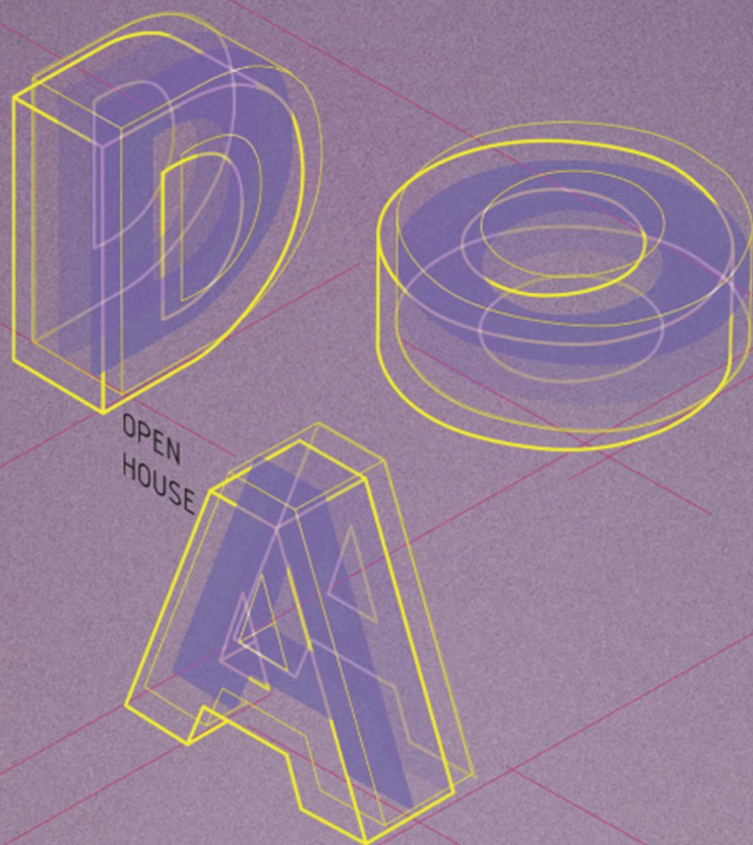


# Your FAQ Guide to B.A. (Arch)



## 1. Why pick BA (Arch) programme?

NUS Architecture provides a holistic and wider professional development to the student.

In NUS, your architectural education will begin in your first year of study, providing you with a strong design foundation. This foundational year in design will give you a headstart to better engage the diverse and challenging issues of designing the built environment. It will also enable you to make informed career choices in the future.

Students upon reaching senior years can choose a variety of design paths to develop their interests, strengths and potentials. These paths provide career opportunities beyond architecture. With your NUS Architecture training, you might venture into urban design, city planning, landscape architecture, architectural technology, integrated sustainable design and architectural conservation.

The NUS Architecture environment is enriched by its affiliation to a full-fledged university built on world-class programmes in a wide range of disciplines. When you join NUS Architecture, you will have access to a variety of cross disciplinary courses and specialised programmes. In the new curriculum announced on 22 February, you can pursue any second major or open minor across NUS, further expanding your career opportunities.

## 2. What is the BA (Arch) programme about?

The Bachelor of Arts in Architecture is a preeminent four-year Honours degree programme that serves as the core foundation for concurrent Master programmes offered by NUS Architecture.

The programme champions design excellence through studio research, exploration, and making. The fundamental skills of drawing, model-making and representation are complemented by broad-based curriculum comprising architectural history, theory, tectonics as well as systems and technologies, in the first three years of study. An extensive range of issues drive studio research topics, promoting a development of skills necessary for students to take on complex issues of the built environment.

In the first year, students are introduced to foundational concepts in design, representation and critical thinking through making. Through various exercises and projects, students are exposed to a broad range of issues, addressed through the design of the environment. Concepts studied rigorously include, space, precedent, materiality as well as the tropical environment. The second and third year of the programme investigate issues of structure, site, programme and envelope. Students research complex approaches to architectural formation, while extending their knowledge of socio-cultural, aesthetic, and construction concerns.

Students have the option of choosing their individual specialisation in their final year of study, leading on to concurrent Master programmes. The sequence encourages independent and advanced thinking as a preparation for Master level architectural research.

## 3. What is the difference between the BLA programme and the BA(Arch) programme in NUS?

The BA (Arch) programme primarily focus on architectural formations of various scales and context. The four-year undergraduate Honours degree programme forms the core foundation for the concurrent Master programmes offered by the Department of Architecture. Design excellence is championed in studio research, exploration and making. In the first three years of study, fundamental skills of drawing, model-making and representation are complemented by a broad-based curriculum comprising architectural history, theory, technologies as well as environments. An extensive range of issues drive studio research topics, promoting the development of skills necessary for students to take on complex issues in designing for the built environment.

