

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final awards:	MA in Urban Design Postgraduate Diploma in Urban Design Postgraduate Certificate in Urban Design The MA and PG Diploma Urban Design are Masters degrees that are Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma in Urban Design Postgraduate Certificate in Urban Design
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:	Bill Erickson
Course URL:	MA http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/planning-housing-and-urban-design/postgraduate-courses/full-time/p09fpubd-ma-urban-design PG Diploma http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/planning-housing-and-urban-design/postgraduate-courses/full-time/p09fpurd-postgraduate-diploma-urban-design PG Certificate http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/planning-housing-and-urban-design/postgraduate-courses/part-time-day-release/p09ppcud-postgraduate-certificate-urban-design
Mode and length of study:	MA/PG Diploma - 1 year full time or 2 years part time PG Certificate – 1 year part time
University of Westminster course code:	UPDPUPD
JACS code:	K400
UKPASS code:	MA – 004385 PG Diploma – 045448 PG Certificate – 045446

QAA subject benchmarking group:	N/A
Professional body accreditation:	RTPI accreditation as a specialist planning degree. Urban Design Group: approved for recognised practitioner
Date of course validation/review:	2006/2011
Date of programme specification:	2014-15

Admissions requirements

- Normally a good Honours Degree (such as a 2.2 or better) in architecture, landscape architecture, town planning, or other related discipline; together with relevant practical or professional experience.
- Full-time students would normally be expected to have some relevant experience.
- Part-time students are normally expected to be employed within the general area of urban design or related professions and to have at least two years' relevant work experience.
- Applicants with a background in another field may be considered providing they can demonstrate practical experience or knowledge of urban design.
- Normally equivalent to IELTS score of at least 6.5 is required.

Aims of the course

In an increasingly urbanised world, there is growing international demand for urban design graduates. These courses will equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to participate in this rapidly expanding profession. Urban design involves shaping the physical setting for life in cities. The pace of urban change, and the challenge of making cities efficient, sustainable and meaningful, demands creative solutions to design and management. The Urban Design courses at Westminster provide a coherent approach to issues that face our cities, combining structured academic study with live design projects, allowing you to develop practical skills, a theoretical understanding and an informed approach to sustainable urban development.

The programme addresses the needs of a range of individuals in the sector and is structured to allow a number of routes. The MA part time mode is most popular with those already working in the industry who are seeking to specialise in urban design. The full time mode is more appropriate for recent graduates or those changing careers. Urban Design Studio module is delivered in a range of attendance modes and can be taken with the Urban Design Summer School module forming an alternative route to the Postgraduate Certificate, which is particularly suitable for busy professionals who are looking for a practical introduction to urban design.

The specific objectives of the course are to enable students to:

- develop and enhance students' design skills at the urban scale.
- develop a critical approach to sustainable urban development and awareness of awareness of the different philosophies and theory of urbanism.
- establish a comprehensive understanding of the practice of urban design, its historic development as well as its social and economic context.
- understand the activities and products typical to urban design practice, to reflect upon and expand their own skill base
- work collaboratively and in an interdisciplinary context and identify their own role within an interdisciplinary profession.
- Consider, research, expand and document a specific urban design topic or issue in depth

The course strongly emphasises the importance of inter-disciplinary working. Professionals from a range of disciplines working together is seen as essential to creating sustainable communities. On some modules students are taught alongside international planning, planning and housing students, which gives students an understanding of the role of different disciplines and the experience of working collaboratively across disciplines.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, ie 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.

The course has a strong vocational focus and enjoys a good reputation within the industry. Employment prospects are excellent for full-time students graduating from this course. Part-time students are usually already employed and for them promotion and career enhancement follow soon after completion.

It is uncommon for graduates to move on to higher study but this course provides a good grounding for a small number have taken up research degrees

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

- A systematic understanding of and critical approach to current practice in urban design and sustainable development.
- A comprehensive knowledge of urban form and space; their quality, use, typologies and experience and
- A critical awareness of the different theoretical approaches to urban design upon which practising urban designers currently draw;
- Appropriate techniques in undertaking analysis, shaping the public realm, site and master planning, sustainable urban development and feasibility assessments
- The understanding of principal historic and cultural influences that have formed cities, especially in recent centuries and the emerging cultural practices that are transforming them
- The role of urban design in the development process and relation to legislative, financial, social and environmental context and the interaction with related disciplines

Specific skills

- Design process: analysing design problems, setting objectives, posit, visualise and evaluate spatial design propositions at an urban scale
- Design outputs: production of typical urban design products including site appraisal, context appraisal, capacity studies, frameworks, site briefs, design statements, masterplans, design guides and feasibility reports
- Theory: practical application of appropriate theory and precedent to urban design practice
- Survey, analyse and summarise urban form, activity, movement, meaning and context at differing scales
- Context: relate urban design objectives to current planning issues, including; development strategies, transport, conservation, inclusion, diversity and sustainability
- Evaluation, make reasoned assessment of; the financial feasibility, environmental performance and social benefit of propositions

Key transferable skills

- Design based problem solving involving creativity, innovation and critical evaluation based on reasoned application of theory and precedent
- Inter-disciplinary team working, negotiation, and collaborative working.
- Independent learning and enquiry
- Formulate, research, structure, and advance a reasoned argument
- Self-management, set targets, manage time and resources, work to deadlines and balance conflicting demands.
- Effective communication of ideas and information combining verbal, written, numeric and graphic media in a structured manner.
- Identify career aims and prepare a personal development plan.

