Section 1: Basic Data

Awarding institution/body: **UWE**

Teaching institution: **UWE**

Faculty responsible for programme: **FBE**

Programme accredited by:

Highest award title: **MA Urban Design**

Default award title:

Interim award title: **PG Diploma Urban Design**
PG Certificate Urban Design

Modular scheme title: **FBE PG Modular Scheme**

UCAS codes:

QAA subject benchmarking group(s):

Valid until:

Valid from: **2005**

Authorised by: **PG Modular Scheme Director** Date:

Version code: **2**

Version year: **2005**

Section 2: Educational aims of the programme

The overall aims of the programme are:

1. to develop in students a critical appreciation of the nature and scope of urban design, and its distinctiveness as a discipline and practice compared with the related fields of architecture, landscape architecture and town planning;

2. to develop in students a critical awareness of key concepts and theories relevant to urban design, including areas of theoretical dispute;

3. to develop in students a sensitivity to urban form and spaces, and the capacity to analyse, describe, interpret and form evaluative judgements about the qualities of urban places;

4. to develop in students an appreciation of the practical problems of implementing urban design solutions, and thereby of the interprofessional context of urban design work;

5. to develop in students a capacity to involve and communicate with the wide range of clients and users of the built environment;

6. to develop a creative capacity both to conceive of and design efficient, aesthetically attractive and environmentally sustainable urban designs;

7. to develop in students the capacity to communicate design ideas and solutions verbally and graphically.

Section 3: Learning outcomes of the programme

A: Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:

1. to demonstrate a knowledge of the history and main theories of urban design;

2. to demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which contemporary urban environments come to be designed, and the roles played by different agents (such as developers, architects, town planners, etc) in creating and designing the built environment;

3. to demonstrate a knowledge of the ways in which the town and country planning system, and related legislation, seeks to enhance and/or conserve the design quality of urban and rural environments, including the use of such instruments as conservation area designation, the "listing" of buildings and monuments, design guidance and codes, development briefs, the use of planning conditions, etc;

4. to demonstrate a critical appreciation of the relationships between land-use, the design of built form, and human behaviour, including the possible effects of different kinds of built forms on people's behaviour, and the extent to which people find given urban environments convenient and attractive to be in and move about in;

5. to demonstrate an understanding of the contribution which different kinds of urban form and design can make to the realisation of economically efficient, aesthetically attractive, and environmentally sustainable development;

6. to demonstrate an understanding of the varying aspirations and interests of different groups in society with respect to the built environment, including groups with different cultural backgrounds and norms;

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Throughout the programme as a whole (i.e. in the different modules making up the programme), a range of teaching and learning methods are used, including formal lectures and seminars as well as urban design projects. With regard to developing the areas of knowledge and understanding of urban design detailed above, lectures and seminars are the primary teaching methods employed, though some of this knowledge and understanding (e.g. that detailed in points 5 and 6) is gained through the design projects which form a significant component in the assessment of students' work on the programme.

Assessment

Assessment is largely through design and project work. Critical and analytical writing, particularly in the form of essays, also forms a key component. The emphasis on design and project work implies that students' knowledge is assessed holistically and in context.

B: Intellectual skills

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
1. to analyse and form considered assessments of the design qualities of given urban or rural environments, and of the role which urban design may play in conserving, enhancing or adding to those qualities;	The programme uses teaching methods that develop skills in the critical analysis and appraisal of the design of the built environment, as well as design skills themselves. It is considered that developing the ability to rigorously appraise urban design work and analyse the forces contributing to its production are key to operating within the field - whether undertaking actual design work or not. The foundation of the teaching on the course are the essays, appraisals and analysis work that pursue this intent.
2. to form, articulate, and justify judgements (both positive and negative) of the qualities of given urban designs;	The programme as a whole does place great emphasis on the learning of practical design skills, through a series of "hands-on" design projects which simulate urban design problems and situations. This emphasis on learning about urban design by actually "doing" design derives partly from the fact that some students on the programme (especially those working for private sector consultancies) may find that some of their work does involve doing actual urban designs. But it also derives from our view that, even where the urban design work being done involves the guidance and control of urban design rather than direct design (as is the case with most design work in public sector planning authorities), it is through grappling with the challenges of doing urban designs that students best develop a deeper understanding of the problems and possibilities of urban design. However, alongside this emphasis on practical design work in projects, the programme also seeks to develop students' theoretical understanding of urban design, and in particular their capacity to deliberate about, discuss and debate urban design issues, and it is in relation to these skills that seminars form part of the students' learning alongside design projects. Work in the Research for Policy and Practice module and the Dissertation underpins and reinforces the teaching of these skills.
3. to create ideas and strategies for the improvement of the design of urban places, including the capacity to formulate actual designs for urban places and spaces, and working in an environment of uncertainty	
4. to generate and undertake a programme of research to examine design ideas or assumptions, and from this reach clear and critically considered conclusions, and demonstrate an appreciation of the theoretical and practical significance of these conclusions.	
5. to formulate, present and debate complex ideas, and engage with contested concepts	
6. to judge and evaluate the quality (validity, reliability and generalisability) of evidence that is used to support claims about theory and current problems in Urban Design practice	**Assessment**
7. to appreciate the complexity of policy issues and the role of values in their definition and solution	Analysis and synthesis are core to all assessed project work - ranging across essay writing, appraisal projects and design projects. In addition intellectual skills relating to conceptual ideas and analysis are assessed through the research modules and the dissertation.

