

**BRUSSELS**

Studio Sergison  
Diploma 2022

Brussels, the production of culture





Contents

5	Introduction
6	Brussels, the production of culture
8	The context
14	Case studies
20	Strategy plan
22	Survey
24	Atmosphere/image
28	Building concept
30	Facade concept
32	Material for final review
34	Programme
36	Contacts

Aerial view of Brussels





## Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to work in Brussels and focus the theme of cultural production. We will explore how architecture can contribute to this as a social and cultural catalyst in specific places within the city.

The availability of affordable spaces for creative practice also have a significant role in the development of art communities and art movements.

In the 1960s New York was the centre of the global art scene. The social and economic difficulties the city suffered from at the time created opportunities for artists, who were able to secure large former industrial spaces at affordable prices. Andy Warhol, Louise Bourgeois, and what are commonly known as the Minimalists – Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt, Donald Judd, Richard Serra, Dan Flavin, Robert Morris, Robert Smithson, Eva Hesse, Robert Ryman, Walter DeMaria, Lawrence Weiner, Michael Heizer and Gordon Matta-Clark to name the most famous..

The city offered spaces and the benefit of working in close proximity and this resulted in an extraordinarily productive period.

In the 1970s a similar set of circumstances made Berlin attractive to artists.

Against the backdrop of the Cold War the redundant buildings left vacant after the war attracted both German and foreign young artists and gave rise to an underground cultural scene which had profound and lasting effects in the rest of Europe and beyond.

In the 1990's London witnessed a moment of significant cultural production.

Following the crash of the stock and property boom in 1987, former shops, offices and warehouses became available on cheap, short-term leases as studios and exhibition spaces. Young artists, some still at art school, began to promote themselves outside the established gallery system.

The art scene that emerged at this moment in time was in part an expression and reaction to these circumstances and culminated in the circumstances that lead to the Tate Modern project.

We must also be aware that the real estate market is always very quick to exploit such opportunities. The opening of Tate Modern on Bankside led to the regeneration of this previously neglected area gave rise to a process of gentrification. The artists who once found cheap rent in the East End of London are now forced to abandon the city as it has become unaffordable. Brighton, Margate, Bath are some of the new centres of creative practice in the UK.



As in the examples mentioned already, the relationship between creative practice and the economic circumstances repeat itself and is what conditions this round of diploma, giving us the opportunity to study and the relationship between the Belgian capital and the production of culture.

Today Brussels is city with an interesting art scene and a variety of spaces that accommodate the needs of creative practice.

