

**SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
(MLA)**

(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)

These syllabuses apply to candidates admitted in the 2025-26 academic year and thereafter.

**MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
CURRICULUM BY YEAR OF STUDY**

First Year of Study

- LAND7131 MLA Design Studio I	(12 credits)
- LAND7132 MLA Design Studio II	(12 credits)
- LAND7152 Landscape Plants and Ecology I	(6 credits)
- LAND7151 Landscape Technology I	(6 credits)
- LAND7255 Landscape Plants and Ecology II	(6 credits)
- LAND7141 Landscape History and Theory I	(6 credits)
- LAND7142 Landscape History and Theory II	(6 credits)
- LAND7176 Landscape Media	(6 credits)
Total	(60 credits)

Second Year of Study

- LAND7233 MLA Design Studio III	(12 credits)
- LAND7291 Thesis Prep (Capstone Experience)	(6 credits)
- LAND7299 Landscape Thesis (Capstone Experience)	(12 credits)
- LAND7156 Landscape Technology II	(6 credits)
- LAND7281 Landscape Architecture Practice	(6 credits)
- Electives	(18 credits)
Total	(60 credits)

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE CURRICULUM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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

FIRST YEAR: CORE COURSES

LAND7131 MLA Design Studio I (12 credits)

The foundation studio course introduces candidates to the principles of design in Landscape Architecture. It grounds candidates in the language of the discipline and introduces them to the contemporary landscape theories and discourses. Teaching is conducted in the studio and includes exercises, design problems, and individual and group projects. Coursework is regularly presented and discussed in critical review sessions. Required field trips allow candidates to experience and analyse landscape design first hand. Studio exercises explore the conventions of landscape architectural representation. Candidates learn the use of measured analytical drawings, physical modelling, and diagrams as design tools in the creative process. Design problems investigate the spatial, material, experiential and temporal aspects of landscape and introduce candidates to techniques in the manipulation of space, landscape form and tectonics. They develop candidate's ability to conceive and express design propositions with reason, imagination and sensitivity, under time constraints. Projects focus on the exploration of landscape through its design, and are closely related to concurrent course work.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7132 MLA Design Studio II (12 credits)

The second studio course continues the exploration of landscape design through a broad range of learning activities including studio exercises, design problems, and individual and group projects. The studio helps candidates improve their use of landscape design language, to develop design rationales, and broaden their understanding of the discipline and its discourses. Teaching is conducted in both group and individual formats, and coursework is regularly presented and critically reviewed. Regular field trips are required, including a ten day (self-funded) research-based overseas study tour.

Studio exercises explore more advanced forms of landscape architectural representation. They allow candidates to practice their use of analytical drawing, physical and computer modelling, and diagramming, and help to develop research and analytical skills. Design problems continue to develop candidate's landscape design skills through a variety of increasingly complex and challenging landscape architectural design assignments and develop candidate's ability to create and articulate landscape design solutions, increasingly under time constraints. Projects introduce a variety of inquiry methods at a scale that require candidates to consider the specificity of users, programme and context as the basis for design propositions. The scale of projects increases with a focus on site planning with the integration of multiple factors which shape our physical landscapes including society, urban context, and architectural parameters.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

(Pre-requisite: LAND7131 MLA Design Studio I)

LAND7152 Landscape Plants and Ecology I (6 credits)

One of the core skills of the Landscape Architect is an understanding of horticulture, and its influence on the design process. This course gives candidates a comprehensive understanding of plant species and plant communities commonly found in Hong Kong & Southern China, together with a knowledge of their characteristics for use in landscape planting and the underlying fundamentals of botany, plant physiology, and taxonomy.

The course also introduces the basic principles and vocabulary of planting design. It examines the influence on plant physiology and tolerances, plant form, succession and ecological habitat on plant selection. Candidates are introduced to basic spatial forms and arrangements of plants, and how these impact on environmental experience. Field study trips provide the opportunity to investigate real examples planting designs and analyse their success/shortcomings.

