



Module Specification

Introduction to Planning Practice

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Introduction to Planning Practice

Module code: UBLLC5-30-M

Level: Level 7

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

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: Yes

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This module seeks to ensure that students have a practical and theoretical understanding of the approaches to preparing development plans (their purpose, content and implementation) and in subsequently managing development through the mechanisms and system of planning (using planning applications and monitoring and enforcement). The module will provide students with a working and practical understanding of the practical and analytical skills needed to make

decisions based on the quality of the outcome not just on the output of the process (i.e. a decision).

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: This module aims to:

Develop critical insight into the conceptual foundations and practical applications of plan-making, enabling students to interrogate planning approaches through theoretical and real-world lenses.

Foster evaluative thinking around innovative and imaginative responses to planning challenges across multiple spatial scales—from the neighbourhood to the international—encouraging creativity in strategic decision-making.

Build a robust understanding of planning law and its role in shaping effective planning decisions, with emphasis on current principles, policies, and procedural frameworks.

Encourage reflective practice on the multi-disciplinary nature of development management, highlighting the importance of inclusive engagement with diverse stakeholders in pursuit of high-quality environments.

Equip students with practical and analytical skills to assess planning outcomes not merely by procedural compliance but by the quality and impact of the decisions made, promoting a values-led approach to planning.

Outline syllabus: The module will broadly cover two key aspects of planning practice: development plans; development management. Within these broad categorisations themed blocks which will introduce particular aspects of planning practice, indicative content includes the following areas:

Forward Planning

Development Management

Planning Enforcement

Environmental Planning and Sustainability

Minerals and Waste Planning

National Infrastructure Planning

The indicative syllabus will explore the following:

The legislative context including: the plan-led approach; forward planning at different

spatial scales; the definition of development; the need for planning permission; permitted development rights; and planning enforcement.

Policy, guidance and advice: understanding the development plan and other material considerations, including use of evidence, case law and the historic context for the plan-led approach.

Plan-making processes and implementation mechanisms regarding the development and use of land to meet sustainability objectives.

Decision-making in context: discretion in the British planning system and alternative approaches, and the role of delivery mechanisms, politics and the various decision making processes.

Consultation, participation and engagement within the context of planning practice.

Making a decision; material considerations; the use of conditions; reasons for refusal; planning agreements; moral and ethical dilemmas.

Specialist planning regimes: national infrastructure; minerals and waste; environmental permitting.

Appeals: written statements, hearings and inquiries; the role of the planning inspectorate; understanding how to produce evidence and justify argument.

Professional skills, including a focus upon negotiation, project management, and communication with a range of multi-disciplinary stakeholders, political interests and communities.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: This module is specific to Distance Learning students. All teaching and learning materials will be enabled through the use of appropriate software to create a quality student experience and ensure the delivery of module learning objectives.

Pre-recorded lectures will be supplemented by virtual/independent site study, discussion exercises, and supported activities.

Independent learning includes academic, practice and wider reading, assignment

preparation and completion, site visits (actual or virtual, independent experiences), desktop research, and reflection.

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

MO1 Be able to critically analyse plan making approaches drawing upon core concepts, theories and from practice.

MO2 Be able to evaluate the potential for imaginative responses to planning challenges at a range of spatial scales including neighbourhood, local, strategic and international.

MO3 Be able to demonstrate understanding of planning law in the context of current planning principles, concepts and approaches for effective decision making, while recognising the importance of professional ethics and accountability as outlined in the RTPI Code of Professional Conduct.

MO4 Be able to reflect critically on the multi-disciplinary approach to managing development and the importance of engaging with a diverse range of interests in creating a good quality environment.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

E-learning/online learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/63D5EB30-AA3A-A435-D49F-60A90FCD599E.html?lang=en-GB&login=1) via the following link <https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/63D5EB30-AA3A-A435-D49F-60A90FCD599E.html?lang=en-GB&login=1>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy:

The summative assessment consists of two assessment points:

Task 1: Development Plans – preparing a written report (3000 words) relating to an

aspect of plan preparation / delivery at different spatial scale(s), for example reporting to a senior manager on public participation benefits, challenges and strategies.

Task 2: Development Management (3000 words) – requires students to demonstrate professional practice competence in site, context, policy and regulatory analysis.

This assessment requires written communication, using evidenced planning argumentation, to advise on a practice scenario such as informing a client or prospective applicant regarding a particular aspect of the planning application process.

Resit brief is same as that for the first sit.

Rationale for Task 1:

This task introduces students to the strategic and procedural dimensions of plan-making, with a focus on communication, stakeholder engagement, and spatial governance.

Strategic Planning Insight - Students explore how development plans are formulated and delivered across local, regional, or national scales, gaining a nuanced understanding of spatial planning systems.

Public Participation Competence - By reporting on the benefits, challenges, and strategies of public engagement, students learn to navigate democratic planning processes and stakeholder dynamics.

Professional Communication - Framing the report as advice to a senior manager simulates real-world internal reporting, encouraging clarity, precision, and strategic framing.

Policy Implementation Awareness - Students reflect on how plans are operationalised, including institutional coordination, resource allocation, and political negotiation.

Rationale for Task 2:

This task immerses students in the applied realm of development control, requiring them to interpret planning regulations and advise on real-world scenarios.

Practice-Based Learning - Students simulate the advisory role of a planning officer or

consultant, applying policy knowledge to a specific site and context.

Regulatory Literacy - The task demands familiarity with planning law, local development frameworks, and procedural requirements.

Evidence-Based Argumentation - Students must construct persuasive, policy-grounded advice, reflecting the rigour expected in professional planning communications.

Client-Facing Communication - Framing the task as advice to a client or applicant builds skills in translating technical planning language into accessible, actionable guidance.

Formative feedback takes place during the module and considers the development of the professional planner and nurtures a critical and reflective mindset.

Formative feedback will consist of:

Discussion between peers within the lectures, tutorials and other scheduled sessions

Comments on coursework drafts by the teaching team

Use of interactive online tools (e.g. Menti) for students to post ideas/questions relating to taught content/coursework

Use of marking rubric both at the start to manage expectations of what 'good' looks like as well as facilitating students to use the rubric to evaluate their own drafts.

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Use of interactive online tools (e.g. Menti) for students to post ideas/questions relating to taught content/coursework;

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Assessment tasks:**Professional Practice Report (First Sit)**

Description: Task 1: Development Plans – preparing a written report relating to an aspect of plan preparation / delivery at different spatial scale(s), for example reporting to a senior manager on public participation benefits, challenges and strategies.

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Practical Skills Assessment (First Sit)

Description: Task 2: Development Management – requires students to demonstrate professional practice competence in site, context, policy and regulatory analysis.

This assessment requires presenting to the marking panel, using written communication, evidenced planning argumentation, to advise on a practice scenario such as informing a client or prospective applicant regarding a particular aspect of the planning application process.

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Professional Practice Report (Resit)

Description: Task 1: Development Plans – preparing a written report relating to an aspect of plan preparation / delivery at different spatial scale(s), for example reporting to a senior manager on public participation benefits, challenges and strategies.

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Professional Practice Report (Resit)

Description: Task 2: Development Management – requires students to demonstrate professional practice competence in site, context, policy and regulatory analysis.

This assessment requires presenting to the marking panel, using written communication, evidenced planning argumentation, to advise on a practice scenario such as informing a client or prospective applicant regarding a particular aspect of the planning application process.

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Planning and Urban Leadership [Distance] MSc 2026-27

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