



LM099 Bachelor of Architecture

Frequently Asked Questions

...about the course

Is the course accredited by the RIAI?

Yes. The BArch course at UL has full accreditation by the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI).

How does the course at UL compare with other Irish courses in architecture?

They are very similar. The BArch course at UL is a five-year undergraduate course, with successful students achieving a Bachelor (Honours) Degree at Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications. Thus, the UL course meets the same expectations and requirements as other RIAI-accredited undergraduate architecture degrees in Ireland.

What is 'Design Studio'?

Design Studio is at the heart of architecture education at UL. As well as the physical place where all subjects are taught, 'Design Studio' is a creative laboratory where learning is developed through experimentation and reflection. Woven into the design studio are courses in structures and construction, history and theory, environmental science, cultural studies and professional practice. Training as an architect engages the student in a process of 'learning by doing' and problem-based learning. All of this work in design studio is further supported by site visits, field trips, visiting lecturers study trips abroad.

Do students spend much time in the architecture school?

The teaching day in the Design Studio runs continuously from 9am to 6pm, five days a week. Architecture is a challenging and very rewarding endeavour, and it requires a student to be creative as well as achieving a high academic standing. The study of architecture is demanding and very exciting. Students report high levels of engagement with a compelling and broad course that includes live projects, community engagement, international lecturers and much more.

Do I have to stay the whole five years?

Yes. To achieve a Bachelor (Honours) Level 8 degree in architecture, the student must stay and successfully complete the full five years of study. However, after the third year of study, taking a 'year-out' from formal study is encouraged. During their year-out, students have the opportunity to gain professional experience and to travel, but mostly simply to grow. At this juncture at the end of third year, studying abroad in a linked recommended university is also possible, as is transferring into another comparable architecture programme to complete the degree.

Are there many exams at the end of each semester?

Design Studio work is reviewed on a periodical basis throughout the semester. Students are expected to synthesise all material produced over the course of the semester into a portfolio for formal assessment at the end of that semester. All other classes are graded through coursework (presentations, essays, tests, drawings, study assignments etc.). Thus, instead of having one exam at the end of the semester, continuous feedback on module work throughout the semester is the norm.

How many students are in one class?

Class sizes average between 35 and 45 students.

Does the UL architecture course offer placements in architectural practices?

A work placement is not part of the UL architecture course. However, we encourage students to work in the profession – with architects, engineers, builders – and with many faculty members well rooted in the profession in Ireland we offer help and advice in finding suitable employment. The academic schedule allows for extended periods of work experience over the summer. A year-out after third year is another option to gain the desired professional exposure, possibly through a combination of work and travel abroad.

...about admission

What are the minimum entry requirements for the course?

Applicants are required to hold at the time of enrolment the established Leaving Certificate (or an approved equivalent) with a minimum of six subjects which must include: Two H5 (Higher Level) grades and Four O6 (Ordinary Level) grades or four H7 (Higher Level) grades. Subjects must include Mathematics, Irish or another language, and English.

What are the required CAO points? Are they likely to change?

In 2025, the CAO points for LM099 were 520. Note: Not all on this points score were offered places. – Architecture remains an attractive subject for study. The points in a given year are to be used as a guideline only, due to various factors these can go up or down each year. Applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements and have the required number of points are eligible applicants.

Do I need a portfolio?

Yes. For entry in Academic Year 2026/2027, all applicants to UL Architecture programme must submit a portfolio as part of the application process. Your portfolio should demonstrate your creativity, design thinking, and technical/manual skills, reflecting your potential for success in the chosen course of study. The portfolio is an opportunity to showcase your creative talents in ways that are difficult to capture in exam results. In addition to your CAO points, we will award up to 200 marks for a successful portfolio. Your portfolio should demonstrate your creativity, design thinking, and technical/manual skills, reflecting your potential for success in the chosen course of study. Your portfolio is a key component of your application, offering an opportunity to express your unique perspective and enthusiasm for design. Please see the Portfolio Guidelines for details.

Do I need to take Art in secondary school?

No, Art is not a required subject.

Do I need CAD or Tech Drawing?

Sketching, architectural drawing and technical drafting is taught immediately in first year, and CAD will be introduced later in the course. Architectural drawing is a specific skill and is neither 'tech drawing' nor CAD. We do not expect students to have prior skills in DCG, Tech Drawing or CAD.

Do I need to take Maths or Physics in secondary school?

Apart from the minimum Maths requirement there is no additional specific requirement for Maths, and Physics is not a required subject. An intuitive understanding of Art, Maths and some science subjects is undeniably helpful and are valuable preparation in logical reasoning and clarity of thought. Structures classes as taught to architecture students at UL but do not include extensive calculations, rather require a clear understanding of the structural logic in a building.

Can you transfer into the course?

Yes. For further details, please see:

<https://www.ul.ie/academic-registry/transferring-another-3rd-level-institution>

What is required for mature applicants?

Applications are particularly welcome from mature candidates (at least 23 years of age on or before January, 1st of the year of enrolment). Each mature application is considered on an individual basis. Academic qualifications, work and life experience, motivation and overall potential for the programme of study are evaluated. All mature candidates must apply through the CAO. Mature applicants are required to attend for interview and to bring material to support their application to that interview.

QQI Entry

Certain QQI Awards are acceptable in fulfilling admission requirements for this programme. For the most up to date information on QQI entry requirements please visit the Central Applications Office (CAO) website (www.cao.ie). For details, please also refer to the www.ul.ie/admissions website.

...about career and profession

Are you a fully qualified architect after five years?

The Building Control Act 2007 introduced registration for architects in the Republic of Ireland, and the RIAI maintains this professional register. According to the RIAI, “The best way to qualify as an architect eligible for RIAI membership and admission to the Register for Architects is to

- get a degree from a recognized school of architecture, followed by
- two years of approved practical experience, and
- an examination in professional practice.

Recognised degree courses in architecture take five years of full-time study. Many students take a year out for practical experience between the third and fourth years. So the whole process, from start to full professional qualification, generally takes seven to nine years.” – Refer to www.riai.ie for further details.

Architecture is more than an industry-driven profession. The architectural education at SAUL equips students with knowledge and abilities widely recognised. This enables students to practice in the profession of architecture or even in related fields nationally and internationally as many architects have done successfully in the past. UL architecture graduates are currently employed nationally and internationally (in Limerick, Dublin, Cork, UK, Berlin, New York, London, Canada, and France).

What jobs can students get after completing the course?

Architecture studies are broad, encompassing technical skills, design, art, history and presentation skills and some graduates move into other areas including teaching, mentoring at university, policymaking or public administration, business or urban design, history, journalism, photography or other arts, furniture or model making, research and writing, or pursue further studies.

A UL Architecture graduate will of course be in a position to start working in an architect's office. This is the path followed by many graduates. An architect's office in private practice can vary in size from a sole practitioner to an office of over 100 employees. Equally, an architect's office in a local authority context can mean that a young graduate is exposed to working across many local authority departments such as planning, transport or policy.

A number of recent UL architecture graduates have sought out alternate paths to practice, i.e. some have chosen to work solely on self-generated projects and design-build projects. Others have chosen to work directly with communities. Others have been employed as teaching assistants and started to pursue an academic career. There is a growing and healthy architectural culture of UL Architecture graduates choosing to stay and find work in both Limerick City and in the Limerick Region.

Bachelor of Architecture

NFQ Level 8 Major Award Honours Bachelor Degree

CAO points history: 520 in 2025 (Not all on this points score were offered places.)

Course code: LM099

Duration: 5 Years

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Queries: www.ul.ie/admissions-askus