

**REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF URBAN DESIGN  
(MUrbanDesign)**

*(See also General Regulations)*

*(These regulations and syllabuses will apply to candidates admitted in the 2011-2012 academic year and thereafter)*

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

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**Admission requirements**

**Ar16** To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Urban Design, a candidate

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
  - (b) shall hold a Bachelor's degree of this University in a relevant subject; or relevant qualification of equivalent standard from another university or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
  - (c) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.
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**Qualifying examination**

**Ar17**

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidate's formal academic ability or his ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.
  - (b) A candidate who is required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until he has satisfied the examiners in the examination.
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**Award of degree**

**Ar18** To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Urban Design, a candidate

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations; and
  - (b) shall complete the curriculum and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations and syllabuses set out below.
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**Curriculum**

**Ar19**

- (a) The curriculum shall extend over not less than one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study and not more than three years in all cases, with normally 48credits<sup>1</sup> of

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<sup>1</sup> 1 credit= 8 teaching hours per semester (or 3-credit course = 2 teaching hours per week)

enrolled courses, and shall include all examinations, urban design project reports, and a dissertation as detailed below.

- (b) To complete the curriculum, candidates
- (i) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work and practical work where appropriate;
  - (ii) shall complete work prescribed in the Urban design studio I (9 credits); Urban design studio II (9 credits); and Dissertation/Design thesis (12 credits);
  - (iii) shall normally satisfy the examiners in not less than six courses including five core courses:

- Introduction to urban development and planning
- Urban design principles
- Physical environment and site planning
- Computer in urban design
- Research methods for urban design

and the balance from a list of postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Architecture. The list of elective courses may vary from year to year and will be announced at the beginning of each year. Selection of elective courses shall be made in consultation with the Programme Director concerned to secure specialization in either urban design or a related topical area.

A list of elective courses is given below:

- Conservation management and practice
- Cultural heritage and the built environment
- Location and transport in urban design
- Special topics in urban design
- History and theory of landscape architecture I
- History and theory of landscape architecture II
- The design of Chinese cities
- Ecology and Design
- Chinese landscape
- Geographic Information System (GIS) for Urban and Regional Planning Development
- Transport Policy and Planning
- Housing, Planning and Sustainability
- Urban planning and practice in China
- Globalisation and Urban and Regional Development in China
- Housing in urban development
- Contemporary urbanism
- Components of sustainable landscape design
- Cultural landscapes

Candidates may upon application be granted exemption from one core course on the basis of their previous studies; candidates who have been granted exemption will be required to take another elective course and be granted permission by the Head of Department upon the recommendation of the Programme Director.

Depending on their academic background and field of specialization, candidates may be required to study "Introduction to visual communications in urban design"

as pre-requisite upon recommendation of the Programme Director. Such pre-requisite course will be taken as extra-curricular studies and will not be counted towards the minimum of six courses required.

- (iv) shall satisfy the examiners in each of the courses followed either by a written paper or an assessment of coursework, or a combination of these methods. The examiners may at their discretion prescribe an oral examination in any course or on any work prescribed in the Urban Design studio.

## **Examinations**

### **Ar20**

- (a) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners at first attempt in not more than three courses (core or elective) followed during an academic year may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination in the failed courses at a specified date. If they again fail, but in not more than two courses, they may be permitted to repeat the relevant curriculum and to present themselves for re-examination at a specified date in the failed course(s) at a third and last attempt. Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in one or more electives in their first attempt may be permitted under special circumstances to register for alternative courses and be examined at a specified date. If they fail to satisfy the examiners, in any of the substitute courses, they may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination only once more at specified date. If any of the failed courses is not being offered in the particular academic year, this may be construed as a special circumstance for the purpose of this article.
- (b) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in any academic year in work prescribed in the Urban Design studio or in the Dissertation/Design Thesis may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination at a specified date. If they again fail to satisfy the examiners in any work, they shall be required to repeat all or part of the work prescribed during the academic year and to present themselves for re-examination at a specified date in the work repeated.
- (c) Candidates shall be recommended for discontinuation under the following circumstances:
  - (i) if they fail to satisfy the examiners at a first attempt in more than three courses followed during an academic year;
  - (ii) if they fail to satisfy the examiners in any of the failed courses in their third attempt or in any of the failed substitute courses in their second attempt;
  - (iii) if they fail to satisfy the examiners in their third attempt in any of the work prescribed in the Urban design studio or in Dissertation/Design Thesis;
  - (iv) if they fail to satisfy all requirements for the award of the degree within three academic years from the commencement of studies.

