



Module Specification

Urban Design

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Urban Design

Module code: UBGMX7-15-M

Level: Level 7

For implementation from: 2023-24

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

Faculty: Faculty of Environment & Technology

Department: FET Dept of Geography & Environmental Mgmt

Partner institutions: None

Field: Geography and Environmental Management

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: Not applicable

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: In addition to the Learning Outcomes, Transferable skills developed through the module will include:

Recognising the role of communication skills, particularly visual, in the planning

process and the importance of working in an interdisciplinary context

Being able to demonstrate negotiation, mediation, advocacy

Being aware of, listening to and evaluating the opinions and values of others (by participating in a design review)

Developing skills in plan and document production, by using packages such as Digimap, AutoCad, Adobe InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop.

Outline syllabus: Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning. Development should contribute positively to making places better for people and design plays a significant part in improving the character and function of urban and rural areas. Knowing how to plan, encourage and secure high quality design is an essential skill for planners. It is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations. Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place, and the individual constraints and opportunities arising from a site.

Alongside national guidance, such as that published in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Wales, policies to achieve design quality are also found in local and neighbourhood plans. Site or area-specific guidance can be provided by some kind of development brief, design framework or master plan, while many local authorities have also published broader advice (as some kind of supplementary planning document) to help reinforce the understanding, and subsequent application, of key design principles. Examples here would include guidance relating to the use of public art, the treatment of open space and the promotion of streets and spaces that are safe and unthreatening.

While the module encourages a critical appraisal of this guidance, particularly in terms of its ability to be implemented, the module focuses predominantly on the design skills needed to achieve high quality design through the development management process. Since the pedagogical approach to the module encourages

'learning by doing', students are offered direct experience in developing a site proposal that convey the principles for achieving good building and urban design, alongside communicating the merits of the design and making the case for its suitability. Students will be presented with a complex site that they will be expected to appraise, thereby allowing them to formulate a series of development options. One of these will be worked up into a fuller scheme and presented to a design review 'panel' where students will argue the strengths of their proposal and the rationale behind the design decisions. This argument will be communicated through a full design and access statement (which would accompany a planning application for the scheme). The students will then change roles and will be expected to assess the merit, in design terms, of schemes submitted by their colleagues as part of the design review 'panel'.

The module will conclude by considering how design quality can be secured and maintained as planning projects are implemented, with particular emphasis being given to the type of measures that can be incorporated into planning conditions or some kind of legal agreement. Examples would include the need for some kind of design code or public realm or landscape strategy to be submitted before development commences.

Accordingly, the syllabus will explore the following:

The objectives for achieving design excellence in both building and urban design, including a summary of important terms and expressions.

The principles and requirements that underpin inclusive building and urban design.

The design process, including the need to respond to careful area and site analysis and the financial and market considerations surrounding a project.

Achieving design excellence through policy and development control tools, and the type of barriers that planners (and other stakeholders) face in implementing these aims and objectives on the ground.

The consideration of design through the preparation and consideration of a planning submission.

Making the case for good design and communicating that argument through a design and access statement.

How design quality is assessed and measured and the role of design in the move from a reactive to more positive and communicative planning.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: Scheduled learning includes lectures, site visits, guest speakers and workshops.

Independent learning includes essential reading, assignment preparation and completion etc, site visits to the study area and to visit examples of good practice.

This is a project module delivered through a series of studio-based lectures, discussions and workshops. Students are expected to participate actively and much of the teaching requires students to emulate the professional situation. The module links very closely to live examples and uses case studies from the public and private sectors to illustrate the points being made. There is a strong emphasis on the understanding of 'best practice' in the subject field. The module also draws upon the interdisciplinary nature of the students in integrating the architecture and planning backgrounds of those participating.

Contact time: 36 hours

Assimilation and development of knowledge: 74 hours

Assessment: 40 hours

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Clearly articulate the principles and processes of good design and be able to develop and apply design objectives in formulating a site proposal

MO2 Explain the principles of inclusive design and evaluate the impacts of design decision making on the quality of life of the client and user

MO3 Use the vocabulary and terminology of urban and building design accurately

MO4 Identify, and critically appraise, the role that different forms of policy and design guidance have in securing design excellence at the site level and to appreciate the contributions made by other disciplines/professions using a range of design tools

MO5 Display professional skills that are required to make a successful planning application, to advocate and negotiate a proposal for development, and to advise on the controls and guidance that can be used to secure and maintain design excellence (such as design coding)

MO6 Create plans and drawings that are able to communicate a development proposal, both by hand and by using appropriate software

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Face-to-face learning = 36 hours

Total = 150

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ubgmx7-15-m.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/ubgmx7-15-m.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Portfolio (3500 words) - The module will be assessed by a single component of assessment that will take the form of a design and access

statement which will need to explain and justify the student's individual site proposal. This will be developed progressively through the module with dedicated sessions being arranged to help with its production. These sessions will provide guidance on the portfolio's substantive content, as well as its visual design and production. The assessment will use, and extend, the range of skills developed in the Masters degree and create a substantial piece of work.

Resit Portfolio - a similar brief to that described above, which may include a summary of changes from any previously submitted portfolio.

Plagiarism - The assessment is felt to minimise the risk for plagiarism on the basis that each portfolio will focus upon a student's individual proposal, which will be developed under tutor supervision over a series of weeks.

Formative Feedback - Students will be able to present their portfolio for formative review in advance of the deadline. Example portfolios will be made available to the cohort for review, with care being taken to ensure that these relate to a different site and design brief.

Assessment tasks:

Portfolio (First Sit)

Description: Portfolio: Design and Access Statement (3,500 words)

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5, MO6

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: Portfolio: Design and Access Statement (3,500 words)

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5, MO6

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Transport [Frenchay] MSc 2023-24

Urban Planning [Frenchay] MSc 2023-24

Transport [Frenchay] MSc 2023-24

Urban Planning {Apprenticeship-UWE} [Frenchay] MSc 2022-23

Urban Planning [Frenchay] MSc 2022-23