

Programme Specification

Master of Planning - City and Regional Planning

Valid from: May 2012

Faculty of Technology Design and Environment

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University
Final award:	MPlan
Programme title:	City and Regional Planning
Interim exit awards and award titles:	None
Brookes course code:	None
UCAS/UKPASS code:	MPlan
JACS code:	K400
Mode of delivery:	Face to Face
Mode/s of study:	Ft/PT
Language of study:	English
Relevant QAA subject benchmark statement/s:	Town and Country Planning qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/benchmark/phase2/tcp.pdf
External accreditation/recognition: <i>(applicable to programmes with professional body approval)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) - Accredited by the RTPI and provides exemption from the educational requirements of Membership to the RTPI.• Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Faculty managing the programme:	Technology Design and Environment
Date of production (or most recent revision) of specification:	February 2012

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW AND PROGRAMME AIMS

2.1 Rationale for/distinctiveness of the programme

The key objective of the MPlan City and Regional Planning programme is to deliver a 'combined programme of initial planning education' as defined by the Royal Town Planning Institute in 2003/2004. In addition, as planning activity is necessarily fashioned within a particular set of social and professional values, the programme also reflects the Department's own Educational Philosophy.

2.2 Aim/s of the programme

The overall aims of the programme (in addition to meeting the RTPI's educational requirements), are to develop a professional understanding of:

- *The scope of planning*: the purpose, rationale and objectives of planning and the varied ideological characteristics; the often competing professional and social needs which determine its effectiveness and utility. The essence of the concern here is with the complexity of changing economic circumstances, social justice and environmental sustainability.
- *The policy environment*: a concern with how public policy is made and implemented. This deals with the complex process of mediating competing demands – both current and in the future - on the environment, designing appropriate instruments and tools to implement policies, and devising systems to evaluate their impact and effectiveness.
- *The reflective practitioner*: equipping students with the ability to practice in an ever changing environment, enabling them to learn skills of critical and strategic thinking that can be applied in a diversity of settings and within a variety of policy frameworks, above and beyond the detail of practice.
- *Institutions and governance*: exploring and evaluating the structure, capacity and effectiveness of different institutional arrangements to design and implement policies to manage environmental change. The emergence of new configurations of governance, directly embracing private stakeholders yet seeking to empower community-based interests, are critical to an understanding of how planning and allied environmental professions can adapt to the needs of 21st century societies.
- *Social justice*: embedding a continuing commitment to: social justice; understanding the distributional impacts of policy; evaluating the capacity and effectiveness of different modes of governance and institutional structures to represent different sectors of society; enhancing the ways in which the socially disadvantaged can better participate in the decisions which affect their lives and livelihoods.
- *Multi- professionalism and multi-disciplinarity*: a belief that planning, as a professionally incorporated activity, must be complemented first, by a generic or multi-professional view of the task of managing environmental change, and second, by a multidisciplinary approach which requires an understanding of the commercial and project development framework in which planning takes place and the development of a variety of specialist perspectives and skills.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge, understanding and skills:

3.1 *Academic literacy*

- a. Knowledge of and a critical understanding of the processes of socio-economic and environmental change and actions to manage the quality of relationships between people and change in the built and natural environment.
- b. Knowledge of and a critical understanding of the processes of environmental, ecological change and physical resources; interaction and inter-relationship between the social and built environments; urban and architectural design.
- c. Knowledge of and a critical understanding of the distribution of social, economic and environmental costs, their differential impacts on groups within society and how these impacts may be mediated .
- d. Interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding based on the eclectic nature of the subject including the rationale of planning; the research basis of built environment knowledge, ideas and concepts ; and, depending on modules taken, the processes of policy formulation, analysis and implementation, architectural design.
- e. Identification and formulation of urban environmental, design and development issues and problem solving
- f. Obtaining, analysing, evaluating synthesising planning/environmental/urban design data.
- g. Depending on the modules taken: translating theory, knowledge and analysis into plans, policies and designs and monitoring and evaluating the range of planning interventions ; practical design skills; multi-professional, multi-agency and multi-group interaction in the context of the built and natural, environment including networking, negotiation and advocacy; ethics of professionalism particularly those of RTP1 .
- h. Practice capabilities within the framework of more specialised study, including a critical perspective on planning practice as this pertains to an area of specialisation.

3.2 *Research literacy*

- a. Research skills in data and information sourcing and collection, analysis and presentation;
- b. Academic research and investigation.

3.3 *Critical self-awareness and personal literacy*

- a. Self-management and learning skills;
- b. Communication, negotiation and networking; teamwork in a multi-agency and multi-professional settings; creative problem-solving;

3.4 *Digital and information literacy*

- a. Presentational skills – design, oral and written including reports and narrative methods.

