



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

MCD

Urban Design and Planning

Study mode

Full-time

Part-time

Duration

12 months

24 months

Apply by: **28 August 2026**

Starts on: **21 September 2026**

About this course

In this course, you'll gain insights into the social, economic, and environmental challenges that urban planners face in designing cities that are functional, liveable, and sustainable. You'll also become familiar with various planning and urban design tools and methods that are used to address these challenges, and learn how they can be applied to specific contexts. By exploring the complexities of urban design and planning, you'll be equipped with the knowledge and skills to tackle real-world issues and create vibrant and resilient communities.

Introduction

This MCD taught programme is fully accredited by the Royal Town Planning Institute and is offered both in full-time and part-time mode.

Urban design and planning is a complex field that requires an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on expertise from the landscape, architecture, engineering, social sciences, and environmental sciences.

Our course will introduce you to the fundamental concepts of urban design and planning, providing you with a solid foundation in the principles and practices of designing and managing urban spaces. You will explore the social, economic, and environmental challenges that cities face today and learn how to address these challenges through innovative design and planning strategies.

By the end of the course, you will be able to analyse urban contexts, develop urban design proposals, and evaluate the social, economic, and environmental impacts of projects at different scales. Whether you aspire to become an urban designer, planner, or researcher, this course will provide you with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in your future endeavours.

What you'll learn

- A critical appreciation of challenges facing modern society in terms of the need to reconcile economic growth and development with protecting and conserving the environment.
 - An understanding of the diversity of planned interventions at a variety of spatial scales, which are designed to produce effective and implementable solutions to policy dilemmas.
 - A range of analytical skills and techniques that are designed to develop appropriate and implementable solutions to a range of complex problems.
 - You'll get the opportunity to apply your knowledge, skills and understanding to the achievement of feasible solutions to real-life problems.
 - Develop the ability to appreciate the need to adopt strong professional values and ethics, recognising the diversity of interests that planning serves.
 - Explore ideas, perspectives and debates in planning and urban design, including through a residential field class.
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Accreditation

This MCD taught programme is fully accredited by the [Royal Town Planning Institute](#).

Accreditation in detail

RTPI

The [Royal Town Planning Institute](#) works in partnership with universities to develop and accredit professional planning qualifications to put graduates

on track to become a Chartered Town Planner.

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Course content

Discover what you'll learn, what you'll study, and how you'll be taught and assessed.

Semester 1

In your first semester, you will be introduced to the forces that shape the built environment and the role played by design professionals.

You will develop an understanding of the conflicts facing planners and urban designers in trying to deliver sustainable development, learn methods and techniques for analysing spatial planning and design issues, and the perspectives and theories that are relevant to the understanding of the role and purposes of planning and urban design.

You will attend lectures, seminars and take part in tutorials and field work to help you to build an understanding of planning and urban design principles and the field.

Please see below for semester one modules. Click on the next tab for semester two modules.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
<u>SPATIAL PLANNING CHALLENGES (ENVS411)</u>	15
<u>THEORY, POWER AND ETHICS (ENVS432)</u>	15
<u>TRENDS, OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS (ENVS469)</u>	15
<u>URBAN DESIGN: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE (ENVS420)</u>	15

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

Semester 2

In your second semester, you will further develop the skills required to excel in the field of urban design and planning.

You will understand more about the challenges that are faced by planners and urban designers when working towards meaningful change and get hands-on with project work that will allow you to apply concepts you have learned in a practical context – working with your peers and clients within the local community.

You will also explore important planning and urban design issues in other places as the programme includes a residential field class. Recently, the field class has visited Glasgow, Lille, Copenhagen and Malmö. The cost of travel and accommodation is covered by the University, but students will need to pay for visas and meals as well as any other personal expenses.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
<u>IMPLEMENTING AND MANAGING CHANGE (ENVS459)</u>	15
<u>SPATIAL PLANNING AND DESIGN PROJECT (ENVS467)</u>	30
<u>URBAN DESIGN STUDIO (ENVS463)</u>	15

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

Final Project

For your final research project, you will undertake a research focused on urban design. Using all of the skills, knowledge and understanding you have gained throughout the programme, you will identify a research topic, manage your research process and draw policy and design conclusions from your findings.

