

Applying for architecture

Entry Requirements

Many subjects studied at school and college are relevant to architecture giving you the flexibility to choose the subjects you are strongest in and enjoy. Ideally you should have gained a broad secondary education encompassing a mixture of arts and sciences. Although it is not always necessary to study art, you should enjoy drawing freehand and have an interest in design and making 3D work: most schools will require you to present a portfolio at interview.

Schools of architecture will express their offer in terms of the UCAS tariffs, but typically you will need at least two subjects at A level or one A and two AS levels. In addition you must generally have passed at least five GCSEs which normally include English Language and Mathematics.

Many schools of architecture also recognise other further education qualifications. If you are a mature student it is worth remembering that even if you don't possess the usual admissions requirements most schools are happy to assess a mature student on other grounds, especially your portfolio.

The RIBA currently validates, and the ARB prescribes, courses at over 40 schools of architecture in the UK. The entry requirements and the format of the courses vary from school to school. You are advised to contact individual schools of architecture to ascertain their specific entry requirements, as well as their course structure. That way you will be able to find out which schools are most suitable for you to apply to, and which schools have the greatest appeal.

Once you have applied, you may or may not be invited for interview. Many schools of architecture ask to see a portfolio of work. However, some schools make conditional offers on the basis of the information you include on your UCAS form.

This is most likely to be the case when your A level subjects are seen to be particularly relevant. In the absence of an interview, an open day is an opportunity for you to find out about the school's approach to architectural education before you make your final decision.

Preparing for interview

At interview university tutors will ask questions and discuss your portfolio with you. This is to help them determine your skills and interests. It is therefore important to have researched the world of architecture and to feel confident and happy talking about the work in your portfolio. Some sample questions might be:

- Why do you want to study architecture?
- Is there a particular architect or specific building that you admire?
- Why do you want to study at this school?