3.5 Global citizenship

- a. *A critical understanding of the management of change and knowledge of the enabling instruments, processes and organisational structures and frameworks – the process of governance and planning*

SECTION 4: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

4.1 Programme structure and requirements:

Table 1 Modules for Assessment for the MPlan City and Regional Planning	
Year One Level 4: Students must normally pass all modules to progress to level 5	
Semester one	Semester Two
U35008 Introduction to Spatial Planning	U37705 Environmental Sustainability
U37702 City People and Diversity (Double)	
U37709 City Design and Development (Double)	
	U 35001 Economics of the Built Environment
U35005 Intro Valuation & Commercial Management (Single)	
Year two Level 5: Students must normally pass all Compulsory Modules plus two Acceptable Modules to progress to level 6	
Semester one	Semester Two
U 37742 Designing the City	U 37723 Politics and Planning
U 37721 Urban Development Processes and Finance	U 37729 Geographical Information Systems
U 37728 Research Data and Design (Double)	
U 37746 Transport and Society (Acceptable)	U 37722 Environmental Decision Making (Acceptable)
U 37744 Global Environmental Resource Policy (Acceptable)	
Year Three Level 6: Students must pass all compulsory modules and one Acceptable Module to progress to level 7	
Semester one	Semester Two
U 37770 Local Planning and Development Control (Double)	
U 37771 Urban Design and Development (Acceptable)	U37781 Planning Thought and Practice
U37772 Regional and Strategic Planning	U37782 Cities and Society
U37773 Implementation project (Double)	
U37788 Independent Study in Planning (Acceptable)	
Note: Students must pass all the programme requirements at Levels 4, 5 and 6, with a combined average mark of 50% across all modules at Levels 5 and 6, in order to progress to Level 7 (year 4).	
Year Four Level 7: Students must successfully complete 40 credits of specialisation study, plus P37501 Development Economics, Management and Finance, P37503 Research Seminars and P37699 the Dissertation to be awarded the MPlan City and Regional planning	
Semester one	Semester Two
P37501 Development Economics, Management and Finance	
P 37503 Research Seminars (10 credits)	
P 37699 MPlan Dissertation (50 credits)	
Specialisations	
Urban Design	
P 32072 Urban Design Studio 1 (10 credits) P 32073 Urban Design Theory 1 (10 credits)	P 32075 Urban Design Theory 2 (10 credits) P 32081 Urban Design Development Seminars (10 credits)
Environmental Decision Making	
P 38332 Environmental Assessment	P 38331 Environmental Law and Decision Making
Historic Conservation	
P 37809 Design for Conservation	P 37807 Historic Conservation in Context (10 credits) P 37808 Conservation Economics (10 credits)
Urban Planning: Developing and Transitional Regions	

P 38167 Development and Urbanisation	P 38168 Urban and Policy and Urban Management
Tourism Planning	
P 38075 Sustainable Tourism Planning	P 38072 Destination and Event Development
Transport Planning	
P 37901 Transport Policy	P 37904 Contemporary Issues in Transport Planning Practice
Regeneration	
P 37701 Introduction to Regeneration	P 37702 Regeneration of Neighbourhoods

4.2 Professional requirements

RTPI Competencies are Achieved by Programme Modules as approved by the RTPI Partnership Board

SECTION 5: PROGRAMME DELIVERY

5.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This programme utilizes a wide variety of teaching, learning and assessment methods, appropriate to the knowledge and skills you will need; a student-centred approach is an important feature. Whilst most modules have a lecture 'core', this is also normally supported by smaller group teaching and learning in seminars, and project and workshop sessions. The project base is a highly appropriate vehicle for planning education and a number of modules utilise 'real life' situations. As the programme evolves increasing emphasis is placed on students managing group activities, negotiation, decision making and presentation. There is emphasis in the coursework in a number of modules on presentation and communication skills and report writing

Students will experience many modules where the collection, analysis and the presentation of data (quantitative and qualitative, socio-economic and built/natural environment, primary and secondary), through for example projects and self-contained surveys. There is progression in the development of knowledge and skills between Levels 4-7. Throughout the programme, both in specific modules and as elements of other modules students will be developing a wide variety of professional, technical and transferable skills.

All modules are assessed separately with an overall pass mark of 40% for Levels 4,5 &6 and 50% for Level 7. The modules are assessed in a variety of ways - essay reports, individual and group project work, seen and unseen examinations. Further details for each module assessment are published in the individual module syllabi. Each module handbook which enlarges on the syllabus and provides information about the programme, details, teaching methods, coursework schedules, assessment regimes, reading lists, etc.

Reflecting the programme's emphasis on professional practice and continuity in the learning process, a considerable proportion of the assessment is on the basis of coursework. Practitioners operate in a wide variety of agencies - in the public, private and voluntary sector - and you will need a comprehensive array of skills and knowledge. Communication of knowledge clearly and effectively to different clients and interest groups is important. Accordingly, the need for clear and effective

presentation of work throughout the course will form an important component in the assessment process. The methods of assessment are designed to evaluate the skills for example in design, graphic, presentation, quantitative methods, report writing, verbal presentation, but also knowledge in relation to concepts and theory and professional practice.

