

(These Regulations are applicable to candidates admitted to the Master of Urban Design curriculum in the 2025-2026 academic year and thereafter)

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF URBAN DESIGN

(MUrbanDesign)

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

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.

Admission Requirements Ar16

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Urban Design, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
- (b) shall hold a Bachelor's degree of this University in a relevant subject; or a 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.

Qualifying Examination Ar17

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidates' formal academic ability or their 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) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.

Requirements for Graduation Ar18

To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Urban Design, candidates

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

Curriculum Ar19

- (a) The curriculum shall normally require one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study. Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration of three years for both full-time and part-time study unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.
- (b) To complete the curriculum, candidates

- (i) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
- (ii) shall take not less than 84 credits in the manner specified in these regulations and the syllabuses, and follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work and practical work where appropriate;
- (iii) shall complete work prescribed in the Hong Kong Urban Design Studio (12 credits); International Urban Design Studio (12 credits); and Dissertation/Design Thesis (24 credits);
- (iv) shall normally satisfy the examiners in not less than six courses (36 credits) including five core courses (30 credits):

Introduction to Urban Development and Planning
Morphologies & Urban Design Theories
Urban Design Technologies & Innovations
Values of Urban Design: Urban, Social, Environmental Economics
Research Methods for Urban Design

and one elective course (6 credits) from an approved list of elective courses comprising courses of other taught postgraduate curricula 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; and

- (v) 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.

Assessment Ar20

- (a) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners at first attempt in not more than 18 credits of the core and elective courses, excluding Urban Design Studio or Dissertation/Design Thesis, followed during an academic year may be permitted to present themselves for re-assessment in the failed courses at a specified date. If they again fail, but in not more than 12 credits of the core and elective courses, excluding Urban Design Studio or Dissertation/Design Thesis, they may be permitted to repeat the relevant curriculum and to present themselves for re-assessment at a specified date in the failed course(s) at a third and last attempt.
- (b) Subject to the provision of Ar20(a), candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in an elective course in the first attempt may be permitted under special circumstances to register for another elective course as substitution and be assessed at a specified date. If they fail to satisfy the examiners in the substitute elective course, they may be permitted to present themselves for re-assessment 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.
- (c) 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-assessment 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-assessment at a specified date in the work repeated.
- (d) Candidates shall be recommended for discontinuation if they have:

- (i) failed to satisfy the examiners at a first attempt in more than 18 credits of core and electives courses followed during an academic year; or
- (ii) failed to satisfy the examiners in any of the failed courses in their third attempt or in any of the failed substitute elective courses in their second attempt; or
- (iii) failed to satisfy the examiners in their third attempt in any of the work prescribed in the Urban Design Studio or in Dissertation/Design Thesis; or
- (iv) failed to satisfy all requirements for the award of the degree within three academic years from the commencement of studies; or
- (v) exceeded the maximum period of registration specified in the regulations of the degree.

Grading System Ar21

Individual courses shall be graded according to the following grading system

Grade	Standard	Grade Point
A+	Excellent	4.3
A		4.0
A-		3.7
B+	Good	3.3
B		3.0
B-		2.7
C+	Satisfactory	2.3
C		2.0
C-		1.7
D+	Pass	1.3
D		1.0
F	Fail	0

Assessment Results Ar22

- (a) Upon successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diploma.
- (b) In consultation with the Internal Examiners and subject to the approval of the Head of Department, the Programme Director may recommend that candidates registered for the Master of Urban Design curriculum be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Urban Design if they have satisfactorily completed the curriculum requirements except the dissertation.

Advanced Standing and Exemption Ar23

- (a) Advanced standing and exemption may be granted to candidates who have successfully completed a cognate Master's degree of this University or another qualification of equivalent standard accepted for this purpose, except for studio courses, the capstone course and the research methods course.
- (b) Advanced standing from 6 to 18 credits may be granted by the Board of the Faculty on a case-by-case basis. Credits granted for advanced standing shall not be included in the calculation of

the GPA but will be recorded on the transcript of the candidate.

- (c) Exemption of 6 credits may be granted by the Board of the Faculty on a case-by-case basis, from the requirement prescribed in the regulations and syllabuses governing the curriculum. No credits will be given for the exempted course and candidates shall be required to take an approved alternative course of the same credit value.
- (d) The consideration for advanced standing and exemption is subject to the following conditions:
 - i. Candidates can produce evidence, such as transcript and course syllabus, that a course is equivalent in content to another course taken elsewhere before admission to the Master of Urban Design Curriculum for which a satisfactory grade has been obtained; and
 - ii. that the application is received within five years of successful completion of the degree accepted for this purpose.
- (e) Applications for advanced standing and exemption shall normally be made at the same time of application for admission to the Master of Urban Design curriculum and should be accompanied by copies of academic transcripts to support the application.

