

Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	Course Title	MA Urban Design PgDip Urban Design PgCert Urban Design
2	Course Code	PT1524
3	Awarding Institution	Birmingham City University
4	Teaching Institution(s) (if different from point 3)	
5	Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation (if applicable)	not applicable

6	Course Description
	<p>This forward thinking, exploratory, design focused MA, is rooted in a deep connection between theory and practice. In completion, you will know how to critique, create and experiment with the design of high quality, trans-disciplinary urban places.</p> <p>As 'an umbrella' field of study and profession, Urban Design lies at the critical junction of an ever-increasing urban population that continues to add pressure to global systems, with effects that connect through scale, from political strategies right down to an individual's every-day personal experience. Now is the time we must be innovative and joined-up in our thinking. Whether you have a background in architecture, Landscape Architecture, Planning, or other fields; Urban Design is an acknowledgement that we need to work together to face the current global challenges and develop integrated responses that open new opportunities for all of us.</p> <p>On this course we embrace collaborative, creative processes, which connect and transcend traditional discipline boundaries, 'silo' processes and mentalities, to promote the dynamic diversity of human conditions. You will explore ways to refine the way we think about, and make, the places that represent and support our lives. We want to make places that can facilitate a happier and more sustainable world, supporting both the short- and long-term success of humanity and our fellow species.</p> <p>This course is an integration of best practice and innovative learning strategies from the widely regarded Birmingham School of Architecture and Design, and the Department for the Built Environment. As a highly collaborative course, we bring expertise from a rich diversity of backgrounds.</p> <p>Drawing on extensive experience in research and practice, this Master's in Urban Design provides a balance of practical and theoretical learning, within the following themes:</p> <p>Design Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory, iterative design creativity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies and framework design processes • Life and Place: curating sustainability, value, character and function • Socio-economic and physical analysis across diverse contexts • Collaborative design strategy and the role(s) of the urban designer <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary visualisation for urban design - best practice and innovation • Mixed-media design communication: explorations in interface and interactivity • Communicating with structure, character and precision <p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional and ethical evaluation • Transdisciplinary, participatory and inclusive practice • Sectors, trends and the targeted marketing of design • Time and Process Management <p>Theory and Debates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary global questions and debates • Between practical theories and theoretical practices • International 'Urban'isms', people and design • Research practice and process
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7	Course Awards		
7a	Name of Final Award	Level	Credits Awarded
	Master of Arts Urban Design	7	180
7b	Exit Awards and Credits Awarded		
	Post Graduate Certificate Urban Design	7	60
	Post Graduate Diploma Urban Design	7	120

8	Derogation from the University Regulations		
	N/A		

9	Delivery Patterns			
	Mode(s) of Study	Location(s) of Study	Duration of Study	Code(s)
	Full Time	Parkside	1 years	PT1524
	Part Time	Parkside	2 years	PT1525
	Full Time with professional placement	Parkside and placement provider	1 year + 1 year placement	PT1556

10	Entry Requirements		
	Home:	Applications are welcomed from designers that have already achieved a high-quality degree in Urban Design, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, or closely related discipline such Planning,	

		<p>Geography where there is experience of urban scale three-dimensional design.</p> <p>As a minimum, applicants should have a portfolio demonstrating their critical thinking, technical abilities and creative process in a range of media.</p> <p>Applications from students with alternative qualifications and/or substantial work experience will be considered individually on their merits/portfolio.</p>
	EU:	Advanced English Skills are essential as this is a taught MA and all project work requires accurate and appropriate communication in English language. Non-English speakers should have IELTS 6.0 in the following categories - reading, speaking, listening and writing
	International:	Advanced English Skills are essential as this is a taught MA and all project work requires accurate and appropriate communication in English language. Non-English speakers should have IELTS 6.0 in the following categories - reading, speaking, listening and writing
	Access:	n/a