The five Specific Graduate Attributes are met through the Learning Outcomes associated with the subject compulsory and elective modules; Academic Literacy will enable graduating students to acquire the knowledge and skills associated with planning and survey professions associated with the built environment and its specialist areas, Research Literacy will enable graduating students to undertake research relating to planning issues in a professional manner, Critical self-awareness and Personal Literacy enable graduating students to reflect on the role of the planning and development professionals in society, Digital and Information Literacy will enable graduating students to obtain and acquire relevant and critical information associated with planning and development issues from a wide range of sources, Global Citizenship will enable graduating students to reflect on and evaluate the differing cultural and international approaches to and roles of planning and development .

5.2 Assessment regulations

MPlan City and Regional Planning Programme Regulations

These are available through the Programme handbook and the programme conforms to the University Regulations The Specific Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes can be found at <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/brookesnet/graduateoffice/current/taught/regulations>

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SECTION 6: ADMISSIONS

6.1 Entry criteria

BC/CCC or 2 A2 at CC + 2AS at CC or 12 unit vocational A level at C plus 1A2 or 2AS at C

Applicants whose home language is not English must demonstrate that their level of English is of a standard that meets the level of English language qualification that is acceptable to the University as set out in the list produced by Oxford Brookes International.

6.2 CRB checks

N/A

SECTION 7: STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Student Support will be provided through the following;

- An Induction Programme conducted in Week 0 Semester 1
- Programme Lead and Subject Co-ordinators as advisors
- Programme and Module Handbooks giving details of subjects and the University regulations and procedures.

- Student Support Co-ordinators,
- Central support services
- Study skills development/support introduced in Level 4 Modules
- Careers Centre and

SECTION 8: GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

Graduates from the MPlan are eligible to apply for membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute. They are likely to be employed in a professional capacity as planners as;

Planning Officers in Local Government, National Government and Quangos;
 Planning Consultants in Planning Consultancies, Surveying and Planning consultancies, Multi-professional development consultancies;
 Planners in Development Corporations
 Planners in Environmental consultants, Agencies and Advocacy Organisations;
 Researchers in Universities, Government Agencies and the Private Sector;

SECTION 9: LINKS WITH EMPLOYERS

The programme has links with prospective employers through-

The Practice Liaison Committee - As the majority of our programmes are vocational in nature the Department has always recognised the importance of balancing the needs of maintaining academic standards while ensuring that our graduates are fully equipped for the work environment. To foster this balance the Department ensures that practitioners play an important part in the delivery and development of our programmes. This is achieved through the use of practitioners, from the private and public sectors, as visiting speakers and lecturers and the use of our Practice Liaison Committee (PLC) as part of our programme development and validation procedures. The PLC was first convened in 1995, meets three time per year, and is comprised of senior practitioners from local government and major private sector planning and environmental consultancies. The role of the PLC is to help the Department ensure that its programmes are relevant, current and produce graduates that will be attractive to employers in the fields of planning and the built environment. Members of the PLC have played a major role in the development of the Department's student handbook "The Art of Becoming Employed: Five Things You can do Now" that was first produced in 1990s and updated in 2009. Our work with the PLC is a two way relationship with members of staff providing regular presentations to the committee on current research outcomes. Current membership (2012) of the PLC includes senior members of staff from:

- Barton-Wilmore
- DPDS
- Kemp and Kemp
- Peter Brett Associates
- RPS Group
- Ealing Borough Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council

- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- RTPI South East Region

In addition to the important role of the PLC in fostering and maintaining sound relationships with employers, the Department employs a number of other means of ensuring that we work in partnership with practice. These include:

- our extensive CPD programme is designed to reflect the needs of changing practice to support employers in the development of the skills and knowledge base of their employees;
- we have a partnership agreement with Oxfordshire County Council that includes a summer placement programme for our students;
- we have run our own Dept. of Planning recruitment fair that is additional to the University and School of the Built Environment fairs;
- many of our research and consultancy contracts are completed in partnership with leading planning and environmental consultancies;
- one of our external examiners on both the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are drawn from practice; and
- senior practitioners are members of the our RTPI Partnership Board that has the responsibility for accrediting our programmes.

SECTION 10: QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Indicators of quality/methods for evaluating the quality of provision

The Department takes seriously the views of its students on the learning environment and actively invites and undertakes review and feedback in a number of ways.

- i. Through 'traditional' module evaluations which are reviewed at the MSc programme meeting by staff and students
- ii. Through the Universities Annual and Periodic (six yearly) Review process which requires all programmes to be monitored and evaluated in terms of their academic validity and cohort analysis
- iii. Through External Examiners scrutinising modules associated with the programme and the programme itself at regular intervals throughout the Academic Year.
- iv. Through programme level feedback at committees and exit surveys which are reviewed at the MSc programme meeting by staff and students
- v. Through interrogating information such as NSS and PTES at departmental level which are reviewed at the MSc programme meeting by staff and students
- vi. Through additional mechanisms such as AESC and the Department Management Team

- vii. Through reports to the Practice Liaison committee and Annual Reports to the RTPI and RICS.

Further we monitor actions taken in response to these again through evaluations which show changes suggested and made in relation to student comments and through minutes of course committees etc.