

# MSc Bio Digital Architecture 2020-21

## YOUR UNIVERSITY

The University of Kent is looking forward to welcoming its new intake of PGT (Postgraduate-Taught) students to its campus this September. 'Welcome Week' (Freshers' Week, more traditionally) begins on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September, with your academic programmes starting one week later, on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

As a leading centre of research both nationally and internationally, the Kent School of Architecture and Planning offers a rich portfolio of postgraduate programmes with six masters courses, directed and taught by our dedicated members of staff and conceived around expertise related to our three research centres: CREAtE (Centre for Research in European Architecture), CASE (Centre for Architecture and Sustainable Environment), and DARC (Digital Architecture Research Centre).

Designed to provide students from a variety of backgrounds with both cultural and practical tools for their chosen careers, as well as a series of interchangeable skills, our Masters cover the following areas: 1) **MAUD** (Masters in Architecture and Urban Design); 2) **MAAV** (Masters in Architectural Visualisation); 3) **MARCON** (Masters in Architectural Conservation); 4) **MASE** (Masters in Architecture and Sustainable Environment); 5) **BIODIG** (Masters in Bio Digital Architecture); 6) **MUPR** (Master in Urban Planning and Resilience); and 7) **PGDipAP** (Postgraduate Diploma in Architectural Practice)

## ACADEMIC DELIVERY

How do we teach the programme, especially in these uncertain times of great public health concern?

As you can read in our FAQs below, the majority of our teaching and services will be delivered in a blended way – both online and on campus. What parts of your studies will be online and what will be in-person will vary according to the course you are on, government requirements and our health and safety assessments. Online lectures will be complemented with face-to-face and/or online interactive sessions. Lecture theatres will be used for smaller in-person group-based activities. Lab classes, and other activities where you physically need to be there, will take place in strict compliance with health and safety requirements. Some modules, or parts of modules, may need to be rescheduled to later in the academic year when social distancing restrictions are eased.

In short, we are planning to return to campus in September with careful arrangements put in place to ensure that everyone is protected as much as possible. We plan to continue with small group teaching, such as our Masters courses, with larger format teaching, such as lectures, etc., being placed online. All teaching events will be recorded via Moodle, the university intranet, and made available to the students. In addition, all teaching material will be made available to the students in advance of every teaching event. In respect of all advice, this makes for a sustainable way forward where the quality of our courses, and everyone's safety, are safeguarded.

Further details regarding how teaching will take place for MSc Bio Digital Architecture are outlined below:

The programme comprises four modules taught over two terms, if full time, or two years, if part time, in addition to a summer term/summer vacation Dissertation module.

The autumn term focuses on the principles and methods of computing and digital design to enable students to improve their CAD skills and gain understanding and know-how of computer coding, which is delivered through workshops and seminars. This is coupled with lectures and seminars on the programme's theoretical discourse. The spring term consolidates the principle and methods emphasis in the first term to develop a strong theoretical background and comprehensive understanding of digital technology applied to architectural design.

Each module is based on a three-hour workshop type teaching model with lecture/seminar to introduce principles (concepts and theories), and which students are introduced to and shown how to use various algorithms and modelling methods. Each module involves an initial period (approx. 6 weeks) of teaching of methods and concepts, whereby students are taught more directly, where after teaching transitions to a more studio-oriented approach whereby students are experimenting and developing outputs in response to the material taught. The Discourse and Theory module, delivered in the spring term, follows a similar format albeit it is more seminar, as opposed to workshop, oriented initially.

Whether or not you are on campus, we will be teaching you either face-to-face or online, or a mixture. All events will of course be recorded, where possible, and made available on Moodle, the university intranet. Teaching material will also be made available on Moodle in advance of every teaching event. We expect no particular changes to either module content or to assignments. The programme can safely be conducted with social distancing, or indeed remotely, with no detriment. Equally, students can benefit from access to nearby sites and the use of our library.

As we have done in the academic year now ending, the nature of our modules is such that we can adapt the way in which we deliver them to any scenario, using on-line tools to ensure that the learning outcomes are achieved and the students' learning experience is not compromised come what may.

Dr Tim Ireland  
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MSc Bio Digital Architecture Programme Director  
Director of Digital Architecture and the Digital Architecture Research Centre  
Kent School of Architecture and Planning  
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## **SITE VISITS**

Most of our site visits can be done by respecting social distancing or indeed via online tools if you are unable to attend in person. Arrangements and/or adjustments can be agreed with the programme director.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Most of our assignments can be adapted to all circumstances. The nature of adjustments will depend on the particular module you are taking. See above for details.

## **SOCIAL LIFE**

The University and the Students Union are developing plans for a safe social life, on and off campus. Clearly, the mass gatherings that have been the hallmark of student social life cannot take place in their former formats. However, Kent is blessed with a large, airy and low-density campus, and the onus will be on the myriad student clubs and societies to provide safely distanced events. Our own KASA – the Kent Architecture Student Association – is organising its term-time events, including the weekly guest lectures (all online this year, for obvious reasons), but also a series of small-scale social and communal meetings.

## **FAQs**

The University has produced answers to these frequently asked questions. Do please follow the link! <https://www.kent.ac.uk/student/coronavirus/returning-to-campus>.

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