



The Architecture portfolio

Architecture candidates who are invited for interviews at King's are asked to bring with them a portfolio of their work to discuss with the interviewers.

What should be included in the portfolio?

There are no set requirements for the content, style or number of pieces in your portfolio. Successful candidates have brought paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, models and constructions of all kinds.

Broadly speaking, we would like to see:

- Material that shows your ability to work in a range of media and draw from life.
- Material that conveys a spatial and three-dimensional interest.
- Material that shows your ability to work with a range of materials, such as models, installations, casts, and other forms of manual production. These are particularly useful to convey your three-dimensional interests and creativity.
- Material that shows *your own* interests. Successful students with different interests are likely to have very different portfolios.

We advise you to bring enough material to show the range of your skills, but to be selective (quality not quantity). Remember that the portfolio is not simply a catalogue of the work you have produced. The portfolio itself is a piece of work you have produced. Take good care preparing it, organising your work in a certain order, laying out pieces on a page, etc.

We do not expect you to include:

- Designs for buildings – that is what you are coming to Cambridge to learn!

We do not mind where or why you produced the pieces you include. The material may have been prepared for school exams but equally you can include creative work that you produced in your own time.

Practical details

Please do not send any portfolio material by post or email in advance. Portfolios must be brought to interviews only. You will be able to take your work home with you afterwards.

- For drawings it is best to bring your original pieces, but any paintings on canvas, or other bulky 3D items such as sculptures and models should be shown as photographs rather than brought with you.
- If you have audio or video work, bring your own laptop (or any other necessary piece of equipment) to show it. Make sure it is on when you walk into the interview and that the battery is charged.
- Many students arrive with a portfolio in an A1 folder large enough to take big pieces, but there is no set size for your work and no expectation that all work should be the same size. Students who will need to take their portfolio on aeroplanes etc. may like to bear this in mind.

What are we looking for?

Architecture students at Cambridge work on studio projects for two days each week. In the studios you will be asked to produce models and drawings to communicate design ideas.

We do not formally 'mark' or assess the portfolio but, in judging your suitability for the course, we will be interested to see:

- Your drawing and related technical skills
- Your ability to produce three-dimensional pieces of work
- Your choices and interests
- The terms in which you present and discuss your work.

Your ability clearly to convey your intentions, and to respond to the comments that we make during the interview, provides the best measure we have to assess your likely performance in the studio.

How can I improve my drawing skills?

A Level Art or an equivalent qualification is not essential, however it is important to enjoy freehand drawing and to have excellent drawing skills as these are essential for the Architecture course.

You do not need to learn technical drawing skills such as orthographic projections or computer software before making your application to study Architecture. Instead, the best things to focus on are free hand drawing from life, model making, or any form of three-dimensional creative work.

If you would like to develop your drawing skills, the best approach would be both to get plenty of practice and also to take drawing classes. You would find helpful an art school where teachers can give advice about representing things from life in a broad range of drawing styles and media.

There are also some useful books about drawing which you could use for guidance, for example:

- Edwards, B. *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (HarperCollins, 4th edition, 2012)
- Dodson, B. *Keys to Drawing* (Northlight, 1990)