11	Course Aims
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on contemporary Urban Design processes, practices and theory • Consider the global and ethical impact of Urban Design decisions • Question the current boundaries of Urban Design • Realise Urban Design employability opportunities through live projects • Explore the connectedness of different design and planning disciplines (between ADM and CEBE)

12	Course Learning Outcomes
Knowledge and Understanding	
1	Evaluate urban design within historic; socio-economic and political contexts, reflecting on international issues of policy and governance, to argue critically, rigorously and rationally on the basis of evidence and cutting-edge debates [Contemporary Debate and Contexts]
2	Experiment and iteratively develop urban design proposals that creatively integrate ideas across multi-faceted layers and scales of consideration; to form critical responses to complex urban conditions [Reflective Design Processes]
3	Evaluate theory and practice to synthesise relevant urban design proposals from simple to complex that are appropriate to the nature and scale of issues being investigated, including awareness of sustainability issues and client/user requirements. [Generate Complex urban Design proposals]
4	Appraise business principles related to urban design practice and set professional goals recognising emerging markets and design trends in the industry [Business and Employability]

Skills and other attributes	
5	Develop and apply professional, and ethical working methods to facilitate effective collaboration between multi-discipline stakeholders, including public participants [Collaborative Processes]
6	Assimilate problem solving skills and develop strategies to control and facilitate the creative process to work effectively in both team and individual work context, prioritising workloads and managing conflicts appropriately in professional situations. [Professionalism, Team Working, Time and Design management]
7	Use exploratory processes to develop structured, characterful and precise communication approaches that align to diverse audiences, sectors and markets [Communication Processes]
8	Methodologically search, collate, evaluate and synthesise a range of academic and practice-based information, to inspire and evidence theoretical debates and design processes [Research Methods]

13	Level Learning Outcomes
	<p><i>Level Learning outcomes are statements that identify what learners will have gained as a result of their learning; they should be linked directly to the knowledge, understanding, skills, capabilities and values that a student will have gained after completing each level of a course, in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications</i></p> <p><i>Level Learning outcomes should be numbered and separated to show what students will have achieved on completion of each potential exit award.</i></p> <p><i>The Education Development Service can provide further <u>guidance</u> on the development of Level Learning Outcomes.</i></p>
	Upon completion of Post-Graduate Certificate Urban Design, students will be able to:
	Evaluate urban design within historic, socio-economic and political contexts
	Experiment and iteratively develop urban design proposals
	Evaluate theory and practice to synthesise relevant proposals from simple to complex
	Appraise business principles related to urban design practice
	Develop and apply professional, and ethical working methods
	Assimilate problem solving skills and develop strategies
	Use exploratory processes to develop structured, characterful communication
	Methodologically search, collate, evaluate a range of academic and practice-based information
	Upon completion of Post-Graduate Diploma Urban Design, students will be able to:
	Evaluate urban design within historic; socio-economic and political contexts, reflecting on international issues of policy and governance

	Experiment and iteratively develop urban design proposals that creatively integrate ideas across multi-faceted layers and scales of consideration
	Evaluate theory and practice to synthesise relevant proposals from simple to complex that are appropriate to the nature and scale of urban design issues being investigated
	Appraise business principles related to urban design practice and set professional goals
	Develop and apply professional, and ethical working methods to facilitate effective collaboration
	Assimilate problem solving skills and develop strategies to control and facilitate the creative process to work effectively in both team and individual work context
	Use exploratory processes to develop structured, characterful and precise communication
	Methodologically search, collate, evaluate and synthesise a range of academic and practice-based information

