

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Course record information

Name and level of final award:	BA (Honours) Designing Cities: Planning and Architecture
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Diploma of Higher Education Certificate of Higher Education
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Marylebone Campus, University of Westminster
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	Three years full time. September start.
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</a> :	Town and Country Planning (2008)
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	Royal Town Planning Institute
Date of course validation/review:	9 June 2015
Date of programme specification approval:	
Valid for cohorts :	2016/17 level 4, 2017/18 levels 4 and 5, 2018/19 levels 4, 5 and 6
Course Leader	To be confirmed (Professor Marion Roberts and Dr. Suzy Nelson are coordinating preparation of documents for validation)
UCAS code and URL:	<a href="http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate">http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate</a>

## What are the minimum entry requirements for the course?

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

[westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply](http://westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply)

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: [westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply](http://westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply)

## Aims of the course

Cities are increasingly dynamic, complex and global in their impact. This course will help you to build a professional career taking an active role in shaping our cities as they continue to grow and adapt. The course provides ways of understanding the processes of city development, how they function and the forces that will form their future. The course gives you skills in how to manage cities sustainably, how to shape the buildings that form them and enhance the lives of those who inhabit and work in them. As such it meets the requirements of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) enabling the initial significant step to certification as a chartered town planner. This will give you the authority and confidence of an established profession that has international recognition.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU);
- **Graduate attributes** are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA);
- **Professional and personal practice learning outcomes** are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP);
- **Key transferable skills** that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS).

## Upon completion of level 4 you will be able to:

- L4.1 Discuss key economic, social and environmental issues faced in a range of different international urban contexts (KU, GA, PPP);
- L4.2 Demonstrate an understanding of key historical architectural and planning traditions, and identify associated relevant features of architectural composition and urban layout (KU, GA, PPP);
- L4.3 Identify different forms and techniques for construction and relate them to architectural traditions and building types within the context of sustainable development (KU, GA, PPP);
- L4.4 Demonstrate a basic competence in the skills issues necessary for the practice of architecture and planning (These will include CAD and other relevant digital software, 2D and 3D drawing, data analysis and manipulation, report and essay writing, layout and presentational skills, and group working) (GA, PPP, KTS);
- L4.5 Deploy, synthesise and augment the skills gained above through carrying out a spatial analysis (PPP, KTS);
- L4.6 Identify the potential for and develop policy proposals and propositions for small-scale design intervention (GA, PPP, KTS).

### **Upon completion of level 5 you will be able to:**

- L5.1 Present an analysis of a site in its urban context and develop planning and design briefs to meet the needs of users in a specific real life international context (KU, GA, PPP);
- L5.2 Design and represent a creative architectural proposition for a simple building type using orthographic graphic means (KU, GA, PPP);
- L5.3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the role of strategic spatial planning and its potential for meeting the challenges of sustainability in an international context (KU, GA PPP);
- L5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the roles of patterns of land ownership, private and public finance, and different stakeholders in urban development (KU, GA, PPP);
- L5.5 Evaluate the financial impact of different strategies and assess their potential for generating added value for the community (KU, GA, PPP, KTS);
- L5.6 Carry out a character appraisal of an area with historic built form; identify opportunities and make propositions for positive change (KU, PPP, KTS).

### **Upon completion of level 6 you will be able to:**

- L6.1 Demonstrate effective use of research and analytical skills developing a critical understanding of a particular planning issue or building type (KU, GA, PPP, KTS);
- L6.2 Critically evaluate alternative strategies for promoting sustainable development assessing their impact in mitigating and adapting to climate change (KU, GA, PPP);
- L6.3 Critically analyse the political and ethical nature of spatial planning and architectural design, discuss consultation and accountability to clients and the wider public, elaborate the potential of interdisciplinary practice KU, GA, PPP);
- L6.4 Develop and critically evaluate alternative spatial planning policies and design strategies for a specific real life context (KU, GA, PPP, KTS);
- L6.5 Describe a creative planning or design solution explaining how it responds to the local urban context, the needs of a diversity of users and promotes sustainability using 2D and 3D graphic representation; (GA, PPP, KTS);
- L6.6 Make effective oral and graphic presentations of your work, and produce written work to graduate level standard (GA, PPP, KTS);.

### **How will you learn?**

The learning and the teaching of the course will include lectures, seminars, workshops, charettes, presentations, site visits, field trips and studio tutorials.

