

UCL BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING  
Faculty of the Built Environment



# UCL



International Planning MSc



Shikumen houses, Shanghai

The International Planning MSc is a professionally accredited planning programme which can be completed in either 1 year of full-time study or in 2 to 5 years of modular/flexible study. It is accredited by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The programme provides:

- An opportunity to acquire a broad range of skills and knowledge, whilst setting foot on the path towards specialisation;
- A programme of study which draws on University College London's position as a leading research-led university;
- An integrated programme, with all modules linked by common principles and an integrated view of the subject matter;
- A principle and theory driven programme, which gives students both conceptual understanding, and the skills needed to tackle practical problems;
- A spatially focused programme dealing with real places and the role of planning in place-making.

The International Planning programme includes lecture and seminar modules, project work, an international field trip and the preparation of a dissertation. All students have a choice of specialist modules – in urban regeneration, urban design, international property, sustainable development, mega-infrastructure projects or housing.

## Programme Objectives

The University of London's MPhil Degree in Town Planning was established in 1966. The 180 credit International Planning MSc and its sister programme the Spatial Planning MSc build on and develop this heritage. All of UCL's accredited postgraduate programmes in planning have been carefully designed for graduates of any discipline who wish to make a career in planning (in central and local government, private consultancy, voluntary bodies, etc.), or in related fields (housing, urban regeneration, transport planning, urban design, etc.), or in teaching or research.

The International Planning MSc aims to broaden students' appreciation of planning and urban theory whilst providing them with the necessary skills to engage in critical and creative problem solving. The programme delivers an initial planning education that enables people entering the profession to think critically about space and place as the basis for action or intervention. The Bartlett School of Planning (BSP) aims to provide a platform for critical thinking that extends beyond regulatory considerations, and instead embraces wider social, economic, environmental and political concerns. An emphasis on understanding the social and physical world will lead onto a greater appreciation of how action or intervention shapes place and the experience of place.

The International Planning MSc is intended for students who want an international perspective on planning systems and cultures, or are likely to work outside the UK after their studies. The international scope of the MSc builds on the diversity of BSP's academic staff and students and invariably encompasses comparative perspectives on developed and transitional economies throughout the globe, with particular emphasis on Europe, North America, Australia and increasingly China, South East Asia and the Middle East. Less emphasis is put on the urban development issues and planning systems of developing countries of the Global South (e.g. Africa and Latin America), since the Development Planning Unit, another school within the Faculty of the Built Environment at UCL, offers specialised MSc programmes focusing on urban development in developing countries.

# International Planning MSc

More specifically, the International Planning MSc will:

- give students a critical appreciation of the commonalities and differences among a variety of national planning systems;
- enhance their understanding of planning as a culturally specific, context dependent activity which takes different forms in different parts of the world;
- raise students' awareness of the impacts of globalisation on planning, and of patterns of convergence and divergence in planning approaches which arise through the international circulation and transfer of 'good practices' in planning and urban policies.

The main difference between the MSc International Planning and its sister programme, the Spatial Planning MSc, is the strong international and comparative focus of the International Planning programme, which is achieved through specific core modules (International Planning, Critical Debates in International Planning and International Planning Project); an international field trip taking place outside the UK; and an MSc dissertation focusing on an international planning or policy issue, case study and/or a comparison between two countries. In the specialist modules, nonetheless, London is often used as a case-study, as it is a unique and complex setting which provides an accessible laboratory for BSP students.

## The Bartlett School of Planning

The Bartlett School of Planning, at University College London, is part of a large multi-disciplinary built environment faculty and has a strong history of teaching and research at all levels. The School has been at the forefront of planning research and teaching for over fifty years and is one of the foremost planning schools in the United Kingdom, with an international reputation. The School's academic focus is on teaching and research in urban planning, urban and rural policy-making, strategic and regional planning, spatial planning, sustainable development infrastructure and transportation policy and planning, all of which are defined broadly and are international in scope.

## 180 Credit MSc: International Planning

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Summer
The Pillars of Planning (PT1)			
Urban Design: Place-making (PT1)	International Planning Project (PT1)	Planning Research Support Module (PT1)	MSc International Planning Dissertation (PT1 & 2)
International Planning (PT1)	Critical Debates in International Planning (PT2)		
Specialism Part 1 (PT2)	Specialism Part 2 (PT2)		

This shows the course structure for full-time study. If studying part-time, modules are either taken in the first (PT1) or second (PT2) year.

### Programme Length

The International Planning MSc (180 credits) can be completed in a minimum of 12 months of full-time study or on a modular/flexible basis in up to 60 months.

### Programme Structure and Content

#### Core Modules

The aim of the core modules is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the planning process for city and regional development in an international perspective, the appropriate methods to tackle a variety of planning issues and the opportunity to discuss the policy and design problems involved. An orientation towards problem identification, policy and plan formulation and intervention is maintained throughout and students are encouraged to develop a sensitive understanding of the political, social, economic and environmental contexts in which planning interventions are designed.

