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Bachelor of Architectural Studies 2026

Dear Prospective Bachelor of Architectural Studies Applicant,

GETTING STARTED: PURSUING A BACHELOR IN ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

Welcome to the exciting world of architectural studies! If you're a grade 12 student passionate about design, creativity, and shaping the built environment, a Bachelor's in Architectural Studies could be your perfect path. In this guide, we'll help you kickstart your journey by outlining the requirements and steps to embark on this rewarding academic adventure.

Step 1: Understand the Admission Requirements

Before you dive into this inspiring field, it's essential to ensure you meet the admission requirements:

- **Minimum NSC Statutory Requirements:** You must fulfil the minimum National Senior Certificate (NSC) statutory requirements for degree entry.
- **Mathematics Proficiency:** If you've tackled NSC Grade 12 Mathematics, you'll need a minimum Applicant Score of 370. Additionally, you should have achieved a Mathematics achievement rating of at least 55%.
- **Departmental Selection:** Keep in mind that admission is subject to departmental selection. While meeting the basic requirements is crucial, your passion for architecture and dedication to this field may also play a significant role in the selection process.

Step 2: Prepare for Success

Now that you understand the requirements, it's time to prepare for success:

- **Excel in Your Current Studies:** Make sure your grade 12 performance, especially in Mathematics, is top-notch. This will help you meet the minimum requirements and set you up for a strong foundation in architectural studies.
- **Explore Your Passion:** Take some time to explore your interest in architecture. Visit architectural marvels, engage in design projects, and familiarise yourself with architectural concepts and trends.
- **Gather Your Documents:** As you approach your application, ensure you have all the necessary documents, including your NSC results, Mathematics proficiency evidence, and any other required paperwork.



Step 3: Begin the Application Process

When it's time to apply, follow these steps:

- Visit the University Website: Head to the university's website and navigate to the admissions section. Here, you'll find the online application portal. For your convenience, [click here](#) on our application page.
- Complete the Application: Fill out the online application form, providing all the required information and documents.
- Submit Your Application: Once your application is complete, submit it through the university's online portal.

Step 4: Wait for Departmental Selection

After submitting your application, it's time to wait for departmental selection. The department will carefully review all applications and select students who demonstrate academic potential and a passion for architecture. It normally takes 21 working days for the admission department to process your online application and to promote you to the department for selection. Be on the lookout for an email from our admission officer.

Step 5: Secure Your Portfolio Review Slot

Before preparing your portfolio, it's important first to secure a review slot. The MS Booking system allows you to choose a date and time that works best for you to submit your portfolio to the Department. A panel will then review your work. Please note, this is not an interview, and you do not need to be online for this process. Portfolio review slots are available once a month from July to December. You must select one slot that fits your schedule. Send your portfolio to Dr. Basson (jpbasson@mandela.ac.za) on the selected day. Once you book your review slot, you will receive a confirmation email.

Session	Date	Session	Date
1	18 July 2025	4	10 October 2025
2	29 August 2025	5	28 November 2025
3	19 September 2025	6	5 December 2025

Step 6: Prepare Your Portfolio

With your interview slot secured, it's time to focus on creating a standout portfolio that reflects your passion and creativity in architecture. Here are some pointers before we look at the requirements:

- **Portfolio Creation:** Prepare a portfolio that highlights your interest in architecture. Include sketches, design projects, or any creative work demonstrating your enthusiasm for the field.
- **Organisation:** Organise your portfolio neatly and thoughtfully. Arrange your work in a way that tells a story about your artistic journey and showcases your skills and unique perspective.
- **Attention to Detail:** Pay close attention to the details in your portfolio. Ensure that your work is presented in a visually appealing and professional manner.
- **Reflect Your Passion:** Your portfolio reflects your passion for architecture. Be sure to include pieces that not only display your technical abilities but also convey your dedication to this exciting discipline.

Your portfolio will be a key part of your application and a testament to your commitment to the world of architecture. It's your opportunity to demonstrate your creative potential and leave a lasting impression as you embark on this remarkable academic journey.