Students then have the option to choose their educational route in their final year of study, to pursue a concurrent Master programme in Architecture or Urban Planning or complete the pre-professional honours degree.

The BLA programme focuses on the natural component of the outdoor environment, which range from spaces like parks, gardens, rooftop gardens, and home gardens, to large green infrastructure projects such as riverine systems for stormwater



management and biodiversity corridors. The primary remit of a landscape architect is to create environments that protect and conserve nature, and of which foster human connection to nature.

#### 4. BA (Arch) graduates may apply for other built environment related Graduate programmes. What are the differences among the Graduate programmes offered by DoA?

The Master of Art in Urban Design (MAUD) programme is a one-year full-time (two-year part-time) international and interdisciplinary course oriented at those who seek to study the city in more complex and inclusive terms. Students will address the challenges facing urban designers, architects and urbanists in the Twenty-first Century and appreciate how the design of successful urban spaces take into careful consideration current and future users based on an understanding of a wide range of issues encompassing sustainability, resilience, economics, ecology, sociology, environmental psychology, technology, urban geography, cultural theory or real estate.

MAUD draws on the contemporary successful urban experience of Singapore as a living laboratory and its role in helping to transform the region, encouraging urban designers to envision strategic futures and design sustainable and resilient urban places in the AsiaPacific region.

The Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) is offered as a two-year, full-time degree programme That is distinctively Asian and pan-tropical in its geographic attention, and urban in its emphasis. It aims to provide a landscape architecture education that is sensitive to the myriad challenges facing Asian cities, as well as opportunities provided by the sheer richness of heritage and cultural, socio-economic and ecological elements of the region. It adopts a research-centric approach to teaching. Design is a core emphasis but is grounded in socio-cultural sensitivities, ecological knowledge and grasp of emergent technologies and techniques. The diversity of culture and cosmopolitan outlook in Singapore, where urban greening is a cornerstone of its urban development approach, provides an enriching backdrop to the training of landscape architects. MLA's goal is to train the next generation of landscape architects in practice and academia who will be stewards in shaping a liveable, sustainable and resilient environment

The Master of Science, Integrated Sustainable Design (MScISD) is a one-year, post-professional programme that addresses the global sustainability challenge by tackling both the building and urban scales, and integrating knowledge from the disciplines of architecture, engineering, landscape design, planning, urban design and biological science. The curriculum delves into material, technical, spatial and social systems, linking them directly to the urbanisation of Asian cities. With Singapore at the forefront of environmental policy and action in Asia, the MScISD programme takes full advantage of this by incorporating visits to completed projects and guest lectures by policy-makers and consultants, bringing to life the Singapore Model. After graduation, many MSc ISD alumni return to their core disciplines as sustainability-trained professionals with a newfound capability to frame problems from an Asian perspective.

The Master in Urban Planning (MUP) is a two-year full-time multidisciplinary programme that seeks to equip the graduates with all the necessary skills and knowledge to act as urban planner. Unprecedented pace and scale of urbanization in Asia, climate change, the pervasiveness of info-communications technology, geopolitical instability and increasing socio-economic inequality impinge on the ways cities are planned, built and lived. In the wake of these challenges, the profession of urban planning is constantly reinventing itself by critically examining existing methodologies and incorporating new ones. The Master of Urban Planning (MUP) programme taps into the experience of Singapore and cities in Asia as laboratories of planning ideas and methods, experimenting with high density living, ecological sensitivity, data science and social policies to ensure equity through development. It equips graduates with all the necessary skills and knowledge to act as urban planning professionals and policy-makers in a rapidly urbanizing world.

#### 6. What will I learn in the first year of the BA (Arch) programme?

The Year One curriculum introduces students to fundamentals of architecture and principles of design. Students are also trained in basic skillsets of visual representation and design thinking.

#### 7. Is the BA (Arch) programme offered on a part-time basis?

No. The 4-year BA (Arch) programme is only offered on a full-time basis.

## 8. Is BA (Arch) programme a professional programme?

No. NUS Master of Architecture (M.Arch) is the professional programme recognised by the Board of Architects (BOA) Singapore. Students who wish to eventually practise as an architect in Singapore have to read the M.Arch programme upon completion of the BA (Arch) programme in order to have the requisite degree for registration with the BOA.

In order to qualify for the professional exam conducted by BOA, M.Arch graduates need to undertake at least 2 years of practical experience after completion of the M.Arch programme. For details on professional registration, please refer to <http://www.boa.gov.sg/>.

