

# CAREER VIEW

## ARCHITECTURE

At the most basic level architecture, interior architecture and landscape architecture are professions that have grown out of human needs for shelter and space. As art forms, the different architectures are means by which architects make individual and cultural statements as they meet the needs of different client groups. To implement their designs, architects work in teams with many other professionals to bring buildings and landscapes from the virtual to the real. Even the most ordinary looking buildings and landscapes will have had input from design, planning and building professionals whose work continues to push the boundaries of concept and practice. As climate change and technology change the way we live, their work becomes increasingly critical.

### WHAT IS ARCHITECTURE?

The art and science of designing the built environment is a rigorous and multi-disciplinary profession. Architecture brings together the arts and humanities, sciences, technology and environmental awareness. It influences every way in which we plan, design, build, use and maintain our environments. Through their work architects can influence the ways we operate, how we feel and how safe we are inside and outside our buildings. Architecture also has an effect on the environment, on the light, wind, views, noise level and the ecology of a place.

Architects work on small buildings, groups of buildings and large or complex buildings, as well as the spaces in and around them. In doing this, they must comply with relevant codes and building regulations. The phases of a project in which they are involved begin with project initiation, during which the architect establishes a client's needs and budget. This leads to design development and analysis, documentation and building consent, construction and completion of a project. This process may take a few months to several years depending on the scale of a project. Along the way an architect will work with many other professionals including other architects, project managers, engineers, construction companies, quantity surveyors, building scientists and historians.

### Landscape architecture

Wherever people walk, gather, live, work and play they have a relationship with the natural and built environment. The landscapes people inhabit are of



great cultural, spiritual, aesthetic and economic value and the work of landscape architects is influential in creating this value. To do this they draw on many different disciplines to create environments that meet a wide range of human and ecological needs.

Landscape architecture is concerned with the design, planning and strategic maintenance of enclosed and

*Topical coverage of career related issues brought to you by Victoria University Careers and Employment.*

*Areas covered include how degrees and courses relate to employment opportunities, to life/work planning, graduate destination information and current issues or material relevant to the employment scene. Your comments and suggestions always welcomed.*

open spaces for people's use and enjoyment. While the practice of landscape architecture creates new urban, rural, residential and public environments, it is also concerned with the management and conservation of natural and heritage landscapes.

Wide-ranging in its scope, landscape architecture fulfils both aesthetic and practical purposes, whether in modifying an urban environment for a shopping mall, designing an industrial site, advising on rural or residential developments, or creating parks, reserves, waterfronts — any shared open spaces for environmental and recreational purposes. Landscape architects may decide to specialise in a particular area once they have qualified and have acquired a broad base of knowledge and experience over several years. Landscape architects tend to choose design, planning (environmental impact and project development advice) or management (policies for and preservation of cultural or heritage landscapes).

A landscape architect will be involved in the designs for specific sites, in drawing up contract documentation, doing landscape planning, management and assessment, and making landscape policy. While landscape architects usually don't implement their designs, they help their clients in the tendering process, inviting and reviewing tenders from landscape contractors, awarding contracts and acting as the client's agent.



## Interior architecture

Interior architecture specialises in the architectural design of interior spaces—the places we live, work, play, eat, shop, exercise and learn. It seeks to make a difference to people's wellbeing and create a better future through the innovative design of interior spaces. As we move towards more urban living we are spending over twenty hours a day inside, making the interior a critical place to get right. Millions and millions of dollars are invested in the design and construction of interior spaces every year; designing how people experience these new interiors is a highly valuable part of this investment.

Interior architects work in a wide range of places, including architectural practices designing interior and urban spaces, in the film and game industry designing sets and digital spaces, or designing furniture and jewellery. All of these careers require a good design sense, in order to create stimulating and exciting physical, cultural and emotional environments for people. To meet diverse client needs they must understand how different societies and cultures perceive and use interior places and how technology can influence an environment. Interior architects also understand how the elements of space, proportion, colours and furnishings work together in contemporary and older buildings. They work closely with a wide range of clients and other professionals using innovative technology to design and visualise the future spaces and places we will share.

