

## **BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES (HONOURS) DEGREE PROGRAMME**

The BAS(Hons) is a degree in architecture that pursues advanced vocational and discipline-specific knowledge, skills and competencies related to the design, history, theory, technology, scholarship, and practice of architecture. The course of study extends the base of knowledge through graduate study with emphasis on complexities of architectural design. It is focused on developing creative and critical inquiry, reflective understanding, and cultural, social and technical knowledge in preparation for self-motivated independent learning. The BAS(Hons) fits within a succession of qualifications leading towards professional qualification in architecture. It is a prerequisite qualification for admission into the Master of Architecture (Professional) degree.

These studies occur in a global context of technological innovation and increasing natural disasters, of human resilience and increasing inequity. Understood from a location in the global South, consideration of whose knowledge we produce and acquire, and in whose interests, is key. In this context the public purpose and ethical practice of architecture can make a significant contribution to life.

The BAS(Hons) programme aims to develop a student's ability to: analyse and interpret knowledge critically; engage in critical debate; integrate knowledge of social, political, economic and professional contexts with architectural design; frame design questions critically; evaluate and critically appraise a design brief; formulate an appropriate design response to context and site; produce a coherent and well resolved architectural design and its making; integrate a theoretical approach in an architectural design; engage with current technological norms and practices; interpret regulatory and legal aspects, basic concepts of business structures, and management and administration pertaining to the practice of architecture; develop knowledge of the principles and theories associated with visual, thermal and acoustics environments; apply a working knowledge of architectural research methods; and, undertake independent design research.

The curriculum integrates humanities and technologies through creative knowledge of design, informed by methodological and ethical rigour of practice and research. Design excellence requires not only skilful manipulation of form and its making, but also inspiration from a broad body of sociological and scientific knowledge. Pedagogy is studio based, requiring active participation in the peer learning and teamwork of studio culture. Design Studio is structured to foster creative and responsible investigation by way of complex architectural problems with supporting courses offering an expansive field of advanced knowledge. Five areas of study support design:

- Advanced History and Theory of the City – offers an interdisciplinary perspective of the history of the world city through an engagement with critical thought drawn from contemporary social, political, and urban theory.
- Building Technology – an investigation of how the interaction of systems of structure, enclosure, environment, materials, fabrication, and detailing inform form.
- Advanced Research Ethics and Methods – provides foundational and specialised topics in critical approaches to research methodology, epistemology, and ethics in the scholarship and practice of the spatial and social sciences.
- Professional Practice – an introduction to the legal and ethical complexities of present-day architectural practice.
- Electives in architectural design theory and cognate scales of design practice permit the

student freedom to pursue some courses in related areas appropriate to their individual professional goals, skills and interests.

Diverse programmes presented in the Faculty offer the opportunity for cross-disciplinary design projects with programmes of Urban Design, Landscape Architecture, City and Regional Planning, Quantity Surveying, Southern Urbanism and Urban Infrastructure: Design and Management, thereby affording students the possibility to pursue interdisciplinary approaches to design learning.

## **2026 BAS(Hons) ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

The UCT BAS(Hons) degree consists of one year of full-time study (at NQF Level 8) and it, or an equivalent degree, is a prerequisite qualification for admission into the Master of Architecture (Professional) degree (required to enter into the profession as a candidate architect in South Africa).

The requirement for entry is a three-year undergraduate degree in architectural studies (at NQF level 7) followed by practical experience, and a portfolio of work.

### **UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE AND PRACTICAL YEAR EXPERIENCE**

Application to the UCT BAS(Hons) programme is available to students with a Bachelor of Architectural Studies (or equivalent) degree, and who have subsequently completed the following requirements of 11 months of practical work and travel study during the year out:

- at least six-months practical experience in the office of the same registered professional architect;
- an independently defined project of study travel;
- the balance of time undertaken as additional work, practical building studies or social service experience in support of graduate studies in architecture;

Practical work experience is an opportunity to consolidate undergraduate learning in the world of architectural practice. This includes consolidation of design knowledge in the context of multidisciplinary teamwork, of technical design development and documentation skills in the context of statutory, contractual, and financial constraints, and of procedures of practice in the context of social and economic development. Though there may be limits to the work experience available to you, applicants who go out and find the kind of work experience that matches their creative, technical, theoretical, or societal interests have a good platform for pursuing these interests methodologically in graduate studies.

Study travel is an opportunity to consider the kind of architecture you are interested in, to identify a good built work or works of that kind, to visit and experience them 'in the flesh' and in their urban or rural social context, and to reflect on that learning. Though this travel could be to a location anywhere in the world, there is as much merit in visiting good architecture close by in your local region. Applicants who select this place of study thoughtfully, understand it historically or theoretically, observe and document it with curiosity and care on site, and reflect on this experience have a good platform for pursuing these interests with critical thinking and independent learning in graduate studies. Evidence of this work and travel is to be included in the portfolio.

