

Part one: Programme Specification

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	MA Housing Practice Postgraduate Diploma Housing Practice Postgraduate Certificate Housing Practice
	The MA and Postgraduate Diploma in Housing Practice are Masters degrees that are Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Housing Practice Postgraduate Certificate Housing Practice
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Marylebone Road
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Tony Manzi
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/planning-housing-and-urban-design/postgraduate-courses/part-time-day/p09mphpr-ma-housing-practice
Mode and length of study:	2 years part time (for the MA) 3 semesters part time (for the Diploma) 1 and ½ semesters part time (for the Certificate)
University of Westminster course code:	HPRPHPR
JACS code:	K450
UKPASS code:	004377
QAA subject benchmarking group:	Housing
Professional body accreditation:	Chartered Institute of Housing (for MA and Diploma)

programmes)

Date of course 2011

validation/review:

Date of programme 2013-14

specification:

Admissions requirements

Applicants will normally hold a good honours degree (second class honours or above) or appropriate equivalent awarded by a recognised institution. In addition, applicants should have English Language competency judged sufficient to undertake advanced level study (equivalent to 6.5 IELTS).

The course recruitment policy encourages applications from candidates with non-traditional academic backgrounds. Mature students are considered favourably and applications are particularly welcomed from people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Admissions to all postgraduate housing courses are processed in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunity Policy.

Aims of the course

- (i) To provide an academically challenging and professionally relevant programme of study for students seeking to broaden and deepen their knowledge of housing and related areas;
- (ii) to provide a framework at postgraduate level within which individuals can develop their personal and professional skills, ability and knowledge of housing practice;
- (iii) to enhance students' research skills within a framework that focuses on a critical and analytical assessment of current issues in housing organisations;
- (iv) to develop curiosity and self-curiosity and the self-critical attitudes which underpin lifelong learning;
- (v) by imparting postgraduate level skills, to enhance students' employability in the context of rapid change and development in the housing profession;
- (vi) to meet the professional body requirements within a postgraduate level framework;
- (vii) by the encouragement of critical reflection on policy and practice issues, to promote and shape the debate on good practice within the housing profession.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.

Most students are already employed and studying on a part-time day-release basis. However, the critical thinking analytical abilities help to improve employability and to operate in more strategic managerial posts. Once enrolled on the programme students will attain student membership of the Chartered Institute of Housing. Students will attain corporate membership on completion of the Diploma in Housing (as a minimum) in addition to completion of the CIH APEX (practical experience) requirements of the programme.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and understanding

At Level 7 (noting modules where the Learning Outcome is, or can be, particularly addressed) students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- **The social context** for housing: Equality and diversity; housing demand and supply; housing need; tenure; social inclusion and exclusion; housing and the impact of information technology (*Housing Management Practice; Housing and Public Finance; Urban Policy and Strategy*)
- **The policy context** for housing: linking policy and practice; policy transfer and comparative housing; housing and urban governance (*Housing Management Practice; Urban Policy and Strategy*)
- **The economic framework** for housing: housing and the macro-economy; supply and demand; public expenditure; public and private finance; consumer subsidy (*Housing and Public Finance*)
- **The legal framework** for housing: housing and the judicial process; landlord and tenant law; homelessness and tenancies; anti-social behaviour (*Housing Law; Housing Management Practice*)
- **Housing organisations as businesses:** organisational change; new public management; customer service; leadership and motivation (*Housing Management Practice; Urban Policy and Strategy*)
- **Sustainability and regeneration:** planning for housing; the development process; housing and economic regeneration; gentrification; resident involvement and empowerment (*Housing and Regeneration; Urban Policy and Strategy*)
- **Collaborative working:** partnership arrangements; network organisations; inter-disciplinary practice (*Housing Management Practice; Housing and Regeneration; Reflective Practice*)
- **Housing research:** quantitative and qualitative methods (*Research Methods - MA and Diploma students; Dissertation – MA Students*)

Specific skills

At Level 7 (noting modules where the Learning Outcome is, or can be, particularly addressed) students should achieve the following:

- **Personal and Professional skills:** ethical understanding; non-discriminatory practice; problem solving; presentation; reflective practice (*Housing Management Practice; Housing Law; Housing and Public Finance; Urban Policy and Strategy Reflective Practice*)

- **People skills:** flexibility, negotiation; active listening; conflict management; inclusive working; community engagement (*Housing Management Practice; Housing and Regeneration; Urban Policy and Strategy; Reflective Practice; Public Participation*)
- **Strategic skills:** leadership; enterprise; managing risk; developing strategy; change management; asset management (*Housing Management Practice; Housing and Public Finance; Housing and Regeneration; Urban Policy and Strategy*)
- **Practical skills:** project management; performance monitoring; financial awareness; the application of legal principles; undertaking research; using IT for housing (*Housing Management Practice; Housing Law; Housing and Public Finance; Urban Policy and Strategy; Research Methods; Dissertation*)

Key transferable skills

Graduates of the course should be able to demonstrate skills in:

- Critical analysis and reflection
- Information gathering, retrieval and application, including problem definition, data collection and qualitative and quantitative analysis
- Written and oral communication
- Inter-disciplinary team working, negotiation, and collaborative working.
- Understanding diversity and difference in all contexts
- Independent learning, creativity and innovation and a methodological approach to exploring an issue or problem in depth
- Self management and motivation, including setting targets, managing time and resources, working to deadlines and balancing conflicting demands.
- Personal development planning

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

Learning

The learning strategy is based on the need to develop students' conceptual framework and skills in a rigorous but vocationally useful way. Students working in housing and related organisations are encouraged to bring their own experience at work to seminar discussions in order to advance the exchange of information about implementation and processes, and real world case studies are also used to this end.

