

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

for the award of

**MSc Spatial Planning**

**Managed by the Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment**

**delivered by School of the Built Environment**

<b>Date approved:</b>	Date approval confirmed, on recommendation of University validation panel or other authorised body.
<b>Applies to students commencing study in:</b>	September 2018

**RECORD OF UPDATES**

<b>Date amended*</b>	<b>Nature of amendment**</b>	<b>Reason for amendment**</b>
July 2016	Transferred to new template, update graduate attribute from global to active citizenship	CMA Compliance, Update to graduate attribute
October 2016	Checked for errors and amended by Subject Coordinator and Programme Lead.	Subject specialist knowledge.

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Awarding body:</b>	Oxford Brookes University
<b>Teaching institution and location:</b>	Oxford Brookes University, Headington Campus
<b>Language of study:</b>	English
<b>Final award:</b>	MSc
<b>Programme title:</b>	Spatial Planning
<b>Interim exit awards and award titles available:</b>	PGDip Planning Studies (exit award, non accredited) PGCert Planning Studies (exit award, non accredited)
<b>Brookes course code:</b>	PL63
<b>UCAS code:</b>	P008088
<b>JACS code:</b>	K490
<b>HECoS code:</b>	100199
<b>Mode of delivery:</b>	Full-time (face to face/on-campus) Part-time (face to face/on-campus)
<b>Mode/s and duration of study:</b>	1 year F/T, 2 Years P/T 5 years Max
<b>QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:</b>	There are no benchmarks for postgraduate programmes. However this programme's aims and outcomes conform to the QAA descriptor qualification at M level set out in the NQF ( <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/nqf/ewni2001/annex1.htm">www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/nqf/ewni2001/annex1.htm</a> ). In addition, this programme has been developed in direct response to the RTPI's educational requirements for accreditation of taught postgraduate programmes as defined in the 2004 Policy Statement on Initial Planning Education.
<b>Professional accreditation attached to the programme:</b>	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) - Accredited by the RICS and provides exemption from the educational requirements of Membership to the RICS.
<b>University Regulations:</b>	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: <a href="http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/">http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/</a>

## **SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?**

The MSc Spatial Planning seeks to develop and advance the practical skills and rationality of planning (the 'science') as well as the creativity of place-making (the 'art') as the basis of the planning profession. change in the built and natural environment and are major players in the practice of sustainable development. The overall aim of the programme is to provide graduates with an RTPI approved education in accordance with the *Policy Statement on Initial Planning Education* (2004). Planners facilitate. On completion of this course, graduates will have developed the critical thinking about space and place necessary to plan and manage human settlements as sustainable, healthy, equitable, attractive and competitive towns, cities and regions.

The key objective of the programme is to deliver a 'combined programme of initial planning education' as defined by the Royal Town Planning Institute. However, as planning activity is necessarily fashioned within a particular set of social and professional values, the programme also reflects the School's own Educational Philosophy, and as such the overall aims of the programme, at both the master's and postgraduate diploma level (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 managing economic growth, 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 increasing variety of specialist perspectives and skills.

Please refer to the following link to view the staff profiles within the School of the Built Environment:

<http://planning.brookes.ac.uk/staff/index.html>

## **SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES**

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

### **3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY**

1. Generate visionary and imaginative responses to spatial planning challenges that are realistic and derive from substantial investigation and analysis of relevant data and other evidence.
2. Articulate such responses through coherent and integrated strategies, plans or programmes that combine creative direction for the future with credible means of implementation.
3. Balance the significance of such strategies, plans or programmes, either in whole or in part, against other relevant factors that ought to be taken into account in reaching an individual planning decision.
4. Evaluate the case for and against spatial planning and particular forms of spatial planning and assess what can be learnt from past experiences of spatial planning in different socio-economic, cultural and political contexts.
5. Appreciate the importance and process of design in creating high quality places and enhancing the public realm for the benefit of all in society, and evaluate the effectiveness of alternative design approaches in achieving this.
6. Debate the dynamics of interactions between societies and social, economic, environmental and political events, and appreciate the potential of planning to exert a positive influence on the changes that arise from these interactions.
7. Understand the relationship between market processes, built form and development patterns, evaluate the economic and financial implications of alternative development strategies and consider how best to generate and capture added value for both particular interests and the wider community.
8. Develop practice capabilities within the framework of more specialised study, including a critical perspective on planning practice as this pertains to an area of specialisation (MSc candidates only);
9. Acknowledge the values underlying interpretations of sustainability, and explore what sustainability implies about the role of planning in promoting social and economic development, while conserving environmental, social and cultural heritages for transmission to future generations.
10. Appreciate the importance of time in the planning process, realising how the short-term and longer-term consequences of planning decisions may impact differentially on those affected.
11. Recognise the political nature of decision-making in planning, and understand the need for all planners to develop the ability to work effectively with systems of this nature, and to be able to explain them clearly to a wide range of stakeholders.

### **3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY**

1. Promote and enhance research, analytical and prescriptive capabilities in the understanding of planning policy and in the varieties of planning practice
2. Demonstrate effective research and appraisal skills, evident in data collection, investigation, quantitative and qualitative analysis, weighing evidence and reaching sound conclusions.

