

BUILDING PLACES AND SPACES

Architect



Architects come up with imaginative and effective ways of building new shops, offices and homes, and re-using old ones. It's a job that's both practical and creative, where you'll prepare design proposals and planning applications, and produce plans and drawings. You'll also have to oversee contractors and sort out any hiccups during construction. It takes seven years to qualify as an architect, with five years' study and two years' work experience. You need to be passionate and committed for all that. You also need good presentation skills so you can liaise with clients, local authorities and builders, and strong consultation skills as your work may be subject to public scrutiny.

Degree needed

A degree in architecture recognised by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the Architects Registration Board is usually required.

The standard entry route normally involves a degree in architecture, divided into two parts: a three year degree, known as RIBA Part 1, followed by two years' advanced undergraduate study, known as RIBA Part 2.

Normally an architect will take a year to gain professional experience in an architect's office after Part 1 and another year after Part 2. Architects then go on to take the RIBA Part 3 Professional Practice Examination.

Good courses

RIBA validated courses:

- Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen
- University of Bath
- The Queen's University of Belfast
- University College for the Creative Arts, Canterbury
- University of Cardiff
- University of Dundee
- Edinburgh College of Art
- The University of Edinburgh
- University of Ulster
- University of Central England in Birmingham
- University of Brighton
- University of the West of England, Bristol
- University of Cambridge



Aidan Hoggard at work
Architect, Allen Todd Ltd



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Facts and figures

Starting salary

£14,000 – £17,000, rising to £25,000 – £29,000.

Working hours

Generally 9am to 5pm.

Days' holiday per year

On average 25 days per year.

Skills and experience

At least two years' practical experience is required. You also need to be able to work with industry standard software packages such as Auto Cad and Sketch Up.

Would suit

This is a creative role and practitioners need to demonstrate practical initiative.

Likely employer types

- Private practices, which range from small firms with one architect to larger firms with many architects
- In-house architectural departments in commercial and industrial organisations employ some 5% of architects
- Large public sector organisations: 4% of architects work in central government and 5% in local authorities
- Private developers, housebuilders and housing associations

How many jobs available?

The UK architectural employment market has been buoyant recently, with numerous positions for architects with five years' professional experience beyond Part 3 qualification, especially in the residential sector.

Number of people employed in this field

In May 2006 there were around 31,000 people employed as architects in the UK.



Meet the expert

Aidan Hoggard,
AllenTodd Ltd

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"I love engaging with the people who'll use a building, having to be creative and solve problems. We have a long-term responsibility to the communities we work in, and also to the environment."

Did you know?

Architect Juan Del Corral's Bridge of Eggs in Peru was built in 1610 using mortar mixed with the whites of 10,000 seabird eggs. It still stands.

More information

- Find out about architecture and how to qualify as an architect from the Royal Institute of British Architects www.riba.org
- For details of careers in architecture, the qualifications needed and where to study visit www.careersinarchitecture.net
- Discover details of current vacancies at www.riba-jobs.com
- For advice, information and discussion forums for architecture students see www.archaos.org