



## **Module Specification**

### **Spatial Planning Dissertation**

Version: 2027-28, v1.0, Approved

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## **Part 1: Information**

**Module title:** Spatial Planning Dissertation

**Module code:** UBLLBX-15-3

**Level:** Level 6

**For implementation from:** 2027-28

**UWE credit rating:** 15

**ECTS credit rating:** 7.5

**College:** College of Arts, Technology and Environment

**School:** CATE School of Architecture and Environment

**Partner institutions:** None

**Field:** Architecture and the Built Environment

**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:** This module provides students with the opportunity to undertake a substantial piece of independent research that reflects their academic interests and professional aspirations within urban planning and architecture. Through the development of a focused research aim, students will critically engage with existing literature and practice, identifying a relevant and timely topic within the built environment.

Students will design and implement an appropriate methodology, applying qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods to gather and analyse data from primary and/or secondary sources. Ethical considerations and health and safety responsibilities will be embedded throughout the research process.

The module culminates in the presentation of a well-structured dissertation that demonstrates critical analysis, interpretation of findings, and reflection on the research process. Students will be expected to draw meaningful conclusions and articulate the implications of their work for future practice and research.

**Features:** Not applicable

**Educational aims:** The aim of this module is to enable students to undertake an independent, in-depth investigation into a topic of personal and professional relevance within the fields of urban planning and architecture. It supports the development of advanced research, analytical, and reflective skills that are essential for graduate-level practice and further academic study.

Students will be encouraged to critically engage with existing literature and professional practice, formulate a coherent research aim, and design a suitable methodology for data collection and analysis. The module fosters intellectual autonomy, ethical awareness, and the ability to manage a substantial piece of work from inception to completion.

By the end of the module, students will have demonstrated their capacity to produce a rigorous and well-structured dissertation that contributes meaningfully to contemporary debates and challenges in the built environment.

**Outline syllabus:** Week 1: Introductory Session

Title: Introduction to the Dissertation Module

Content:

Overview of module aims, structure, and assessment

Expectations for independent research

Choosing and refining a research topic

Role of the supervisor and tutorial support

Ethical and health & safety considerations

Week 3: Workshop 1 – Literature Review: Building a Critical Literature Review

Identifying relevant academic and professional sources

Synthesising literature to frame research questions

Referencing and citation best practices

Using digital libraries and databases effectively

Week 5: Workshop 2 – Research Design and Methods

Content:

Choosing appropriate qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods

Data collection tools and techniques

Sampling strategies and data quality

Ethical approval processes and risk assessments

Week 7: Workshop 3 – Writing and Structuring the Dissertation

Content:

Structuring chapters and presenting findings

Critical analysis and interpretation

Writing style and academic tone

Common pitfalls and how to avoid them

Week 11: Assessment preparation session

Content:

Submission requirements and deadlines

Final editing and proofreading tips

Reflective writing and concluding the study

Q&A and troubleshooting

Supervised tutorials with allocated supervisors:

Each student will be assigned a supervisor for 5–7 tutorials (maximum 5 hours total).

Tutorials will be used to:

Refine the research aim and scope

Review progress on literature and methodology

Discuss data collection and analysis

Provide feedback on draft chapters

Support final submission preparation

### **Part 3: Teaching and learning methods**

**Teaching and learning methods:** Scheduled learning will be split between workshops and supervisory meetings. Workshops will be used to provide the background theories, concepts and examples from research and practice. The workshops will encourage both group and individual reflection on the key themes being discussed.

Students will be asked to undertake some preparatory work to help support and underpin these workshop sessions, including elements of reading and personal research. Some of these references will be taken from the reading strategy but, given the dynamic nature of the subject matter and the broad nature of the students' research, additional and bespoke sources will also need to be found.

Independent learning includes hours engaged with essential reading to support the lecture sessions and the reading that will be needed to underpin the workshops.

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

**MO1** Formulate and justify a research aim that demonstrates critical engagement with existing literature and/or professional practice in urban planning and architecture, identifying its relevance to contemporary challenges in the built environment.

**MO2** Design and implement a robust research methodology, selecting and applying appropriate primary and/or secondary data collection and analysis techniques, while demonstrating ethical awareness and consideration of health and safety implications.

**MO3** Critically analyse and interpret research findings in relation to the wider academic and professional context, drawing evidence-based conclusions and

reflecting on the research process, including its limitations and implications for future practice.

**Hours to be allocated:** 150

**Contact hours:**

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Face-to-face learning = 36 hours

**Reading list:** The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/7C3C85D8-CEA3-3347-CCCB-90C26323EC11.html?lang=en-GB&login=1) via the following link <https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/7C3C85D8-CEA3-3347-CCCB-90C26323EC11.html?lang=en-GB&login=1>

## Part 4: Assessment

**Assessment strategy:** The assessment comprises one summative assessment, the final dissertation submission of 8,000 words.

Final Dissertation submission:

Students undertake a piece of independent research which explores in depth a planning topic that is relevant to their studies.

Under the supervision of a tutor, students are expected to select relevant research methods introduced in the earlier part of the module and develop these to enable them to produce a piece of work that contributes to existing research in their field of study.

The written dissertation should make clear how the primary research was designed and conducted and discussion of the outcomes of primary research should be clearly related to existing literature.

Formative feedback is an ongoing part of this module.

The resit is the same as the first sit.

**Assessment tasks:**

**Dissertation** (First Sit)

Description: 8,000 word dissertation

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

**Part 5: Contributes towards**

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Urban Planning Practice {Apprenticeship-UWE} [Frenchay] CertHE 2026-27

Architecture and Planning [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26