### **3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY**

1. Appreciate the importance of resource issues (in particular, those concerning human and financial resources) and organisational management processes and initiatives in helping to deliver effective spatial planning, and acknowledge the need for personal flexibility, adaptability and self-management, as demonstrated in setting priorities, managing time, and knowing how and when to seek input from others.
2. Recognise the role in the planning process of such skills as negotiation, mediation, and advocacy and the importance of team-working, often with other professionals, in an inter-disciplinary context.
3. Appreciate the meaning of professionalism, including probity and adherence to independent informed judgement; the identification of clients and the duties owed to them; the concept of conflict of interests; and the importance of a commitment to lifelong learning to maintain and expand professional competence.

### **3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY**

1. Demonstrate advanced literature research and digital presentation skills through self-directed project and research work.

### **3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

1. Appreciate and respect diversity of cultures, views and ideologies, and understand how that respect can be applied in planning systems through the pursuit of equal opportunity, social inclusion and non-discrimination (on the grounds of wealth, gender, age, race, disability, religion and culture).
2. Understand the concept of rights, including the balance between individual and collective rights, and the legal and practical implications of representing rights in planning decision frameworks.
3. Recognise the importance of stakeholder involvement and public participation in the planning process and of engaging and communicating with (by appropriate and varied means) a diverse range of interests, including local residents and community groups, business people, commercial developers, politicians and protest groups.

## SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

### 4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
P37601	Spatial Planning in Context	20	7	Compulsory	100
P37602	Spatial Planning in Action	20	7	Compulsory	100
P37603	Place Making	20	7	Compulsory	100
P37604	Delivering Sustainable Futures	20	7	Compulsory	100
P37605	Contemporary Issues in Planning Practice and Research	10	7	Compulsory	100
P37642	Research Methods	10	7	Compulsory	100
P37699	Dissertation	50	7	Compulsory	100
Students require 40 credits of specialisation and are advised to take 20 credits of specialisation each semester:					
P32072	Urban Design Studio I	10	7	elective	100
P32073	Urban Design Theory I	10	7	elective	100
P37701	Introduction to Regeneration and Economic Development	20	7	elective	100
P37809	Design for Conservation	20	7	elective	100
P37850	Conservation and Regeneration: theory, law and practice	20	7	elective	100
P38075	Sustainable Tourism Planning	20	7	elective	100
P38167	Development and Urbanisation	20	7	elective	100
P38303	Principles of Environmental Assessment and Management	20	7	elective	100
P37688	Independent Study	20	7	elective	100
P32075	Urban Design Theory II	10	7	elective	100
P32081	Urban Design Development Seminars	10	7	elective	100
P37702	Regeneration and Neighbourhood Planning	20	7	elective	100
P37802	Building Construction and Repair	20	7	elective	100
P37808	Conservation Economics	10	7	elective	100
P38168	Urban Land Policy and Urban Management	20	7	elective	100
P38333	GIS and Environmental Modelling	20	7	elective	100
P38350	Strategic Environmental Assessment	20	7	elective	100

### 4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

MSc = P37601, P37602, P37603, P37604, P37605, 40 credits of PG Specialisation, P37642, and P37699 (MSc Dissertation) = 190 M credits

Exit Awards = PGDip Planning Studies Any 120 credits, PGCert Planning Studies Any 60 credits

### 4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Only the MSc award is accredited by RICS and RTPI. Exit awards of PGDip and PGCert are not accredited.

## **SECTION 5: TEACHING 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.

Many modules include 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 P37601, P37602 and P37603, P37604. 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. 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 as indicated in the Assessment Compact.

All modules are assessed separately with an overall pass mark of 50%. 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 enlarges on the syllabus and provides information about the programme, 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 choice 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/international approaches and roles of planning and development.

## **SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME**

### **6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

*Updated May 2016*

Spatial Planning attracts students from a wide range of backgrounds and nationalities. Applicants are welcome from any academic discipline, as well as from among those in work and seeking continuing professional development.

Admission is normally open to those with a good undergraduate honours degree (2.1 or equivalent) or other professional qualification relevant to planning and development, or an appropriate professional background.

The course provides the opportunity to attain formal academic training and qualifications based on a diversity of professional backgrounds. Applications will also be considered from those who have no first degree but have three or more years' professional experience in planning and have completed the University's [Certificate in Spatial Planning Studies](#).

See the university's general entry requirements: <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/studying-at-brookes/how-to-apply/entry-requirements/postgraduate-courses/>

English language requirements

If your first language is not English you will require a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 overall with 6.0 in all components **OR**

An equivalent English language qualification acceptable to the University. See the university's general English language requirements: <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/international/applying-to-arriving/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>

## **SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

Graduates from the MSc Spatial Planning 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;

The Practice Liaison Committee - As the majority of our programmes are vocational in nature the School 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 School 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. Current membership (2016) of the PLC includes senior members of staff from:

- Barton Willmore
- David Lock Associates
- Kemp and Kemp
- Peter Brett Associates
- MJC Associates
- Chilterns AONB
- London Borough of Hounslow
- Cherwell 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 School 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 School recruitment fair that is additional to the University 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.