In short, a student may attain his/her professional Architect status after 5 years of education plus 2 years of practical experience.

## 9. How would I know if I have the aptitude for architecture?

You should show an interest in design and a curiosity in how things work. You should also have keen observation skills, and an ability to express and describe ideas in visual and verbal formats.

## 10. How can I prepare for an education in architecture?. What is the BA (Arch) programme about?

You should talk to people who are working as architects and senior students to understand the professional and student life. It would be helpful to acquaint yourself with basic architecture knowledge through books and the internet and have an appreciation of architectural development, locally and internationally. You can also start to learn basic skills such as drawing and use of modelling software such as SketchUp.

## 11. What are the exchange and overseas enrichment opportunities available for architecture students?

In its emphasis to engage the opportunities and challenges of globalisation, NUS has implemented Student Exchange Programmes (SEP) to more than 150 universities. Architecture students have the opportunity to participate in SEPs for one semester, with more than 30 partner universities (at Departmental and University Level) in Asia, Europe and USA. These include four of the top six architecture schools in the world.

In addition to the student exchange programme, DoA creates opportunities and sponsors numerous overseas field trips, overseas enrichment programmes and design workshops conducted abroad. These activities enhance our students' academic experience and enrich their exposure to design conditions under myriad social-cultural milieus.

## 12. Are students able to take part in internships to gain practical exposure?

The majority of students obtain practical experience through internship with architectural practices during the semester break. Students have the opportunity to participate in a structured 24-week Architecture Internship Programme in their fourth year of study to gain practical experience in the profession. Competitive scholarships through the support of the Milton Tan Memorial Fund, are available to senior students who have secured overseas internship with reputable international design practices. Some students might decide to take a longer gap year to travel or work before proceeding to the M.Arch programme.

## 13. Are students enrolled into BA (Arch) programme provided with the design software (e.g., Autocad, Adobe photoshop, Sketchup, Revit, etc.) required for the course?

NUS provides Adobe software for students to use in the campus computer clusters. Students who require to have the design software on their laptop, will have to purchase the software on their own from (<https://www.adobe.com/sea/creativecloud/buy/students.html>). Sketchup is provided for students' use in the lab clusters in NUS. Design software are not provided for installation into personal laptops/computers. Students can make use of student's version of required software for installation into their personal devices. Such software might be free version of Sketchup, and student license for Autodesk software.

#### 14. Are there any scholarships available?

URA/ BCA offer scholarships.

There are also various NUS scholarships and financial aid available. Please refer to the following links for more details <https://www.nus.edu.sg/oam/scholarships> and <http://www.nus.edu.sg/oam/financial-aid>

#### 15. What are the job prospects and types of jobs for a BA (Arch) graduate from NUS? Is it difficult to get a job? What is the approximate average starting salary expected?

NUS BA (Arch) graduates have several choices. They can work in architectural firms or in other related fields. Our graduates have gone on to work in different design fields such as graphic and user interface design. They have also joined allied industries such as the real estate industry as project managers and sustainability officers. Some joined other creative industries to become digital visualizers, design researchers design journalists, heritage consultants, and even filmmakers. With the possibilities of earning a second major and minors, NUS BA (Arch) graduates would have even more career choices in the future.

They may continue their study up to masters level, in a variety of Graduate Programmes offered in the Department: Master of Architecture (M.Arch), Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA), Master of Arts in Urban Design (MAUD), Master of Urban Planning (MUP), Master of Science in Integrated Sustainable Design and the Master of Arts in Arch/Research, further leading to PhD degree. Alternatively, they may also continue their education with other masters programmes like MBA, MSc in and across a variety of fields.

In short, a student may attain his/her professional Architect status after 5 years of education plus 2 years of practical experience.

Approximate starting salaries vary, depending on several factors including type of company and prevailing economic situations at the time of graduation and job application.

#### 16. What are the admissions requirements specific to BA (Arch) programme?

- A levels (New Curriculum):

H1 pass in Chemistry or Mathematics or Physics; OR pass in 'O' level Additional Mathematics. For the latest indicative grade profiles of the students admitted into BA (Arch), see <https://tinyurl.com/5en29mp4>

- Diplomas (excluding Advanced Diplomas/ Specialist Diplomas/ Certificate Courses) from local Polytechnics:

A pass in E Maths attained at the GCE 'O' Level exam

Applicants who do not fulfil the minimum GCE 'O' Level Elementary Mathematics requirement but have obtained the relevant Graduate DDP Transcripts / Certificate in University Preparatory Mathematics depending on the Polytechnics would be deemed as having met the Mathematics requirement.