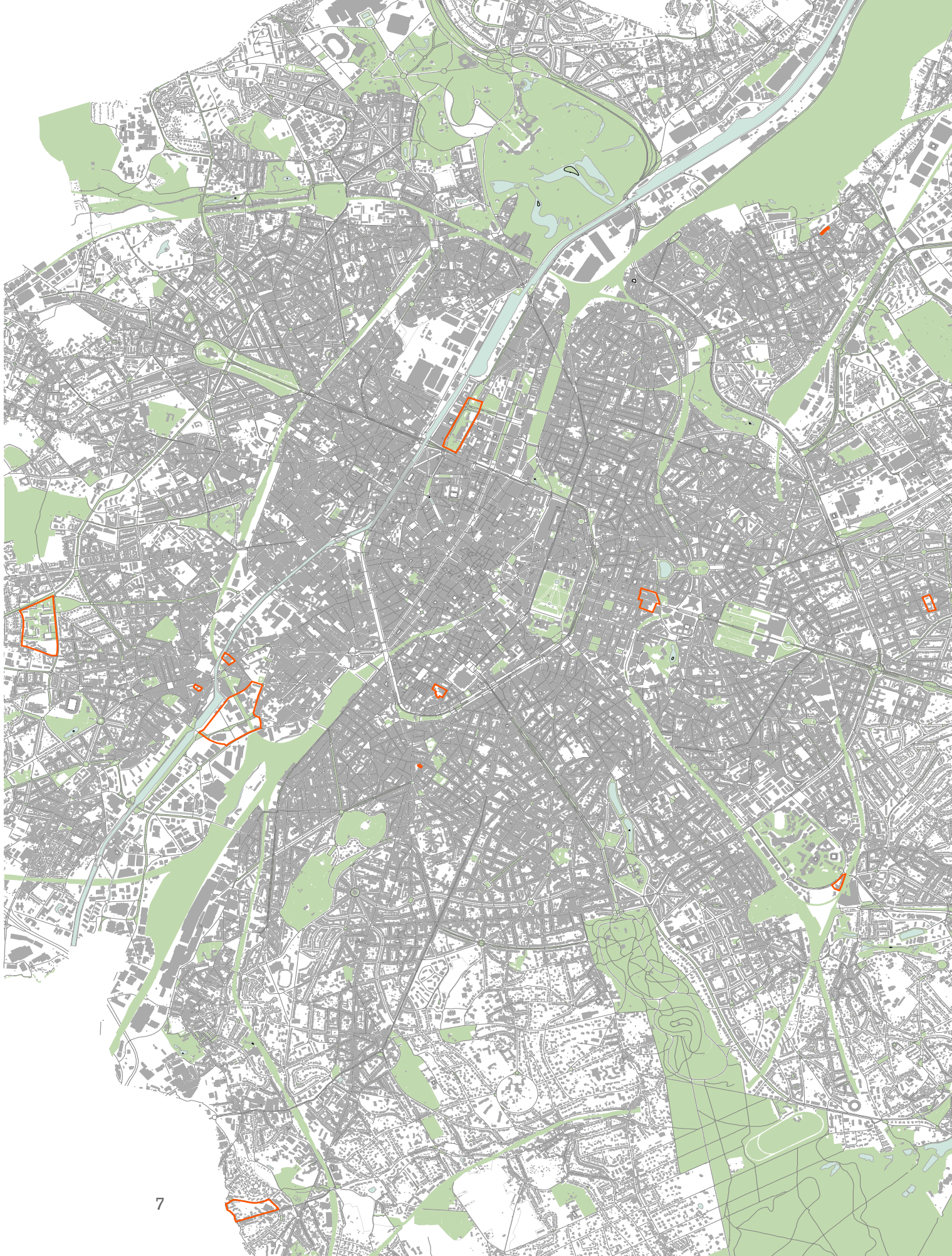
It is also a complex multicultural city whose cultural identity is evolving.

While we welcome the invitation to consider cultural production, we believe it is necessary to situate it within a wider social, political and economic context.

Brussels suffers from a high rate of unemployment, the failure to integrate migrant communities and other forms of social inequality, not to mention the environmental needs of the built environment.

The building programme we been assigned - showroom – does not provide a very promising opportunity to address these issues, but we will elect to break it into two words, show and room, and explore how these may inform a fitting response to the 12 sites students will work on.

We will also integrate at least one additional building programme from the range of options being studied, addressing the unique circumstances of the sites we will work on.



Plan of the area under investigation





1



4



5



2



6

- 1 Rue de stassart
- 2 Rue Emile Claus
- 3 Avenue de la Libération
- 4 Ruel Alphonse Renard
- 5 Av. du Congo
- 6 Backyard René Magritte Museum Rue Essegheem





1



4



2



3



5

- 1  
Abbaye de la Cambre
- 2  
Rue Alphonse Renard
- 3  
Jardins de l'Abbaye de la  
Cambre
- 4  
KANAL-Centre Pompidou  
Place Saintelette
- 5  
Rue de Bosnie
- 6  
Overleaf  
Rue Michel Servet