14	Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy
	<p>The learning experience connects to the Department of Planning (CEBE) and School of Architecture and Design (ADM) approaches and is made fundamentally through curation of a personal design process and design culture. This very much aligns to real-world creative practice in Urban Design, aligning to other aligned design professions in 'built-environment' sectors, such as Architecture and Landscape Architecture.</p> <p>Tutorials</p> <p>Tutorials may take place in groups or individually and may vary in size depending on the mode and context of study. Tutorials encourage independence and self-confidence, by providing a forum for discussion and critique of work with staff and peer group, helping in the development of ideas, presentation and interpersonal communication skills. Tutorials are key teaching and learning experiences that enable feedback, guidance and criticism of work at every stage of a module.</p> <p>Design studio</p> <p>As an approach, studio teaching, or 'Design Studio', mimics the real-world working culture of design professions, with an open atmosphere for promotion of free, quick exchanges of ideas, knowledge and skills. Studio sessions provide the foundation for the development of a healthy, individualised understanding of design process; promoting a fearless attitude to exploration and experimentation with materials, physical form and for developing conceptual ideas that are rooted to strong theoretical understanding.</p> <p>Each design studio module is driven by one or more design projects, which are tailored to promote the development of an integrated approach to creation and communication of design ideas, including verbal, graphic, physical methods, such as perspectives, 2D plan and section, parallel projection, physical and digital 3D models, constructed objects, video, installation, exhibition and written components.</p> <p>Design studio develops with an open minded and self-aware approach, expanding ability and confidence in providing and receiving objective critique of design. This is achieved via an iterative, cyclical process of regular formative review of developing design proposals (often known as 'pin-up review'), which focus and refine ideas toward well rounded, finalised proposals.</p> <p>Design briefs within studio cover a diverse range of situations, often connecting with research areas within the school, opening up potential opportunities to connect with real-world Landscape</p>

Architectural practice and/or to the advancement of academic understanding and theory in the subject.

Lectures and Seminars

Individual, project-related and guest lectures (including the 'Lecture series'), provide a broad spectrum of knowledge base of theories, principles, concepts and issues relating to the subject area and the learning outcomes for the course, motivating independent study.

Seminars in addition, provide an opportunity to gain student self-confidence through discussion and development of ideas and theories, from lectures, reading, research and design projects.

They promote intellectual understanding and further analysis, through exploration of reasoning and critical judgement, via guided debates within group discussion and presentation. They also provide an invaluable opportunity to discuss ideas and receive comment on specific subjects of interest, particularly moving into the later elements of the course.

Research & Independent Study

Research and independent study enable development of personal interpretations of knowledge, critical skills and specialist interests. As well as being an integral part of all studies and a preparation for professional life, it is an essential process for the development of academic curiosity, self-motivation and a well-organised, personalised library of design references.

Effective research process underpins practice at all scales and sectors.

Options

These enabling a choice of areas of study, which encourage the development of individual interests and knowledge to a considerable depth and to develop independence, self-confidence and independence in studies. Where appropriate, the elective may take the form of a shared project between cohorts from different disciplines, ensuring multi-disciplinary understanding in theory and practice.

Workshops

Workshops provide hands-on experience and opportunity for development of skills across a large range of potential areas of interest. They focus on specific applications to develop approaches, attitudes and methods, to facilitate theory and skills can be more easily incorporated into developing design process.

Study Visits

Study visits allow access to the physical experience of design, connecting theory to built form, illustrating ideas presented in lectures and seminars, illustrating, and reinforcing theoretical understanding of cultural context and material technology.

All module types may involve focused site visits that may vary in length, from short local trips, to longer visits, some of which may be overseas. Equivalent learning opportunities are available by negotiation.

Some of modules may include online learning support. If this is applicable, more information will be provided by course tutors and in the relevant module descriptions.

Assessment methods

Work presented for assessment will demonstrate the extent to which the student has fulfilled the learning outcomes of the module. Marks are awarded and are determined through the assessment of the student's ability to research, conceptualise and realise their ideas in design work, 'live' presentation, and written work, as detailed in the learning outcomes of the module and in the module marking descriptor.

- Formative Review

There is an opportunity for formative appraisal to take place via diagnostic and one to one tutorial support, and where appropriate student-led seminar presentations. Most scheduled sessions take the approach of continual formative review, where all comments are important as part of a reflective, iterative process. There are always points of 'formal' formative, which are in the format of simulating a summative assessment

- Summative Assessment

In practice modules through the presentation of practical work and supporting research material, or verbal group or individual presentation. In theory modules in the form of an essay, dissertation or critical review.