January 2025

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF URBAN DESIGN

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

(These syllabuses are applicable to candidates who are admitted to the Master of Urban Design curriculum in the 2026-27 academic year and thereafter)

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

CORE COURSES

MUDP1010. Introduction to Urban Development and Planning (6 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 both in Hong Kong and internationally.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP1020. Urban Design Technologies & Innovations (6 credits)

The course focuses on technologies-related tools and techniques in professional urban design practice, and urban design research that enables designers to fully exploit technologies and techniques for urban physical environment appraisal, research for and about urban design, urban development design and communication at small and medium spatial scales. It also includes insights of innovations and techniques in urban design.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP1030. Morphologies & Urban Design Theories (6 credits)

This course provides an introduction to the three natures of urban morphology: natural, built environment, institutional configurations and urban design theories. Introduction to urban morphologies will examine key concepts, the study of the formation of urban fabric, the relationship of these components through time and at different spatial scales in local and international contexts. Urban design theories describe the state of the art of research about the relationship between urban morphology and human effects and other impacts referenced to the key historical urban design thinkers.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP1001. Hong Kong Urban Design Studio (12 credits)

The urban design studio is the core component of the Master of Urban Design curriculum. In the Hong Kong Studio, students learn to acquire basic urban design skills through a series of project-based exercises that (1) introduce the students to a fundamental vocabulary for examining physical high intensity vertical multi-level urban form; (2) develop students' ability to identify and analyse urban design issues and problems through design iterations (Options stage and preferred option); (3) initiate the students on fundamental skills to develop urban design scheme in 2D-3D form and delivery challenges over time. The studio includes mandatory design review of option and preferred option. This studio is conducted over one semester.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP2010. Research Methods for Urban Design (6 credits)

The course introduces research design and research methodology and their limitations appropriate for urban design. Topics include: research paradigms, the emergence of design research, formulation of research questions; range of research methods and resources needs; choices of research methods and limitations; formulation of research proposals; use of digital techniques in urban design research.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP2020. Values of Urban Design: Urban, Social, Environmental Economics (6 credits)

Urban design and real estate engage the complex mechanisms of environmental and social capital in relation to finance and economics, by seeing design and built environment investment as intrinsically associated with economics and values. The course is an introduction to the issues arising of these associations: what roles urban economics play in urban design? From regional and spatial economics to spatial initiatives and governance to approaches to values in urban design. Conversely how urban design visioning can have impacts on economics, financial investment and values, including added environmental, social, cultural and aesthetic values?

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP1002. International Urban Design Studio (12 credits)

The International Urban design studio normally consists of urban design projects with a larger scale and complexity than the fall studio. The location is related to engaging with various level high intensity horizontal urban form. The aims are to: (1) engage with the challenge of international urban design values set that are distant from one own; (2) enhance and further develop the students' analytical and design ability for handling real-life urban development, renewal and/or re-development projects; (3) prepare the students for conducting more advanced studies leading to large, comprehensive urban design schemes through design iterations (options stage and preferred option); (4) to develop urban design scheme in 2D-3D urban form and delivery challenges over time. The studio includes mandatory design review of options and preferred option. The Studio includes an International Field Visit. This studio is conducted over one semester.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

MUDP1004. Dissertation/Design Thesis (24 credits) (Capstone experience)

The Dissertation/Design Thesis mainly consists of three options, of which each student must take one: 1) A Research Dissertation about urban design in the manner of academic research aiming at contributing to the scholarly knowledge of the discipline. The deliverables are in the form of text with at least 6,000 words, excluding figures, abstract, bibliography, list of figure and tables, etc.; or 2) An Urban Design Thesis (Project) which should be research-informed and comprehensive, in the manner of an urban design brief & research for urban design report. The deliverables include drawings, analysis diagrams, multi-media, or other creative format, accompanied by a write-up of at least 3,000 words in the main body, excluding the abstract, bibliography, list of figure and tables, etc.; or 3) A combination of the Research Dissertation and the Urban Design Thesis, with a weighting of each format to be decided in consultation with supervisors and tailored to the interests and career development of each student. Typically, its deliverables might include a write-up of 3,000-6,000 words which follows the Research Dissertation format requirements, accompanied by drawings, analysis, diagrams, multi-media, or other creative format according to the standards of the Urban Design Thesis.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

ELECTIVE COURSES

Not all elective courses are available each year and list of courses may vary from year to year. Selection of elective courses offered by other taught postgraduate curricula, whether from the Faculty of Architecture, or the other Faculties at the University of Hong Kong, 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.