SALOIR

SALON LA

259

ALIMENTATION GENERALE





1



2



3



4

1  
House and Studio for Brad  
Lochore  
Tony Fretton  
London, England

2  
Lisson Gallery  
Tony Fretton  
London, England

3, 4  
House for two artists  
Tony Fretton  
London, England

5  
Donald Judd home and studio  
New York, USA

6  
Studio-house  
Theo van Doesburg.  
Meudon-Val-Fleury, France

7  
Ensamble Fabrica  
Ensamble studio  
Madrid, Spain

8  
Anish Kapoor Studios  
Caseyferro Architects  
London, UK



5



6



7



8





1



2



3

1  
Melnikov House  
Konstantin Melnikov  
Moscow, Russia

2  
Werkraumhaus  
Peter Zumthor  
Andelsbuch, Austria

3  
Isamu Noguchi studio  
Isamu Noguchi, Shoji Sadao  
New York, USA

4  
Goetz Collection  
Herzog & de Meuron  
Munich, Germany

5  
Rotor headquarters  
Maarten Gielen, Lionel Devlieger,  
Mia Schmallenbach, Tristan  
Boniver  
Brussels, Belgium

6  
Elektra House  
David Adjaye  
London, UK

7  
House for an Art Collector  
Herzog & de Meuron  
Therwil, Switzerland



4



5



6



7

Overleaf  
View of Brussels  
from the top of WIELS Museum

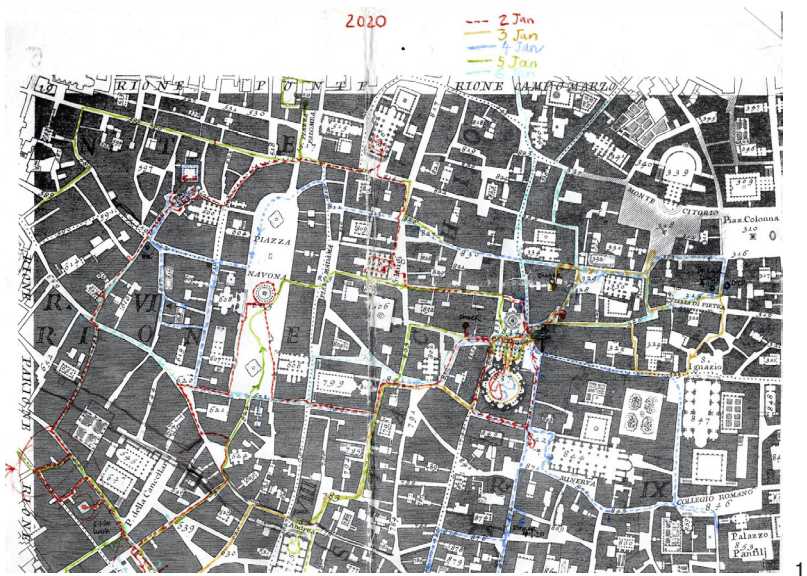






The first component of the work to be undertaken this semester requires you to develop a strategy plan. This will involve a typological and massing study based on a 1:500 model that should encompass a wider area than the site in which your work is situated.

We ask you to begin by exploring numerous solutions that would allow the site or sites you are studying to be developed. Each of the studies or options proposed should be recorded in photographs and its qualities should be critically appraised in order to further develop, refine or discard it. This work should be understood as an iterative process that will begin to develop the idea for the project you will be working on throughout the semester.



1  
Sheila O'Donnell  
Drawing over Giambattista Nolli's Nuova  
Topografia di Roma, 2020

2  
Sergison Bates  
City Gate mixed-use masterplan,  
Brussels, xBelgium, 2019



2

In this studio we hold the position that invention is a necessary ambition in architecture, but it rarely emerges by spontaneous intuition. Generally, architects develop truly unique proposals only after many years of study and reflection, and it is questionable whether true originality can actually be achieved, given the wealth of precedents in the history of world architecture.

To help you understand the task that you will be attending to this semester we would like you to undertake a survey. This will be at the scale of the city, focusing on the immediate neighbourhood your project would be adjusting and adding to. This will ensure a clearer understanding of what it is you are being asked to work with, giving you a better chance of making a building that is suited to its purpose.

You should begin to consider where the building programme you have been assigned can be introduced into the urban fabric.

You could look at how the plan of a building is organised, or you could consider a study that looks at elevations rather than at building volumes. You should be able to describe it clearly and analytically, employing diagrams where necessary. Alternatively you might concentrate on understanding the quality and arrangement of a facade drawing upon a measured survey of an existing series of elevations.

This will require you to look carefully at buildings, making sketches and taking photographs as a way of recording their current condition. We also ask you to make a precise photographic portrait that conveys the atmosphere of the building or buildings and the manner in which they are situated in the city. You might also make a photographic portrait of an internal space and record the relationship of the building's interior with the city outside.