Portfolio Requirements

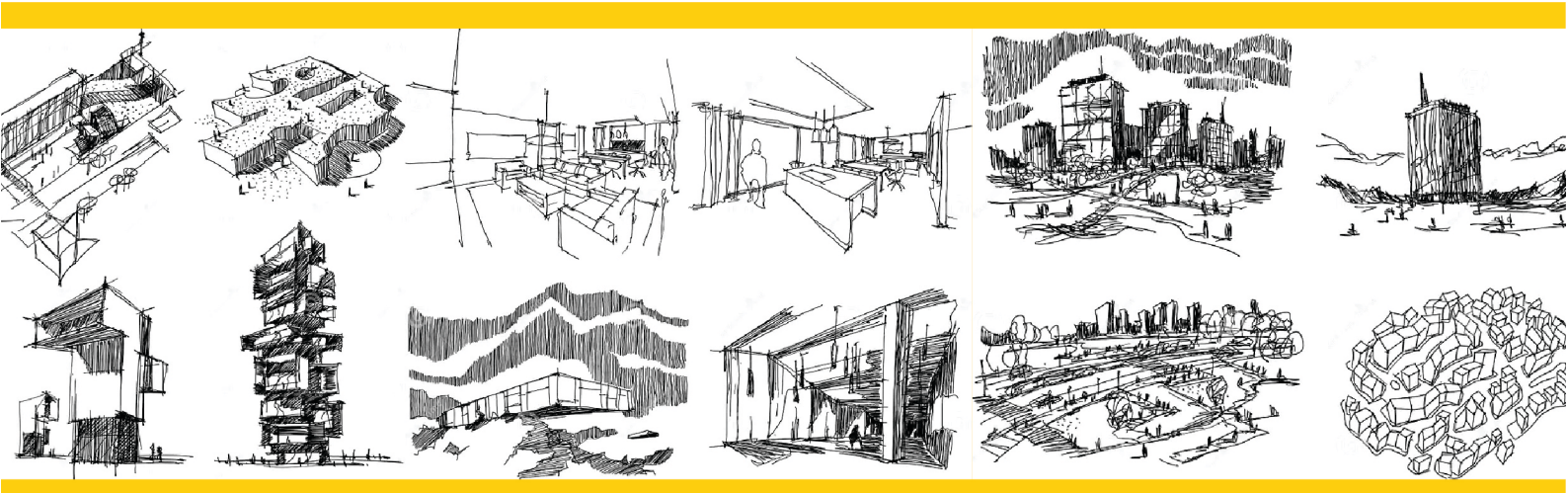
Your creative portfolio must include all of the exercises mentioned below. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to include any other creative work that they believe will enhance and strengthen their application.

1. Drawing Exercises

Architectural Sketches: Create a freehand sketch of prominent architectural landmarks in your local area, emphasising line quality and attention to detail.

Tonal Drawings: Produce tonal drawings of a well-known architectural structure, highlighting light and shadow to convey form and depth.

Perspective Drawing: Demonstrate your understanding of perspective by sketching a room or interior space, capturing accurate spatial relationships.



2. Mapping Exercise

"Illustrate Your Journey: Where Will It Take You?: Picture this – you're given a blank canvas, and your task is to fill it with a combination of illustrations and words. Your goal? To illustrate the fascinating journey between two places. The best part? The journey is entirely up to you! This isn't your average art project. It's a chance for you to let your creativity run wild. Will you take us on a whimsical trip through a magical forest, an underwater wonderland, or a futuristic cityscape? The possibilities are endless, and the choice is yours!

We're looking for originality, perception, and, most of all, your unique perspective. Your journey can be as fantastical or as down-to-earth as you like. It's all about how you see the world and how you choose to share it with others.

3. Creative Exercise

Capture Your Passion" - A Selfie Story: Hey there, future architects! We know that your journey into the world of architecture is about to begin, and we're excited to get to know you better. What better way to kick things off than with a creative challenge that's all about you and your dreams?

We want you to take one awesome selfie, but this isn't your ordinary selfie. It's a "selfie with a twist." Your mission? Use this unique selfie to tell us all about yourself and why you're super stoked to study architecture. Feel free to let your imagination run wild. Maybe you're holding a mini model of your dream building, surrounded by your favourite architecture books, or even exploring an amazing architectural wonder in your area. It's all up to you!



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Alongside your fantastic selfie, we're asking for a short write-up. In 350 words or less (yes, we're keeping it snappy), tell us why architecture is your calling, what inspires you, and how you see yourself making a difference in the world of design. Make it fun, make it personal, and most importantly, make it YOU!

Remember, this isn't about fancy photography skills or professional modelling. It's about showing us your passion and creativity in a selfie that reflects your architectural aspirations. So, turn those creative gears, strike a pose, and capture the spirit of your architectural dreams in one amazing selfie! We can't wait to see what you come up with. 🇮🇵 ✨ #FutureArchitects #SelfieStory



4. Problem-solving Exercise

Project Title: Metamorphosis: Transforming Waste into Art

The theme for the sustainable sculpture project is "Metamorphosis." Applicants are tasked with creating a sculpture that symbolises transformation, rebirth, and the potential beauty that can emerge from waste materials. Applicants are challenged to design a sculpture that captures the essence of transformation using **recycled materials**. The sculpture should reflect the journey from discarded waste to a piece of art, highlighting the potential for positive change in our approach to the environment.

- How can the chosen recycled materials be transformed into a visually appealing and meaningful sculpture?
- What symbols or elements can represent the concept of metamorphosis in the design?
- How does the sculpture engage with the theme of sustainability and environmental consciousness?

Restrictions: Minimum dimensions: 300mm x 300mm x 300mm, and maximum dimensions: 600mm x 600mm x 600mm.

Provide your design ideas through concept sketches or diagrams and include relevant keywords for planning. Additionally, submit a photograph of the completed sculpture.

The submission and format of the portfolio:

- **Portfolio Format:** You can choose any format and size that best represents your work.
- **Submission Format:** When submitting your portfolio, it should be compiled into a **single, well-organised PDF** document. This PDF should include a cover page, an index, and a logical presentation of your work. Label your PDF with you **Surname Name**
- **Combining Your Work:** You can use various methods to combine your work into a PDF. Popular options include tools like MS PowerPoint. Ensure that your final PDF is professionally presentable.
- **Submission Deadline:** Your completed portfolio in PDF format should be emailed to Dr Basson by the deadline specified in **Step 5** of the application process.

This flexibility allows you to showcase your creativity and design skills in a way that best represents you. We're excited to see your innovative portfolios!



Step 7: Portfolio Review and Outcomes

After submitting your portfolio, the panel will thoroughly review it. Based on this evaluation, you will receive one of the following three outcomes:

- **Unsuccessful:** If the panel determines that the portfolio does not meet the required criteria, you will be notified that your application was unsuccessful based on the portfolio submitted.
- **Successful:** If the panel finds that your portfolio meets the necessary standards, you will be notified that your application was successful based on the portfolio received.

Should you have any questions or require further information regarding the admission requirements, application process or the Bachelor of Architectural Studies programme, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Basson.

Wish to come and visit the Department for a tour of our facility? You are more than welcome to email Dr Basson to make the necessary arrangements.

We are excited to receive your application and learn more about your passion for architecture and our aspirations in the field. Thank you for considering Nelson Mandela University for your undergraduate studies, and we look forward to the possibility of welcoming you into our Bachelor of Architectural Studies programme.

Best regards



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Portfolio assessment rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Drawing Skills	Exceptional skill in architectural drawing, precise and aesthetically pleasing.	Proficient in architectural drawing, with clarity and detail.	Competent architectural drawing skills, but with minor inaccuracies.	Limited architectural drawing skills and noticeable inaccuracies.	Inadequate architectural drawing skills and many inaccuracies.
Creative Thinking	Exceptional creativity and originality in concept development and design solutions.	Strong creativity and originality in concept development and design solutions.	Good creativity and originality in concept development and design solutions.	Adequate creativity in concept development and design solutions.	Limited creativity and originality in concept development and design solutions.
Problem-Solving	Exceptional ability to identify and solve design challenges, demonstrating a deep understanding of architectural principles.	Proficient ability to identify and solve design challenges, with a solid understanding of architectural principles.	Competent ability to identify and solve design challenges may require further refinement.	Adequate ability to identify design challenges with room for improvement.	Limited ability to identify and solve design challenges; significant improvement needed.
Three-Dimensional Thinking	Exceptional ability to create complex, innovative, and well-crafted three-dimensional models.	Proficient ability to create three-dimensional models that effectively convey design concepts.	Competent ability to create three-dimensional models, with some room for improvement in complexity and craft.	Adequate ability to create three-dimensional models, but with limitations in complexity and craft.	Limited ability to create three-dimensional models, requiring significant improvement.



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