## WHAT SKILLS DO ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS DEVELOP?

Architecture students develop a highly marketable set of knowledge and skills.

**Practical skills and technical knowledge.** The study of architecture provides wide ranging and up-to-date knowledge in the built environment field. Students also develop awareness of their personal strengths and limitations in respect to professional knowledge. As these professions are multi-disciplinary, students gain an understanding of other knowledge systems and a desire to continue and expand their learning. For example, they develop an understanding of the processes, methods and materials in construction. Work experience in construction is often recommended to understand structures in practice.

**Design methodology** is the capacity to draw on theoretical frameworks, research and to understand the needs and contexts of people. As they progress in their work, students will develop their practice by testing, iterating and changing their designs. Equally



## WHAT DO ARCHITECTURE GRADUATES NEED TO WORK AS PROFESSIONALS?

Architects, interior architects and landscape architects need professionally recognised qualifications awarded by an accredited institution. Architects must have completed a Master of Architecture (Professional) and be registered by the New Zealand Registered Architects Board (NZRAB). Landscape architects can register with the New Zealand Institute of

Landscape Architects (NZILA). There is no specific registration required for interior architects however professional associations such as the Designers Institute of New Zealand (DINZ) have entry criteria and ongoing professional development requirements. The New Zealand Institute of Building (NZIOB) has a wide membership within the building industry.

Following completion of their postgraduate degree, graduates will usually need to work for at least three years before advancing further in their career, becoming registered or choosing an area of specialisation. As the architecture and building industries are multi-disciplinary, graduates need to be able to understand the language of the other professionals they work with such as engineers, sub-contractors and construction companies. Graduates also benefit from being all-rounders, having varied interests and work experiences.

Some professional bodies have a membership category that allows students and new graduates to belong. Joining an association as an undergraduate or new graduate is a good way to form networks, to begin professional development and hear about companies that are recruiting in areas of interest.

## WHERE DO ARCHITECTURE GRADUATES WORK?

Architects may specialise once they are registered and have acquired a broad base of knowledge and experience. Specialisations include commercial and industrial, education, healthcare, hospitality, marine, building restoration and conservation, multidisciplinary practices, residential, sports,

important, they learn to be collegial by giving and accepting critique, which is essential in any creative practice.

**Creative and critical thinking.** Graduates will have learned to think rigorously, to analyse complex data and information, synthesise knowledge and solve problems in an imaginative and creative way. They develop their own approach, influenced by the thinking of others, based on their research and knowledge of history, cultural and social movements and trends. They learn to see the big picture as well as hone in on the detail.

Architecture involves a great deal of collaborative **teamwork** between the different professions and trades required to achieve safe indoor or outdoor built environments. Structures must meet the requirements of building codes, resource management and the client's brief.

During degree studies, students work on projects in groups and learn about the work of other construction professionals. Students learn about all aspects of **project management** and other aspects of professional practice, such as planning, finance, legal obligations and the administration of contracts.

To support their practice, students become skilled in many aspects of **communication**. These include writing, sketching, drawing and modelling as well as verbal communication. They can also listen, interact and negotiate in a range of interpersonal, communal and professional situations and work effectively in a team setting. Professional practice studies at postgraduate level also bring out **leadership** skills and the ability to operate in a responsible, fair and ethical manner using sound professional judgement.