Lectures and seminars will support your academic writing and primary research skills – and you will have support from your tutor on developing your research

outline into a full-scale research project.

Modules

Compulsory modules	Credits
<u>DISSERTATION MCD/MA/MSc PLANNING (ENVS491)</u>	60

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

Teaching and assessment

How you'll learn

You'll learn through a combination of teaching, learning and assessment methods in line with the varied nature of the programme.

You'll attend lectures, seminars and tutorials and take part in practical sessions, such as project work and field visits. You are encouraged to take a proactive approach to your learning.

You will plan and organise your studies both on an individual basis and working in groups, take an active role in seminars, class discussions, library and IT studies and make practice contacts and site visits associated with coursework submissions.

How you're assessed

You will be assessed through a combination of coursework, such as essays, reports, seminar presentations, examinations and project work. Essays, reports, seminars and discussion papers enable you to explore particular components of the course in-depth and present coherent arguments using a range of writing styles, suitable for different audiences.

Seminar presentations provide opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate your ability in presenting and defending your arguments. Group projects enable you to demonstrate, through verbal presentations, written reports and design work, your ability to work as part of a team to resolve large and complex problems. Examinations test knowledge, understanding and critical reflection on a range of materials covered in a module.

You will also take part in a final research project focused on urban design. You will work independently to develop and demonstrate research skills and apply knowledge to a specific research problem. You will be specifically assessed on your initial presentation, your research outline, and your dissertation.

Liverpool Hallmarks

We have a distinctive approach to education, the Liverpool Curriculum Framework, which focuses on research-connected teaching, active learning, and authentic assessment to ensure our students graduate as digitally fluent and confident global citizens.

The Liverpool Curriculum framework sets out our distinctive approach to education. Our teaching staff support our students to develop academic knowledge, skills, and understanding alongside our **graduate attributes**:

- Digital fluency
- Confidence
- Global citizenship

Our curriculum is characterised by the three **Liverpool Hallmarks**:

- Research-connected teaching
- Active learning
- Authentic assessment

All this is underpinned by our core value of **inclusivity** and commitment to providing a curriculum that is accessible to all students.

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Careers and employability

Graduates of this MCD programme have excellent job prospects in the field of urban design and planning and beyond.

There are significant career opportunities in the fields of urban design and planning. Graduates from this programme will develop a set of skills that will be attractive for employers in the urban design and planning sectors – local authorities, the private and voluntary sectors, as well as architectural offices working on place-making and master planning. Students can also go on to take higher degrees or work as research assistants in academic institutions.

This programme meets particular needs, both in the UK and internationally, for specialists in this field.

Career support from day one to graduation and beyond

Career planning

From education to employment

Networking events

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Fees and funding

Your tuition fees, funding your studies, and other costs to consider.

Tuition fees

UK fees (applies to Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland)

Full-time place, per year – £12,500

Part-time place, per year – £6,250

International fees

Full-time place, per year – £24,100

Part-time place, per year – £12,050

Fees stated are for the 2025/26 academic year. Tuition fees for the academic year 2026/27 will be announced soon.

Tuition fees cover the cost of your teaching and assessment, operating facilities such as libraries, IT equipment, and access to academic and personal support.

- You can [pay your tuition fees in instalments](#).
- All or part of your tuition fees can be [funded by external sponsorship](#).
- International applicants who accept an offer of a place will need to [pay a tuition fee deposit](#).

If you're a UK national, or have settled status in the UK, you may be eligible to apply for a Postgraduate Loan worth up to £12,167 to help with course fees and living costs. [Learn more about paying for your studies](#).

Additional costs

We understand that budgeting for your time at university is important, and we want to make sure you understand any course-related costs that are not covered by your tuition fee. This could include buying a laptop, books, or stationery.

Find out more about the [additional study costs](#) that may apply to this course.