## **Examination results**

### **Ar21**

- (a) After presentation of the dissertation and after conclusion of the examination, a pass list of candidates awarded the Master of Urban Design degree shall be published. A candidate who has shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded on the candidate's degree certificate.
- (b) In consultation with the Internal Examiners and subject to the approval of the Head of

Department, the Programme Director may recommend that a candidate registered for the Master of Urban Design Programme be transferred to the candidature of PDip(Urban Design) if he is unable to continue with his dissertation.

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## **SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF URBAN DESIGN**

For the purpose of these syllabuses, the teaching of each course will be conducted within one semester.

### **PRE-REQUISITE COURSES**

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#### **ARCH 6071. Introduction to visual communications in urban design (3 credits)**

This course is designed for students with non-architecture background to understand the role of visual communications in urban design, and to acquire basic skills for design communication using both traditional and digital media. The course consists of two parts: (1) traditional drawing techniques covering design drafting and presentation drawing, free hand drawing and sketching, site observation and documentation graphics; (2) entry-level computer skills for generation and representation of architectural and urban designs in 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional forms, and image-processing.

### **CORE COURSES**

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#### **ARCH4006. Urban design principles (3 credits)**

This course is an introduction to the subject area of urban design, within the broader field of architecture. Topics covered include: city forms and design in history, issues and dimensions in contemporary urban design, methods and techniques for urban design inquiry.

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#### **ARCH6070. Research methods for urban design (3 credits)**

The course introduces candidates to research methodology appropriate for urban design. Topics include: formulation of research questions; qualitative and quantitative research methods; environmental design attributes and research paradigms; formulation of research proposals; use of computers in urban design research.

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#### **ARCH6101. Urban design studio I (9 credits)**

The urban design studio is the core component of the Master of Urban Design curriculum. In Studio I, students learn to acquire basic urban design skills through a series of project-based exercises that (1) introduce the students to a basic vocabulary for examining physical urban form; (2) develop students' ability to identify and analyze urban design issues and problems; (3) initiate the students on basic skills to develop urban design scheme in two-dimensional and

three-dimensional form. This studio is conducted over one semester.

**ARCH6102. Urban design studio II (9 credits)**

Conducted over one semester, Studio II normally consists of urban design projects with progressively larger scale and complexity, which aims to: (a) enhance and further develop the students' analytical and design ability for handling real-life urban development, renewal and/or re-development projects; (b) prepare the students for conducting more advanced studies leading to large, comprehensive urban design schemes.

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**ARCH6103. Dissertation/design thesis (12 credits)**

Dissertation/design thesis conducts an in-depth investigation of urban design or development issues which relate directly to the physical design of the urban environment. The topic chosen should be both academic and practical in nature and a report not exceeding 20,000 words or equivalent is required.

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**ARCH6104. Physical environment and site planning (3 credits)**

The course offers a synoptic introduction of site planning as urban design technique, and focuses on major factors that interact with, and directly determine the shaping of physical urban environment. Topics covered include the art and mechanics of site planning; ecology and aesthetics of landscaping; transport infrastructure for urban and rural development; programming and land use planning for urban development, and planning standards and environmental performance criteria.