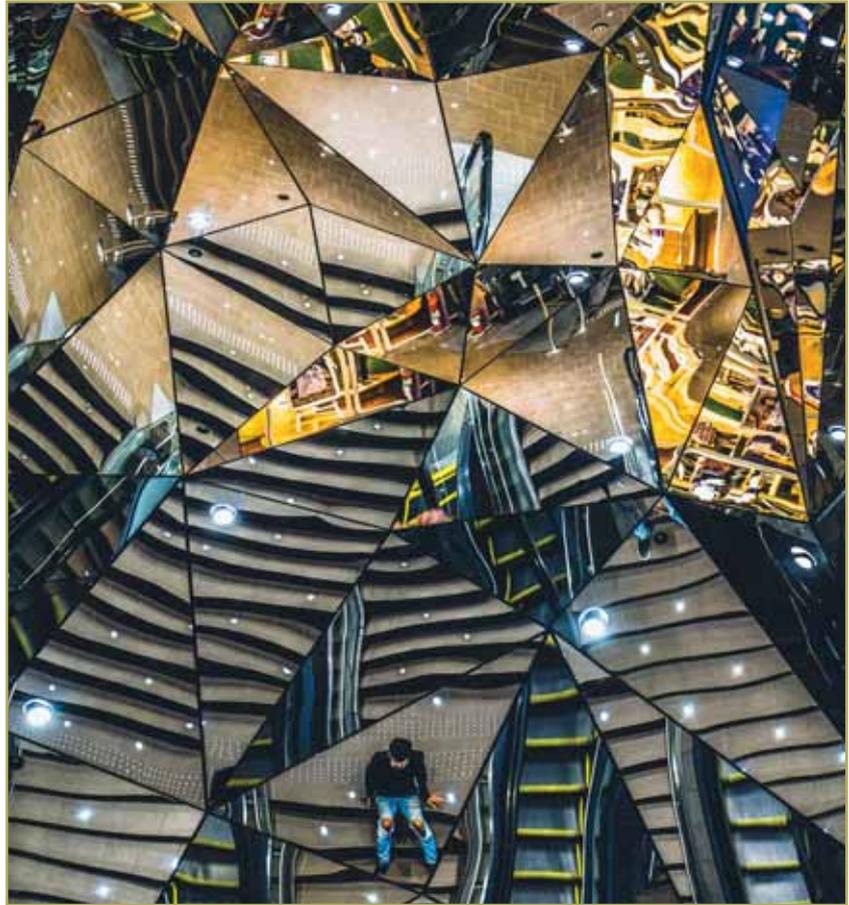
accessibility, planning, sustainable building, seismic research and design. Many graduates will move into a career in mainstream architecture, working in an architectural firm or for a large organisation. Because a degree in Architecture equips students with a set of marketable transferable skills, graduates may also pursue careers in related fields. Additional qualifications may be required.

**Private practice.** Large and medium-sized companies and consultancies such as construction, engineering, property operators and developers employ graduates to entry-level positions, depending on the availability of work. Large landscape architect firms may hire graduate architects in landscape design, landscape planning and management. Alongside architectural and construction companies, interior architects/designers may find work with interior design companies, specialist design firms and product companies. Some furniture companies also use designers.

**Graduate architect** positions give architecture, interior and landscape graduates experience working collaboratively on different projects. Large architecture and engineering companies often have a graduate programme as well as summer internships. Smaller firms tend to prefer experienced practitioners.

Architecture graduates typically work for three to four years until they pass registration. Graduate architects work within a project team, under the guidance of a project architect and cover a range of roles including preliminary concept and developed design, documentation, and site and contract administration. Occasionally graduates will specialise in the design or documentation phases, but generally they get exposure and are expected to work across stages and sectors. They may also do drafting and other tasks. Some companies prefer graduates to have a working knowledge of construction and this may be gained through work experience on building sites.

**Self-employment.** Some architects, landscape architects or interior architects set up their own practice after gaining several years' experience. Others with an interest in the technologies behind project management, building information management



and design may be part of technology start-ups, often supported by business incubators.

**National, regional and local government organisations** employ people with architecture degrees in relevant areas. Urban and rural planning, environmental design, and management and conservation of heritage sites are relevant to graduates with degrees in architecture and landscape architecture. While government and crown agencies such as Housing New Zealand employ architecture professionals, they also contract private companies for specific projects. This is largely the case for community and non-government agencies responsible for developing social housing stock in major centres as demand increases. Previous industry experience is likely to be a requirement for some roles.

**Regional councils and territorial authorities** employ architects, landscape architects, urban designers and planners, project assistants and managers. Work within local authorities is often varied. Entry-level positions may be found in parks and reserves, building consent, housing or property sections. Some councils have graduate programmes and scholarships.

Combined with a Law qualification, Architecture graduates can work in **legal** roles, in government or private practice. They may work in litigation,

## GRADUATE PROFILES

arbitration or mediation, especially in the areas of insurance, disaster recovery and weather-tightness.