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

Teaching combines lectures, seminars and workshops with individual and group tutorials. Assessment is 100% course work. Students are set a range of design problems common in practice and have experience of producing typical products such as site appraisal, context analysis, capacity studies, design frameworks, site briefs, design statements, masterplans, design guides and reports. Design tasks are balanced by a range of investigations into the physical, cultural, social, financial and sustainability issues influencing urban design practice allowing students to develop skills in research, analysis, communication, information, and interdisciplinary working.

The course delivery encourages reflective and critical thinking, helping students to extend existing skills and competencies. Projects are supported by individual tutorials and group seminars. Lecture series give background information together with structured reading. The dissertation/ major project gives students the space to study a topic in depth and develop research skills.

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate MA students are expected to complete 180 credits in one academic year. Part time students will normally complete the 180 credits in two academic years. Students taking the PG Diploma take a total of 120 credits. The PG Certificate students take 60 credits in one year. The PG Certificate is offered in an alternative mode of attendance where students attend one day per month over a full year together with a 10 day summer school. The PG Diploma and the PG Certificate are also available as exit awards.

	semester 1	semester 2	summer
year 1 PT	Urbanism & Design (Core MA ,PgDip, & PGCert)	Option	
	Urban Design in Context (Core MA, PgDip, PgCert.)	Urban Design in Context (Core MA, PgDip, PgCert.)	Summer school (option)
	Field Trip (MA & PgDip)		
year 2 PT	Sustainable Cities (Core MA & PgDip)	Master Planning (MA PgDip)	
	Research methods (Core MA)	Dissertation (Core MA)	
	Reflective Practice (Core MA)		

Requirements for the course

Module code	Module title	Semester	Status	UK credit	ECTS
Core for all students:					
AURD700	Urban Design In Context	1	Core	20	10
	Design And Development	2	Core	20	10
MA/PG Diploma Urban Design students take the following:					
AURD702	Urbanism and Design: Form, Context and Philosophies	1	Core	20	10
APLN704	Sustainable Cities	1	Core	20	10
AURD703	Urban Design Field Trip*	1	Core	0	0
And take modules to the value of 40 credits from the following:					
AURD704	Master Planning	2	Option	20	10
	Option module	2	Option	20	10
AURD701	Urban Design Summer School	Summer	Option	20	10
AURD705	Public Realm: Significance, Design, Experience	1	Option	20	10
AURD712	Extended Essay	2	Option	20	10
				Sub-total:	120 UK credits
MA Students only take in addition:					
APLN705	Research Methods	1	Core (MA only)	10	5
AURD709	Reflective Practice	1	Core (MA only)	10	5
AURD710	Dissertation / Major Project	2	Core (MA only)	40	20
				Total:	180 UK credits

NB: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one academic year.

* The Urban Design Field Trip is an important element of the course. It normally takes place in the first semester of the students' studies and introduces students to key skills and knowledge that are developed further and assessed in other modules.

PG Certificate Urban Design students take the following:

Module code	Module title	Semester	Status	UK credit	ECTS
AURD700	Urban Design In Context	1	Core	20	10
	Design And Development	2	Core	20	10
	Option module**	2	Option	20	10
				Total:	60 UK credits

** The PG Certificate option can be any 20 credit module from the MA in Urban Design; normally students take AURD701 Urban Design Summer School.

Academic regulations

The MA Urban Design 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 the *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 Urban Design**, a student must:

- i) obtain a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7;
- ii) attempt modules worth no more than 240 credits (see section 18.29 and 18.37);
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.iii) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.
- iii) Passed AURD703 Urban Design Field Trip or AURD701 Urban Design Summer School; and
- iv) satisfied the requirements contained within the course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme (as set out in the course structure above).

The University may award a Masters Degree with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across modules at Level 7 or a distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules at Level 7.

To qualify for the award of Postgraduate Diploma Urban Design, a student must:

- i) obtain a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7;
- ii) Passed AURD703 Urban Design Field Trip or AURD701 Urban Design Summer School; and
- iii) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme (as set out in the course structure above).

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 Urban Design, a student must:

- obtain a minimum of 60 credits at Level 7;
- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme (as set out in the course structure above).

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. These awards may specify particular modules which must be passed or have course specific regulations.

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 School 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 School. 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 School. 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 course has been designed to take account of the University's mission to provide education for professional life and to meet the requirements of the University Policies on skills development and employability. The course structure meets the requirements of the modular frameworks and the academic regulations of the University of Westminster.

Externally

QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and sections of the Code of Practice.

This degree is credited as a 'specialist' degree for the purposes of chartered membership for the RTPI and is subject to the RTPI quality assurance procedures and audit. For more information see <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/178/23/5/3>. The course is recognised by the urban design group as an approved course in terms of 'recognised practitioner' status.

Quality management and enhancement

Course management

The course is delivered by a small team of full- and part-time lecturing staff with assistance from part-time visiting lecturers. One team member is designated as course leader, responsible for the day to day management of the course; at present this is Bill Erickson for the MA and David Seex for the PG Diploma and PG Certificate. The course team hold regular meetings to review the course structure, content and delivery as part of the annual monitoring process.

Course approval, monitoring and review

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2006. 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 School 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 School 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. The University and the Students' Union work

together to provide a full induction to the role of the Course Committee.

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 Schools' quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course:

Contact course leaders Bill Erickson W.N.Erickson@westminster.ac.uk or or visit www.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. **Copyright of University of Westminster 2015 ©**