You are free to choose the subject of your own survey, but do consider carefully the role it may play in assisting you later.



Matteo Dossola, Lorenzo  
Semeraro

Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon  
Unknown architect



The next piece of work you will need to undertake requires you to produce two images. No specific graphic technique is prescribed, although you should be able to explain why you consider the technique you choose appropriate.

These images should represent the atmosphere and the presence of your building. One of the images should depict the exterior of the building and its relationship with the existing urban tissue and the site of the project within the city and its immediate context. The other image should represent the interior and its qualities as a partly public, partly private space.



1



2

1  
Interior perspective  
Luca Borlenghi

2  
Interior perspective  
Chiara Arcidiacono

overleaf:  
Exterior perspective  
Arnaud Beetscheni







The results of these previous studies should be reappraised and drawn upon to produce the next instalment of this semester's work. We would now like you to develop a more precise concept for a building or buildings and their relationships to the wider context. The principal tool we ask you to employ is a 1:100 study or sketch model, which should include the relevant surrounding area. This will form the basis of the key piece of work you will be producing this semester. We are interested in the qualities of the buildings you design and the way they are expressed through the organisation of the facades.

Your work should concentrate on the critical appraisal and further refinement of your earlier studies. While a model will be the principal piece of work, we expect your project to be developed with study plans, elevations, sections and sketches. It is also important that you measure the density of your proposal.

At this stage in the semester your work will be subject to an intermediate review.

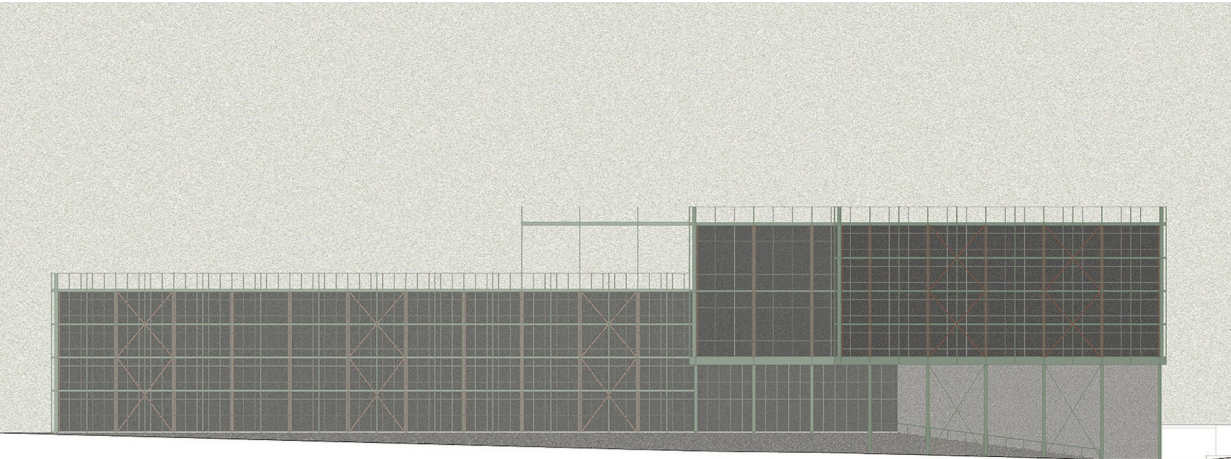
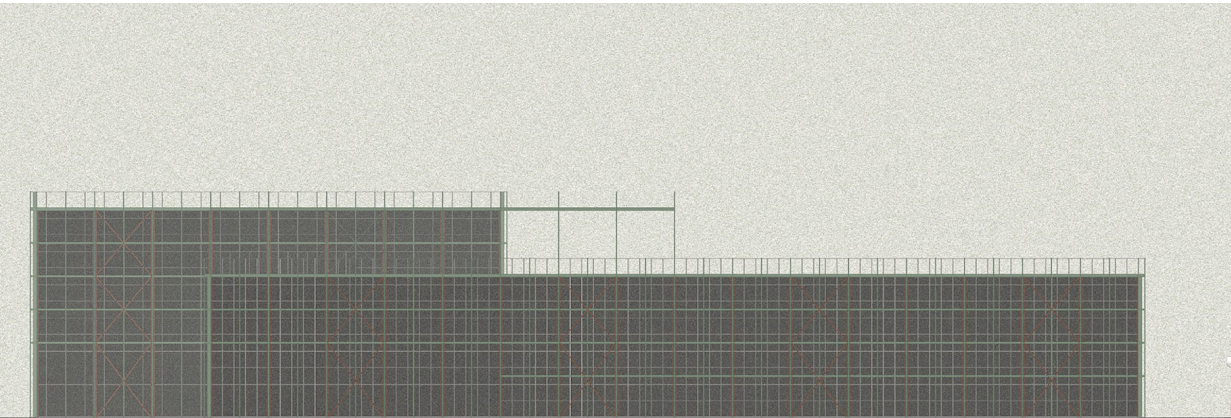