**Education.** Universities employ Architecture graduates as tutors and faculty staff. Graduates considering an academic career usually require a PhD and a record of publication. Technology teaching in secondary schools and training establishments is a viable career option for graduates. A secondary teaching qualification is required.

**Journalism, content development, web design, writing and editing** for journals, websites and publications are work options that may require further training. Writers with a specialist background who can communicate knowledge in a clear and interesting way to a broad cross section of readers may find a niche market for their skills. Technical writing is another option where specialist knowledge is useful in writing manuals, reports or documents to do with standards and regulations.

Architects, especially interior architects, find roles with **art galleries and museums** designing and curating exhibitions, mounting installations and creating interactive media. Many architects exhibit as artists in their own right, whether full time or as projects in what can often be a diverse portfolio of roles. They may also be involved in **theatre** as set designers.

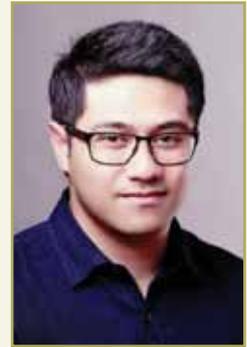
### JOB TITLES

Following is a selection of titles taken from our graduate destination surveys. Some roles may require postgraduate or conjoint qualifications and training. Titles can include:

Architect • architectural historian • architectural technician • artist • building construction analyst • building materials consultant • building researcher • business development manager • business director • CAD technician • curator • designer • draftsman • editor • environmental designer • estimator • exhibition designer • furniture designer • graduate architect • graphic designer • interior architect • interior designer • jewellery designer • landscape architect • lighting designer • marine interior designer • lecturer • mediator • planner • project assistant • project manager • property developer • property manager • resource planner • retail designer • set designer (film, theatre, television) • spatial designer • sustainability consultant • technical advisor • technology teacher • tutor • urban designer • urban planner • web designer • writer/critic

### Esekia Faiga

*Architectural Graduate  
CCM Architects*



Coming out of high school I was very interested in graphics and illustration, steering myself towards a career in animation. However, it was my early curiosity in Architecture that led to me enrolling in Architectural Design and after discovering that my interests and passions could align with my courses, I never looked back. I was successful in getting through to the second year of the degree and went on to complete my Bachelor of Architectural Studies followed by a Master's degree.

From first year right through to final year, my courses allowed me to explore various techniques to communicate ideas through imagery. I relished the challenge of producing visuals that would reveal a narrative or concept behind my project without the need for words. While the degree aims to develop essential knowledge in building systems and construction, at the same time, creativity and imagination is never constricted and always encouraged to flourish within any project. For my final-year Master's project, I developed a series of visionary hand sketches that investigated how architecture could respond to global disaster in the future, more specifically, an ice age.

I was fortunate enough to have had opportunities that enhanced my studies through Te Rōpū Āwhina, an amazing on-campus whanau support group. One such opportunity was the chance to meet with practicing architects in Wellington to bounce ideas and gain valuable feedback. This opportunity to break the arduous transition from tertiary studies to the workplace early on would eventually lead to my employment with CCM Architects, where I have been working on many projects, from hospitals to community centres.

My studies have enabled me to communicate Architecture through the language of imagery and visualisation – languages that are an integral part of our everyday lives, yet can be so easily misunderstood. From 3D renders to quick table-napkin hand sketches, the degree helps to develop key skills for getting ideas across quickly and simply, as well as providing opportunities to extend networks to the professional world outside of the university.

**Alana Inglis**

*Interior Designer  
Athfield Architects Ltd.*



I was introduced to architecture by my high school physics teacher who recognised my passion for art and curiosity for how things work. My grandfather was a draughtsman and builder who drew plans for some of the first social housing in Wellington. Under their influence I enrolled to study first-year Architecture. I enjoyed how open and varied the first-year programme was. Finding myself drawn to projects that focused on the human scale and sense of occupation through furniture and spatial design techniques, I chose to specialise in Interior Architecture. With a strong focus on making at a 1:1 scale in order to build an understanding of materiality, I was able to grow as a designer throughout my five years of study.