Assessment: 75-100% continuous coursework assessment and up to 25% examination

LAND7151 Landscape Technology I (6 credits)

This course covers the basic theory and practice of site engineering for landscape architects including earthworks, grading, drainage, basic surveying and road alignment. Earth materials, soil mechanics, and site investigation are reviewed as a basis to site engineering operations. Coursework may include regular assignments, site visits, and site study reports.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7255 Landscape Plants and Ecology II (6 credits)

This course introduces candidates to the advanced ecological concepts and practices available for landscape architects and emphasizes issues such as environmental remediation, construction mitigation, habitat construction and other impacts of land use and development on natural processes. This knowledge gained in this course will help set a foundation for sustainable practice in the field of landscape architecture.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7141 Landscape History and Theory I (6 credits)

Illustrated lectures are given on the historical development of landscape design in its various cultural contexts. Basic theory of design as related to landscape architecture is dealt with as a basis for the studio course in landscape planning and design. Coursework may include studies on selected topics and a sketchbook assignment.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7142 Landscape History and Theory II (6 credits)

As a continuation of History and Theory of Landscape Architecture I, this course continues to examine

the historical development of landscape design in its various geographic and cultural contexts, including recent and contemporary designs. The theory and practice of contemporary landscape architecture are dealt with. Coursework may include studies on selected topics and a sketchbook assignment.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7176 Landscape Media (6 credits)

Methods of Fabrication. By manipulating and controlling information available in the public domain, a model will be constructed to form a landscape out of the pre-existing, mapped urban environment. Developing the information further, a three-dimensional computer model will be constructed to produce objects with a high degree of precision. By manufacturing the model from a series of computer controlled fabrication devices, including the CNC milling machine, the large-format laser cutter, and a three-dimensional resin printer, a highly precise physical model will be the final output.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

SECOND YEAR: CORE COURSES

LAND7233 MLA Design Studio III (12 credits)

The third studio course further develops the candidate's ability to research, analyse, conceptualise and create meaningful landscape designs and to articulate rigorous, ordered and critical design positions. Teaching is conducted in both group and individual formats, and coursework is regularly presented and critically reviewed. Field trips or site visits may be required.

Candidates will practice the use of analytical and representational techniques, and will study contemporary research practices in landscape design and adjacent disciplines. Projects introduce a variety of design inquiry methods that require candidates to critically consider the specificity of users, programme and context as the basis for their propositions. The increasingly complex and challenging projects focus on the interrelationships of landscape systems and human development and call for integration of multiple factors which shape our physical landscapes including ecology, community, and social parameters.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

(Pre-requisite: LAND7132 MLA Design Studio II)

LAND7291 Thesis Prep (Capstone Experience) (6 credits)

This course incorporates supervised studies on special approved topics in landscape architecture by individuals or small groups. Oral presentations and special study reports/paper are required.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7299 Landscape Thesis (Capstone Experience) (12 credits)

The final studio concludes the landscape architecture curriculum as a capstone experience by means of a design thesis project on a topic related to the discipline of landscape architecture. Thesis studio course is self-directed, but candidates are required to work under the supervision of a faculty member. The thesis project is expected to develop the candidate's ability to research, analyse, generate and articulate mature landscape solutions to technically complex, multi-faceted design problems. The thesis project will operate at multiple scales from a regional perspective to a local intervention in order for candidates to acquire the ability to manage and relate designs at various scales. Projects call for the designed integration of the many factors which shape our physical landscapes including ecology, society, and urban parameters, with special attention to local and regional characteristics. Teaching is mostly individual and coursework is regularly presented and critically reviewed.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

(Pre-requisite: LAND7233 MLA Design Studio III and LAND7291 Thesis Prep)

LAND7156 Landscape Technology II (6 credits)