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**ARCH6121. Computer in urban design (3 credits)**

The course focuses on computer-related tools and techniques in professional urban design practice, and enables designers to fully exploit computers as design and presentation tools. It also includes an overview of computer graphics, hardware, software and their applications in urban design.

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**ARCH6122. Introduction to urban development and planning (3 credits)**

This course examines the framework of urban development and urban planning within which urban design is undertaken and implemented. Topics covered include urban development process, urban spatial structure, and nature and function of urban planning.

**ELECTIVE COURSES<sup>2</sup>**

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**ARCH6067. Location and transport in urban design (3 credits)**

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<sup>2</sup> Not all of the courses are offered every year.

This course will focus upon the key determining factors that create the reciprocal relationship between land use, population and building densities and transport. Candidates will be introduced to methods of evaluation of urban morphology. Case studies with particular reference to Hong Kong will be presented.

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**ARCH6072. Special topics in urban design (3 credits)**

This course offers a closer examination of selected urban design issues in history and in contemporary time. Topics covered include, urban design concepts and models in history and their applications, contemporary city building issues, and, future urban forms. Illustrated lectures will be combined with seminars/ workshops to enable in-depth study of urban design topics in context.

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**URBP6017. Geographic information system (GIS) for urban and regional planning development (3 credits)**

This course introduces the basic concepts and methods in the use of geographic information system as a spatial planning support system in different areas of urban and regional planning and development. It examines the basic principles and functions of geographic information system in data input, manipulation, retrieval, visualization and modelling of geographical data for supporting spatial planning decisions.

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**URBP6131. Transport policy and planning (3 credits)**

This course focuses on key issues in transport policy and the implementation of transport plans and programmes. It examines the role of private and public modes within the overall urban transport system as well as pedestrian movement planning, airport development and seaport development. The course uses examples drawn from various countries to evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of alternative policies and implementation mechanisms.

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**URBP6904. Housing, planning and sustainability (3 credits)**

This course aims to provide an integrative and in-depth understanding of Hong Kong's housing system and its relationships with urban planning and the concepts of sustainable development. It discusses the theoretical and practical aspects of housing, making special reference to their relationships with urban planning and sustainable development. Major topics include the housing system concepts, the political economy of housing policies, land use planning and housing affordability, principals of residential planning, housing policy analyses, housing market analyses, and the application of the sustainable development perspective to housing analyses.

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**URBP6905. Globalization and urban and regional development in China (3 credits)**

This course examines the processes of globalization and studies its implications for urban and regional development in China. It studies the general concepts of urban development and the

historical legacy constraining the urban development in China. With China's accession to WTO membership, special emphasis is placed on the interactions between the transnational corporations (TNCs) and the different level of the state and local governments. Regional dynamics will be examined in the context of global competitiveness.

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**URBP6906. Urban planning and practice in China (3 credits)**

The course will first review the history of urban planning practice in the People's Republic of China. The relationship between economic and urban planning, the evolution of the planning legislation and the practice of planning at different geographical scales will be discussed. The course will then focus on planning practice in the Pearl River Delta region and its major cities where the transitional economy is evolving rapidly. Issues surrounding the institutionalisation of planning regulations, systems and hierarchy; the formulation and implementation of plans; and problems of development control will be examined.

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**Elective Courses Offered by MArch, MLA or ACP:**

ARCH5102	Chinese landscapes
ARCH5103	Housing in urban development
ARCH5105	The design of Chinese cities
ARCH5111	Contemporary urbanism
ARCH6119	Components of sustainable landscape design
ARCH7106	History and theory of landscape architecture I
ARCH7107	History and theory of landscape architecture II
ARCH7108	Ecology and design
ARCH8102	Architectural heritage and the built environment
ARCH8103	Charters & legislation of conservation
ARCH8109	Cultural landscapes

Choice of the above courses is subject to prior approval by the Head of Department/Programme Director concerned. Priority will be given to students of the relevant programmes. Please refer to the respective programme syllabuses for the course descriptions.