

Course record information

Name and level of final award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Arts - Urban Design • Postgraduate Diploma - Urban Design • Postgraduate Certificate - Urban Design <p>The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible</p>
Name and level of intermediate awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Urban Design • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Urban Design
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Primary: Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Professional statutory or regulatory body	<p>RTPI accreditation as a specialist planning degree. https://www.rtpi.org.uk/become-a-planner</p> <p>Urban Design Group: Approved for recognised practitioner</p>
Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA Urban Design FT, Full-time, September start - 1 year standard length • MA Urban Design PT, Part-time day, September start - 2 years standard length
Valid for cohorts	From 2026/7

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. 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: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply>.

Aims of the programme

The MA Urban Design has been designed in response to an increasingly urbanised world, where there is growing international demand for urban design graduates. This course 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 course at Westminster provides a coherent approach to issues that face our cities, combining structured academic study with live design projects, allowing students to develop practical skills, a theoretical understanding and an informed approach to sustainable urban development.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. career/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.

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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. While it is more common for graduates in urban design to pursue careers in design practice, some do move on to higher study, and this course provides a good grounding for those students who have taken up research degrees. For those who do not, the Specialist accreditation from the RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute), which, alongside the PG Certificate in Urban & Regional Planning (only available to MA Urban Design graduates of Westminster), allows for full professional membership of the RTPI following the sitting of the APC (Assessment of Professional Competence). Such graduates would be able to work as licensed planners, or for example as urban design officers in a local authority.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements of what successful students have achieved as a 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)

Cognitive Skills, are learning outcomes that help build conceptual understanding that is necessary to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems and comment on research.

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Level 7 course learning outcomes: upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- KTS.01 Framing of problems in complex situations based on research and judgement. (KTS)
- KTS.02 Generation of design-based propositions involving creativity, innovation and critical evaluation based on

reasoned application of theories and precedents. (KTS)

- KTS.03 Inter-disciplinary team working, negotiation and collaborative working. (KTS)
- KTS.04 A critical understanding of how knowledge is advanced through structured enquiry. (MA only) (KTS)
- KTS.05 Demonstration of resilience and judgement through independent enquiry and critical reflection. (KTS)
- KTS.06 Faming and advancing of a coherent original argument structured by enquiry and critical evaluation of evidence. (KTS)
- KTS.07 Managing complex work flows, setting of targets, managing time and resources, working to deadlines and balancing conflicting demands. (KTS)
- KU.01 Systematic understanding of and critical approach to current practice in urban design and sustainable development. (KU)
- KU.02 Key theoretical approaches to urban design and their impact. (MA, PG Diploma only) (KU)
- KU.03 Identification of the various cultural practices that shape and use the urban setting logically and at a global scale. (MA, PG Diploma only) (KU)
- KU.04 Analysis of the components of the city, the networks that connect them, the activities they support and how these relate to the design and regulatory process. (MA, PG Diploma only) (KU)
- KU.05 The role of urban design practice within the multi-disciplinary nature of planning, development and management of sustainable cities. (MA, PG Diploma only) (KU)
- SS.01 Informed research and analysis of contemporary urban issues in specific complex locations. (MA, PG Diploma only) (SS)
- SS.02 Identification and application of appropriate theories and precedents of urban design practice. (MA, PG Diploma only) (SS)
- SS.03 Creative strategic responses balancing conflicting development pressures within a range of urban contexts. (SS)
- SS.04 Imaginative design solutions manipulating urban space and built elements to meet stated aims. (SS)
- SS.05 Generation of appropriate urban design products including site appraisal, contextual analysis, capacity studies, frameworks, briefs, design strategies, design statements, master plans, design guides and feasibility reports. (SS)
- SS.06 Assessment of the financial feasibility, environmental performance, ecological impact and social benefit of design propositions within the relevant legislative frameworks. (SS)
- SS.07 Demonstration of the ability to communicate spatial design principles and propositions across a variety of media. (SS)

How will you learn?