For the latest indicative grade profiles of the students admitted into BA (Arch), see <https://tinyurl.com/5en29mp4>

- Other Academic Qualifications
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma:

Pass in SL Chemistry, Mathematics or Physics.

- International Students: Year 12 or Higher Level pass in Chemistry or Mathematics or Physics or Physical Science.

For detailed admission requirements, please refer to [www.nus.edu.sg/oam](http://www.nus.edu.sg/oam) for more information.

## 17. Who are eligible to be considered under Aptitude Based Admissions?

For Aptitude Based Admissions, other factors besides academic grades will be taken into consideration. The following are some samples of exceptional achievements that the University may take into consideration:

- Medal winner at the International Olympiads (Biology, Chemistry, Informatics, Mathematics and Physics).
- Winner in the National Science & Talent Search.
- Represented Singapore in Arts and/or Sports.
- Active participation in community service and volunteer programmes.
- Work experience relevant to the course applied for (supporting document/s is/are required). Key leadership positions in community organisations, sports and athletic clubs, etc (outside school).
- Other relevant supporting documents related to the course applying for.

## 18. I would like to transfer to NUS from an overseas university. What are the admission criteria and application process?

You may refer to office of admission website (<https://www.nus.edu.sg/oam/apply-to-nus/transfer-applicants>) for admission procedures through International Candidates category. The requisite for the course is Year 12 or higher level pass in Chemistry or Mathematics or Physics or Physical Science.

Information on the financial resources, tuition fees etc can also be accessed from the above website. Applicants who are shortlisted would be required to attend an interview that would be held in April/ early May at our Department.

Credit transfer from your previous course will only be considered after the candidate has been offered a place in the programme and it is not guaranteed. Normally we would need to review the programme syllabus and the results of the candidate for any exemption consideration.

## 19. I am currently pursuing another degree in a different institution, can I apply for a course transfer?

Yes, interested applicant can apply for transfer under <https://www.nus.edu.sg/oam/apply-to-nus/transfer-applicants>

## 20. Is CCA important in the BA (Arch) enrolment selection process?

CCA may be considered under Aptitude Based Admissions. See FAQ No. 17.

## 21. I enrolled into a polytechnic via PFP, so do not have any O' Levels. How will this affect my eligibility for BA (Arch) programme?

Applicants who do not fulfil the minimum GCE 'O' Level Elementary Mathematics requirement and do not have the Graduate DDP Transcript mentioned may still submit an application. They will be assessed based on their polytechnic results and other results/ certificates presented under the Outstanding Achievements section. The University may evaluate these applicants on a case-by-case basis. Shortlisted applicants may be required to attend an admissions interview under the discretion of the School of Design and Environment.

## 22. Are exemptions granted to diploma holders?

Yes, please refer to the list of Advanced Placement Credits (APCs) granted to diploma holders from local polytechnics at <https://cde.nus.edu.sg/arch/programmes/bachelor-of-arts-in-architecture/advanced-placement-credits-apcs-for-baarchitecture-programme/>

It is possible for diploma holders who are given APC in design modules (AR1101 and AR1102) to complete the BA(Arch) course in 3 years.

## 23. Do I need to sit for the Architecture Admission Test (AAT) and Interview if I'm shortlisted for the programme?

Shortlisted candidates would be invited to sit for the AAT and attend an interview as part of the selection process in order to be considered for admission. More details will be emailed to shortlisted candidates sometime in March.

## 24. What is the scope and format of the Architecture Admission Test (AAT)?

The AAT tests the student's creativity and intuition in design. While technical knowledge in architecture is not essential, common understanding of the subject would be useful. Shortlisted candidates will complete special design work and carry out set tasks under test conditions. The AAT might include a written section, design illustrations, simple model making, etc. Your experience in the aptitude test is indicative of what is expected in the course: to be able to think creatively, critically and practically, and to communicate your ideas succinctly across various media.

## 25. Do I need to submit a portfolio together with my application?

You need not submit the portfolio at the point of application. However, should you be selected to attend the AAT and interview, you are strongly encouraged to bring along your portfolio as evidence of your interest in design.

## 26. What do I need to include in the portfolio?

The portfolio should show the candidate's creative work. If possible, this should document an accumulation of work over several years. The content may include (but should not be restricted to) drawings, paintings, graphic design, magazine layouts, posters, stage design, web design etc. As far as possible, the portfolio should be neatly arranged, bound and indexed in a suitable format, determined by the applicant.

## 27. Is drawing a requisite skill in order to be considered for admission?

Although it is beneficial for applicants to know how to draw, it is not a prerequisite. Drawing is only one of many components needed in the course. It is also a skill which can be picked up if you are diligent and determined.