Teaching

The teaching strategy is designed to allow students to place their knowledge and experience of practice in a theoretical context, to integrate theory and practice. Short lecture presentations will be given by full-time staff or visiting lecturers, encouraging comments and questions. Seminars and group discussions following the lectures are used to allow students to relate their practical experiences to the theoretical issues raised in the lecture.

Assessment

The broad aim of the assessment strategy is to incorporate a range of different assessment forms. Essays allow the student to focus on defined issues in depth; project work, is designed to support the student in applying analytical frameworks to practical situations and case-studies, allow the use of a variety of methods. Time-constrained examinations are used only in those modules where the ability to compare and contrast a range of perspectives concisely and precisely is considered as fundamental to the module.

There are two 10 credit modules (research methods and reflective practice – for MA and Diploma students); these are designed to provide an introduction to the research process, to enable students to critically reflect on work-related environment and to relate academic study to practical situations.

The dissertation (for MA students) will seek to locate an aspect of housing study in a theoretical framework and will be assessed on the extent to which the student has demonstrated a sound grasp of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and applied these to the issue chosen. The project will have a more practical orientation, acknowledging prior research and focusing on process within organisations. It will be assessed on the extent to which the student demonstrates an understanding of the linking of theory and practice within organisational strategies and the credibility of the recommendations in the light of the empirical material presented.

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value.

Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
Core modules				
4HSG7B3	Housing Management Practice *	Core	20	10
4HSG7B2	Urban Policy and Strategy **	Core	20	10
AHSG700	Housing and Regeneration *	Core	20	10
4HSG7A8	Housing and Public Finance *	Core	20	10
4HSG7C4	Housing Law *	Core	20	10
AURD709	Reflective Practice **	Core	10	5
APLN705	Research Methods **	Core	10	5
AHSG701	Dissertation/Project	Core	40	20
(* to be taken for Certificate and Diploma - three out of four modules for Certificate; ** to be taken for Diploma)				
Option modules (MA only - one from)				
APLN711	Public Participation and Engaging Communities	Option	20	10
AURD705	Public Realm	Option	20	10
APLN710	Environmental Policy & Climate Change	Option	20	10
4HSG7B8	Domestic Violence: Law and Policy	Option	20	10
4HSG7A1	Legal Method	Option	20	10

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

Academic regulations

The Housing Practice programme and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster. The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 18: Modular Framework for Postgraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current Handbook of Academic Regulations, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

Award

To qualify for the award of **MA Housing Practice**, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7 (this may include a maximum of 30 credits at Level 6 where validated as part of the award);
- attempted modules worth no more than 240 credits; and

Note: A first attempt of any module will count as an attempt, and a re-attempt of any module that a student has failed will count as a further, separate attempt. Re-assessment following referral at the first sit will not count as a further separate attempt.

- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Masters Degree with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across modules at Level 7.
- a Masters Degree with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules at Level 7.

To qualify for the award of **Postgraduate Diploma in Housing Practice**, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7, which must include all of the core modules listed above, with the exception of the Dissertation;
- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Postgraduate Diploma with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across the modules contributing to the award, where the Diploma is the **target award** rather than an intermediate award conferred following failure in one or more modules.
- a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules contributing to the award, where the Diploma is the **target award** rather than an intermediate award conferred following failure in one or more modules.

To qualify for the award of **Postgraduate Certificate in Housing Practice**, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 60 credits at Level 7, which must include three from: Housing Management Practice, Housing Law, Housing and Public Finance and Housing and Regeneration;
- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Postgraduate Certificate with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across the modules contributing to the award, where the Certificate is the **target award** rather than an intermediate award conferred following failure in one or more modules.
- a Postgraduate Certificate with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules contributing to the award, where the Certificate is the **target award** rather than an intermediate award conferred following failure in one or more modules.

An intermediate award of a Postgraduate Certificate (normally 60 UK credits at Level 7) or a Postgraduate Diploma (normally 120 UK credits at Level 7) is also available for students who are unable to complete the course.

Support for students

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Faculty Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at their Faculty. 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.

The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

Reference points for the course

Internally the housing team are committed to furthering knowledge through publication, academic research and consultancy. The programme is in line with the mission of the University of Westminster is to provide high quality education and research in both national and international contexts for the intellectual, social and professional development of the individual and for the economic and cultural enrichment of London and wider communities.

The course meets the strategic objectives of the University's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy (TLAPS) as well as university policy on skills and employability. The modular framework is aimed to offer flexibility and quality delivery.

Professional body accreditation

Externally the MA and Diploma programmes meet Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) expectations for corporate membership.

Quality management and enhancement

Course management

Situated within the Department of Planning and Transport in the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment on the Marylebone Campus, the course is managed by a small team of permanent academic staff with specialist knowledge in housing and related disciplines. The course leader (Tony Manzi) is responsible for the day to day management of the programme and development of the academic curriculum. The course team hold regular meetings to review the course structure, content and delivery as part of the annual monitoring process.

Staff in the Department undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by colleagues leading to staff development through course attendance or research activity. The staff teach on related courses and are involved in publication, research and consultancy for variety of public, private and third sector organisations. We maintain close links with practice and members of the team are active in research and professional associations.

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2010. The panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic course review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is 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 each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the Faculty action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback 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 elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with review panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student

feedback from course committees is part of the Faculty's quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course: westminster.ac.uk/

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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