



Design Thesis

Module Descriptor

Module Code:	LSA7DTH
Version:	V1.0
Status:	Final
Date:	23/04/2025

Summary Module Details

Module details

Module Title: Design Thesis

Module Leader: Ruth Lang

Module Mode: Full time face to face

Semester/Term: 2 and 3

Level: 7

Credits: 20

Learning Hours: 200

Contact & Study Hours

Directed Study Time: 28 hrs (14%)

Self-directed Study Time: 172 hrs (86%)

Assessment Type

Portfolio: 100%

Module Summary

Design Thesis is the second of three modules in Second Year. The module provides the framework for the next stage of development the Comprehensive Design Project. Following a critique of the final Design Speculation presentation, students will work throughout the module to develop the detail of all aspects of their brief including refining the project typology and programme – their scale and ambition – site selection, client and stakeholder groups, funding model, as well as positioning formal and spatial proposals within the social, political and environmental context they have described.

Students will critically reflect on how the design intent aligns with the realisations that emerge through rigorous iterative examination and testing of their design hypothesis and method. Questions such as what has worked, what has not? What can be rejected or reconsidered as unexpected design opportunities? What new information is required to meet the aims of the brief? And, how can the methodology be honed so that each student is operating as a rigorous and agile designer, making informed design decisions at a variety of scales from detail to building to public realm.

Design Thesis

Each student will produce a revised series of design documents: including general arrangement drawings and models of site and building proposal, scale plans/sections/elevations/axons and details, material/structural/environmental options, visualisations of modes of inhabitation and compile/edit supporting research and contextual materials to consolidate the thesis position.

Taken on which Programmes

MArch Designing Architecture (C)

Core (C) or Elective (E)

Pre-requisites

All modules on the programme must be completed and passed in the sequence outlined within the programme structure section of the programme specification except where progression has been approved by the Board of Examiners due to mitigating circumstances.

Module Aims

- This module provides the opportunity for students to critically re-evaluate their previous experience of the programme and consolidate their plan for the graduating Comprehensive Design Project.
- The module aims to develop a student's ability to generate and refine project briefs through research, analysis and interpretation of architectural culture and precedent, physical and social context, and the needs of clients, users and the public.
- Working closely with tutors and building on the experience, knowledge and skills gained through both the Inter-Practice Year and Design Speculation module, students are guided to critically research and establish:
 - A sophisticated and considered architectural thesis;
 - A general location and particular site within it;
 - A 'client', which could range from an institution to a demographic;
 - Written programme and specific brief;
 - A developed approach to the LSA's strategic themes and values.

Module Learning Outcomes

On completion of this module students are expected, within the scope of a personal project brief, to be able to:

- LO1. Assess how the needs and aspirations of their identified user group and the local inhabitants are affected by – and can influence – the scale and quality of their architectural proposal and its relationship to the urban fabric
- LO2. Evaluate, within the professional and social context of their role as an architect, the potential impact of their building proposal on existing and proposed communities
- LO3. Compose a brief that defines client and user requirements in relation to a building scale, programme and type appropriate to its site and context
- LO4. Apply appropriate methods of investigation and preparation to the formulation of a design project brief, identifying their role and contribution to the process as an architect in relation to their co-professionals

Indicative Module Syllabus

The framework for the module revisits the three stages as set out in Design Speculation but demands an increased level of detail to be applied to each area of the design brief. The module is taught in parallel with Design Tectonic which provides for the mutual testing of conception and realisation of the Comprehensive Design Project requiring responses to be tested and explored through 2d, 3d and 4d modes of representation.

Particular emphasis will be put on the production of an artefact at 1:1/1:5 scale but will also include sketching, physical and digital modelling tests, orthographic drawing and time-based media.

Overview of Summative Assessment

Module learning outcomes	Assessment	Word count or equivalent	Weighting
LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4	Assessment 1 Portfolio	N/A	100%

Module Pass Mark (as a weighted average of all assessments): 50%

Key Module Learning Resources

Core Sources and Texts

Indicative bibliographies for each module can be found in Module Booklets.

Module tools

Students will work on their individual thesis topics guided by a design tutor. They will participate in workshops, round table reviews, clinics and school-wide design charrettes.

Supporting seminar series will run throughout the module led by members of the Practice Network and faculty drawing on relevant expertise.