For my Master's thesis, I reviewed the spatial and physical conditions of the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Wellington Hospital. Using spatial and furniture design techniques I developed products for parents to use during interactions with their infants outside of the incubator, a practice known as Kangaroo Care or 'skin-to-skin' contact. The experience of working with the premature babies, parents, medical staff and volunteers of the NICU was an extremely moving and rewarding design experience.

After graduating I contracted as a set designer working on design-build projects for shows like Summer Shakespeare, the New Zealand School of Music Opera, The Fringe Festival, and even the School of Architecture and National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) as an exhibition designer. My time as a set designer allowed me to get really hands on with the full design-build process. Everything I designed I made, budgeted and project managed. It was a fantastic, yet very challenging, practical learning experience.

Networking within the architecture community is important. I continue to make an effort to attend as many events, talks and lectures as possible so that I can meet other inspiring design professionals. I currently work at Athfield Architects as an interior designer, designing for a range of medium-to-large scale commercial projects whilst continuing to volunteer my skills to the theatre community.

**Carinnya Feaunati**

*Architectural Graduate  
Opus Architecture*



I've always been creative; from a young age I loved to draw as well and make things. I remember sitting in church, as a rebellious eight-year-old, designing dresses and pants - the flare pants were a favourite. Little did I know this design mind-set would evolve into a career in architecture.

For me, architecture became an exploration of who I was and what I could contribute to my learning of the field. I'm very proud of my Pacific identity; as there are not many Pacific Islanders in the industry, I became somewhat of a self-appointed ambassador. My parents came over from Samoa as young adults and went straight into work. With that came a lot of sacrifice on their part. My four siblings and I were allowed to choose our own direction, but attending university was a given. It was obvious to us growing up that education was the key to unlock poverty, but more importantly the value of working hard. During my time at university I saw huge value in what indigenous cultures could offer to the teaching of Architecture. I was interested in the connections between a country's histories and culture and their relation to transforming the built environment. My Master's thesis proposed a research and design framework for approaching the redesign of communities after natural disasters, and an architecture firm in Wellington took it on. The research picked up positive attention and my team were given the opportunity to show some of our work at the National Museum in Samoa for the UN SIDS (Small Island Developing States) conference in 2014. It was then exhibited at Pataka Gallery in Porirua.

After graduation and before joining Opus I was with Workspace Architects for about 15 months. During that time I was invited to UNESCO in Paris for the COP21 Sustainable Innovation Forum to present my research.

Right now, I am currently on the Opus Women in Leadership committee, the NZ Samoan Methodist Church Special Projects Committee and I belong to the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC). I am also now a Co-Director of a social design company called Mau Studio and we are currently working on two sustainable development projects in the Philippines.

## Shane Annabell

*Estimator  
Transpower New Zealand*



I have made several side steps from my original study plans, building on skills I learnt along the way, to career paths I had never considered. I studied Architecture because I enjoyed design and the building process, however as I progressed through the degree I found myself more interested in the programs and technologies used and the processes employed rather than the outcomes themselves. I discovered that there were many facets to creating built environments and it was the financial side of projects that interested me most. I had always been interested in computers, which started to show as I began asking more of the programs we used, both in the classroom and at work.

After speaking to a guest lecturer, I secured a summer job for some work experience at Rawlinsons Quantity Surveyors. After seeing real projects in the workplace, I decided that after finishing my Bachelor of Architectural Studies I would begin full-time work as a Quantity Surveyor with the company. Being a Quantity Surveyor is focussing not only on what a construction project is going to cost, but also making sure that construction costs and production are managed as efficiently as possible. I find that quite a few people skills are also involved to gain agreement between the contracting parties. While in that role I began working closely with the technology the firm used. I specialised in large-scale housing projects and used databases to keep, manage and utilise accurate costing information.

I was later offered a position with Transpower in their Estimating department. The role supports asset planning decisions and expenditure forecasts, ensures consistency across project budgets, ensures the construction rates are defensible and traceable when scrutinized, and provides business-wide tools and reporting. In some ways, it is a long way from Architecture, but actually uses many of the transferable skills I learned. The company was after someone skilled in a mix of quantity surveying and database management, so the fit was perfect.