- Lectures will be used to introduce students to key concepts and debates relating to the design of cities, and to explain and discuss different planning and design strategies and techniques. A range of visiting lecturers from practice will present their experience of tackling real life problems.
- Seminars will provide a forum for students to discuss material introduced in lectures and to discuss relevant literature.
- Workshops will provide students with the opportunity to develop practical skills through guided exercises.
- Site visits and field trips will provide students with the opportunity to examine and evaluate urban development in a range of different contexts. In the second year there will be an international field trip.
- Presentations enable students to develop their oral and graphic skills and to receive immediate feedback.
- Charettes are time limited design exercises that enhance students' creative responses and ability to represent ideas and concepts.
- Approximately 40% of the course will consist of project modules which will enable students to apply and deepen knowledge and skills learned in other modules. At level 4 and level 5 project modules students will initially work in groups to carry out initial research, evaluate precedents and develop strategies for intervention, and then submit individual policy and design proposals.

Students will have the opportunity to choose option modules at levels 5 and 6.

### **How will you be assessed?**

The assessment of student work will include presentations in seminars, essays, different types of reports, case studies, sketchbooks, and policy and design proposals. Project modules will assess learning outcomes introduced in other modules. Core modules will not include examinations or in-class tests.

Where appropriate the assessment of modules will follow the FABE assessment tariff set out below. There will be a range of assessments which link with the course and module learning outcomes.

### **Employment and further study opportunities**

There is currently a buoyant employment market for professional planners in the public and private sectors in the UK and internationally. There is a particular demand from employers for planners who have a good understanding of design issues.

On successful completion of the course students will have realised the learning outcomes of the Royal Town Planning Institute's requirements for initial spatial planning education. In order to become members of the RTPI they will need to complete

- a Masters Degree with RTPI accreditation as a specialist course,
- two years in practice, and
- pass the RTPI's Assessment of Professional Competence.

The University of Westminster currently offers an MA Urban Design, which has RTPI specialist accreditation and is seeking specialist accreditation for the MSc Transport Planning and Management.

The BA Designing Cities: Planning and Architecture is designed to promote the development of the University of Westminster's five graduate attributes: creative and critical thinkers, literate and effective communicators, entrepreneurial, global in outlook and engaged in communities, and socially and environmentally aware.

#### **• Critical and creative thinkers**

Creativity and critical thinking are key to the practice of planning and architecture. Developing critical thinking extends and often challenges previous academic experience and cultural expectations. During the course students will discuss and critique theory and practice. Case studies and projects reflecting real world situations will be used to develop strategic thinking, problem solving skills, and design skills.

#### **• Literate and effective communicators**

Our graduates will need good written, oral and graphic communication skills in their professional lives. Students will learn to develop coherent evidence based arguments, and to use a range of media to present policy and design proposals. Graduates will need to be digitally literate and proficient in the use of a range of software including CAD. They will need to be able to listen and respond to both members of diverse communities and fellow professionals. As the course progresses students will learn how to develop strategies to communicate to varied audiences.

#### **• Entrepreneurial**

Our graduates will need to be able to operate effectively in a competitive business environment. Our students will learn to evaluate the operation of property markets and to assess the role of different stakeholders in the development process. They will develop skills in the financial appraisal of development proposals. As their studies progress, students will

become more outward looking and engaged with practice. They will experience and evaluate work environments, and use these experiences to develop and manage their careers.

- **Global in outlook and community engaged**

Our graduates will need to be aware of the impacts of globalisation on urban development in different contexts and of the finite nature of global resources. They will also need to understand the importance of effective community engagement to sustainable development. The development of this attribute will be embedded in our teaching activities and intrinsic to our students' learning. The course will explore literature and case studies that investigate the planning and implementation of development in a range of different international contexts. Projects will enable students to investigate the needs of communities and develop practical proposals to meet their needs. The course will include a project linked to an international field trip.

- **Socially, environmentally and ethically aware**

An understanding of sustainability is crucial for professional planning practice and will be developed throughout the course. Students will debate different strategies to address the challenges of climate change and to realise sustainable development, and consider how planning and design proposals can most effectively promote environmental and social sustainability as well as economic prosperity. Students will also discuss the ethical standards that are required of professional planners.

### Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

University of Westminster courses capitalise on the benefits that London, as a global city and as a major creative, intellectual and technology hub, has to offer for the learning environment and experience of our students. A number of level 4 modules will focus on studying contemporary issues, planning policies, urban form and development in London.

