always

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seem to gather? Why is this? Are there buildings that make you feel small? How do they do that? Have you found a place where there is real connection between inside and outside space? Think about how you might document these phenomena. When you begin to form a personal description of how you see the world begin to think how these special discoveries could inform how you might design. Think light, surface, materials, gatherings, structure, environment and nature.

The documentation of place can take any form. It is personal to you. Drawing, photography, film, models. Try to build a resource for yourself. This could be in the form of note books or even a website or blog. This can be a project that you can include in your portfolio when applying to the BArch programme to include with all your other work. Any questions please email me!

Useful websites

A great portfolio website is www.behance.net. You can upload an archive of work and build it over time so that it becomes an online resource accessible from anywhere. Start building it today!

Hope this helps. If you have any questions or would like me to look through your portfolio once you have taken this advise please contact me at bgriffin@lincoln.ac.uk

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