My advice for those beginning study would be, don't think that studying Architecture can only lead to a career as an Architect, never pass up a chance to learn a new skill set and don't ignore opportunities that arise along the way as you'll never know where they may lead.

## Ensiyeh Ghavampour

*Senior Urban Designer &  
Landscape Architect  
Boffa Miskell*



I decided to follow my heart, as I loved the creativity and originality of architecture. My decision to study Landscape Architecture was influenced by my favourite lecturer in Tehran, who showed us that it was more about the spaces between buildings, how buildings interact with each other and how people use open spaces. Undertaking a PhD at Victoria completes the missing piece between architecture and landscape architecture.

Having a PhD and looking for work in New Zealand was not easy. It involved a lot of door knocking. There is a perception with employers that a PhD graduate does not know how to do the practical side of things. However, I don't regret for a moment the learning experience of studying at that level. I observed people in Wellington inner-city squares and parks and looked at how they interacted with those spaces, ultimately submitting my findings and recommendations to the Wellington City Open Space Strategy. This deep study improved my understanding of design that is usually underestimated in design practice.

To overcome the barriers in finding work, I found volunteering was a good way to learn about the New Zealand job market and networking. I was the designer for The Porirua Placemaking project, part of a team working with the Porirua City Council on Porirua Place, an open space revitalisation project where I transferred my team's ideas into a plan as well as working on a large art installation. Coming from a different cultural background, it meant that I could demonstrate to people what I could do and make connections.

Now that I am working on bigger projects with a large organisation, there is an interest in my PhD and how it can be applied in practice. Key strengths and skills from my PhD include an ability to sustain a high workload, apply myself and resolve problems. From undertaking and presenting a thesis, I developed a belief in myself and it enhanced my capacity to learn the practical things. My writing and GIS skills improved and I could quickly learn to use new applications on the job.

A key bit of advice that I would give is to be willing to learn on the job and not to be picky about first experiences. Be prepared to do anything. Things that might be considered basic can often help you find a way to make progress in an organisation.

## ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES AT VICTORIA

The School of Architecture at Victoria University is well placed to provide intellectual leadership on a range of issues around contemporary architecture practice and the built environment. The Bachelor of Architectural Studies (BAS) is a three-year undergraduate degree offered in four majors: Architecture, Interior Architecture, Architecture History and Theory, and Landscape Architecture.

All four majors share a first-year programme covering design, technology, environmental studies and communication practices in the context of all disciplines offered within the School. These courses give an overview of design knowledge for the built environment and introduce concepts, vocabularies and skills in an interdisciplinary context. At the completion of the first year, students apply for selection into one of the BAS disciplines to major in. The second year is discipline-specific, inclusive of technological, theoretical and design subjects that relate to the chosen major. The third year reintegrates the disciplines and offers a richer and more complex

interdisciplinary approach. This undergraduate degree alone does not qualify Architecture or Landscape Architecture students for professional registration. Students aspiring to become professional architects or landscape architects will need to enrol in postgraduate programmes. Similarly, Interior Architecture students should undertake postgraduate study in order to pursue careers as specialised designers (professional registration is not available in New Zealand for Interior Architecture).

The two-year Master's degrees in Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Interior Architecture prepare students for professional careers. Part one is a consolidation and integration of previous knowledge gained in Design, Technology, Environmental Studies, Communication Practice and Professional and Business Studies as a precursor to professional practice. Research methods are taught to prepare students for a Master's thesis in part two. Part two involves a design thesis that tests a research proposition and demonstrates a degree of academic rigour and professional specialisation prior to graduation. Students majoring in

Architecture History and Theory can continue studies with the one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Architecture History and Theory. This leads into a non-professional thesis-based Master of Architecture.

The School of Architecture also has two graduate programmes—a Graduate Certificate in Designed Environments and a Graduate Diploma in Designed Environments. Both the certificate and diploma provide an attractive professional development vehicle for architects, interior architecture specialists, landscape architects, designers, planners, project managers, building inspectors and people working in related areas.



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