## PORTFOLIO OF WORK

The portfolio should show evidence of a creative and balanced interest in architectural design knowledge. You are encouraged to show the process, development and thinking behind your work, not just the product.

The portfolio consists of four sections: introduction, academic work, practical work and independent work. Carefully consider how you curate the portfolio of work. **The portfolio must be complete as required as a pdf file with no imbedded links to online content. Portfolio size should not exceed 50 mb data.**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction should contain:

- A one-page letter of motivation, in support of your application;
- A one- or two-page curriculum vitae, with two contactable references;
- For applicants who are not UCT BAS graduates: a certified copy of your undergraduate degree certificate, and a certified copy of your marks transcript.

### 2. ACADEMIC WORK

The portfolio of academic work should contain:

- A complete and substantive academic writing sample of **no fewer than** 2000-words. This may have been submitted as part of a final year undergraduate course requirement, or another suitable sample at your discretion
- Three design projects or products of which you are the creative author; any group authored work reproduced must cite all authors in full with each image.
- The final design project submitted in your undergraduate programme (BAS or equivalent).

### 3. PRACTICAL WORK

The portfolio of practical work should contain:

- A report on your practical experience of at least six months work with an architect, describing the nature of that work month by month and the lessons learnt, illustrated with photographs and drawings. Where you have been involved in teamwork describe the work you have been responsible for in the team.
- At least one 2D and one 3D CAD drawing of which you are the author.
- Confirmation by the architect you have worked with of the period and scope of your involvement (e.g. worksheets or a letter, signed by the employer).

### 4. INDEPENDENT WORK

The portfolio of independent work should contain:

- A maximum 3,000-word illustrated essay reporting on your topic of architectural study travel.

## SUBMISSION OF THE PORTFOLIO

The portfolio is to be submitted electronically as a single pdf document via a link on the UCT online application form. Please use the application checklist attached to confirm submission of all required work. The checklist should be included in your submission and attached as the cover and index page of your portfolio.

Please also use the following document naming protocol – SurnameName+uct application number. For example: SteinbergRayda+ste001.

UCT BAS graduates who have been granted automatic entry to the BAS(Hons) programme are exempt from Sections 1 and 2 of the portfolios but are required to submit Sections 3 and 4 before **30 August** for international applicants or **15 November** for South African citizens.

## PORTFOLIO EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Portfolios are reviewed by a selection committee of the graduate programme. Applicants may be requested to present themselves for an interview with the selection committee either in person or via Skype or Zoom.

You will receive official notification about the outcome of your application directly from the Faculty Office of Engineering and the Built Environment as either an offer of acceptance, not accepted, wait listed or pending submission of outstanding documentation. It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the school should you wish to know whether your application for study has been accepted or not.

The school receives a high number of applications for a limited number of places and is unable to provide personal feedback to individual applicants. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to consider to re-apply in the following year, to apply at another institution or to apply in a different but related discipline.

## UCT ONLINE APPLICATION

**Application forms:** The UCT Application form is available on the UCT website: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za). The academic degree code for BAS(Hons) is EH006. Your portfolio is to be submitted electronically via a link on the online application form.

For further queries contact the Admissions Office on 021 650 4556/2129.

**The closing date** for the submission of the online application form, including all required documents as set out in the 'Portfolio of work' above, is:

**International applicants: Thursday, 31 August 2026**  
**South African applicants: Friday, 30 September 2026**

***Please note that no late entries will be accepted.***

**Applicants from abroad:** Please contact the International Academic Programme Office (IAPO) at the University on 021 650 2822 with regard to special conditions for both fees and study permits ([www.iapo.uct.ac.za](http://www.iapo.uct.ac.za)).

**Student fee enquiries:** The fees for **2026** will only be approved in the final quarter of **2025**.

For all fee related enquiries please phone the UCT Fees Office directly: (021) 650 1704 or email [fnd-feeeng@uct.ac.za](mailto:fnd-feeeng@uct.ac.za).

**Bursary enquiries:** Contact the Postgraduate Funding Office on (021) 650-3622.

**Student housing enquiries:** Contact Student Housing and Residence Life on (021) 650-2977.

**General information:** Please visit the University of Cape Town's website, you will find it most informative. The address is [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za). The website for the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics is <https://ebe.uct.ac.za/school-apg>. The website for the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment is [www.ebe.uct.ac.za](http://www.ebe.uct.ac.za).

## **BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES (HONOURS) APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**NAME:**

**Letter of motivation**

*Page number:*

**Curriculum Vitae with references**

*Page number:*

**Degrees and transcripts**

*Page number:*

**Academic writing sample**

*Page number:*

**Three self-authored design projects or products**

*Page number:*

**BAS or equivalent final design project**

*Page number:*

**Practical experience work report**

*Page number:*

**Employer confirmation letter**

*Page number:*

**2D and 3D CAD drawings**

*Page number:*

**Study Travel Essay**

*Page number:*