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Entry requirements

The qualifications and exam results you'll need to apply for this course.

Postgraduate entry requirements

We accept a 2:2 honours degree from a UK university, or an equivalent academic qualification from a similar non-UK institution. This degree can be in any relevant subject discipline. Non-graduates with very extensive professional experience and/or other prior qualifications may also be considered.

Relevant work experience is not an entry requirement, but prospective students are encouraged to gain some familiarity with the work of planning professionals prior to joining the programme.

International qualifications

Applications from international students are welcome. International qualifications will be evaluated in line with the National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) guidelines.

English language qualifications

All applicants must have reached a minimum required standard of English language and are required to provide evidence of this. Qualifications accepted by the University please review the [English Language requirements specific to your country](#).

If you meet the academic requirements of the course but do not have the required level of English Language, it is possible for you to come and study at the University on one of our Pre-sessional English for Academic Purposes programmes. Please see the [English Language Centre website](#) for further information about these programmes.

If you require additional English Language training during your study, the University is able to provide tuition and arrange IELTS tests through its English Language Centre, details of which are available at [via the website](#).

International qualifications

[Select your country or region to view specific entry requirements.](#)

If you hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent, but don't meet our entry requirements, a Pre-Master's can help you gain a place. This specialist preparation course for postgraduate study is offered on campus at the [University of Liverpool International College](#), in partnership with Kaplan International

Pathways. Although there's no direct Pre-Master's route to this MA, completing a Pre-Master's pathway can guarantee you a place on many other postgraduate courses at The University of Liverpool.

English language requirements

You'll need to demonstrate competence in the use of English language, unless you're from a [majority English speaking country](#).

We accept a variety of [international language tests](#) and [country-specific qualifications](#).

International applicants who do not meet the minimum required standard of English language can complete one of our [Pre-Sessional English courses](#) to achieve the required level.

IELTS

6.5 overall, with no component below 6.0

TOEFL iBT

88 overall, with minimum scores of listening 19, writing 19, reading 19 and speaking 20. TOEFL Home Edition not accepted.

Duolingo English Test

125 overall, with writing not less than 125, speaking and reading not less than 115, and listening not below 110. For academic year 2025/26 only, we will also accept the production, literacy, comprehension and conversation score set: 120 overall, with no component below 105.

Pearson PTE Academic

61 overall, with no component below 59

LanguageCert Academic

70 overall, with no skill below 65

PSI Skills for English

B2 Pass with Merit in all bands

INDIA Standard XII

National Curriculum (CBSE/ISC) – 75% and above in English. Accepted State Boards – 80% and above in English.

WAEC

C6 or above

Pre-sessional English

Do you need to complete a Pre-sessional English course to meet the English language requirements for this course?

The length of Pre-sessional English course you'll need to take depends on your current level of English language ability.

Pre-sessional English in detail

If you don't meet our English language requirements, we can use your most recent IELTS score, or [the equivalent score in selected other English language tests](#), to determine the length of Pre-sessional English course you require.

Use the table below to check the course length you're likely to require for your current English language ability and see whether the course is available on campus or online.

Your most recent IELTS score	Pre-sessional English course length	On campus or online
6.0 overall, with no component below 6.0	6 weeks	On campus

Your most recent IELTS score	Pre-sessional English course length	On campus or online
6.0 overall, with no component below 5.5	10 weeks	On campus and online options available
6.0 overall, with no more than one component below 5.5, and no component below 5.0	12 weeks	On campus and online options available
5.5 overall, with no more than one component below 5.5, and no component below 5.0	20 weeks	On campus
5.0 overall, with no more than one component below 5.0, and no component below 4.5	30 weeks	On campus
4.5 overall, with no more than one component below 4.5, and no component below 4.0	40 weeks	On campus

If you've completed an alternative English language test to IELTS, we may be able to use this to assess your English language ability and determine the Pre-sessional English course length you require.

Please see our guide to [Pre-sessional English entry requirements](#) for IELTS 6.5 overall, with no component below 6.0, for further details.

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