C: Subject, Professional and Practical Skills

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:

1. to engage in actual urban design practice work, either through the medium of design guidance and control undertaken by town planning authorities, or by contributing directly to the creation of urban designs through master planning and design work for planning and urban design consultancies;

2. to work as a member of a team engaged in urban design work, including the capacity to appreciate and communicate with professionals from related disciplines (such as architects) involved in urban design work, and to discuss and negotiate design solutions with other agents (such as developers) involved in designing the built environment.

3. More generally, to create and communicate design ideas, to generate design policy and guidance, to advise and negotiate on urban design issues, and to prepare urban design frameworks and site layouts.

4. to communicate design ideas and solutions to others, including different groups in society from different social or cultural backgrounds, who may possess different aspirations and interests with respect to the way environments are designed;

5. to discuss, debate and negotiate about different design proposals with colleagues, clients, and different agents involved in the provision of the built environment (such as developers, architects, landscape architects, etc);

6. to devise appropriate methods to guide and control the quality of new designs for the built environment;

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Once again, it is primarily through the medium of analysis and appraisal projects, and design projects, with critical and reflective feedback that the foregoing professional and practical skills are learnt and developed.
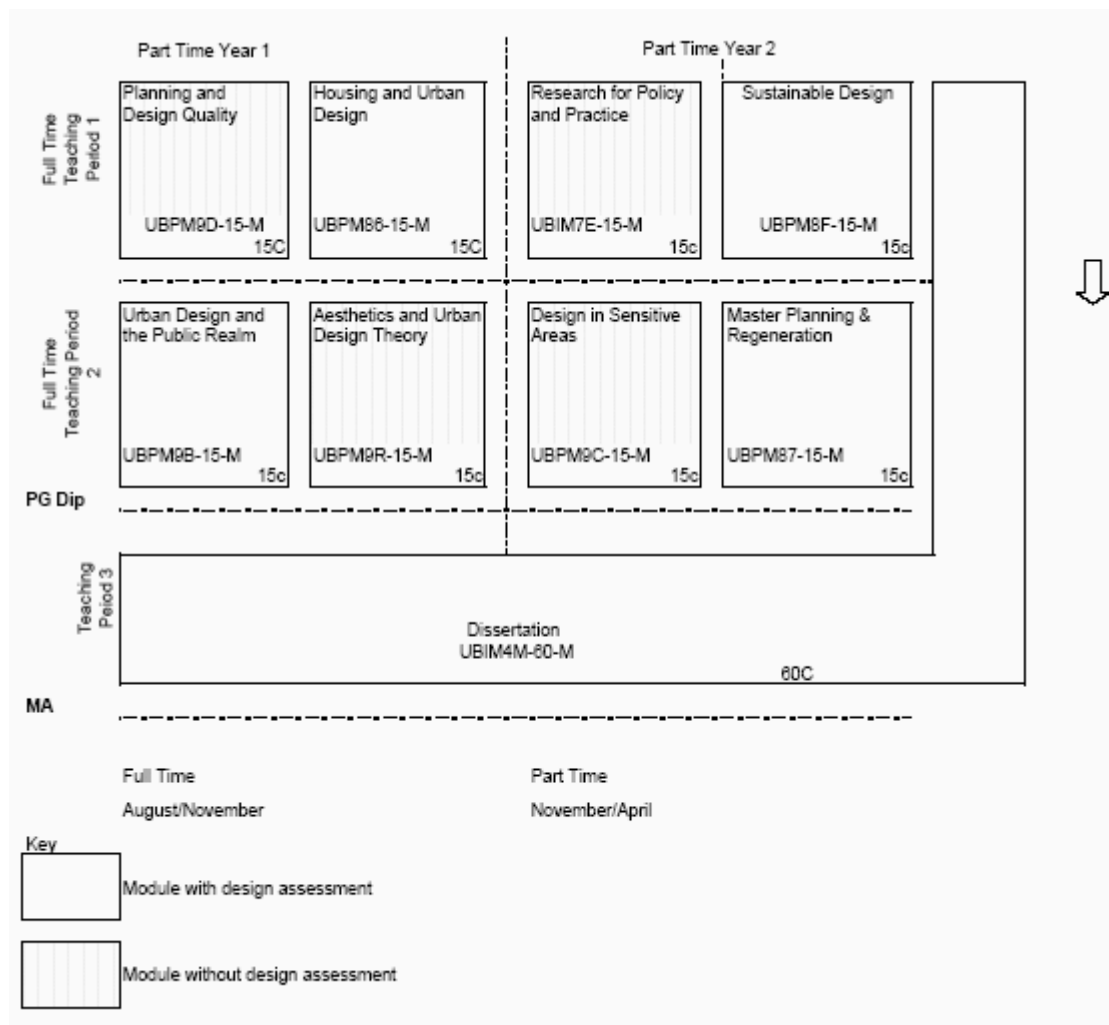
Assessment

Design and appraisal skills are assessed through essay, dissertation and project work undertaken across the spectrum of modules.

