



## Construction and the Built Environment – Unit 3

### 3.1 Interpreting technical sources of information

#### SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications are formal documents presented in written form along with working drawings of the proposed project. Their purpose is to outline the client's expectations and set the standards for the project's construction stage.

Specifications include information on:

- the scope of work that needs to be achieved
- specific materials to be used
- the quantities and sizes of materials needed to complete the task
- standard of workmanship for the project
- tolerance of dimensions and vertical/horizontal levelness
- quality of finish
- adherence to recognised building standards.

#### BUILDING REGULATIONS

Building regulations set out the standards to which all buildings must be constructed, altered or extended in the UK. They are statutory regulations and are enforceable by law. They were first set out in the Building Act 1984 and are regularly updated to improve factors such as the safety, quality and sustainability of construction work. The regulations are enforced by the UK Government in England, the Northern Ireland Executive, and the Scottish and Welsh Governments. They are intended to:

- protect people's safety, health and welfare in and around buildings
- improve conservation of fuel and power
- protect and enhance the environment
- set standards for accessibility, water use, energy use and security
- promote sustainable development.

#### DESIGN BRIEFS

A design brief for a construction project is developed from the project specification and outlines the requirements and scope of the project, the timeline and the budget. The individual construction tasks and methods of construction are described in detail for each of the trades involved in a project. In the Unit 3 assignment brief, the overall scope of the project is outlined as well as the indicative scope for each of the eight trade options.

The brief often includes the following:

- **Client information** – what the client does and the end function of the project.
- **Site information** – location, condition and surveys of the intended site.
- **Spatial requirements** – detailed drawings, plans and elevations.
- **Technical details** – structure, anticipated lifespan, building services, specialist equipment requirements, energy use and security.
- **Materials and components** – significant materials and product requirements.

#### DRAWINGS

Drawings are produced to British Standards 1192 (BS 1192).

They need to be used and understood by everyone involved in a project, including structural and civil engineers, site managers, mechanical and electrical contractors and tradespeople.

Scale drawings are used to show objects when it is not convenient to draw them at their actual size. The relevant scales, as specified in BS 1192, are generally:

- 1:1, 1:5 and 1:10 for construction details
- 1:50, 1:100, 1:200 for layout and site plans
- 1:1250 for location plans.