



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

ARCHITECTURE ADMISSIONS ASSESSMENT

CONTENT SPECIFICATION

2016

Assessment Format

The Architecture Admissions Assessment will take place in individual Colleges in Cambridge before the subject interview. The assessment is 1 hour in length and consists of two parts. Part 1 is a 30-minute *writing skills* test; Part 2 is a 30-minute *graphic and spatial ability* test.

In Part 1 candidates will be asked to write a short essay in response to a question. Candidates may be asked to discuss images.

In Part 2 candidates will be asked to observe and interpret a setting through drawing (either indoor or outdoor within the college premises).

Candidates will be provided with HB or B pencils and, if required, a clipboard.

Sample Assessment

Part 1: Writing skills assessment

How can architects help the environment?

Part 2: Graphic and spatial ability

Draw the room in which you are sitting, on one side of the A3 sheet of paper you have been given. You may take any viewpoint; there could be a single drawing, or multiple sketches; you can show views from the room or just within the room, or both; you may include people and furniture, or not. You may be asked to discuss the drawing at the subject interview.

Marking Criteria

The two parts of the test will be given separate scores. The score will be from 1 to 10, based on the scoring system of the interview report forms.

Part 1: Writing skills assessment marking criteria

Well-presented and expressed. Good comprehension of the meaning of the question and clear and competently-argued; evidence of an interest in and awareness of architecture and the environment.

Part 2: Graphic and spatial ability assessment marking criteria

We are not looking for the display of any particular technical or formal skills. We are interested to assess the candidate's ability:

- 1) to think in a visual and spatial manner;
- 2) to record spatial impressions;
- 3) to demonstrate an awareness of their environment;
- 4) to interpret their environment in visual terms.

Supporting material

In order to prepare for the admissions assessment you are strongly encouraged to:

- 1) keep a personal sketchbook outside of any formal courses you may be taking at school.
- 2) regularly engage in hand-drawing in your sketchbook.
- 3) draw from life; drawings do not need to be composed in any particular way and you may use a range of media you are comfortable with (pencil, pen, crayon, charcoal etc.).
- 4) Observe, listen to and record your own environment through annotated drawings.
- 5) Reflect on why some spaces succeed while others do not. You may explore any setting including your school yard, local street or shopping mall.
- 6) Identify a spatial sequence in a building or a town or a series of interiors and exteriors that you find awkward, surprising or particularly stimulating, and explore why this is.
- 7) Read reviews of buildings that interest you online in Dezeen or arch daily.
- 8) Read about prize-winning buildings/public spaces and the reasons cited for the award they have been given in the architecture section of the Guardian online.
- 9) Read about topical urban design issues in the cities section of the Guardian online.