There is a balance throughout the programme of design, and non-design, focused modules - allowing the development of productive and reflective skills.

D: Transferable skills and other attributes

By the end of the programme, the student should be able:	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
1. to analyse and evaluate the design qualities of urban environments;	Seminars, design, research and appraisal projects are the main vehicles for developing these transferable skills and attributes.
2. to communicate verbally and graphically design ideas and solutions to different groups with varying ranges of interest in the built environment.	**Assessment**
3. to work effectively in teams	Students' communication and inter-personal skills are assessed via presentations and defence of their ideas and designs. Groupwork offers the opportunity for the assessment of team-working.
4. to initiate and manage the research process, utilising the appropriate methodologies	Written work (particularly essays and the dissertation) provide an opportunity to assess analytical and evaluative skills.
5. to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level	
6. to self direct, manage, and reflect on their own learning, exercising initiative and taking personal responsibility	

Section 4: Programme structure

	Part Time Year 1		Part Time Year 2		
Full Time Teaching Period 1	Planning and Design Quality UBPM9D-15-M 15C	Housing and Urban Design UBPM86-15-M 15C	Research for Policy and Practice UBIM7E-15-M 15c	Sustainable Design UBPM8F-15-M 15c	
Full Time Teaching Period 2	Urban Design and the Public Realm UBPM9B-15-M 15c	Aesthetics and Urban Design Theory UBPM9R-15-M 15c	Design in Sensitive Areas UBPM9C-15-M 15c	Master Planning & Regeneration UBPM87-15-M 15c	

PG Dip

Teaching Period 3	Dissertation UBIM4M-60-M 60C	

MA

Full Time	Part Time
August/November	November/April

Key

[blank box]	Module with design assessment
[striped box]	Module without design assessment

- course structure

Core modules	Optional modules	Target Award
Level M	Students must take one of the following modules:	**MA Urban Design** 180 credits at level M, comprising the PG Diploma plus the Dissertation.
UBPM9R-15-M: Aesthetics and Urban Design Theory (15)		
UBPM9C-15-M: Design in Sensitive Urban Areas (15)		**Default Award**
UBIM4M-60-M: Dissertation (60)		
UBPM86-15-M: Housing and Urban Design (15)		
UBPM87-15-M: Master Planning and Regeneration (15)		
UBPM9D-15-M: Planning and Design Quality (15)		**Interim Awards**
UBIM7E-15-M: Research for Policy and Practice (15)		
UBPM8F-15-M: Sustainable Design (15)		
UBPM9B-15-M: Urban Design and the Public Realm (15)		PG Certificate Urban Design 60 credits at level M (excluding the dissertation) PG Diploma Urban Design 120 credits at level M, comprising Research for Policy and Practice, plus 105 credits of core and optional modules as specified (excluding the dissertation)

Section 5: Entry requirements

First Degree or equivalent normally with at least a lower second award and preferably in a related discipline eg Town planning, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Civil Engineering. However other degrees are accepted where the applicant has at least an upper second class degree and with the student understanding the design nature of the course.

Exceptionally, mature students without a first degree but with relevant experience will be considered eligible following a basic written test.

The development and assessment of design skills is an important part of the programme and thus applicants may be required to undertake pre-enrolment learning as a prerequisite to commencing the urban design programme proper. Applicants will be required to submit a small portfolio of design work (electronic format, or no larger than A3 if hardcopy). The requirement to undertake pre-enrolment learning will then be at the discretion of urban design programme team. However, it will be compulsory for applicants who cannot produce a portfolio

The course focuses on UK practice and the legislative framework in the UK, although international comparisons are made. International applicants who want this focus, and can satisfy the entry requirements will be considered.

Section 6: Assessment Regulations

The Assessment Regulations for this programme are the current version of MAR

Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support

Distinctive features of this programme include:

1. A wide variety of teaching and learning methods, designed to develop students' confidence in making design decisions, in communication and in appraisal. Conventional lectures and seminars are integrated with design project sessions where design work is carried out with tutors providing personal tutoring.

2. Inter-professional working in teams composed of people from different disciplinary backgrounds.

Section 8: Reference points/benchmarks

- The course was established by a team includings experienced practitioners and members of the Urban Design Group.
- Many of the staff have established research and consultancy reputations, often for innovative work (eg Sustainable Development, Universal Design, Design Policy and Guidance, Aesthetics and Public Realm design. This informs the teaching programme and ensures that the course addresses current issues.
- Core members of the teaching team are regularly commissioned by employers to conduct in-house courses on urban design issues.
- Core members of the team have international professional and academic experience working in the field of urban design and continue to engage in consultancy work.
- As the course has been established over 10 years many ex students are now employers and a number have sent their employees on the course