Key Modes

Design Project Portfolio – a compiled, mixed media output, which communicates not only the final design project, but the process of design, including description, reflection and reference to theory-best practice. This can be used each for design process, site/context analysis and/or as an integration or all of these elements (typical in a design project)

Practice Research – adheres to formal requirements for research: situated with a research question and contextual theoretical review, with emphasis on practice-based methods, which related to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design - examples: detailed case-study analysis, analytical mapping, self-narrated experiential, photographic or sketch analysis, exploratory design/ system modelling.

Design/Project Presentation (performative)

Physical, Verbal and Visual presentation of work in a formal, timed setting and process. To communicate a narrative of process to peers and tutors. Often from L5 onwards, with input of practitioners at formal stages. We use this as an integrated percentage of the assessment rather than a standalone element: within learning outcomes related to communication.

15	Course Requirements							
15a	<p>Level 7:</p> <p><i>In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 160 credits):</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: yellow;">Module Code</th> <th style="background-color: yellow;">Module Name</th> <th style="background-color: yellow;">Credit Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: yellow;">UBD7011</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;">Global Urban Transformations</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;">20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value	UBD7011	Global Urban Transformations	20
Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value						
UBD7011	Global Urban Transformations	20						

BNV7142	Placemaking	20
UBD7013	Design Research	20
UBD7012	Contemporary Urban Debates	40
BNV7146	Transitions to Sustainable Futures	20
UBD7014	Experimental Urban Design Studio	40

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete 20 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules:

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ADM7001	Co.LAB	20
BNV7137	Development Project	20

Level 6:

In order to qualify for the awards with Professional Placement, a student must successfully complete all of the Level 7 modules listed above as well as the following Level 6 module:

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
PLA6003	Professional Placement	60

15b Structure Diagram
Level 7 – Full Time, September Start

<i>Semester 1</i>	<i>Semester 2</i>	<i>Semester 3</i>
Core <i>UBD7011</i> Global Urban Transformations (20 Credits)	Option <i>ADM7001</i> Co.LAB (20 Credits)	Core <i>BNV7146</i> Transitions to Sustainable Futures (20 Credits)
Core <i>BNV7142</i> Placemaking (20 Credits)	Option <i>BNV7137</i> Development Project (20 Credits)	
Core <i>UBD7013</i> Design Research (20 Credits)	Option <i>UBD7012</i> Contemporary Urban Debates (40 Credits)	Core <i>UBD7014</i> Experimental Urban Design Studio (40 Credits)

Level 6 ‘with Professional Placement’

After completion of your mode of study, there is option for ‘MA Urban Design *with Professional Placement*’. An additional 60 credits at Level 6, with a 20 week professional placement.

Full time year 1 plus Year 2:

<i>Semester 1</i>	<i>Semester 2</i>	<i>Semester 3</i>
<i>PLA6003</i> Professional Placement 60 credits		

Level 7 – Part Time, September Start

YEAR 1		
<i>Semester 1</i>	<i>Semester 2</i>	<i>Semester 3</i>
Core <i>UBD7011</i> Global Urban Transformations (20 Credits)	Option <i>ADM7001</i> Co.LAB (20 Credits)	Core <i>BNV7146</i> Transitions to Sustainable Futures (20 Credits)
Core <i>BNV7142</i> Placemaking (20 Credits)	Option <i>BNV7137</i> Development Project (20 Credits)	
YEAR 2		
<i>Semester 1</i>	<i>Semester 2</i>	<i>Semester 3</i>
Core <i>UBD7013</i> Design Research (20 Credits)	Core <i>UBD7012</i> Contemporary Urban Debates (40 Credits)	Core <i>UBD7014</i> Experimental Urban Design Studio (40 Credits)

16 Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment
Level 7
Workload
17% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	300
Directed Learning	760
Private Study	740
Total Hours	1800

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	95%
Exam	0%
In-Person	5%