MHCD7001. Design, Survey and Modelling for Urban Health (6 credits)

This is a methodology course aimed at assessing key attributes of urban environments for population health improvement. The course will introduce concepts of: 1) study design (descriptive and analytical [observational study and experimental study]); 2) study populations (sample size calculation, data collection/sampling approaches); 3) exposure assessment (survey and management of urban environments: air pollution, water, wastes etc.); 4) outcome assessment (physical and mental health, economics, policy etc.); 5) describe and analyse evidence (disease mapping, spatial analysis models, and health effects assessment of environmental exposures). Students will be also encouraged to form groups to appraise and interpret existing evidence of the links between urban exposures, behaviour and health outcomes.

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

MHCD7002. Principles of Healthy Cities (6 credits)

This is a theoretical course focusing on fundamental concepts, theories and models on a wide range of emerging urban health issues at local, regional and global scales. The aim is to employ systems thinking to elucidate the intrinsic multifactorial interactions between urban space and human behaviour and lifestyle resulting in the socio-spatial production of health. Urban planning, design and policy aspects at building-, neighbourhood- and city-levels promoting active-living, salutogenicity, social cohesion and racial inclusivity, age-friendliness, climate change-resilience, pandemic-resilience and longevityreadiness, and their role in population health and wellbeing will be discussed.

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

MHCD7003. Health Impact Assessment of Urban Development Projects (6 credits)

Urbanisation is one of the leading global trends of the 21st century. It has been found that urban development is closely associated with significant human health in both direct and indirect way. This course will introduce Health Impact Assessment as a tool to internalize evidence in our decision-making process with focus on health externalities. The process of full-chain health impact assessment including exposure assessment, health risk assessment and economic evaluation of various aspects of urban design and urban and transport development projects will be elucidated.

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

MHMP8013. Smart and Sustainable Cities (6 credits)

This course examines the rise of smart and sustainable cities, as mobilized by a range of governance actors from the urban to global scale, including their origins, construction and management. It

explores the underlying motivation for these specific urban models - often grounded in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - their potential, but also their more problematic aspects. The course will introduce key theories that have been used to understand smart and sustainable cities, and relevant planning and governance issues. Learning activities will involve case studies, debates, and field research intended to enhance student engagement.

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

MUDP7001. Municipal Finance for Urban Practitioners in Belt and Road Regions (6 credits)

This course will cover fundamental concepts in urban public finance, including municipal budgets, transfers, land-based financing, own-source revenues, and municipal debt. The course also allows students to grasp insights and knowledge pertinent to urban planning, design and development along the Belt-and-Road regions. It will equip students with the skills to find relevant quantitative and qualitative data and to conduct basic municipal budget analysis. The goal is to ensure that students working in urban environments, regardless of their background, can understand and apply these concepts to identify emerging trends and apply them locally to cities.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

URBP7006. GIS and Smart Technology in Spatial Planning (6 credits)

This course introduces the basic concepts, methods and techniques in the use of geographic information system (GIS) and smart technologies as a spatial planning support system in urban planning and smart cities development. It examines the challenges and opportunities of using emerging urban data for the development of smart cities and regions through urban analytical methods such as GIS, remote sensing, big data, and open data.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

URBP6131. Transport Policy and Planning (6 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.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

URBP6157. Transport Economics (6 credits)

This course helps to develop a specialist appreciation of the economics of urban transport provision. It highlights the economic principles and techniques employed in planning, operating and managing our city transport systems and concentrates on topics such as: travel time valuation, road congestion costing and pricing, public transport finance and cost-recovery, and economic appraisal techniques employed therein.

Assessment: 40%-60% continuous coursework assessment and 40%-60% examination

URBP6904. Housing, Planning and Sustainability (6 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.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

URBP6905. Globalization and Urban and Regional Development in China (6 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.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

URBP6906. Urban Planning and Practice in China (6 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.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

URBP6123. Public Transport Systems (6 credits)

This course is designed to examine the nature and the role of public transport systems mainly in the urban context with special reference to high density development. Topics include the nature and the characteristics of passenger transport, the operation and management of public transit systems, deregulation and privatization, the role of para-transit, and multi-modal cooperation and competition.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment
