

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE**

**Master of Urban Design (Full-time study mode)**

CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

(applicable to students admitted in 2024-25 and thereafter)

The Master of Urban Design Programme (MUrbanDesign) in full-time mode is three semesters long (Fall, Spring, Summer) consisting of a total of 84 credits and 1,980 total hours of student learning activity, which include 365 class contact hours and 1,615 student study hours (self or group study). The credits and study hours are calculated in accordance with the following principles: each 6-credit course consists of approximately 150 hours of student learning activity; each 12-credit studio course consists of 300 hours of student learning activity; and the 24-credit Dissertation/Design Thesis course (capstone) consists of 480 hours of student learning activity. The higher credits and study hours of the latter two types reflects the intensive nature of student-staff interaction in design studios and capstone, in comparison with regular lecture courses. Assessment methods are determined by course coordinators, subject to confirmation by the Programme Director to tally with the intended learning outcomes. The assessment methods may include a combination of coursework (ranging from 30% to 100%) and examination (0% to 70%). The organization of the semesters is as follows:

1. Fall Semester (30 credits), including three 6-credit core courses and one 12-credit studio course.
2. Spring Semester (30 credits), including three 6-credit courses (two cores and one elective), one 12-credit studio course.
3. Summer Semester (24 credits), including the 24-credit Dissertation/Design Thesis course.

MUrbanDesign curriculum consists of four categories of courses, with distinctive teaching and learning modes specified below:

1. *Core courses* (6 credits each)  
These are the foundation and essential courses that provide students with the theoretical and professional knowledge in urban design. 5 courses fall into this category. These courses are delivered primarily by means of lectures and/or tutorials/seminars. Each 6-credit course includes approximately 25 class contact hours and 125 student study hours, adding up to 150 hours of total student learning activity.  
Assessment tasks for these core courses may include writing essays and reports, as well as a combination of intermediary progressive drafts, in-class tests, individual or group presentations, teamwork performance, examinations, and class participation. However, the specific assessment requirements vary by courses. Typically, they include weekly reading response, group presentation, or 2,000-3,000 words of study report.
2. *Elective course* (6 credits, assessment ratio and written output will depend on which elective courses is enrolled)  
These are specialization courses in connection with the sub-fields of urban design to be selected and approved by the Department from time to time. These sub-fields cover transport, housing, environment, physical planning, architecture, landscape architecture, and conservation, and special study. Students are required to take one elective course. The selection of courses shall be approved by the Department and normally shall be related to the topic of the Dissertation/Design Thesis to be completed by the student. The teaching pedagogy, delivery format and assessment methods are similar to those of the core courses. For the 6-credit elective course, typically it should also include

approximately 25 class contact hours and 125 student study hours, adding up to 150 hours of total student learning activity.

The assessment requirement varies course by course, but in general it might include midterm exam, group project proposal (600-1000 words), and final report (max 6,000 words including tables and figures).

3. *Studio courses* (12 credits each)

Studio courses blend analytical, generative and synthesis deployment of practical professional skills through a simulated real-life environment. Students are provided with the opportunity to integrate theory with application in tackling urban design problems through learning-by-doing. Two experiential learning urban design studios are offered in the Programme, which covers different urban scales and local and international cases. The total student learning activity measures up to approximately 300 hours, with about 90 contact hours and 210 self or group study hours.

The assessment projects for these courses require development of urban design knowledge and methods and teamwork both inside and outside the classroom, including but not limited to the following:

- Required design seminar and workshop attendance.
- Required weekly tutorial attendance and design progress presentation/discussion (40-45 min each).
- Required progress presentation/discussion (40-45 min each) with deliverables specified by the course leader.
- Individual and group design brief, models, multi-media, etc.. Notably, the deliverables are 4-6 A0 boards of design research descriptions, figures and tables, accompanied by usually 20-minute presentation.

4. *Dissertation/Design Thesis course* (24 credits, 100% continuous coursework assessment)

Dissertation/Design Thesis is the Capstone course that aims at providing students with an opportunity to demonstrate their interests and capacity at both research and practice of urban design under the supervision of a teacher. Contact hours are flexibly organized between students and supervisors. The total student learning activity measures approximately 480 hours, including about 35 class contact hours and 445 student study hours (self or group). The teaching of Dissertation/Design Thesis consists mainly three options: 1) a Research Dissertation, 2) an Urban Design Thesis (Project), or 3) a combination of the Research Dissertation and the Urban Design Thesis. Each student must take one of the three options.

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.,
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.
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 standard of Urban Design Thesis.

A Dissertation/Design Thesis briefing will be held at the beginning of the research and method for urban design course (MUDP2010). Additional seminars and training on research methodology are provided starting from the spring semester (MUDP2010).

January 2024