This seminar course explores how modern technology changes the ways people interact, how they experience space, and ultimately their perception and understanding of the built and natural environment. These are very critical developments in contemporary societies that would affect the

practice of landscape architecture. Candidates enrolled in this course will engage in the critical analyses of such phenomena.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7281 Landscape Architecture Practice (6 credits)

Introduction to the basic principles and approaches to the practice of landscape architecture, including an understanding of professionalism, codes of professional conduct, the nature and scope of services, consultancy appointments, project team members and their roles, the forms and management of consulting practices, tender documents and types of contract for the implementation of landscape works. Additionally, the course covers the above in relationship to key areas of the Laws of Tort; Contract; Land; and Environment. The course investigates the role of the landscape architect on site, focusing on the procedures and activities required to manage the construction of a landscape contract and ensure successful realization of the designer's vision on site.

The course is conducted as a series of focused lectures on specific topics interspersed with panel discussions with leading landscape professionals to explore the application of landscape practice theory in the contexts of local private practice, public offices and working in China.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

ELECTIVE COURSES

There are five categories of elective courses offered. Within each of these there are a number of courses which may be available for selection by candidates in the curriculum. No more than three courses are to be chosen from any one of the Categories I to IV, and no more than one course from Category V.

- I: History and Theory
- II: Technology and Sustainability
- III: Digital Media and Fabrication
- IV: Landscape and Urban Research Methods
- V: Independent Studies

These courses should be taken in Second Year. Candidates will be guided in the selection of elective courses. Not all of the courses are offered every year and new courses may be offered from time to time.

The assessment of the course may take the form of a written, practical or oral test, or by continuous assessment or by any combination of these. If a candidate is required to repeat a course because of failure but that particular course is not offered in the following year, his/her choice of an alternative course must have the approval of the Head of Department and the relevant course teachers.

Selection of elective courses offered by other taught postgraduate curricula of the Faculty of Architecture is subject to prior approval by the Head of Department in consultation with the respective Programme Directors. Please check the courses offered by these curricula at the time of enrolment and refer to the respective syllabuses for the course descriptions.

CATEGORY I: HISTORY AND THEORY

LAND7349 Chinese Landscapes (6 credits)

Beginning with a background survey of the varied landscapes of China - physical, functional, pictorial, cultural aspects - the course proceeds to focus on a unique landscape type: the Chinese Garden. Its tangible elements, both natural and man-made, together with its intentions, poetics and symbolisms will be analysed, leading to an appreciation of integrated compositions as exemplified by well-known gardens from that historical tradition. Theories on their aesthetics and design as well as their relationship with Chinese architecture, philosophy, literature and painting are also explored and discussed. Coursework includes studies of selected texts, assignments, field visits and written reports.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7348 Case Studies in Contemporary Landscape Architecture (6 credits)

Landscape architecture has transformed itself into an intriguing discipline over the past decades with the introduction of new theories and interpretations of land and environment, innovative methods in dealing with brown fields and contaminated sites, and many other new approaches that challenge the conventional perception of how public realm should be. This course will focus on the landscape projects undertaken in the past ten years worldwide, and use them as case studies to further examine these contemporary theories and see how these pioneering concepts are executed.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7341 Advanced Topics in Landscape Architecture History (6 credits)

This topical content-based seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics relating to the history and epistemology of landscape architecture through a variety research methodologies.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7342 Advanced Topics in Landscape Architecture Theory (6 credits)

This topical content-based seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics relating to the history and epistemology of landscape architecture through a variety research methodologies.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7343 Advanced Topics in Urbanism (6 credits)

This topical content-based seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics relating to the history and epistemology of landscape architecture through a variety research methodologies.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7344 Research Seminar in Landscape Architectural History I (6 credits)

This topical research seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics related to the production of academic research within the discipline of landscape architecture and urban design.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7345 Research Seminar in Landscape Architectural History II (6 credits)

