

AM I READY?

If you are considering doing your Part 3, the likelihood is that you are working in architectural practice, or that you have secured a position. To help you ascertain whether you are 'ready' or not to start your part 3 journey, we have pulled together some guidance. **Please note** that there is no specific formula for assessing your readiness to take your Part 3. All applicants should refer to the entry requirements as a starting point, which can be found [here](#).

Step 1: Recognise how far you have come already

In addition to working for an architectural practice, you will also, typically, have an undergraduate degree (RIBA Part 1), and a Masters qualification (RIBA Part 2), already under your belt. Congratulations! Please don't underestimate how huge these achievements are. You may have taken an alternative route, and if you hold non-UK qualifications, you can find [guidance from the ARB regarding this here](#).

Step 2: Talk to your Practice Mentor

Initially, we advise you to have a discussion with your Practice Mentor (Director/Line Manager/whoever you report to...). Your Mentor should be signing off your PEDR records regularly, so will be best placed to offer you guidance in relation to your current level of experience. It is important to inform your Mentor that you are considering taking your Part 3, at the earliest opportunity. Your Practice Mentor should have oversight of what projects you are working on currently, as well as understanding what the future opportunities are, which will have an impact on your readiness to complete the Part 3 programme.

If you are not currently recording your experience... you should be! Read our [guidance booklet](#) to help you understand why this is important, and how to start with the support of the MSA.

TALK TO US

For general **Part 3** programme enquiries, or to arrange an informal pre-application discussion, please email Programme Leader:

Rachel Newton:

r.newton@mmu.ac.uk



Part 3 Programme Details

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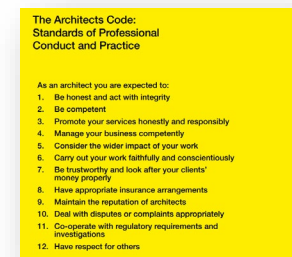
Step 3: Become familiar with the ARB Professional Criteria for Part 3

Look at the [ARB Part 3 Professional Criteria](#), and do an **honest** audit of your skill-set/experience to date.

How confident do you feel in relation to the RIBA work stages? Do you have a basic understanding of UK Planning and Building Control processes? How much experience have you been exposed to regarding Client/Consultant relationships? Do you know what the role of the ARB and RIBA are in the profession at large?

TO BE CLEAR, the Part 3 programme is designed to offer you the opportunities to expand and embed this knowledge... so you certainly do not need to feel ultra confident in these areas before applying! However, depending on which programme you want to enrol on (Sept/Jan), you will need to already have a **minimum 12 months experience** of working in a professional practice environment, and I would expect you to have a **basic awareness and understanding** of the content outlined in the Part 3 Professional Criteria upon application – even if you are a little unsure of the specifics/terminology.

Do not be frightened by the terminology – we are here to help demystify the jargon. However, it is important that you are honest in your level of current understanding.



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Step 4: What sort of 'learner' are you? What's going on in your life?

Consider the timeline of the programme you are looking at (9 or 12 months). Now, looking at your personal circumstances, how does this timeline map against your commitments? Is it the right time for you embark an intense period of working full time AND studying part-time simultaneously?

You will be expected to attend all lecture days/exams (10 days in total), in addition, you will be expected to do some further reading, research, revision, assignments in your own time (*whatever works best for you*: some candidates use one lunchtime a week, stay late for a couple hours in the office one evening, or use time over weekends). You won't need to do this every week – it is entirely up to you how much extra time you invest. However, we do not promote 'burn-out' culture at MSA, and we take the wellbeing of our students very seriously. We encourage students to spread-out their learning journey as much as possible to ensure the best results. We know that breaking tasks down into bite sized chunks is the best way to retain knowledge and achieve long-lasting results.

Therefore, it is important that you are honest with the level of commitment you can invest in a programme of this nature, at this time in your life.



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Step 5: Professional Practice Experience (PPE) – Will your practice support you?

At the end of the programme, you will undertake a 45 minute Professional Interview, with 2 x Professional Examiners. At that point, you need to demonstrate that you have **recently completed 24 months working in architectural practice**. This typically comprises 12-months at Stage 1 (following your undergraduate – Part 1 – qualification), and 12-months at Stage 2 (following your Masters – Part 2 – qualification). The weighting/accumulation of experience will differ according to your individual circumstances. We recognise that everyone has different experiences and personal circumstances. Therefore, it is prominent to state that **all experience is valid**. The crucial element is to make sure you have formally recorded/reflected/evaluated and have a written record of experience signed off by your Mentor, and your PSA. This includes short contracts and part-time working. We can work with you to help you demonstrate your experience.

Your holistic (24months min) 'PPE (Professional Practice Experience) Portfolio' needs to demonstrate that you have had involvement and exposure to a wide range of projects, covering as many RIBA work stages as possible, across the 5 Professional Criteria for Part 3 (ARB).

It is not ESSENTIAL for you to have lots of experience at any particular RIBA work stage. The important thing is that you have an awareness and understanding of the role of the architect across all work stages. We cover this content in the programme; however, the knowledge will embed much more effectively if you are also gaining good quality practical experience within your work environment simultaneously.

*If you are currently reading this with no experience of a project beyond RIBA Stage 4 – please **DO NOT PANIC**. You are not alone. Most Part 3 candidates will start the programme at the same stage. Talk to your practice Mentor and discuss the realistic opportunities for you to be involved in a project approaching stage 5, or that is likely to approach stage 5 in the coming months. It is perfectly acceptable to start your Part 3 programme without having gained experience of Stage 5+, as long as YOU and your practice are committed to asking for/providing you with opportunities to widen your experience throughout the duration of the programme.*