Credit Level 4				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
4PLAN002W	Contemporary Issues in Designing Cities	Core	20	10
4URDE001W	Construction and Environmental Design	Core	20	10
4URDE002W	History of Architectural and Urban Form	Core	20	10
4PLAN003W	Skills for Planning & Architecture: analysis and visual communication	Core	20	10
4PLAN004W	Project: Planning for Integrated Neighbourhoods	Core	40	20
<b>Award of Certificate of Higher Education available</b>				
Credit Level 5				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
5PLAN004W	Strategic Spatial Planning	Core	20	10
5URDE001W	Development Process and Property Markets	Core	20	10
5URDE002W	Project: Townscape and Conservation	Core	20	10
5PLAN005W	Project: Regeneration and Development (with international field trip)	Core	40	20
	Option or elective		20	10
<b>Award of Diploma of Higher Education or Foundation Degree available</b>				

Credit Level 6				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
6PLAN003W	Work Experience and Professional Practice	Core	20	10
6SUEV001W	Sustainability and Environment	Core	20	10
6PLAN004W	Research Report	Core	20	10
6PLAN005W	Project: Planning Policy and Design Intervention	Core	40	20
	Option or elective		20	10
Award of BA available				
Award of BA Honours available.				

### Options and Electives

You will be able to choose one 20 credit option (chosen from a list of modules within the faculty) or a Westminster Elective (chosen from a list of modules within other faculties) at levels 5 and 6. The Learning Futures Programme is still in the process of being developed and a full list of possible options and electives is not yet available, but some possible options and electives are listed below.

Faculty	Module Code	Module Title	Level
ABE		Heritage and Cultural Tourism	5
ABE		Tourism and Events Policy	5
MAD		Contemporary Photographic Practices	5
MAD		Illustration and Visual Communication - Critical Frameworks	5
WBS		Project Management	5
SSH		Academic English - Initial Registration Code	5
ABE		Urban Tourism	6
ABE		Sustainable Tourism in the Developing World	6
SSH		Cultural Criticism: The Popular and the Everyday	6
WBS		Online Social Entrepreneurship	6

In addition students may choose to take Polylang modules in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian or Spanish. Languages are offered at 5 different levels, from beginners to advanced levels. All modules aim to enhance employability by developing effective communications for professional and personal life.

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

### Professional Body Accreditation

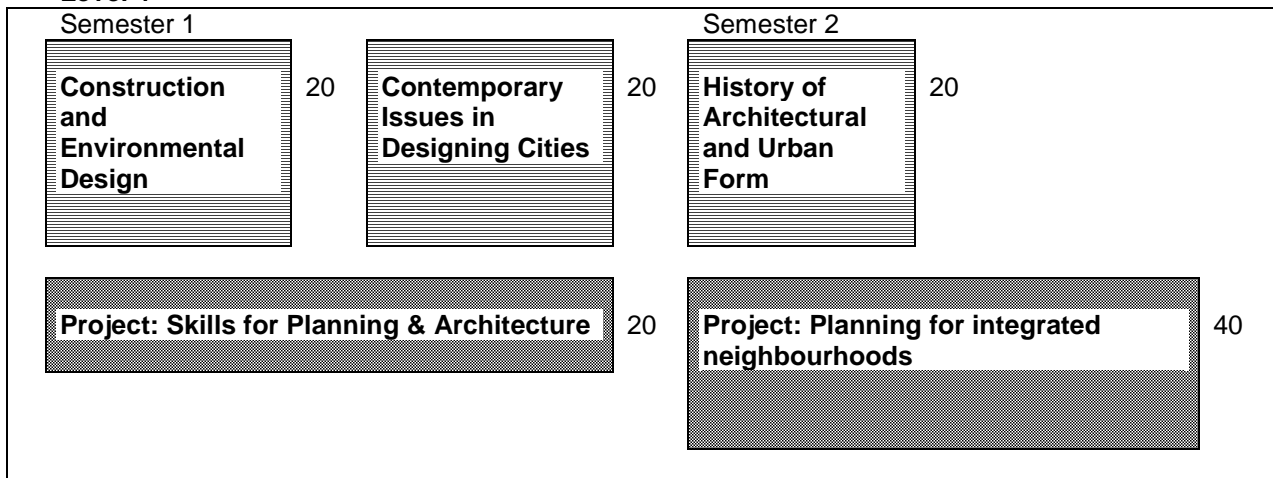
We are seeking accreditation of the course from the RTPI as meeting their requirements for the spatial planning element of Initial Planning Education.

