

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Master of Science in Urban Planning

CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

(applicable to students admitted to both the Urban Planning and the Urban and Regional Planning streams in the academic year 2024-25 and thereafter)

The Master of Science in Urban Planning programme comprises five different categories of courses using distinctive teaching and learning modes. The majority of the courses are 6-credit courses. The norm for a 6-credit course represents 150 hours of student learning activity (including both class contact hours and other student learning efforts). Studios and Dissertation are 18-credit and 24-credit courses, respectively, as they require more intensive student-staff interaction and/or greater student learning inputs than in a normal course. Courses are assessed by means of coursework (including continuous assessment), examination or by a combination of both. Under a normal progression pattern, students are expected to take no more than 36 credits of course loadings in each semester. The entire programme requires 126 credits for graduation, equivalent to a total of about 3,150 student learning hours (including not more than 516 contact hours in total). The five categories of courses are summarized as follows:

1. *Foundation course* (6 credits)

It is a general foundation course on statistics, quantitative methods and computer techniques that are commonly used in urban analysis and planning. The aim is to develop students to a basic level of competence and ability in using them in urban analysis and planning. Depending on their academic background, students may be required to take this course upon recommendation of the Programme Director in the first year of the programme. It is delivered by means of lectures and/or practical sessions (normally 24 hours in total). Assessment tasks may include exercises, in-class tests or quizzes, examination and writing of essays of not more than 3,000 words. Coursework comprises 30-100% and examination comprises 0-70% of the assessment.

2. *Core courses* (6 credits each)

These are the foundation and essential courses that provide students with the theoretical and professional knowledge in urban and regional planning. Seven courses fall into this category. These courses are delivered primarily by means of lectures and/or tutorials/seminars (normally 24 hours in total). Assessment methods are decided by the individual teachers to tally with the intended learning outcomes of the courses. Assessment tasks may include the writing of essays, reports, in-class tests, class participation, teamwork performance, examination and so on. The total written output varies among different courses and ranges from 2,000 to 5,000 words. Assessment is normally by means of 100% coursework. For core courses involving examinations due to pedagogical reasons or professional accreditation, examination comprises 30 – 70% of the assessment.

3. *Elective courses* (3 or 6 credits each, assessment ratio and written output will depend on which elective courses are enrolled)

These are the specialization courses in connection with the sub-fields of urban and regional planning to be selected and approved by the Department from time to time. These sub-fields cover transport, housing, environment, urban design, international planning, urban analytics, conservation, project management and special study. Students are required to take no less than three elective courses, or a total of exactly 18 credits of elective courses. The selection of courses shall be approved by the Department and shall be related to the topic of the final-year dissertation to be completed by the student. Environmental electives are normally 3 credits each involving 60-90 student learning hours (12-18 class contact hours), with a combination of coursework assessments (30-100%) involving presentations, class tests or written assignments, and examination (0-70%) with total written output between 1,500 to 3,000 words. For the other 6-credit elective courses, the teaching pedagogy, delivery format and assessment methods are similar to those of the 6-credit core courses which normally represents 150 hours of student learning activity (approximately 24 contact hours). Assessment is normally by means of 100%

coursework. Assessment tasks may include the writing of essays and reports, and the total written output varies among different courses and ranges from 5,000 to 10,000 words. For the courses involving examinations due to pedagogical reasons, examination comprises 0 – 100% of the assessment.

4. *Studio courses* (18 credits each)

These courses aim at training students the practical professional skills through a classroom and/or simulated real-life environment, and providing them with the opportunity to integrate theory with application in tackling urban and regional planning problems through learning-by-doing. Two Studios are offered in the Programme to cover spatial planning and urban design, and strategic and community planning, respectively. Class contact hours range from 72-120 hours. The assessment projects for these courses require intensive research, team work, presentation and experiential learning both inside and outside the classroom. Written output may include individual assignments of not more than 3,000 words, spatial presentation materials, design drawings, and group assignments of within 40,000 words. Student learning hours in each studio (including class contact, assignments and self-study hours) shall not exceed a total of 450 hours in two semesters. Assessment in studios will be by means of 100% coursework.

5. *Dissertation course* (24 credits)

Dissertation is the Capstone course that aims at providing students with an opportunity to pursue their own research interests related to their specializations and under the supervision of a teacher. A dissertation briefing (about 1 hour) will be held at the beginning of the dissertation process. Additional seminars and training on research methodology will be provided for students to take at their discretion. Individual students are required to defend their research proposals, apply for research ethical clearance and regularly report their research progress to their supervisors. Contact hours are flexibly agreed between students and supervisors and the total contact hours will normally not exceed 12 hours. All student learning activities in dissertation shall not exceed a total of 600 hours. Student performance is evaluated by continuous assessment and also by means of a dissertation of not more than 15,000 words. The examiners may prescribe an oral examination of the subject of the dissertation.