■ **Pillars of Planning:** This module explores the key concepts and theories underlying the study and management of cities through the integrated study of urban economics, sociology, politics/urban governance, and environmental management. The module looks at the use of social science concepts as analytical and conceptual frameworks for the understanding of policy and planning issues. Rather than learning based on separate disciplines, the focus here is on the integration of social science knowledge to develop confidence in the selection and use of appropriate concepts.

#### Urban Design: Place-making

This module provides an introduction to urban design through lectures and a series of projects. The module aims to illustrate the potential of design as a creative, problem-solving process and the potential of planning as a 'positive' discipline able to exert a powerful and valuable influence on the overall shape and character of the built and natural environment.

#### International Planning Project

This project-based module involves a strategic planning exercise in a European (non-UK) city, and includes a short field trip in February (see 'International Field Trip'). In 2011-2012 the case study city was Barcelona. Students work in small groups to prepare a 'spatial concept plan' for a large-scale site in the case study city, after studying the spatial planning context and issues facing the area.

#### International Planning:

This module aims to expand students' understanding of the planning systems

of various countries in the context of globalisation, by studying planning in a cross-national comparative perspective.

■ **Critical Debates in International Planning:** This module takes the form of a series of small group seminars in which students have the opportunity to do in-depth readings and have a critical discussion about key debates in international planning. This module is designed to support the lecture-based teaching.

■ **Planning Research:** This is a support module for the MSc Dissertation. It exposes students to the research process and to appropriate data collection methods for planning research. Students are also supported through this module in the early stages of planning their dissertation research, and assisted with the development of appropriate research methods.

### International Planning MSc Dissertation

This is a record of original work (of around 10,000 words), relating closely to the specialist option chosen by the student, and linked to international planning. Submission of the dissertation is required by the end of year 1 (full-time) or the end of year 2 (modular/flexible). Examples of recent MSc dissertation topics include:

- Planning and the mitigation of climate change: Identifying the barriers to implementing mitigation strategies in municipal Climate Action Plan
- Can Cape Town's 2010 World Cup stadium accelerate the restructuring of the Apartheid City?
- The merits of public participation in the redevelopment of the new Dharavi slum, Mumbai, India
- Placelessness without sprawl: Vertical homogeneity in a compact city
- Planning for cycling in New York City: Publications, politics and prerogatives



## Specialist Study

Six key specialist areas are offered in the Bartlett School of Planning, with each taught across 2 modules:

### ■ Urban Regeneration:

This specialism is concerned with innovation, urban and regional economic development and regeneration. These are analysed in the context of development economics, the new space economy, the agglomeration of innovative high-technology industries, the concepts of innovative and creative milieus and emerging forms of urban governance. These analyses are brought to bear on project work, which allows for the examination of the relationship between those broad trends and specific local contexts and processes. The specialism comprises two modules: the first focuses on the theoretical framework for the understanding of the spatial and socio-economic dynamics of contemporary cities, the second is a structured project in which students are invited to apply the theory and develop their own strategies for the regeneration of a locality.

### ■ International Property and Planning:

This specialism comprises a first module, Planning Practices in Europe, which focuses on how planning varies among regions and metropolitan areas in Europe and how the European Union has influenced planning systems, policies and practices across Europe. This is followed by Comparative Urban Projects, which examines a diversity of practices in the conception, planning, financing and implementation of urban development projects in different national contexts. Both modules are assessed through coursework (oral presentations, reports and essays).

■ **Urban Design:** This specialism considers design across a range of different scales of operation, from those dealing with settlement form, to those dealing with land use mix, to those concerned with detailed design and individual site layout. Planning is undoubtedly a design discipline and planners need to be aware of, and be concerned with, the design consequences of their decisions on the ground. To explore this, the Urban Design Specialism is divided into two parts, reflecting the two primary means through which planners engage in urban design – first as members of a collaborative design team, who advise on design proposals, and second as policy and guideline writers. The first module examines the design process through analysis, critique and the generation of alternatives for site-specific design projects. The second module addresses the process of design guidance writing and implementation through a group project.



The Rocks, Sydney

### ■ Sustainable Urban Development:

This specialism is structured around two modules. Sustainable Urban Development: Key Themes, explores the concepts behind sustainable urban development and the principles of its implementation, in relation to sustainable urban form, transport, energy, housing and density, environmental planning and the involvement of people in the process. The second module, Sustainable Urban Development: Project, involves a group investigation into a real-life sustainable development initiative in London, for which students have to analyze its strengths and weaknesses in terms of contributing to the goal of urban sustainability.

■ **Planning for Housing:** This specialism examines the context for and process of residential development in the UK and is divided into lecture-based and project-based components. The first module begins by looking at the drivers of residential development including the demographics of growth. It considers who provides housing and the evolution of the UK policy context, then looks at the residential development process from strategic and development planning, land acquisition to development viability. The second, project-based module challenges students to apply their knowledge of development drivers, actors and practices to real-life housing development opportunities in London. Students working in small groups will co-ordinate the completion of a comprehensive feasibility study and housing development brief for a specific site.

