

Interdisciplinary Design for the Built Environment (IDBE) A part-time Masters Degree at the University of Cambridge

Information for employers

Who is the course for?

The course is open to those involved in the commissioning, design, construction and management of projects in the built environment. Applications are welcome from those with a background in architecture, engineering (civil, structural, building services, transport, fire, and so on) surveying, planning, landscape design, project management, building economics, urban design, contracting, as well as from client representatives, client advisors and facilities managers.

The course aims to bring together an interdisciplinary cohort of well-motivated individuals who have confidence and ability in their core discipline and are now looking for new responsibilities and challenges. The interdisciplinary student group provides a source of ideas and collective energy, and students in the cohort will learn from each other in workshops and studio projects as well as from the formal lectures and individual assignments.

Aims of the course

The aims of the course are:

- To equip professionals for strategic decision making, inventive problem solving and team leadership.
- To develop skills in effective collaboration and communication, particularly between clients and their advisors, design professionals, constructors and users.
- To provide a strategic overview of the production of the built environment including current challenges faced by the construction industry such as global climate change and sustainability.

Course Structure

The course is part-time and lasts two years. Students spend a total of seven residential weeks in Cambridge during the two years, four weeks in the first year and three in the second. Each week comprises an intensive programme of:

- Formal lectures from leading practitioners and academics.
- Workshops and seminars.
- A studio design project undertaken in small interdisciplinary teams of students supported by design tutors.

Individual assignments

Between the residential weeks, and away from Cambridge, students undertake four written assignments:

- A 5,000 word case study.
- Two 3,000 word essays.
- A 15,000 word thesis on a topic of the student's choice, undertaken in the second year.

Students receive supervisions from specialists within the University. The case study is an opportunity to reflect on a current or recent project and capture the strengths (and weaknesses, if any) of its conduct, with the potential to provide feedback to an employer. Similarly, the thesis may be an opportunity to address a topic of interest to an employer.

Themes of the residential weeks

The themes of the seven residential weeks are:

- Interdisciplinary understanding
- The client, the user and the design team
- Interdisciplinary teamwork
- Sustainable construction
- Infrastructure and landscape
- The structure of the industry
- Urban design and sustainable communities.

Teaching resources

Lectures, workshops and supervisions are delivered primarily by staff from the University's Departments of Architecture and Engineering, and from other departments. The course also benefits from extensive and regular contributions from leading practitioners. Lectures and studio projects generally take place in the University's Engineering Department.

College arrangements

Students on the course become members of Wolfson College, which was established specifically for graduate and mature students.

Further details

The course brochure contains details of course dates and fees and, with other information, can be found on the website www.idbe.org. You can email the course team at info@idbe.org. Or contact the Course Administrator at the address below.



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