### Academic regulations

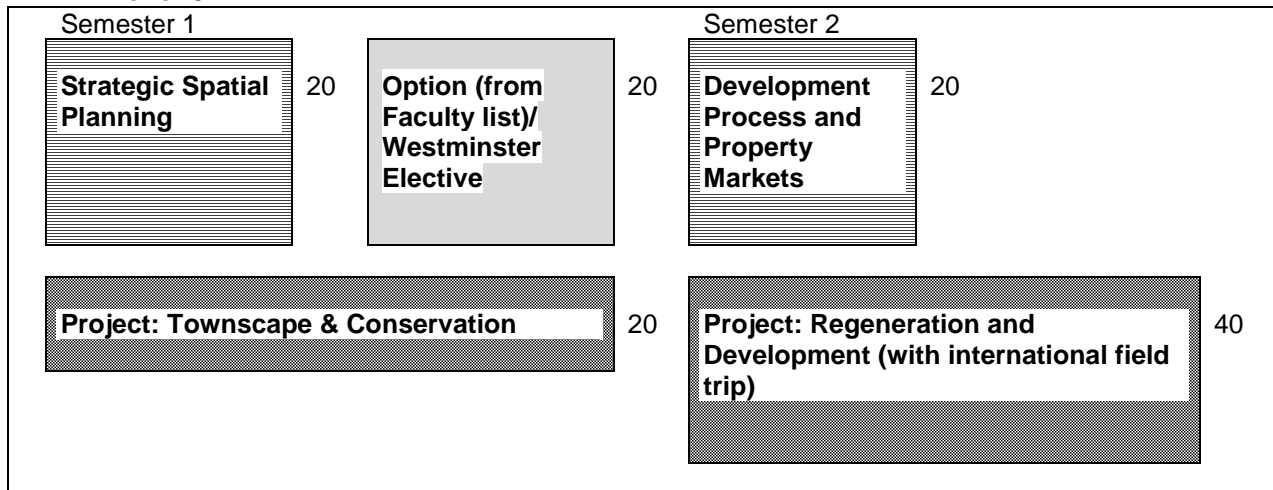
The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations)

## Course Diagram: BA Designing Cities: Planning and Architecture

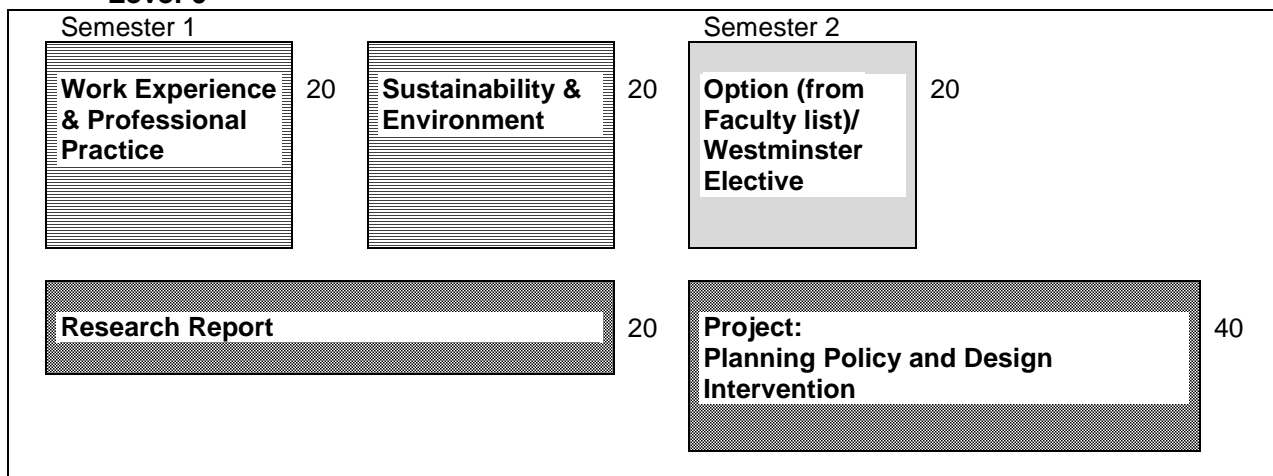
### Level 4



### Level 5



### Level 6



## How will you be supported in your studies?

### Course management

The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- The Course Leader is responsible for all aspects of the day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum and its delivery;
- Professor Johan Woltjer, Head of Department, holds overall responsibility for the course, and for the other courses offered by the Department of Planning and Transport: <J.woltjer@westminster.ac.uk>
- Professor David Dernie, Dean of Faculty, holds overall responsibility for the course and for all other courses run by the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment.

### Academic support

Upon arrival, an orientation programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. All students registered for more than three modules and courses of at least one year's duration will be allocated a **personal tutor** who is responsible for giving you academic guidance (see below for further details on personal tutoring).

### Learning support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Students will be encouraged to develop their design work in the architectural studios, which are equipped with computers. Studio sessions will be timetabled for particular days of the week.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

### Support Services

The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/new-students/when-you-arrive>

The [University of Westminster Students' Union](http://www.uwsu.com/) also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University. <http://www.uwsu.com/>



### **How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel and the RTPI's Partnership and Accreditation Panel in 2015. The panels included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

The RTPI's Partnership and Accreditation Panel meets annually with academic staff from the Department of Planning and Transport to ensure the continuing quality of the accredited planning courses in the University.

### **How do we act on student feedback?**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously.

Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey which seeks the opinions of students about their course and University experience. Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

**Please note:** This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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