Music school building plan  
Jasper Rumbelow

At this stage of the semester you should already have developed a rudimentary understanding of your project in plan and section, and we now ask you to develop and test your ideas for the facades within the framework of the strategy you have developed.

The facades of your buildings should be drawn at 1:100 (as unwrapped elevations) and translated into three-dimensional models.

This piece of work should be undertaken with a clear concept of the image of your buildings in mind. What materials is the building made from? How do you approach the arrangement of window openings? How does the building meet the ground, and how is the top of the building resolved? There are numerous additional questions you should be asking yourself about the facade of your building.



Elevations  
Elisabetta Muttoni



With the emergence of a convincing set of ideas for your buildings you will need to produce a careful set of drawings of some of the facades you have developed. In addition to these, you will need to produce a number of sections at scale of 1:100.

You should also give due consideration to the plans for the project. These should be developed at 1:200, 1:100 and at a larger scale where appropriate. You should consider repetition and variation in apartment plans and what other programmes might be introduced, especially on the ground floor.

A landscape plan should be produced at a scale of 1:200 to indicate an approach to the landscape surfaces, hard and soft elements, and public realm in general.

The main piece of work should be the remaking of images that represent the project.

Finally, you should produce a pdf or Powerpoint presentation describing your project. This should be understood as an important tool for presenting your project at the final review and should document the development of your work and explain the strategy you propose.



Volumetric models  
1:500



Date	Event	Details	Assignments
10 January	Collective meeting Site allocation	Taro Sakurai (TS), Liviu Vasiu (LV)	
10 February	Collective meeting Model discussion	Presentation 1:500 / 1:200 models	1:500 / 1:200 site model Precedent study
23 February ( Wednesday)	Tutorials	Urban studies	1:500 / 1:200 model studies 1:500 plans
3 March	Tutorials	Review of urban studies	1:500 / 1:200 model studies 1:500 plans
11 March	Tutorials	Perspectives	1:500 / 1:200 model studies 1:500 plans
18 March	Tutorials	Preview of all work	1:500 / 1:200 model studies and plans Perspectives
25 March	Tutorials	Preview of all work	1:500 / 1:200 site model 1:200 plans Study models Interior/exterior perspectives Pdf presentation
1 April	Tutorials	Preview of all work	1:100 plans Study models
6 April	Intermediate reviews	Project reviews with Diploma commission and guest critics	1:500 / 1:200 site model 1:200 plans Interior/exterior perspectives
15 April	Review	Project reviews with Diploma commission and guest critics	1:100 plans Study models
22 April	Easter holidays		
29 April	Review	Plan studies Elevation studies	1:100 plans Study models

Date	Event	Details	Assignments
6 May	Tutorials	Plan studies Elevation studies	1:100 plans Study models
13 May	Review	Review elevations	1:100 plans Study models
20 May	Tutorials	Elevations	1:100 plans Study models
27 May	Review	Review of projects	Start final models
3 June	Tutorials	Discussion of final model	Project revisions
9 June	Final reviews	Project reviews with Diploma commission and guest critics	1:500 / 1:200 site models Final models (scale to be agreed) 1:100 ground floor plan 1:100 typical plan 1:100 elevations and sections Interior/exterior perspectives Pdf presentation

## Contacts

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