Learning methods

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.

Teaching 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, master plans, design guides and reports. Design tasks are balanced by a range of investigations into the physical, cultural, social, and financial and sustainability issues influencing urban design practice allowing students to develop skills in research, analysis, communication, information, and interdisciplinary working.

Assessment methods

Please see individual module proformas for details.

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules

Level 7

Students studying for the Postgraduate Certificate in Urban Design will take the following modules:

7PLAN037W Urban Design and Development Process

7PLAN039W Urban Design Project

AND 7PLAN034W The Dynamic City: Urban Form, Scale and Movement OR 7PLAN038W Place and Experience in the Design of Urban Spaces.

Students studying for the Postgraduate Diploma in Urban Design choose from the same modules as MA students, except do not register for the Dissertation/Major Project or the Research Methods and Skills module.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
7PLAN051W	Dissertation / Major Project	Core	1	40	20
7PLAN034W	The Dynamic City: Urban Form, Scale and Movement	Core	1	20	10
7PLAN037W	Urban Design and Development Process	Core	1	20	10
7PLAN024W	Urban Design Field Trip	Core	1	0	0
7PLAN039W	Urban Design Project	Core	1	20	10
7PLAN038W	Place and Experience in Design of Urban Spaces	Core	2	20	10
7PLAN019W	Sustainable Cities and Neighbourhoods	Core	2	20	10
7PLAN035W	Planning Research: Methods and Skills	Core	Various	20	10
7PLAN040W	Communities Towards Sustainability: Public Engagement	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN041W	Conservation and Heritage	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN033W	Emerging Landscapes and Urban Ecologies	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN029W	Environmental Policy, Assessment and Climate Change	Option	2	20	10
7HOUS002W	Housing and Urban Regeneration	Option	2	20	10
7TRAN036W	Information Management Applications for Urban Planning	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN006W	International Spatial Planning Practice	Option	2	20	10
7TRAN013W	Land Use Planning and Transport	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN010W	Planning for Urban Risk and Resilience	Option	2	20	10
7TRAN027W	Streets, Places and Active Transport	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN020W	Sustainable Neighbourhood Development and Management	Option	2	20	10
7PLAN043W	Extended Essay Option for Planning, Transport and Urban Design	Option	Various	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

Professional body accreditation or other external references

The programme is accredited by the RTPI as a Specialist course. This is effectively half of the accreditation required for eligibility to take the APC (Assessment of Professional Competency) for full membership of the RTPI. The University offers a Postgraduate Certificate of Spatial Planning of 60 UK credits (three 20-credit modules hosted by the MA Urban and Regional Planning course) as a top-up course for MA Urban Design graduates to achieve full eligibility for the APC and subsequent full professional membership of the RTPI. See the MA Urban and Regional Planning course for details.

Course management

Academic regulations

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

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and additional support available. You will be provided with a Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or equivalent. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part-time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University utilises a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard, where students access their course materials and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard>

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. In addition to online resources in Blackboard, students can also attend Study Skills workshops and schedule one-to-one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes our libraries, each of which holds 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.

Support Services

The University of Westminster's Student and Academic Services department provides a range of advice and guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice>

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union>

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

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored annually by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that any issues that might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence from various sources, including student surveys, student progression and achievement, and reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make necessary changes.

Periodic reviews are also conducted to ensure that the curriculum remains up-to-date and that the skills acquired on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Representative students meet with a panel to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess the course's performance.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University, and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is collected in various ways.

- Through student engagement activities at the course and module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected 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 course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire for each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be improved.
- Final-year undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey, which helps inform the national university league tables. Postgraduate students will be asked to complete the Postgraduate Taught Survey (PTES).

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student may reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2025©

Additional Details

For the compulsory field trip, accommodation and the costs of scheduled academic activities are covered by your tuition fees. However, students should anticipate some additional out of pocket costs, e.g. for meals, incidental purchases and any optional activities.