### ■ Mega Infrastructure Planning:

This specialism consists of two modules addressing the question 'what constitutes a successful mega infrastructure project, programme or plan'. Module 1, 'Mega infrastructures as agents of change' defines the overarching characteristics of mega infrastructure projects, programmes and plans of various kinds and examines their roles as agents of change. It encompasses both the understanding of past perspectives of the roles of mega infrastructure and the investigation of 21st century perspectives, paying particular attention to the development context of such infrastructure investments. Module 2, 'Critical Debates in Mega infrastructures and investments' defines the overarching special characteristics of mega infrastructure projects, programmes and plans of various kinds in today's globalised world – both in terms of traditional perspectives of the late 20th Century and wider early 21st Century perspectives where the global interdependency of economic growth and environmental impact is stronger than ever before, and where sustainability looms large as a key challenge for future generations.

### International Field Trip

All students joining the International Planning MSc will participate in a short field trip in Term 2 of their first year. This trip will be based in a European city outside the UK and will cover a range of spatial planning themes, linking directly to the masters programme and to the International Planning Project which students have to prepare in Term 2. In 2011-12 the field trip took place in Barcelona, Spain.



Bukit Nanas KL Monorail station, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia





Chicago waterfront

## Entry Qualifications

Applicants must normally have obtained the equivalent of a UK first or second class honours degree or other qualifications of equivalent standard. Some practical experience in addition to academic qualifications is welcomed but not required.

A high level of competence in both spoken and written English is also required. Overseas students whose first language is not English will be asked to provide evidence of competency in English. A minimum overall score of 6.5 for IELTS or 580 in TOEFL is required.

## Research Seminar Series

The School has an active research seminar series attracting high profile speakers from all over the world. Recent visitors have included:

- Professor Helmut Holzzapfel (University of Kassel)
- Professor John Landis (University of Pennsylvania)
- Prof. Edward Soja (University of California; LSE, London)
- Prof. Frank Moulaert (University of Leuven)
- Dr. Maria Abreu (University of Groningen)
- Prof. Ann Markusen (University of Minnesota)
- Prof. Robert Freestone (University of New South Wales)
- Prof. Willem Salet (University of Amsterdam)
- Prof. Pantelis Skayannis (University of Thessaly)
- Michael Neuman (University of New South Wales)

## Application Procedures

Applications are invited from graduates of any relevant discipline. In recent years graduates of anthropology, architecture, development studies, ecology, economics, engineering, environmental studies/sciences, geography, landscape design, modern languages, social sciences, sociology and music have been accepted from the UK, EU and other parts of the world onto the Bartlett School of Planning's postgraduate programmes.

Information on potential funding sources is available from the UCL website: [www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/scholarships](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/scholarships).

For UK and EU students, a number of government bursaries may be available on a competitive basis.

For information about sources of funding available specifically for the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment or for students in the Bartlett School of Planning please visit [www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/planning/programmes/applying/funding-and-scholarships](http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/planning/programmes/applying/funding-and-scholarships)

## Programme Fees

Programme Fees are fixed annually by University College London and are therefore subject to modification. Fees for the 2013-2014 session per annum (unless specified otherwise) are:

MSc	Full-time
UK and EU students	£10,750
Non-EU students	£19,000

Students taking the course part-time or those taking individual modules on a CPD basis are charged fees on a pro-rata scale.

UCL's website contains further advice on fees, the cost of living in London and on financial matters including student hardship grants.

MSc Director and Admissions Tutor: **Dr Susan Moore**  
Email: [susan.moore@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:susan.moore@ucl.ac.uk)

More detailed information and some updating of printed materials can be found at: [www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/planning](http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/planning)

Application forms can be downloaded from [www.ucl.ac.uk/admission/graduate-study/application-admission/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/admission/graduate-study/application-admission/)

For general enquiries about UCL, applicants are advised to contact: Admissions and General Enquiries Office, UCL, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT  
Email: [degree-info@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:degree-info@ucl.ac.uk)

## Term Dates

A thirty-week academic year is followed. Although term dates vary from year to year, academic years commence towards the end of September with three terms of twelve, eleven and seven weeks respectively. Terms one and two each contain a reading week and term one an orientation week. A written examination for the International Planning module is held in term three.

## Career Opportunities

Graduate students from the Bartlett have been very successful in gaining subsequent employment in various sectors. At present there is a growing demand for our Masters' graduates from a wide range of both public and private employers in the UK and abroad. While the main source of employment remains in local government and central government planning departments and in planning related consultancies, graduates are also employed in the housing and transport sectors; urban regeneration and environmental agencies; public and private utility companies and teaching and research.

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this leaflet is correct at the time of its publication, but no guarantee can be given that it will not be amended before the commencement of, or during, the programmes to which it refers.