This topical research seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics related to the production of academic research within the discipline of landscape architecture and urban design.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7346 Reading Seminar in Landscape Architecture II (6 credits)

This course utilizes a close reading of seminal or contemporary texts of landscape architecture such as: Design and Theory, Urbanism, Landscape Planning, Landscape Technology, Landscape Ecology. Course time involves group explorations of the ideas and arguments raised by the readings.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CATEGORY II: TECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

LAND7359 Components of Sustainable Landscape Design (6 credits)

The course starts with an exploration of the fundamental components of landscape, systematically examining the nature and characteristics of soils, water, air, and plants, together with the natural forces which influence them, and how they combine and interact to form our natural environment. Candidates see how the elements and forces can be used in practical application to create new landscapes, but also how they can be degraded through mis-use and contamination. They also see how they can provide the context and inspiration for landscape designs.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7305 Horticulture and Design (6 credits)

This course deals with horticultural principles and practices in relation to design. It covers the hierarchical nature of the plant kingdom, the physiological relationships between structure and function of plant organs, responses of plants to environmental factors, techniques for plant multiplication, selection of plants suitable for use particularly in urban areas, species interactions and management of landscaped sites in terms of nutritional requirements and control of pests and diseases. Field trips are required.

Assessment: 30-100% continuous coursework assessment and 0-70% examination

LAND7389 Landscape Practicum (6 credits)

This course provides candidates an opportunity for practical experience in landscape architecture in Hong Kong through direct engagement in the design and physical construction of built landscape works under the guidance of a Registered Landscape Architect. Assessment is based on a detailed log-book / journal to be submitted at the end of the practicum.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7306 Urban Arboriculture (6 credits)

Arboriculture is a rapidly growing area of practice for landscape architects, and this course investigates the science of arboriculture and its practical application in relation to dense urban environments. It covers woody plant physiology, trees in urban environments, the production, planting and maintenance of street trees, management of the urban forestry, managing special trees, legal aspects of trees in Hong Kong, the work of arborists, and tree work practices and equipment.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7351 Advanced Topics in Technology (6 credits)

This topical content-based seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics in landscape architecture technology through a variety of assessment exercises. An overseas study trip may be required.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7307 Advanced Topics in Sustainability (6 credits)

This topical content-based seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics in sustainability in landscape architecture through a variety assessment exercises.. An overseas study trip may be required.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7352 Research Seminar in Landscape Technology (6 credits)

This topical research seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics in landscape architecture through a variety research methodologies. An overseas study trip may be required.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CATEGORY III: DIGITAL MEDIA AND FABRICATION

LAND7308 Advanced Topics in Digital Media and Fabrication (6 credits)

This topical content-based seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics in advanced media and fabrication relating to landscape architecture through a variety of methodologies including advanced fabrication and prototyping.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7309 Research Seminar in Digital Media and Fabrication (6 credits)

This topical research seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics in landscape architecture through a variety research methodologies. An overseas study trip may be required.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CATEGORY IV: LANDSCAPE AND URBAN RESEARCH METHODS

LAND7381 Advanced Topics in Landscape and Urban Research Methods (6 credits)

This topical research seminar provides candidates the opportunity to explore specific issues and topics related to the production of academic research within the discipline of landscape architecture and urban design.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

LAND7386 Reading Topics in Landscape Architecture I (6 credits)

This short-course utilizes a close reading and comparative analysis of works of landscape architectural research and urban studies. Course time involves group explorations of the ideas and methodologies utilized by the researchers.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CATEGORY V: INDEPENDENT STUDIES

LAND7391 Independent Study I (6 credits)

The objective of this course is to allow candidates to pursue independent studies to strengthen critical analytical skills and reflexive learning. With the permission of the supervisor, candidates may choose project outcomes and course bibliography that focus on the exploration, analysis and/or revelations on concepts or technologies in landscape architecture, landscape planning, and urbanism.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

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